

Testimony of

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Before the U.S. House of Representatives

Committee On Veterans' Affairs

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Chairman and Committee Members, I am SSgt Ann Mitchell of the United States Air Force and I thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I will be sharing a brief summary of my situation and the Transition Assistance I have received.

I have been in the Air Force for seven and a half years and just got back from my fifth deployment. While I was deployed this last time to Kyrgyzstan, I was one hundred percent sure that I was going to get out of the service. I was tired of all the deployments and wasn't really happy with where I was working. So after talking it over with my husband, who is also Active Duty, we decided it might be better if I got out.

With this decision in mind, I had started looking for jobs in the local area and I also got scheduled to go to the Transition Assistance Program. This class really helped me with my doubts about getting out. I especially liked the Veteran's that came in to talk to us about numerous topics to include our benefits, resume's, cover letter's, etc. They also told us that we could go to their downtown office for more assistance. In my opinion this was an excellent class for transitioning people that are getting out of the service into civilian life.

But as time went on, I changed my mind about getting out and staying in about 100 times. I came into the Air Force to go to school, to travel around the world, and to have a guaranteed pay check. I just kept thinking about all the great benefits that we have in the military, and the more I looked for jobs around here as a civilian, the more I was thankful about being in. I guess I am really thankful to have job security, equal opportunity, education and medical benefits, travel opportunities, and the list could go on. So I guess this all out weighed my initial decision about getting out because I was scared of leaving my family all the time. I guess if my husband and I have made it through seven deployments already, we can make it through anything as long as we keep doing what we are doing.

I am so proud to be in the United States Air Force and to be a part of something larger than myself. Thank you again for hearing my testimony today.

