

ALA, AFMC, DoD officials, and resale leaders testified at a Congressional hearing this week regarding the status of military resale programs and how they are working together in a fiscally constrained environment.

In his opening remarks, Military Personnel Subcommittee Chairman Joe Wilson stated, "The Commissaries, Exchanges, and Morale Welfare and Recreation programs have long provided extraordinary saving to their patrons, as well as job opportunity for military spouses and families, which I view is critical during the past years of economic challenges."

Chairman Wilson also stated that he agreed with President Obama's statement at Camp Pendleton, "hardworking folks are getting furloughed, families getting by on less, fewer ships available for your training exercises, the commissary your families rely on closed a day a week. We can do better than that. That's not how a great nation should be treating its military and military families."

In her opening comments, Ranking Member Susan Davis stated, "It is important that we hold this hearing each year, and especially in these difficult economic times because the resale programs and associated MWR programs as well are so important and so valuable to the military community." However, she went on to state that both systems need to ensure that they are doing all that they can to best utilize the resources provided.

Military Resale leaders outlined how they are continuing to work to find efficiencies and support our service members, veterans, and their families. They also thanked industry for being united in this common pursuit.

During his statement, Pat Nixon referenced how efficiency and effectiveness is in the DNA of military resale programs. He stated that the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission should be allowed to do its work. He said, "We don't fear analysis, we fear no analysis" and that "Military resale programs should be emulated, not decimated."

Rosemary Freitas Williams, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, told the Subcommittee, "Today more than ever before, the members of our military community need to count on the resolve and commitment you have so consistently displayed over the years for the programs they hold most dear." Ms. Williams said the Department was willing to do their part to improve efficiencies and transform DoD programs to meet new fiscal realities. "But we can't expect the service members past and present and their families to shoulder this burden alone," she said, "and to meet these challenges with even more of their personal sacrifices."

We encourage all of you to watch the archived video of the hearing at:

http://armedservices.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=276.