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Statement on the Nomination of Gen. Eric K. Shinseki To Be Chief of Staff of the United States Army

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Gen. Eric K. Shinseki to be Chief of Staff of the United States Army. If confirmed by the Senate, General Shinseki will succeed Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, who will be retiring later this year after 37 years of distinguished active duty service.

General Shinseki currently serves as the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. Immediately prior to assuming his present position, he served as Commander in Chief of United States Army Europe and concurrently as Commander of NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia. He brings to the position of Chief of Staff extensive operational and joint experience as well as proven leadership ability and a deep concern for the soldiers, civilians, and families of the United States Army.

During his distinguished career, General Shinseki served two combat tours in Vietnam and has commanded at every level from company through theater army. As Commander of the Stabilization Force, he directed the operations of the three Multinational Divisions in Bosnia, promoting implementation of the Dayton accords.

General Shinseki assumes the post of Chief of Staff as the U.S. Army proudly celebrates 224 years of dedicated service to our Nation in war and peace. With General Shinseki as Chief of Staff, I am confident that the total Army—active, Reserve, and National Guard—will continue its tradition of excellence, dedication, and professionalism as it enters the 21st century.

Statement on the Nomination of Lt. Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., To Be Commandant of the United States Marine Corps

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Lt. Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., for appointment to the grade of general and assignment as Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. If confirmed by the Senate, General Jones will succeed Gen. Charles C. Krulak, who will be retiring later this year after 35 years of distinguished active duty service.

General Jones brings to the job of Commandant a wealth of operational experience, exceptional leadership skills, and strong strategic vision.

During his distinguished career, General Jones served a combat tour in Vietnam, commanded the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, served as Chief of Staff of Joint Task Force Provide Promise in Bosnia and Macedonia, and was Commanding General of the 2d Marine Division. As Deputy Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps for Plans, Policy and Operations and, most recently, as Senior Military Assistant to Secretary of Defense, he has demonstrated keen insight into defense policy and the crucial role of the Marine Corps in protecting our national security.

General Jones assumes the post of Commandant as the Marine Corps takes on the challenges of the 21st century. With General Jones as Commandant, I am confident that the Marine Corps will continue its long and proud tradition of defending America's interests and values.

Statement on Congressional Action on Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

April 21, 1999

I am pleased that a little more than a year after I proposed national ed-flex legislation to the Nation's Governors, an overwhelming majority in Congress has passed a solid ed-flex bill. I look forward to signing it without delay. This bill will offer States more flexibility in their use of Federal funding in exchange for demonstrated increases in student achievement.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report strengthens accountability measures and preserves our effort to reduce class size in the early grades. The bipartisan work on this legislation shows we can and must work together to improve our Nation's schools.

Now Congress can move on to the most important aspects of the Nation's education agenda—finishing the job of hiring 100,000