

## **Statement of Ranking Member Thomas R. Carper**

### *Avoiding Duplication: An Examination of the State Department's Proposal to Construct a New Diplomatic Security Training Facility*

July 28, 2015

*As prepared for delivery:*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing on the process used to select Fort Pickett in Virginia as the site for a new State Department training facility. For over five years, the Department of State has worked to identify a new consolidated location to train Diplomatic Security special agents.

This Committee certainly understands the importance of this kind of endeavor. Consolidating agency facilities with the same or similar missions can bring a number of financial and other benefits. That is why I have continued to support the consolidation of the Department of Homeland Security headquarters at St. Elizabeths.

The St. Elizabeths project is good for DHS and its employees, and it's ultimately good for the taxpayer. In fact, completing St. Elizabeths will save over a billion dollars over 30 years. In addition, it has the potential to improve morale at the Department of Homeland Security and enable the men and women who work there to do so more effectively.

That brings me to two basic questions that I hope we can answer here today: First, is Fort Pickett a good option for the State Department and, second, is it good option for taxpayers?

The State Department currently manages operational training at eleven separate facilities. I'm told that most experts agree that a consolidated training site for the Department of State is warranted, but the site selection process that's been used has raised many questions. It is my hope that our witnesses today will be able to shed some much-needed light on the selection process.

We also need to better understand exactly what type of training the State Department needs and what the existing Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia can offer. After all, Director Connie Patrick and the good people at the Training Center run what I understand is regarded as one of the premier training facilities of its kind in the world. I also look forward to hearing from the Office of Management and Budget today about their role in the selection process.

In closing, I would like leave you with a story that I believe is very fitting for this hearing.

When I stepped down as Governor in 2001, I needed to buy a car, so I took my son Christopher out with me. We went out that day and drove Porsches, Corvettes, Mustangs, and I bought a Chrysler Town & Country Minivan. Yesterday, as I was driving in my 2001 Chrysler minivan across the Bay Bridge from southern Delaware, the odometer ran over 400,000 miles. I tell this story because I don't like to waste my money, and as Governor I didn't want to waste the taxpayers money in Delaware, and I certainly don't want to waste money here today. I'd like to

get my money's worth for the dollars that I spend and for the taxpayers. I hope at the end we can do that here as well.

At the end of the day, we must remember that the men and women in our foreign service deserve to be safe and secure while representing our country's interests abroad. At the same time, taxpayers deserve to know that we're investing their money wisely.

I look forward to hearing from all of our witnesses about how we can achieve both of these vital goals.

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