

**STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL NORMAND LEZY, USAF (RET),  
ON BEHALF OF WAL-MART STORES, INC.**

**SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON BENEFITS OF THE UNITED STATES**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**JULY 24, 2003**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Norm Lezy and I am Vice President for National Government Relations for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Wal-Mart is honored to testify before the Subcommittee on the important subject of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

Before I comment about Wal-Mart, I would like to thank the committee for its longstanding support of members of our Armed Forces, veterans, and their families. As an Air Force veteran with 30 years of service, I am very familiar with the committee's leadership on veterans' issues and its significant contributions to the health, welfare, and morale of those who serve our country.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. based in Bentonville, Arkansas, operates more than 2,900 discount stores, Supercenters and Neighborhood Markets, and more than 525 Sam's Clubs in the United States. Internationally, the company operates more than 1300 units. Wal-Mart's annual sales last year were \$244 billion. Wal-Mart employs 1.3 million associates worldwide. Last year, more than \$200 million was raised and contributed by the Wal-Mart Foundation to support communities and local non-profit organizations. Fortune magazine recently named Wal-Mart the "most admired" company in America.

At Wal-Mart, we share the Subcommittee's commitment to those who serve our country. Wal-Mart places high priority on supporting associates who serve their country and participate in the Guard and Reserves. Although we do not have the exact total, we know that thousands of our associates are members of the Guard and Reserves. After 9-11, we wanted to ensure our Guardsmen and Reservists could step forward and serve their country without facing undue financial hardship at home. Consequently, we instituted a policy where we make up the difference in pay for associates whose military pay is less than their Wal-Mart pay. We do this for those called to active duty as well as for those attending training camps. Thus far in 2003, more than 1,200 associates have benefited from this policy.

Medical and dental coverage is another important benefit Wal-Mart offers its associates. We know the importance of this coverage to family members when military members are serving in remote locations away from their families. When associates are called to active duty, medical and dental coverage for their family members is continued without interruption. The company pays the majority of the premium and the associate pays the same premium they paid before they departed on their military leave of absence.

In addition to taking care of our associates serving in Guard and Reserve Units, we recognize the need to support all of our troops and their families. For example, since 9-11 our Foundation has given more than \$3 million to the Navy/Marine Corps Aid Society, Air Force Aid Society, Army Relief Society, Coast Guard Aid Society and USO. At the local level, our stores, clubs and distribution centers have spearheaded a number of community projects to assist active duty service members and their families. These projects include adopting families whose loved ones have been deployed, supporting Boys and Girls Clubs and other youth activities, and serving as collection points for donated items for our troops.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. I am prepared to answer your questions.