

Written Testimony, February 26, 2014  
“American Energy Jobs: Opportunities for Veterans”

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U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lamborn and Committee Members:

For the record my name is Douglas Smith and I am the President and CEO of Little Red Services (LRS). LRS is an Alaskan oil field services company that started in 1983 with 1 hot oil truck and 4 employees on the North Slope of Alaska for BP. Today we have more than 20 Hot Oil trucks and 160 employees. In our business we service oil wells and work in the area of the oil business known primarily as well intervention work. Our company provides essential services to the oil industry which creates good paying jobs for our employees. In 2013 our average gross annual wages for hourly field personnel was \$98,000 with starting positions at \$85,000. This income is earned on a 2 weeks on and 2 weeks of schedule. We also provide good health care benefits and a 401K program with 4% matching contributions. We are proud and grateful to be a part of domestic natural resource development. An industry where we can provide meaningful jobs that allow our veterans and other families to pay for college, take a vacation, give back to their communities, and save for retirement.

During the past year we have seen increased opportunity in Alaska as a result of state tax reform related to oil production taxes. This growth opportunity and normal attrition created a demand for labor that was increasingly difficult to fill. Our business requires operating discipline and attention to detail as our employees have our equipment connected directing to and have control of producing oil wells. We have written procedures and policies that must be strictly adhered to in order to protect both personnel and the environment. In our search for new employees we have found a valuable resource of candidates in our veterans.

In Palmer Alaska a business called Northern Industrial Training is seeing a number of these veterans attending their skilled trade development courses as they prepare for transition to the civilian job market. These courses are covered under the GI bill and range from welding to commercial driving. This skill trade development process has proven to be a key resource for our success as we hire veterans exiting the commercial driver program with their CDL and endorsements in place. These veterans possess the talent and essential attributes that are keys to our business execution. The company position at LRS is to “Hire for Attitude and Train for Skill”. With the unique aspect of our equipment we cannot hire experienced personnel but we are hiring veterans who exhibit character, integrity, loyalty, leadership, teamwork, and the essential ingredient of attitude. In addition many of these new hires have driven commercial class vehicles for many years to include conditions where road hazards take on a whole new meaning. In these areas IED’s are a constant threat, roads are poorly maintained and sleep is a rare commodity.

These veterans played a key role in protecting us while we slept, worked and played. Now they have an important role in the energy business filling key positions that ensure continued delivery of domestic supplies. One of our employees, Greg Cook, was also Master Sergeant Cook of the US Army. Greg served with honor and distinction for 21 years and deployed five times with Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Enduring Freedom. Greg is now a part of our team and his positive presence is already being felt across the organization. Greg was the recipient of 2 Bronze Stars, 1 Meritorious Service Medal, 5 Army Commendation Medals, and 3 Army Achievement Medals. You can see Greg in the photo holding a captured enemy weapon and now wearing our company coveralls on the North Slope working in the BP operated field of Prudhoe Bay. Today Greg is traveling in Israel on his honeymoon and it pleases me to know that we are a small part that well deserved trip.

In addition to Greg Cook we have hired 11 other veterans in the past 12 months who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters of conflict. Combined these men have accumulated 106 years of service to our nation when we needed them most and now it is our turn. By supporting responsible development of our domestic natural resources and leveraging the technology behind our recent energy renaissance we can grow the jobs that provide good pay and benefits to our citizens, decrease our dependence on foreign oil, and increase the national security of America. I hope that members of this committee will support this important part of our national economy and veteran hire. //

