

**TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF THE HONOR-  
ABLE HEATHER A. WILSON, TO BE SECRETARY  
OF THE AIR FORCE**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

\_\_\_\_\_  
March 30, 2017  
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This hearing is printed to include all available information  
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**TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF THE  
HONORABLE HEATHER A. WILSON, TO BE  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

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**THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2017**

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:29 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator John McCain (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Present: Senators McCain, Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Perdue, Graham, Sasse, Strange, Reed, McCaskill, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, CHAIRMAN**

Chairman MCCAIN. Good morning. The Senate Armed Services Committee meets today to consider the nomination of Heather Wilson to be the 24th Secretary of the Air Force.

Dr. Wilson, we thank you for joining us this morning. We are grateful for your years of distinguished service to our Nation and for your willingness to serve once more.

We also welcome your family and friends here with you today. As is our tradition at the beginning of your testimony, we invite you to introduce those who are joining you today.

It is the standard for this committee to ask certain questions in order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibility. These are the standard questions that we ask every nominee.

It is important this committee and other appropriate committees of Congress be able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information. Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record in hearings?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to congressional requests?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Will those witnesses be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear to testify upon request before this committee?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communications, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good-faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman MCCAIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

Dr. WILSON. No.

Chairman MCCAIN. I would like to mention to our members that we are going to have a 10 o'clock vote, so we will not stop the committee. Senator Reed and I will bounce back and forth in order to make the votes. We have two votes at 10, so we will bounce back and forth, and continue the hearing to make sure that all members have appropriate time to ask questions.

The next Secretary will lead America's Air Force in confronting the most diverse and complex array of global crises since the end of World War II—the threat of terrorism and instability emanating from North Africa to the Middle East to South Asia, advanced potential adversaries like Russia and China, and rogue states such as North Korea and Iran.

The world is on fire, and now, more than ever, our Nation is counting on the global vigilance, global reach, and global power that are the hallmarks of Air Force capabilities. However, in recent years, your predecessor has informed this committee that America's Air Force is now the oldest, smallest, and least ready in its history. I repeat: America's Air Force is now the oldest, smallest, and least ready in its history.

Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, it will be your mission, in partnership with Secretary Mattis and the Congress, to change that fact. That starts by recognizing how we got here. Twenty-five years of continuous deployments, troubled acquisition programs, and frequent aircraft divestments have aged and shrunk the Air Force inventory. The combination of relentless operational tempo and the self-inflicted wounds of the Budget Control Act and sequestration have depleted readiness.

Meanwhile, potential adversaries are developing and fielding fifth generation fighters, advanced air defense systems, and sophisticated space, cyber, and electronic warfare capabilities that are rapidly shrinking America's military technological advantage and holding our aircraft at greater risk over greater distances.

In short, we have asked a lot of our Air Force over the last 25 years, and the demands placed on the service continue to grow, but we have not met our responsibility to give our Air Force the resources, the personnel, and the equipment and training it needs to succeed. We are placing an unnecessary and dangerous burden on the backs of our airmen, and we cannot change course soon enough.

Restoring readiness, recapitalizing our combat aircraft fleet, and modernizing to sustain our overmatch will require the strong personal leadership of the next Air Force Secretary.

Dr. Wilson, I look forward to discussing the challenges you will face, if confirmed, and how you plan to tackle them.

For example, the Air Force is facing a massive bow wave of modernization investment programs, and the bills will all come due over the next 10 years. Just consider the list of Air Force modernization priorities: F-35A fighters, KC-46A tankers, B-21 bombers, JSTARS, Compass Call, AWACS, and a new trainer aircraft, not to mention a modernized nuclear force, including the ground-based strategic deterrent B-61 gravity bomb and the long-range standoff weapon.

There is simply no way all of these important yet expensive modernization programs will fit into the Air Force budget as constrained by the Budget Control Act. It will be your task to develop and make the case for a path through this tremendous budget crunch.

As you do, you also will have to be willing to challenge conventional wisdom and reevaluate how the Air Force is shaped. You will need to take an informed look at an optimal mix of the long-range and short-range combat aircraft, manned and unmanned systems, ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance], space and cyber capabilities, and key joint enablers, and you must also closely examine how the Air Force provides ready and capable forces to our combatant commanders.

Furthermore, as this committee has emphasized over the last 2 years, no matter how many dollars we spend, we will not be able to provide our airmen the equipment they need with a lethargic defense acquisition system that takes too long and costs too much.

Like all the services, the Air Force has a troubled history with major acquisition programs. That is why you can expect this committee will exercise close and rigorous oversight of Air Force acquisition, particularly on programs like the B-21 bomber.

Today, I will be keenly interested in hearing how you will streamline and accelerate Air Force acquisitions, deliver needed capabilities on time and at cost, and meet our commitments to both our warfighters and the American taxpayers.

Finally, this committee honors the service and sacrifice of the outstanding men and women of the United States Air Force. At the same time, we recognize that high operational tempo, manning shortfalls, reduced readiness, and lucrative opportunities outside the Air Force continue to drive some of our best and brightest to leave the service. This is only exacerbating problems such as the 800 fighter pilot shortfall you noted in your response to advanced policy questions.

I am interested in hearing your plans on how to mitigate such manpower shortfalls, improve quality-of-life and quality-of-service of all airmen, and incentivize them to remain in the service of their Nation.

Dr. Wilson, we look forward to hearing your testimony and how you intend to lead the Air Force to a stronger future.

Senator Reed?

#### **STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED**

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate Dr. Wilson's willingness to serve the Nation and appear before the committee as the nominee for the Secretary of the Air Force, and there is no doubt that Dr. Wilson has many of the necessary qualifications to serve in this position. She is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, a Rhodes scholar, a former member of the national security staff for President George Herbert Walker Bush, and a former Member of the House of Representatives who served on the House Armed Services and Intelligence Committees.

However, I believe it is incumbent upon this committee to ask some questions that have been raised regarding Dr. Wilson's nomination. Failure to do so could be an abdication of our oversight responsibilities and a disservice to the airmen and civilians that Dr. Wilson will lead, if she is confirmed.

First, Heather Wilson and Company LLC, founded by Dr. Wilson following her tenure in Congress, had contracts with four National Nuclear Security Administration laboratories, Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and a Nevada national security site. From January 2009 through part of 2011, Dr. Wilson's company received \$464,000 in payments from these laboratories for consulting services.

However, due to claims of contracting irregularities involving her company, the Department of Energy (DOE) inspector general conducted two investigations into this matter. As a result, the contractors who operate the laboratories on behalf of the Government paid back at least \$442,877 to the Department of Energy with respect to payments made to Dr. Wilson's company. The rationale for the repayments was the absence of any appreciable evidence of work product.

Furthermore, Lockheed Martin, which operated Sandia National Laboratories, agreed to an overall settlement of \$4.7 million for the management failures.

Let me be clear. Dr. Wilson was not found culpable of wrongdoing. Nevertheless, the allegations that were levied are serious and directly involve her company. I do think that the situation merits closer scrutiny.

Second, in October 2006, Dr. Wilson contacted a sitting United States Attorney, David C. Iglesias, regarding the status of Federal corruption cases in New Mexico while she was serving as a member of the House of Representatives. As a former Member of the House myself, I have concerns about this action in terms of House ethics rules and the possibility a Federal prosecutor may have felt pressured by Congress in an ongoing investigation.

Mr. Chairman, I raise these issues today because we have been asked to confirm Dr. Wilson to a high-level position in the Department of Defense, and that has implications for our national security. But equally important, we are confirming her to a position of public trust, and we hold all of our servicemembers to the highest standards of conduct, and I believe the individual confirmed to lead these brave men and women must be held to the same standards.

Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you.

I note that we have two undistinguished Members of the United States Senate here this morning who would like to make brief com-



ments. You are certainly welcome, Senator Thune and Senator Rounds. I take it because of your advanced age, you would want to begin, Senator Thune.

#### **STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN THUNE**

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Chairman McCain, Senator Reed, and members of the committee, for the honor of introducing to the committee Dr. Heather Wilson to be the next Secretary of the United States Air Force.

I have known Heather for nearly 20 years and submit that President Trump could not have selected a more qualified candidate to lead the Air Force in these challenging times.

I first worked with Heather in the House of Representatives when she was elected in 1998. But most recently, I have had the pleasure of working with her as she leads an exceptional engineering and science university in our State, the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

Throughout her pathway to this nomination, Heather has repeatedly demonstrated her leadership abilities and her commitment to duty. Not only is she a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Academy, but she continued to earn her master's and doctorate degrees as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford University in England.

If confirmed, she will become the first Air Force Academy graduate in history to serve as Secretary of the Air Force. Heather served as an Air Force officer in Europe during the Cold War, in the United Kingdom, and at the United States Mission to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] in Brussels.

Upon leaving the Air Force, she served on the National Security Council staff for President George H.W. Bush, working on NATO and conventional arms control.

She later moved west to marry her husband, Jay Hone. Within a few years, she started her own company working with the national labs and large defense and scientific companies. However, she was soon called back to public service, and she headed the Child Welfare Department for the State of New Mexico.

After her election to Congress, where she served for a decade, she quickly became one of the go-to Members on national security issues. Heather was not afraid to take on tough issues, ranging from oversight of the President's terrorist surveillance program that led to the reform of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act or sexual assault at the Air Force Academy.

In a town where whoever speaks the loudest often gets heard, people would get quiet when Heather spoke because they knew that she had ideas that were worth listening to.

Now, as president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Heather has ushered in a new era of excellence, and the school is well-positioned to remain a foremost engineering, science, and research institution.

She is also a dedicated parent, adopting a son and raising two children. I can remember her son, Josh, coming to the floor of the House with his mom when he was about knee-high. Her daughter, Caitlin, is in college, and I understand has about five tests and a project due this week. Her husband, Jay, an Air Force veteran himself, is in South Dakota today recovering from shoulder surgery.

We wish him a quick recovery. They are a great, supportive family, and they will be good for the Air Force.

Mr. Chairman, Heather has been a proven leader since her days as a cadet. She is well-versed in national security policy and nuclear deterrence. She understands the Air Force's key capabilities of air and space superiority, global presence, rapid global mobility, precision engagement, information superiority, and agile combat support.

She understands the Air Force's tremendous responsibility and role in our national security will be guided by the core values of the Air Force: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all the Air Force does. She understands the importance of not only rising to meet the challenges of the day but to look ahead to defeat the threats of tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to be with you today and honored to be able to highly recommend Heather Wilson to you and your committee. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you very much, Senator Thune.  
Senator Rounds?

#### **STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS**

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed. It is my honor to join Senator Thune in supporting Dr. Heather Wilson's nomination to be the next Secretary of the Air Force.

Senator Thune talked about her record of achievement throughout her life. I have known Dr. Wilson as a leader in South Dakota during the most recent segment of her long and distinguished professional life. She served in an outstanding fashion as president of one of the most highly rated engineering and science universities in the country for the quality of its education and the success of its graduates, the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

This school's success is exemplified by the average starting salaries of its graduates, which is higher than the corresponding figures for graduates of Harvard University, Yale University, or the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. At a time when our Nation faces the skyrocketing cost of college degrees, tuition and fees for an out-of-state student at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology is less than \$15,000 a year, making it one of the best returns on investment for college education in America.

Dr. Wilson became president of the School of Mines in the summer of 2013. She has been a great leader and, if confirmed to be the next Secretary of Air Force, she will leave some very big shoes to be filled by her next successor. Under her leadership, the School of Mines added new programs, expanded research, raised funds to build and refurbish buildings, started an honors program, and deepened the connections between the school and the community.

People who work with her in South Dakota describe her as a great manager and an inspiring leader, and a tireless advocate for the school and her students.

A few years ago, Forbes magazine had a story on the toughest leadership roles in America. They indicated, "We revere the skills of prominent CEOs, perhaps more than we should," said one of the Forbes articles.

"But there's an underappreciated form of leadership that requires far more skill than being a CEO does. It is the job of a university president."

Mr. Chairman, Dr. Wilson brought such leadership and skill to her position as president of one of the finest science and engineering schools in the Nation.

General Mattis knows her quality. This explains the multiple requests he made to her to leave her position which she today finds deeply rewarding and at which she excelled, this to accept the President's nomination to be the Secretary of the Air Force.

South Dakota's loss will be our Nation's gain.

I look forward to this hearing today and to the prompt confirmation of Dr. Wilson as the next Secretary of the Air Force.

I thank her for the honor of introducing her today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. I want to thank both of you. I know, Senator Thune, you have other responsibilities. Senator Rounds, thank you for joining us.

We welcome Dr. Wilson. Please, Dr. Wilson, if you would like to introduce your family members who are here, your son here, we would be glad for you to, and proceed with your statement.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HEATHER A. WILSON, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

Dr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My son, Joshua, is here with me today, as is my brother-in-law, Mike Hone. As Senator Thune said, my daughter is otherwise detained, and my husband is recovering from surgery in South Dakota.

Chairman MCCAIN. Terrible place to recover.

Dr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and members of this committee, for so graciously welcoming me.

Thank you also to Senator Thune and Senator Rounds. The people of South Dakota are known for being hardworking and humble and kind, and I think they are well-led in both of you.

Mr. Chairman, without objection, I would like to put my whole statement in the record and then just summarize for you.

My nomination was unexpected. I did not anticipate returning to Federal service. I really enjoy being a university president, being the president of the South Dakota School of Mines and educating the next generation of young engineers and scientists, and making a contribution to the community in which I live.

I live a blessed life. We all do. We enjoy the blessings of our liberty because volunteers step forward to protect the rest of us. If confirmed, it would be my honor to lead and serve them.

As Senators in this committee, you know well that America's vital interests continue to be threatened, and I will not belabor the list of threats that we face, but I think we sometimes take for granted American dominance in air and space power.

The last time that an American ground troop was killed by enemy aircraft was April 15, 1953, during the Korean War. Two legs of the triad have deterred our enemies and helped to keep the peace for over 70 years. For 26 straight years, the United States Air Force has been involved in combat operations.

But dominating the high ground is not a sure thing, and there is cause for concern. We have a mismatch between our strategic objectives and the military means we have available to deter and confront threats. The Air Force is too small for what the Nation expects of it.

Since the Budget Control Act of 2011, the number of airmen has declined, but the demand for air and space power has increased. Leaders of the United States Air Force have testified that less than 50 percent of the conventional Air Force is ready for all of the missions assigned to them, and I have no reason to doubt that estimate.

We are short over 900 fighter pilots—900 fighter pilots short of the missions that we need to fly and fight. The Air Force is not currently ready to fight against a near-peer competitor, and that should concern all of us.

Our equipment is aging in the Air Force. The average airplane today in the Air Force is 27 years old, and the next Secretary of the Air Force will modernize fighters, tankers, bombers, intelligence platforms, the nuclear deterrent, ammunitions, space capabilities. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense and the United States Congress to restore the readiness of the force.

I will also work with the Congress to address constraints imposed by the Budget Control Act so that the Air Force can be cost-effectively modernized.

As a leader, I tend to be values-driven and mission-focused, but I am also people-oriented. The quality of our leaders, particularly at the squadron level and the wing level, really sets the culture of the United States Air Force. I look forward to working with the Chief of Staff to bring renewed focus to training and educating airmen, particularly focused on the quality of command.

While our airmen of today have to face the fight of today, this committee and the other defense committees in Congress, and the Secretary in particular, really have to prepare for the future. I hope to review and further develop the research and development priorities for the Air Force to be able to look to the long term so that we are not only able to dominate today, we are able to face our adversaries for tomorrow.

In sum, if confirmed, I intend to focus on readiness, modernization, the quality of command, and research and development for the future.

On a personal note, several of you know that my roots in aviation are quite deep. My grandfather lied about his age and joined the Royal Flying Corps in the First World War, the predecessor to the RAF. He flew sub search over the Irish Sea, and he helped to integrate propeller arcs with machine guns and synchronize them, which sounds like a good idea to me.

After the war, there was no work in Scotland, so he came to America, and he was a barnstormer, and he opened little airports all around New England. In the Second World War, he flew for his new country. He flew for the United States of America.

My father started flying when he was 13 years old, and he enlisted in Air Force after high school, and he became a mechanic and a crew chief. He was a crew chief on the hottest jet in America at the time, the F-84 Thunderjet, and he was stationed at Walker

Air Force Base in Roswell, New Mexico, and Otis Air Force Base in Massachusetts, and Selfridge Air Force Base in Michigan.

When he got out of the Air Force, he went home. In the 1950s, when a lot of women did not even drive, he taught my mom how to fly. They rebuilt an airplane together. Then he was a commercial pilot and built experimental airplanes, including inside our 1,600 square-foot house. My mother was a very tolerant woman.

We live in a remarkable country, and when I, at the age of 17, went into the United States Air Force Academy, I became the third generation in my family to serve. My husband is also a 30-year retired Air Force, Guard, and Reserve Judge Advocate General.

We are served by innovators and intrepid airmen who take great risks on our behalf. I have been called back to service in a role that I did not seek and did not expect. If confirmed, I will do my best to do my duty.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Heather Wilson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY DR. HEATHER WILSON

OPENING STATEMENT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Heather Wilson, the President of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology and the nominee to be the twenty-fourth Secretary of the Air Force.

I want to thank you, Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and the members of this committee for taking time to meet with me before today's hearing. In our meetings, I learned more about each of your interests and concerns about the future of the Air Force. I appreciate your willingness to give me so much of your time and, should I be confirmed, I look forward to our continued conversations.

I want to thank Senator Thune and Senator Rounds for introducing me this morning, and for their support and friendship. The people of South Dakota have a reputation for being hard working, humble and kind. I have found that to be true, and they are well represented in both of you.

My nomination to this position was unexpected; I did not anticipate returning to federal service. I thoroughly enjoy being a university president, educating the next generation of engineers and scientists, and making a difference in the community in which I live.

I live a blessed life. We all do, and we have the liberty to enjoy our blessings because thousands of America's best citizens volunteer to protect the rest of us. It would be my honor to serve them to the best of my ability.

As Senators on this committee, you know well that America's vital national interests continue to be threatened. China is rapidly developing new military capabilities funded by an economy that will rival our own in within a decade. Russia has used limited conventional force in Crimea, Ukraine, and Syria to achieve its political objectives. Iran is a destabilizing force in the Middle East and beyond. The Stalinist North Korean regime is willing to starve its own people to threaten neighbors and will sell weapons to any buyer with cash. Terrorism festers in weak states that cannot preserve order.

We live in a dangerous time, and I think we sometimes take for granted American dominance in air and space power. The last time an American military member on the ground was killed by enemy aircraft was April 15, 1953—during the Korean War. Two legs of the nuclear triad operated by the United States Air Force have quietly deterred enemies and helped to keep the peace for over 70 years. Our Air Force has been continuously engaged in combat operations for 26 straight years.

But dominating the high ground is not a certain thing, and, having spent some time over the past 3 months getting reacquainted with national security matters after several years in higher education, there is cause for concern.

We have a mismatch between our strategic objectives and the military means we have available to deter and confront threats. The Air Force is too small for what the nation expects of it.

Since the passage of the Budget Control Act in 2011, the number of Airmen has declined significantly while the demand for air and space power has increased. Senior Air Force leaders have testified that less than 50% of the conventional air force

is ready for all of the combat missions assigned to them. I have no reason to question that estimate.

With only 55 Active, Guard and Reserve fighter squadrons and a shortfall of over 900 fighter pilots, the Air Force is unable to sustain today's fight and, at the same time, effectively train. While the Air Force has rightly made support for the counterterrorism mission and nuclear deterrent operations a priority, the Air Force is not fully ready to fight against a near-peer competitor.

While the size of the service is too small, its equipment is also aging. The average Air Force aircraft is now 27 years old, and while life extension programs and skilled maintainers have kept them in reasonably good shape, the cost of continuing to extend the life of old airplanes is very high. The next Air Force Secretary will be modernizing fighters, tankers, bombers, intelligence platforms, space capabilities, munitions and our nuclear deterrent.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense and the Congress to restore the readiness of the Air Force so that it can defend the vital national interests of the United States.

I will also work with Congress to address the constraints imposed by the Budget Control Act so that the Air Force can be cost effectively modernized to meet a range of threats now and in the future. Working with my colleagues in the other services and under the guidance of the Secretary of Defense, I will seek to bring business-minded reforms to the Air Force to get high quality capabilities at the best price for the taxpayer.

While, as a leader, I am values driven and mission focused, I am also people oriented.

The strength of the United States Air Force is in its people. The quality of our leaders at the squadron level will set the culture in the Air Force. Working with the Chief of Staff, I intend to bring renewed focus to the training and education of Airmen, and particularly the quality of command. If every Airman has a First Sergeant and Squadron Commander whom they trust to lead them, and do the right thing, we will continue to have the finest Air Force in the world.

Finally, the Air Force Secretary and the defense committees also have to prepare for the future. If confirmed, I will review and further develop Air Force research and development priorities to ensure we are investing in basic and applied research that will keep the Air Force ahead of adversaries for the long term.

To summarize, the Air Force is too small and not prepared for all of the threats we face as a nation.

If confirmed, I will focus on readiness, modernization, quality of command, and research for the future. To do that, I will have to work with each of you to fix the budget so that we can defend the country that we love.

On a personal note, several of you know that my roots in aviation are quite deep. My grandfather flew for the Royal Flying Corps—the predecessor to the RAF—in the first World War. He flew sub search in the Irish sea and helped to synchronize machine guns with propeller arcs. There was no work in Scotland after the war, so he came to America. He was a barnstormer and opened airports in New England in the 1920s and 1930s. In the Second World War he flew for the United States, towing targets and ferrying parts for the Army Air Corps.

My father started flying when he was 13 and enlisted in the Air Force after high school. He was a crew chief for what, at the time, was the hottest fighter in the world—the F-84 Thunderjet. After leaving the service, he was a commercial pilot and built experimental airplanes. When I joined the Air Force at 17, I became the third generation of my family to serve. My husband, also an Air Force veteran, retired after 30 years of Active, Guard and Reserve service.

My grandfather started flying shortly after the Wright brothers and he lived to see a man walk on the moon.

We live in a remarkable country, served by innovators and intrepid Airmen who take great risks on our behalf. I have been called back to service in a role I did not seek and did not expect. If confirmed, I will do my best to be worthy of those who serve.

I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you, Dr. Wilson.

Senator, if I could ask the indulgence of committee members, Senator Tillis has to attend the funeral of a dear friend, and I would ask the indulgence of the committee to allow him to go first, and then we will go through regular order.

Senator Tillis?

Senator TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chair. He is actually a highly decorated marine who died just shortly after he retired, and we are going to be over at Arlington, so thank you for your indulgence. I will try to be brief.

Dr. Wilson, I look forward to voting for your confirmation, and I fully expect that you are going to be confirmed. We need strong leadership at a time when—we were in a committee hearing yesterday where we had three lieutenant generals tell us that we only have four out of over 50 squadrons that are at their highest level of qualifications. We are more than 1,000 pilots short, about 800 of them are fighter pilots. I could go down the list. We have already talked about the smallest Air Force in our history.

So when you think about those deficits, they are deficits in what is the smallest Air Force in history, and the oldest.

So I appreciate your courage and willingness to take on this task. We need to hurry up and get you confirmed so that people can hear the chairman's concerns about a CR that does not give you the certainty to start fixing some of the structural problems in the Air Force and all the lines of service.

So I appreciate your courage in taking on the task. I think you are eminently qualified.

I am going to briefly touch on a parochial issue, but I am not going to ask you to respond to it.

Last year, and I have to agree with the chair, something that I was trying to do at Pope Army Airfield, a place where Senator Reed has a lot of fond memories of the Green Ramp, has a unique mission in the global response force. I was trying to do something that I do not think the chair liked, and he is probably right, and that was to really fix the 440th down there, because I do feel like a physical presence down there is important to account for all the other kinds of things, weather, illnesses, mechanical problems, the way that they are trying to help fulfill the training mission down there for the 82nd Airborne.

But I think, on reflection, I realize that I almost became a part of the problem because what I was doing was a legislative fix. What I was doing was constraining what you all need to do to optimize the resources and complete the missions and support, in this case, the mission down at Fort Bragg.

But we really need feedback from you in terms of the things that we have done in the past that would take the 440th and put it on the top of the list of six other places that the Air Force deemed were more appropriate reductions that they could do to meet their cost-cutting goals—in other words, BRAC and a couple other legislative actions that would have been similar to the one that I was trying to take. Those sorts of barriers need to be removed.

Can I get your commitment to go back and look at things that Congress has mandated on the Department that you think are not helpful and are actually hindering you to be able to achieve the other mandate that we gave to you, which is reducing costs and optimizing? Can I get your commitment to, fairly early in year tenure, to go after these things and tell Congress they need to act so that we can help you achieve these efficiencies that we are also expecting you to achieve?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I am very happy to work with you on those kind of mandates.

Senator TILLIS. There are a lot. You know, Dr. Wilson, we can absolutely give you the specific use case of what resulted in the 440th decision as an example of things that we have to change, if we are really going to put you in a position to succeed in your mission.

This is the last thing I am going to talk about. That right there is actually something that started in the Air Force about 10 years ago. It is a 680-page RFP for the next generation handgun. It started in the Air Force. It then went to the Army. It took 10 years to complete. Just over the last year—39 pages, incidentally, are all the pages that are specifications.

But almost a 700-page RFP to define a handgun. That does not make sense to me. In fact, we should probably already be iterating through the next handgun.

Can I also get your commitment on acquisition reform, that we start figuring out why in the hell we spent 10 years and 700 pages for the next generation handgun, and go look at that and maybe work with me to figure out how we can streamline and to what extent Congress has to get involved to do that?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator TILLIS. Thank you. I look forward to your confirmation.

Chairman MCCAIN. I thank you, Senator Tillis. It brings to mind the incredible injection of enthusiasm, reform, and intellect that the newer members on both sides of the aisle have brought to this committee.

Dr. Wilson, I understand that after you left Congress in 2009, your consulting company did work for Sandia National Laboratories, SNL. Later, SNL and Sandia Corporation, which operates the labs, were the subject of two Department of Energy inspector general investigations. Sandia Corporation then reached a settlement with the Justice Department to resolve allegations related to lobbying activities.

What was the nature of your work for Sandia National Laboratories?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I worked for the laboratories after, on a consulting basis, after—actually, before I was elected to public service and elected to Congress, based on my background in the military and national security policy.

When leaving the Congress, the president of Sandia talked to me about working full time and joining Sandia. It did not seem to me that there was the right fit there, that there was a position that was a good fit, and I was not ready to make that commitment. But what we did agree instead was that I would work for them about a quarter time, about 50 hours a month for the president and vice presidents of the labs.

After working that way for about 18 months, a position opened, and they interviewed a number of people for it. In February 2011, Sandia offered me the position of vice president over all of the non-nuclear defense and intelligence programs, about 1,400 employees and about 30 percent of the labs' work. I declined that offer in order to run for the United States Senate.



With respect to the things that I did for the lab, I served—well, I did work for four laboratories.

At the Nevada test site, I served on the president's advisory panel. I also was asked to review some special classified programs.

At Oak Ridge National Lab, I served on their Global Security division advisory board with respect to intelligence programs.

At Los Alamos, I did most of my work there, again, with the intelligence directorate and looking at field intelligence element operations and alignment, special program reviews, cognizance of national security policy, and matters related to the decline of thought leadership on the nuclear weapons program, as well as advice and support to a new vice president for intelligence matters.

At Sandia, I served also on their intelligence advisory board. I helped them I think a great deal with respect to strategic planning, on nonproliferation and their nonproliferation advisory board with respect to nuclear materials. I did numerous program reviews, helped with cybersecurity in their new cyber program. There were some special satellite programs at Sandia I also assisted in.

Chairman McCAIN. You will have to summarize your answer, Dr. Wilson. I have other questions.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there was a wide variety of national security things that I did.

I also served, although not directly, with the congressional affairs office. I was always available to them to answer the vice president's and president's questions concerning the general operation of the United States Congress and the Federal bureaucracy.

Chairman McCAIN. Did you contact any Member of Congress or Federal official concerning a contract extension for Sandia Corporation?

Dr. WILSON. No.

Chairman McCAIN. Did you recommend that Sandia Corporation take the position that competition of its contract was not in the best interest of the government?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Chairman McCAIN. Why?

Dr. WILSON. Because it was not. It is my view that the national laboratories are special assets. They are government-owned assets, and we have had very long tenure and stability in those national laboratories. MIT Lincoln Lab, for example, has had MIT as its operator since 1963.

These are nonprofit government laboratories that have a management and operating contractor, and they are of very long tenure.

Chairman McCAIN. If confirmed, will you advocate for the competition of Air Force contracts?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, when it is in the best interest of the government.

Chairman McCAIN. Were you disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics in connection with your consulting work for Sandia?

Dr. WILSON. No.

Chairman McCAIN. Were you investigated or charged with violating any law in connection with your consulting work for Sandia?

Dr. WILSON. No.

Chairman MCCAIN. Do you view that your work for Sandia in any way would pose a conflict of interest as far as the assumption of your duties as Secretary of the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. No.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you, Dr. Wilson.

Senator Reed?

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just continue.

As I indicated in my opening statement, at the request of the National Nuclear Security Administration, the Department of Energy IG reviewed certain consulting agreements awarded to Heather Wilson and Company LLC, whether they were appropriately administered and managed. Essentially, that was a sole proprietorship, as I understand it.

Two significant issues were identified in this review. It appears that you may have charged as many as four different government-owned and contractor-operated sites for the same consulting services for which you received approximately \$450,000.

The IG noted that, under the Federal Acquisition Regulation, fees for services rendered are allowable only when supported by evidence of the nature and scope of the service provided. The IG concluded that you did not comply with this requirement, nor was it enforced by the contracting officials involved.

While the contracting official did not enforce the Federal Acquisition Regulation to the contract, were you aware of the requirements to provide evidence supporting your 50 hours of work for \$10,000 a month for Sandia and Los Alamos?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I did the work. I complied with the contract. The review found no fault with me. The DOE auditors never even talked to me.

Senator REED. But were you aware, my question is, of the need to maintain work product and evidence of your work for accounting purposes?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I submitted substantial work product and worked directly for the laboratories for no less than 50 hours a month.

Senator REED. Do you have records showing that you were spending 50 hours a month doing that?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, if the DOE auditors had bothered to talk to me, I would have been able to help them with that when this matter occurred 7 years ago now.

Senator REED. So your position is that you had no knowledge of the requirement to maintain records, and that whatever records were required are no longer in your possession?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I complied with the contract and provided the work that Sandia National Laboratories and the other laboratories asked of me.

Senator REED. Did versions of those contracts contain language requiring recordkeeping? Did you reject those versions of the contract before you signed it?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I do not believe so. I do not recall anything like that.

Senator REED. So you do not recall drafts of contracts that were offered to you that required, according to FAR regulations, that you

would maintain records of your work so that they could be validated? You do not recall that?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the contracts that I signed were pretty standard contracts provided by Sandia and Los Alamos and so forth.

Senator REED. Did you review contracts before you signed the final contract and made comments?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, Senator.

Senator REED. So there was a negotiation about what would be in the contract and what would not be in the contract?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, mostly with respect to the statement of work, yes.

Senator REED. In that negotiation, did you cause or agree to the deletion of the requirement to maintain records at all?

Dr. WILSON. I do not recall that at all, sir.

Senator REED. Just let me ask a question which is much more pertinent today, which would be, if you, as Secretary of the Air Force, discovered an invoice paid by a laboratory under your management which simply said, "Consulting services, 8/1/2010 to 8/30/2010, \$10,000," would you accept that?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I would expect the people who are managing that contract to manage it well. In this case, I was in very close contact with the people at Sandia. They knew exactly what I was doing. We worked every—often several times a week together on things that they wanted me to do. I fully complied with the contract, and I did the work.

Senator REED. Why would Lockheed reimburse the government \$440,000 or more for work which the government could not find nor could Lockheed find evidence and not try to reimburse or ask you to reimburse monies?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, you would have to ask Sandia that.

Senator REED. So if you were Secretary of the Air Force, you would not probe down to the actual contractor or subcontractor to determine what was done and see if they were culpable for anything?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, as I understand it, at least initially, Sandia rejected the conclusions of the Department of Energy audit as well.

Senator REED. Let me shift quickly. In 2008, a report of the Department of Justice indicated that you contacted David Iglesias, the United States attorney for New Mexico, to inquire about the prosecution of certain public corruption cases.

The House ethics manual in effect at the time provided that a request for background information or a status report from a Federal attorney "may in effect be an indirect or subtle effort to influence the substantive outcome of a proceeding," and further states that the best way to communicate is in writing and make it part of the proceedings.

Why did you call Mr. Iglesias about the public corruption cases?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, let me correct one of your assumptions there. I did not call him about particular cases or any particular person.

This matter was reviewed by two independent groups, both the Department of Justice and the House Ethics Committee. The

House Ethics Committee interviewed Mr. Iglesias and chose not to even start an investigation of me.

With respect to why I called him, it is because public corruption was a serious problem in the State of New Mexico, and an individual, a constituent, with knowledge of ongoing investigations told me that the U.S. attorney was intentionally delaying corruption prosecutions, and I felt as though I had to address that allegation in some appropriate way.

Senator REED. So you did not call about corruption cases specifically but you called him about corruption cases, which I think, logically, people would infer or he would infer were those cases that were pending before his Federal attorney's office. Is that a fair assumption?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, sadly, there, at the time, were a very large problem with public corruption in New Mexico and a large number of investigations underway.

Senator REED. You said you called in response to an inquiry by someone. Who was that person?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, someone trusted me to do the right thing with information that concerned them, and I did not betray them then, and I am not going to betray them now.

Senator REED. Well, I think it is important because it adds to sort of the motivation for the call. If this was a random constituent, that is one factor. If this was someone who had an issue or a motive to bring the cases or not bring the cases, that, I think, would cast this call in a much different light.

So I think it is very unhelpful to not be able to indicate. If this was an innocuous call about the general status of prosecutions in the State, of your home State, prompted by an innocuous contact by someone, I do not see why you would be reluctant to indicate who urged you to call.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I did not betray them then, and I am not going to betray them now.

I do think that the issue here—and you and I come from a very similar background; you came from West Point, and I came from the Air Force Academy—that one of the appropriate ways to resolve an allegation of impropriety is to talk to someone about it. That is what I did with David Iglesias, who is a personal friend. He gave me his word, and I took him at his word.

Senator REED. So you called a Federal official in his Federal role to make an inquiry about pending cases, maybe not specifically, based on an anonymous contact that you received?

Dr. WILSON. It was not about—Senator, I called him to resolve an allegation of impropriety made against him. You and I both know that, in some ways, ethically, the most difficult questions to ask yourself or to deal with are not about what you do as a person but whether you tolerate other behavior. I had an allegation that the U.S. attorney was intentionally delaying corruption prosecutions. In some way, I had to resolve that, and I chose to resolve it by calling him and asking him about it. He denied it, and I took him at his word.

Senator REED. [Presiding.] Well, I find it still very unsettling. Thank you.

Senator Inhofe?

Senator INHOFE. Dr. Wilson, I think we covered it pretty well in your opening statement and the questions that were asked previously, but it is worth restating. I think it is very important, because people out there do not know what our situation is. Now you stated, and you stated again in your opening statement, we have a mismatch between our strategic objectives and the military means that we have available to deter and confront threats. That kind of says it all. It is a very good statement.

But then within that, we hear from others, General Goldfein, for example, said the most pressing, that was to this committee, challenge for the U.S. Air Force is the rise of peer competitors with advanced military capabilities rivaling our own.

Now, what he is saying is, it is not like it used to be, we are automatically better at everything. Those days are behind us.

Hopefully, that will change. But nonetheless, that is a problem that we have.

Now, we are faced now with looking at some new equipment coming in, and some of the problems that we learned from the past. I will quote General Carlisle. He said: We do not have enough of F-22s. It is a fact of life. We did not buy enough. That is because we were shortsighted. We curtailed the F-22 procurement to just 187 when it started off to be 781.

Now some of the same arguments used to end that program are now used in reference to the F-35 and the B-21. I would hope, and I know that you have studied these causes and the problems that we had in the past, that you could use our past failures to avoid another problem coming up.

Does that make sense to you?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, Senator. It does.

Senator INHOFE. Last month, we had a Readiness Subcommittee. I chair the Readiness Subcommittee. We had all four Vices in there, including another Wilson, and he did a very good job. During that time, he talked about the problems that are facing us right now, and I know that you have already studied that.

The only thing I wanted to get to was this morning I saw that the Air Force Times had an article by Gina Grosso, who is the personnel chief of the Air Force. In here, she points out the very good case on the pilot problem.

I have been active and still am an active commercial pilot, so I talk to a lot of these guys and gals who are out there and are faced with a problem that she points out vividly, and that is that we have a high optempo on the ones that are actually flying out there, but the ones that are not flying, are not out in front, are not getting the hours. I will not quote all of the statistics that we have, but I know that you understand that is the case.

I would hope—it seemed like she was stressing the idea that you can go from 25 to 35 on a reenlistment bonus and somehow solve the problems. I do not think that is going to be enough. I think we are going to have to do something about the training of these guys and allowing them to fly hours, because right now, they are flying about one-fourth of the hours that they were prior to over the last 10 years.

So I would like to ask that you get involved in that end of the argument, and that you and I can talk about this, because I see this as a pretty serious problem that we have.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I look forward to that.

Senator INHOFE. That is good, and I look forward to supporting you.

Thank you.

Senator REED. Senator Peters, please, on behalf of the chairman.

Senator PETERS. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Thank you, Dr. Wilson, for being here. I enjoyed our conversation in the office and appreciated the opportunity to kind of dig deeply into a number of issues that are confronting the Air Force, and I appreciate your appearance here today.

I have kind of a broad question I want to start with, and then I want to drill down to some things more specific to my State of Michigan.

I want to talk a little, hear a little bit more about your thoughts on R&D [research and development]. You mentioned that in your opening statement, that we have to think about the face of warfare years ahead, and those changes are happening a lot quicker than many of us anticipated.

As a Senator from Michigan and being intimately involved in self-driving vehicles, soon we are going to have self-driving vehicles here before us much sooner, and we expect the same thing when it comes to autonomous flying vehicles as well. UAVs will likely transform the face of warfare, as well as a lot of other areas.

It also may address things like pilot shortages, although we have to deal with that now. That does not relieve us of very significant challenges that we are facing right now.

But what do you see for the future of airpower going forward? What sort of R&D work do we need to do. I have had some folks tell me that we may have constructed the last fighter aircraft with a human pilot in it, that it is going to change dramatically. Just kind of generally your thoughts.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I look forward to working with the scientists and engineers to help identify what are the most important vectors to pursue. But there is one thing that is very clear, and that is that the pace of change is going to accelerate. We are either going to have to rapidly accelerate ourselves and be able to spin on innovation into the service, or we are going to be left behind. But it is things like autonomous systems, network systems, advanced materials. I think there are a wide array of things.

But one of the things that concerns me is the low percentage of the Air Force budget that is actually spent on R&D. That concerns me because if you look at—my grandfather started flying shortly after the Wright brothers. He lived to see a man walk on the moon.

The pace of innovation in this field is stunning, and we are either going to continue to innovate or we are going to get left behind.

Senator PETERS. Right. That is accelerating as well, that pace, as you rightly portray.

Dr. Wilson, I would like to talk a little bit about Selfridge Air National Guard Base, a base that you know very well because of your father's service there. We are very proud that he served at our

base in Michigan. As you know, they currently host the A-10 fighter aircraft and the KC-135 tankers.

When the Air Force planned to retire the A-10 sooner than they are planning to do now, the mission of record for Selfridge listed removing the A-10s and doubling the tanker mission, adding additional KC-135s in fiscal year 2021. For the airmen that fly and maintain these platforms, more certainty and clarity about the future of that mission at installations like Selfridge is certainly very important to them.

Now that we know that the Air Force will not be retiring the A-10 in the near term, will you review the mission of record of bases that have A-10s like Selfridge? Would we expect that kind of review coming forward?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, first, the Chief of Staff in the Air Force has committed to keep the A-10s. I think it is out through 2020.

The Air Force has a strategic basing process to look at basing and planning. What I will commit to you is it will be straight. There will not be any thumbs on the scale. We will have the Air Force do things based on the best interests of the country and the Air Force. That also often means that where one Senator may be, in the end, very happy, there are 49 who are not, or 49 States that are not.

But I will commit to you to be open and transparent and to be fair.

Senator PETERS. Related to that is the strategic basing process for the F-35. We currently have five candidate bases that have been determined through that process. I would hope that we would continue to move that process forward without any type of modification and hopefully have your commitment to do that.

It has been a good process. It needs to continue as it has been spelled out, I believe.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, as I understand it, the Air Force is moving forward with that and—they are obviously doing a review directed by the Secretary of Defense with respect to the F-35, but I have heard nothing yet about any change to its strategic basing plan.

Senator PETERS. Right. Thank you very much. I appreciate your answers.

Chairman MCCAIN. [Presiding.] Dr. Wilson, I would hope that, as part of your new duties, you would call Colonel Graham back to Active Duty.

Colonel Graham?

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. We do not want to help the enemy, so I would recommend you do not do that. But I did enjoy my time.

So about basing of the F-35, would you agree with me that the strategic basing initiative was based on fewer F-35s with a declining budget, the idea that we are not going to have as many F-35s as we like because of sequestration?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there is no question that sequestration is placing great constraints on the force, and we need to fix this.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with me that if we had more F-35s, we need to probably look at more bases in terms of where to deploy them, if the budget numbers change?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, if the budget number changed and there were more aircraft, you have to have a place to put them.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. I would urge you to do that, because I am not so sure the first product was that well thought out.

But the bottom line is, a continuing resolution from April of this year to September of this year would be a disaster for the Air Force. Do you agree with that?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir. I do.

Senator GRAHAM. So if this body cares about the military at all, we would not pass a continuing resolution.

Dr. WILSON. That is correct.

Senator GRAHAM. So we actually need a budget.

Do you agree with me that the amount of money we are spending on the Department of Defense in terms of GDP is a virtually historic low?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I have not seen the most recent chart, but I will accept that.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you agree with me that the threats to this Nation are growing, not lessening?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. When it comes to North Korea, I know you are new to the job, and you will be an excellent Secretary of the Air Force. I congratulate the President. It is stronger for choosing you because you understand the Air Force. You understand the challenges that we face.

Do you see, without some change, North Korea developing a missile that can strike the American Homeland with a nuclear weapon on top of it? Do you think that is inevitable without change?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I have not had a classified briefing on North Korea for some time, but based on what we are seeing in the public press, there is serious cause for concern.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with me that that is a bad news day for America, when North Korea can reach our Homeland with a nuclear-tipped missile, and we should avoid that, if at all possible?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Airpower may be necessary to avoid that. Is that correct?

Dr. WILSON. Sir, I have not seen any kinds of plans or had a classified briefing, but I think airpower and strong airpower is necessary for just about any operating—

Senator GRAHAM. When you look over the arc of time, the next 10 or 20 years, it seems to me that Iran is marching toward nuclear capability. In terms of assets available to the President of the United States to deter Iran from going nuclear, to deal with an aggressive Russia and China, we need to modernize our force as quick as possible.

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. When it comes to the airmen who serve so well, do you agree with me that the war on terror is taking the Air Force in new directions never envisioned, where airmen are out there basically doing infantry jobs because of the shortage in the Army?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Driving trucks, doing things that—

Dr. WILSON. We drive trucks too.



Senator GRAHAM. Yeah, but I mean, really combat——

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir. We have battlefield airmen who have always been battlefield airmen doing Air Force jobs on the ground.

Senator GRAHAM. I would say that there are more battlefield airmen today than any time since World War II. I would urge you to capture that and preserve it, because as we talk about technology changing the Air Force, the one thing we will always need is brave young men and women. The more versatile our Air Force, the more able it is to meet the threats of the future, I think the better off we are.

When it comes to asymmetrical warfare, what role do you see the Air Force playing? Can you think of a better platform than the A-10 for the moment against the fight we have against ISIL [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant] and other asymmetrical threats?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, 40,000 munitions have been put on the ISIS target since 2014. Ninety percent of them have been delivered by the United States Air Force. That is an air commander who has to decide at the moment what platform he needs to do a particular job at a particular place. Whether that is an F-16 or whether that is in F-18 or an A-10 just depends on the job. We need to make sure that that air commander has all kinds of opportunities to defeat and kill the enemy.

Senator GRAHAM. Final question. On the asymmetrical battlefield against radical Islam, we play an important role in the Air Force. But part of the Air Force's duties is to offer a nuclear deterrence and deter nation-states from ever getting in a fight with the United States.

Do you believe that our ability to deter war has suffered because of sequestration and that the best way to deter war is to make the enemy think they cannot win the war, and you are going to need more money and more people to do that?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Fischer?

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wilson, in your responses to the committee's advanced policy questions, you answered a question about the necessity of maintaining a nuclear triad and you stated that, "We must maintain a safe, secure, and reliable nuclear deterrent. The deterrent has been effective for over 70 years. The air and ground legs of the triad are a core mission of the Air Force and will continue to be a core mission." You also mentioned that briefly in your opening statement.

I appreciate your statement that the nuclear mission is a core mission of the Air Force, and I understand that, if confirmed, you will only be responsible for the air leg and the ICBMs [intercontinental ballistic missiles]. But is it your personal view that we need to maintain the entire triad?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I do think we need to maintain the entire triad.

Senator FISCHER. Where do you believe we are right now with regard to modernization for that triad, and specifically the two legs that, if confirmed, you will be responsible for?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, based on the publicly available information that I have had access to over the last 3 months, it seems to me

that the Minuteman is a 1970s missile. The Air Force does not believe they can extend the life of it any further. Likewise, we need to modernize the air-based deterrent, and the V-21 is being designed from the beginning to be nuclear-capable.

We also need to modernize the command, control, and communications system for the control of our nuclear deterrent.

So modernization is needed across-the-board, and there is only so much you can do with 70-year-old materials, and I think it is time to say we have to replace them.

Senator FISCHER. Have you had an opportunity yet to look into the debate that is going on about a possible third site for missile deployment? If so, do you have an opinion on that?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I have not had an opportunity to look at that.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you.

Doctor, I also would like to ask you about the UH-1N Huey helicopters that are currently performing the nuclear security and the continuity of government missions.

Last year, we saw General Robin Rand, who commands the Air Force Global Strike Command, testify that, "We will not meet the emergency security response with the present helicopter."

Admiral Haney, who was then the United States Strategic Command (STRATCOM) Commander, went into greater detail before this committee, stating that the current helicopters "do not have the lift capability, speed capability, to meet the requirements that have been approved and validated through a number of studies, as well as Mighty Guardian exercises." He went on to describe the need for a replacement as urgent, and that was a year ago.

Despite the clear need, the Air Force replacement program continues to be delayed time and time again. Just last month, the Air Force withdrew the draft RFP and changed the acquisitions strategy.

If confirmed, I would like your commitment to ensure that the Air Force moves forward as soon as possible to replace this aging fleet. Are you ready to give a commitment at this time?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I will look at the UH-1N program. It is something that I have just looked at the very top level at this point, but it is one of the many modernization programs that I am sure I will be looking at very closely.

Senator FISCHER. But I know you do understand the importance of making sure that those fields are protected and there is limited capability of doing so.

Dr. WILSON. Absolutely.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you.

When you and I met in my office, we discussed the Air Force's troubled history with its nuclear mission, and that was particularly stemming from a lack of senior leader interest in the area. To its credit, the Air Force has made this a high priority in recent years.

I hope that we would have your commitment to continue to make this area a high priority and that you will be an advocate for the needs of our nuclear forces. That includes space. It includes the command and control system that we depend upon.

Could we have that commitment at this time?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Rounds?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I am just very happy to have you here in front of us today, and I look forward to a very speedy confirmation process for you.

I am just curious, when you have the opportunity, and I would suspect that you are going to have lots of opportunities in the future, what is your elevator speech regarding the effects of the sequester, the BCA, on the United States Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. I think it needs to be repealed, and there are a variety of ways that Congress might do that, but it is hurting the Air Force and our ability to defend ourselves. More importantly, the most immediate issue that Congress is going to face is the possibility of a continuing resolution.

If there is a continuing resolution for this year, we will make all of the problems that we are talking about here so much worse. We will have to stop noncombat flying hours in the Air Force. The pilot exodus would increase. The aircraft will not be going to depots to be maintained. There will likely be a freeze on a civilian hiring.

We cannot operate this way. We need to get beyond the Budget Control Act and get back to normal operations for budgeting.

Senator ROUNDS. As you know, there is a dispute within our party regarding the right balance between increased defense spending and deficit reduction. Where do you come down on this issue?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the debt is also an issue for our country, but I think this is a country that can afford to defend itself.

Senator ROUNDS. A matter of priorities, perhaps?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, Senator.

Senator ROUNDS. You are about probably a third of the way through your hearing today, I would suspect. I am just curious, with regard to the questions that have come up so far today, are there any questions that you perhaps have not had the time to answer fully? Anything that you would like to add to any of the questions, or clarifications on any of the questions that have been in front of you so far?

Dr. WILSON. No, sir. Not at this point.

Senator ROUNDS. Very good.

Let me talk a little bit about how we are going to move forward in the Air Force with regard to technology and the need to upgrade the entire system.

We have peer competitors. I think everybody would recognize both China and Russia have been moving forward not only with the development of new aircraft but with new aircraft with large numbers.

How do we move forward in regard to fourth gen. We have some fifth gen, not enough. What is the right mix between our fourth generation aircraft, which are clearly mature, clearly can have some upgrades added to them? But with the changing environment, how do we add? What we do in terms of upgrading the technologies so that the men and women that we send into battle have absolutely no question the best equipment, and that every single fight they ever get into is not a fair fight, one in which they clearly have

the technological advantages? How do we move forward? Where do we go? Do we keep fourth gen around? What we do?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there will be fourth generation aircraft around for a long time. As to what is the right mix, I would have to defer to the uniform military as well as to the civilian folks in the Air Force, whom I have not yet really been fully briefed on what they are looking at for plans. The Air Force is always planning.

But I would say this. I think it is really important to get capabilities from the drawing board to the flight line faster. The cycle of innovation has to be faster. You have to fix requirements; move forward; get small, focused project management teams, and get things out the door, because unless you do, you will always be left behind.

Long procurements have changes in requirements, and costs escalate, and the people in the field do not get what they need to do the job. So I think those things—I am very interested in becoming more familiar with the experimentation and prototyping authorities that the Congress has put in the last defense authorization act.

Of course, I think it needs to be easier to buy commercial products, particularly in the areas of very rapid—where there is very rapid innovation, where we need to make sure that the military has access to high-quality services and capabilities that may have been developed for a nondefense purpose.

Senator ROUNDS. Prepared to take comments from individual organizations that contract with the government on how to provide a lot of these pieces of equipment, these new technologies in terms of what they see as the most efficient way to move forward with new acquisition plans and so forth, recognizing that they have to fit our need but also recognizing that sometimes the folks who are living within those fields are sometimes some of the best places to get good advice about ways to expedite and streamline a very broken process today?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I am very open to all kinds of ideas.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator REED. [Presiding.] Thank you.

On behalf of Chairman McCain, Senator Wicker, please?

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much, Senator Reed.

Dr. Wilson, it is wonderful to have you back here, and I look forward to you serving in government again. You were a terrific colleague in the House.

We talked about retention of pilots. We talked about the pilot shortage. Part and parcel to that is the retention problem we have. They are so well-trained, they are so talented, they are so marketable, that the private sector wants to hire them.

So speak to that, if you will. But also, do we have the same problem with the cyber work force in the Air Force? What are we going to do about that, because these folks are so skilled and so smart and the demand for them is so keen out there?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, let me take those in reverse order. With respect to the cyber work force, you are right. The demand is very high outside of the Air Force for folks with those capabilities.

One of the things that you put in the defense authorization act last year was to allow the services to explore some other direct commissioning programs, and I would like to kind of turn to the Air Force and kind of ask them whether that provision might be used in the area of cyber and particularly whether there are opportunities for National Guard and Reserve units in cyber that we could locate in places where there are concentrations of highly technical people. I would be interested in turning to the Air Force and to ask them that and working with you all on it because it is going to be an issue. They are just too highly valuable to not be taken away.

With respect to the pilot issues, there are a couple things. I was very pleased yesterday to see General Grosklags' testimony concerning targeted bonuses, so it is not across-the-board. It is more of a negotiation to try to keep as many pilots as we can and a lot of flexibility there with respect to trying to retain a pilot.

But it is not just about the money, because we will never be able to compete with the commercial airline industry. It is going to be about the quality of service and being able to do the job, and that is readiness. If a pilot can go out and fly today, if the aircraft is ready today, it is maintained, they have enough jet fuel and enough flying hour time, you are much more likely to keep them.

I think there are a lot of additional duties that get added in for people who are here to fly and fight. We need to try to make sure that their experience of flying in the Air Force is something no one in their right mind would ever give up.

Senator WICKER. Is it partially about bonuses though? I wonder how much we are talking about spending.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there are some bonuses that General Grosklags testified about that yesterday, and you all have authorized some additional pilot retention pay.

What I was pleased to see, and you all authorized, was the Air Force testified yesterday about using those dollars flexibly so that we do not just say, across-the-board, if you are a pilot, then you get this X bonus for Y number of years. But as private industry does, make this a bit of a negotiation and certainly try to keep pilots in the areas where we are most short, particularly we know we are having a problem with fighter pilots. Allowing the same amount of money as a bonus for somebody who is not a fighter pilot does not make a lot of sense to me.

Senator WICKER. So we can agree that it is a matter that needs attention both with the fighter pilots and the cyber force.

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator WICKER. Now you mentioned on page 2 of your testimony the quality of leaders at the squadron level and also education of airmen and the quality of command. You talked about this in the answers to the questions that you answered in writing.

So what are the specific concerns about the quality of command at the squadron and wing level?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I think it is that the squadron level where you really set the culture for the Air Force. If an airman has confidence in their first sergeant and their squadron commander that they will do the right thing, they will treat them fairly, and that they care about them, you have a great, well-led Air Force.

Senator WICKER. We have been deficient there?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, it is not so much that we have been deficient, but we always have to be developing those young leaders. The Air Force does it differently than the other services, and it is really driven by the way we do our mission.

Someone is put in a cockpit, and they are flying and mastering that weapons system with very little responsibility for people until they become a commander. As I understand it, there is about a 1-week training course, and then you are on the job. I think that perhaps we can learn something by taking a step back, looking at how the other services develop their commanders or even other countries, the RAF, the Israelis, or whomever, to see what we could do better.

Because if we have well-trained, well-educated, well-prepared squadron and wing commanders who are first sergeants, we will set the culture in a positive way for the United States Air Force.

Senator WICKER. Put your thinking cap on. We look forward to having your thoughts.

Dr. WILSON. Thank you, sir.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator REED. Thank you.

On behalf of Chairman McCain, Senator Sullivan, please.

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wilson, welcome. Thank you for your great service to our Nation. Very, very impressive.

My State, the great State of Alaska, has been called by the father of the Air Force, Billy Mitchell, the most strategic place in the world. Right now, we are the hub air combat power for the Asia-Pacific. With the F-35s coming, we will have over 100 fifth generation combat coded fighters. We have an entire strategic airlift and mobility command and control with C-17s, KC-135s, AWACS, a whole host of air assets. Of course, we have JPARC, which General Welsh referred to as the crown jewel of air-to-air combat training anywhere in the world, an airspace the size of Florida.

So can I get your commitment, if you are confirmed, to come to Alaska with me and see this critical State, critical strategic location for the U.S. Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, any day in the field is better than a day in the office. I look forward to coming out to Alaska and to a lot of other places and seeing where we are. Yes, I would love to come to Alaska.

Senator SULLIVAN. Great.

With regard to last year's NDAA, there was a provision that talked about characteristics and principles that the Air Force should be looking at with regard to the OCONUS basing of the KC-46. A lot of those characteristics actually look like Alaska.

When General Goldfein was up for his nomination, he gave me his commitment that he would look at those characteristics hard and give Alaska a very, very hard look at the strategic basing of the KC-46s, which, when you are up there, I think you will see how much sense that makes.

Can I get your commitment as well to take a hard look at Alaska, following what the NDAA put in last year on the basing of the KC-46s?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I will take a hard look, and I will take a look at those criteria in the NDAA.

Senator SULLIVAN. Then there has been a lot of talk—actually, a number of us sat in on a Readiness Subcommittee hearing in Armed Services just yesterday with a number of the top generals in the Air Force testifying on the issue of readiness, on the issue of ranges.

When you are up in Alaska, I would like to get your commitment to take a look at JPARC and again at some of the upgrades. In the testimony yesterday, it was widely acknowledged that, given the size of that training area, it is what we are going to need with fifth-generation training because the stand-off of the fifth-generation aircraft are so dramatic.

Can I get your commitment to take a look at that as well?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I look forward to that when I get up to Alaska.

Senator SULLIVAN. Great. Let me ask about the F-35. You know, there was a lot of discussion in the press. President Trump took a lot of interest in it. I think he actually, from what I can tell, just reading in the papers, I think done a good job helping drive down the cost. But at one point there was a discussion about, well, heck, maybe we can just replace the F-35 with a souped-up F-18.

Can you enlighten us on whether you think forgoing a fifth gen upgrade to our Air Force and Navy and Marine Corps—would it make sense to just rely on a souped-up F-18? How important is that aircraft to the future of the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the Secretary of Defense has directed a review of the F-35, and that is underway. But as a general matter, the real thing I do not think you could do with an F-18 or F-15 or F-16 is give it stealth capability retroactively.

Senator SULLIVAN. So from your perspective, would we be in a fair fight with our potential adversaries if we souped up F-18s versus move forward with F-35s with adversaries are developing their own fifth-generation aircraft capabilities?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, just what I have seen in the public press, the defense news kinds of things on Chinese capabilities, they are developing stealth capability. I do not see how we can stop modernizing and expect to win a near-peer fight. I would rather have that fight be unfair and on our side.

Senator SULLIVAN. Well, I think with the cost reductions and the increase in the number of aircraft being produced, that will also drive down to the cost. It is important to try to keep the F-35 deployments that are already laid out by the Air Force to different areas across the globe and across the country on time.

Can I get your commitment to focus on making sure we are trying to get these aircraft out, produced, in a cost-effective manner, but also in a manner that gets them fielded in a way that helps the national security of our Nation?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there is a review underway that General Mattis has directed with respect to the F-35. But I do take your point that it is important to continue to get cost-effective equipment into the field on schedule.

Senator SULLIVAN. Great. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have additional questions for the record, Dr. Wilson. Thank you.

Senator REED. Thank you, Senator.

On behalf of Chairman McCain, Senator Warren, please.

Senator WARREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here, Dr. Wilson.

I would like to associate myself with the comments of the ranking member and the chairman, and echo some of their concerns around ethics issues. I will be submitting some questions for the record on that.

But right now, I would like to focus on another issue, and that is, I know that the Air Force wants a lot of new F-35s, but whether you think we should spend more or less money on the overall military budget, it seems like we are going to need to use and maintain our current aircraft for a long time to come. That is why I was surprised to hear that the Air Force is considering retiring the F-15 C and D variants. I was disappointed to learn that this decision is being considered even before a cost and capability analysis has been completed.

So, Dr. Wilson, I want to ask, if confirmed, will you defer this decision until the committee has been provided with an analysis that purchasing new F-16s instead of servicing existing F-15s will provide the same level of capability and actually save taxpayer money?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I saw the article in the paper that you are referring to. It was either testimony here or over in the House. I have not been fully briefed on that particular program. But I can say that the Air Force, as it should, is always doing out-year planning and what-if kind of planning. I will also commit to you to be fully transparent about—

Senator WARREN. Listen again to my question. I want to know that you are going to defer the decision until the committee has been provided with an analysis that purchasing new F-16s instead of servicing the current F-15s is going to give us the same capability and actually save taxpayer money. I want to make sure we get that analysis before you make that decision.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, my problem is that I am not sure that it was an F-16 substitute, so I have not been briefed on what their actual planning excursion was that they were trying to evaluate and that came out in a hearing here. So I feel a little bit at a loss that I have not been briefed on what they are looking at for options or life extension versus something else. I do not know what the something else was, which is my problem. But what I will commit to is that I will be very transparent with you on what we are doing, whether it affects you or it affects anyone else.

Probably even more, I think it is important to gather ideas and share analysis as it is being done sometimes as hypotheticals, not just after a decision has been made.

Senator WARREN. I appreciate that, Dr. Wilson, but I really do want to bear down on this point. So let me ask you another question.

Can you give me a commitment that the Air Force will consult with the Air Guard and specifically with the adjutants general in States with Air Guard F-15 wings before any decisions are made?



Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator WARREN. Good.

So I would like to move to another topic, if I can, that is very important to me, and that is science.

The Air Force has requested \$28 billion for research, development, test, and evaluation, RTDE, in fiscal year 2017. I am concerned, however, that too much of this funding is going to the development and testing part, the later stages of scientific progress, and not enough to basic research. As you know, basic research is the science that provides the building blocks of our most important technological developments, like stealth and precision weapons and GPS and even the Internet.

The Air Force has asked to cut funding for basic research for the third year in a row. That is a more than 7 percent decrease in funding for basic research since fiscal year 2015. I am also concerned that the Department is not doing everything it can to keep up with advances in commercial technology.

So, Dr. Wilson, if you are confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, will you prioritize funding for basic and applied research?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator WARREN. Good.

How will you work with the commercial technology sector and universities so they can help you tackle the Air Force's greatest military challenges?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, this is an area where I think you and I have very common interests in not only identifying technologies that have been developed in commercial areas that can be spun onto the military but making it easier for commercial companies and universities to provide those capabilities to the Defense Department and particularly the Air Force.

In the area of basic and applied research, you are absolutely right. The things that we invest in today result in—sometimes it is very hard to predict which ones or which vectors are going to be the ones that lead to the breakthrough. It was Hanscom Air Force Base in World War II where they developed radar, revolutionized the protection of this country and of the United Kingdom.

What is the next one? We have trouble sometimes imagining how basic research can lead to innovation. But if you do not do it, you will not have innovation, and that is why I am so concerned about it.

Senator WARREN. Good. Thank you very much, Dr. Wilson. I find your answer very encouraging.

Our adversaries are investing heavily in research and development, and doing whatever they can to exploit advances in commercial technology for their own interests. I want to see us do the same. I think it is a matter of national security, so thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Well-said.

Senator ERNST? Colonel Ernst?

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Admiral.

Thank you, Dr. Wilson, very much. I appreciate your testimony today and the fact that you are willing to take on this very, very great and grave responsibility.

Before I begin, I would just like to ask you some simple yes or no questions.

Dr. Wilson, number one, do you commit to cutting wasteful spending and making it a priority?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator ERNST. Two, do you commit to working with me to combat and prevent military sexual assault and retaliation in the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator ERNST. Three, will you provide me with advanced notice should changes to the gender integration policies be considered?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator ERNST. Finally, given your previous work with the defense contracting industry, do you commit to upholding an unbiased approach throughout the acquisition process?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator ERNST. Thank you for those answers.

Dr. Wilson, when Secretary Mattis was commander of United States Central Command (CENTCOM), he initiated Combat Dragon II, an innovation experiment designed to rapidly introduce highly lethal, low-cost capabilities to the battlefield.

As part of this experiment, United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) borrowed two mothballed Vietnam-era aircraft from NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration]. They outfitted them with advanced commercial ISR systems and precision weapons, which cost less and, in many cases, provided more capabilities than traditional ISR and strike aircraft combined.

During a 3-month deployment, the SOCOM unit achieved a 99 percent sortie completion rate and was able to find, fix, and finish highly sensitive missions by employing 63 precision-guided rockets on 41 different targets.

Can you speak to the benefits of a high-low mix of combat capabilities? Specifically, how can we leverage the lessons of Combat Dragon to rapidly provide new capabilities to the warfighter without overburdening our American taxpayers?

Dr. WILSON. Thank you, Senator.

I think that is probably a good example. I was aware of some OV-10s that were recently brought back to service. I do not know if that was the Combat Dragon program.

But I do think that there are ways to innovate. I have been involved in a few of them myself when I was on the National Security Council staff trying to get some very new capability to the warfighter.

We always have to be sensitive to the fact that sometimes our great ideas in the world of science and engineering have to be operated by an 18-year-old with minimal training in a very highly stressed situation. So we always have to be sensitive to those things and the total cost of maintaining and all of those things.

But I think, particularly the Air Force, we are supposed to be the innovators. We are supposed to be the can-do, fix it, get it there, duct tape and bailing wire kind of service, in a way. I think I am very open to those kinds of experiments.

Senator ERNST. Very good. Do you see other ways that you can use innovation in the Air Force to really protect the taxpayers? Are there other programs that you think should be looked at?

Dr. WILSON. There are a wide variety of innovation programs. I do think that thinking about how we engage the scientific and technical community, because we are all short of scientists and engineers, so how do we better engage them to try to move us forward, and also to try to be aware of what our adversaries might be doing?

Our entire intelligence system since Pearl Harbor has been set up for indications and warning. It is to prevent surprise attack. In the area of science and technology, preventing surprise attack is detecting what our adversaries might be doing with respect to scientific and technical advancement, and what implications that might have for us.

So their development of stealth technology—the best examples are the development of the jet engine in World War II or the V-2 rocket or Einstein's letter to the President about the potential for a nuclear weapon.

How are we systematically assessing scientific and technical development to prevent surprise at the scientific and technical level? I think there may be some things that we can do today that were not even possible to do 10 years ago because of the ability to link scientists and engineers who otherwise would not have known each other.

Senator ERNST. I appreciate that very much and will continue to look for innovation.

Something I heard not long ago, which I think really plays into the Combat Dragon II, is a comment that was made: Why do we spend our millions and millions or even billions of dollars on aircraft and munitions to destroy a \$10,000 pickup in the middle of the desert?

So I think there are ways that we can refine what we do with innovation and make it very cost-effective as well for our armed services.

I want to thank you again for being here today and taking on this challenge. Thank you, Dr. Wilson.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Heinrich?

Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, welcome. Congratulations on your nomination.

Two of the President's nominees for civilian leadership posts in the military services have now dropped out, so I think it is incredibly important that the administration nominates and that the committee considers qualified nominees as quickly as possible, and you certainly have impressive qualifications for this post.

As you know well, New Mexico's men and women in uniform are proud to take the lead in addressing many of the challenges that you would face as Secretary, and Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico has already proven to be critically important in addressing the Air Force's shortfall for both RPA and F-16 pilots.

As Secretary of the Air Force, you will be responsible for growing and retaining our pilot and our maintainer forces. When selecting an installation for these purposes, can you talk a little bit about

what criteria you would most value, given the constraints that the Air Force is currently under?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the strategic basing initiative for every mission comes up with a set of criteria for that mission, and there is at least an interim decision with respect to Holloman and training there. There has not been a final decision on a final location. But as I mentioned to Senator Peters, when those decisions are made, we will not put any thumbs on the scale. We will try to make those straightforward, direct decisions in the best interests of the country.

Senator HEINRICH. Can you talk a little bit about some of the particulars that that decision basing system is based on and what the Air Force is looking for in those cases?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, with respect to a particular weapons system, I probably could not, but I think with every weapons system and with every mission, there is a set of things that the Air Force decides are really important to them, for example, airspace to be able to conduct training operations or particular kinds of electronic practice areas, those kinds of things. For every mission, it is probably slightly different. Then they just rank those in order.

Senator HEINRICH. I was looking at your preliminary hearing questions and you said that you strongly support rapid prototyping, experimentation, and using rapid acquisition authorities to provide new capabilities to the warfighter.

Last year, the Senate Armed Services Committee granted rapid acquisition authorities for directed energy weapons systems.

As Secretary, would you look to use those authorities for directed energy? Would you support transitioning these systems to the warfighter more quickly?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I do support transitioning systems very quickly to the warfighter. With respect to an acquisition strategy for a particular procurement, I would look for advice from the acquisition community before I would make any particular decision.

Senator HEINRICH. In light of the current administration hiring freeze, one of the things I am concerned about is the military's ability to meet mission requirements under those pressures. Military leaders have explained that, by not hiring civilians, more pressure is shifted onto military workers to finish those jobs, and, in some cases, they are now being asked to do additional duty as a result.

At Air Force Research Lab in Albuquerque, there are a significant number of vacancies for civilian positions that actually carry out critical missions for the military.

Can you talk generally a little bit about how important you believe civilians are to the overall mission of the Air Force and what steps you might take or what things you would look to as Secretary to be able to fill those vacancies and ensure that the mission requirements are being met?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, we do have the hiring freeze in place. There are exemptions and work through position by position. It is my understanding the Air Force is operating under that at this point.

Almost half of the people that serve in the United States Air Force are civilians. Many of them were prior military, but many

were not, and they make significant contributions to the mission. They are part of the team, and I treat them as part of the team.

I would say with respect to the pressure on the force, the worst thing we can have happen right now is to have a continuing resolution for the last 5 months of the year that would probably result in a complete hiring freeze with no exemptions and will exacerbate the pilot shortage. We will have to stop, likely, if confirmed, we would have to stop a lot of the new starts that we have going, and we will dig the hole deeper.

So with respect to civilian employment, I think that is the biggest issue before us all.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Perdue?

Senator PERDUE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wilson, thank you for your stellar career and your willingness to take this on. I have two quick questions today.

I grew up in Warner Robins, Robins Air Force Base, and I am very proud that that base has morphed over time from being a SAC base to a MAC base, and today is a major depot for the U.S. Air Force. But at a time when we have the smallest and oldest Air Force, I am very concerned.

General Levy is in charge of the Air Force supply chain, a great lieutenant general and has a stellar career of his own. But he has been educating me about the difficulties. Half the employment of the Air Force are civilians, as you just mentioned, and yet it takes 148 days, according to General Levy, because of Air Force rules, to onboard a new employee.

At a time when we are competing for cyber talent, mechanics, engineers, scientists, programmers, and so forth, as we talked privately, I am very concerned that we are not competitive in trying to reach out and retain and attract the best and the brightest for the Air Force in these civilian jobs.

So can you address how you would prioritize that, if you are confirmed?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there are a lot of rules and regulations that sometimes—they are trying to prevent us from doing bad things, but they keep us from doing good things. I think, obviously, there are rules and regulations that are there for a reason. We all want to drive on the right side of the road in the morning and have everybody else do the same thing.

But sometimes, and you just identified one, if it is that hard to hire someone, talent is going to be taken out from under you.

So I would be happy to take a look at those kinds of things. If there are particularly priority regulations that others have identified that need to be looked at, I am very open to what those should be.

Senator PERDUE. Personally, as one example, two-thirds of our F-18s are not airworthy today. This is an all-hands-on-deck issue.

Would you pledge to work with the committee and bring us those idea to break through those regulations that we can help with to become more competitive?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I would, and I would ask you to do so and help me.

Senator PERDUE. Absolutely. You have it.

The second thing, I want talk about something we do not talk much about here, and that is space.

The Vice Chief of the Air Force, General Wilson, provided written testimony recently at one of our last subcommittee hearings on readiness that, "In the not too distant future, our potential adversaries will have the capability to hold all of our military space capabilities at risk."

Dr. Wilson, those are strong words. Do you agree with those words? How would you propose to make changes in the national security space policy and programs, if you are confirmed?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, one of the things I am most looking forward to about this job is being potentially the senior adviser to the Secretary of Defense with respect to space and chairing the Defense Space Council.

There is no question that space will be a contested domain in any future conflict, and I was actually serving on the House Intelligence Committee at the time the Chinese successfully launched an antisatellite weapon, and I do not expect that things have slowed down since then.

There are a variety of things I think we need to do. There are launch issues we are going to have to deal with. But I think rethinking the way in which we think about space as a contested domain has to be part—it is the development of strategies and techniques and capabilities to be able to fight through, to be resilient, to be as crafty and as successful in space as we are in air, and that is a very big change for the country, to be starting to think that way.

I think there are some elements in the Air Force that already are starting to develop those thoughts. I look forward to working with them and, of course, our national partners and partners in other agencies.

Senator PERDUE. Thank you. The last question I have is, at the very time that you are considering this responsibility and we are considering your confirmation, it looks to me like all the major platforms of the Air Force are maturing to the end of their expected lives and beyond at the same time. At the very time that they are expiring, the ramp-up of new programs to replace them, through delays and regulations and whatever funding, we are building a gap and it is a significant gap. The B-21, KC-46, the F-35, the JSTAR platform, all of these have projected gaps in capability between the time that the existing platform rolls out and expires and the new platforms are available.

Have you had a chance to look at that yet? Would you pledge to us to help educate us about that growing gap in the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, when we talk about what is the risk or the Air Force talks about what is the risk of things like the Budget Control Act, that is a very good example of one.

Senator PERDUE. But it is bigger than that. I am sorry, Dr. Wilson. It is actually bigger than that. This is a multiyear issue that has to do with our debt position and the fact that we will not face up to our responsibility as Congress and how we spend money. We are not fulfilling one of the major responsibilities we have as a unified government, and that is to defend the country.

So I welcome your input, and I pledge to you our support. I am out of time, but I would love to work with you to make sure we fill that gap. It is very concerning.

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir.

Senator PERDUE. I fully expect your confirmation. Thank you, again, for being willing to do this.

Dr. WILSON. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Donnelly?

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Dr. Wilson.

I wanted to ask you about a discussion we had in my office. Your predecessor made a commitment to continue the heritage of the 122nd Fighter Wing in Fort Wayne, Indiana, by maintaining a manned combat mission there at the base, replacing the A-10s with either F-16s or F-35s.

Will you honor that commitment that has been made to us?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I am not familiar with the particular commitment that has been made.

Senator DONNELLY. I asked you this a month ago.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I cannot commit to a future mission today, in part because I am not privy to a lot of the internal discussions in the Air Force because I cannot be because I am before my confirmation. So there are a lot of things.

The Air Force can provide me all of the things that have been publicly available, but not anything behind it. So I am still kind of outside of the door in that way.

Senator DONNELLY. I know you are referring to the strategic basing process, but I am not talking about making a new basing decision. This one has already been made, and all I am asking you to do is to honor the commitment of the person who went before you.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I will tell you this. If a commitment has been made, we will stand by it.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you.

Dr. WILSON. I need to understand what the commitment was a little bit more before I feel comfortable, and I cannot know that until I walk in the door of the office.

Senator DONNELLY. Well, let me ask you about mental health as well. I appreciate your commitment to prioritizing that. It is a readiness issue. It is a matter of maintaining the strength of our force.

In 2014, this committee passed legislation providing a mental health assessment for every servicemember every year. It was named after a constituent of mine, Jacob Sexton, who was lost to suicide in 2009. Each of the service chiefs has testified to this committee that the mental health assessments required under this act will be fully implemented by the end of this year.

If confirmed, will you ensure the Air Force keeps to that schedule?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you.

In regards to our nuclear arsenal, we are undertaking a tremendous and necessary effort to modernize our nuclear deterrent. We have put it off for a long time, and as a result, we have a heavy bill coming due. But we are going to need to implement acquisition

practices across-the-board to succeed, and that means doing a better job of promoting collaboration and commonality.

So what I am also asking is, will you be committed to commonality as a means to modernize and maintain the triad and reduce the cost of risk?

The Navy has a lot of parts of this. The Air Force has a lot of parts of this. We want to try to work together so we are not in separate stovepipes here, so we are not reinventing the wheel every time we start a new system

Dr. WILSON. Senator, yes. There are some times where that is appropriate. There are some times where it is actually more costly to force systems to use common parts. But where it makes sense, obviously, you bet.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Cotton?

Senator COTTON. Thank you.

Dr. Wilson, congratulations on your nomination. You have a big job with a lot of big challenges ahead of you, some of those we explored yesterday in a Subcommittee on Airland power hearing with some of the deputy chiefs from the White House—or from the Air Force.

One in particular was the pilot shortage. We heard testimony yesterday saying the pilot shortage was up to 1,550 pilots as of yesterday.

I think there seems to be a mismatch between force structure and strategy. If we continue down this road, are you worried about creating a hollow force for our Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, yes, I am.

Senator COTTON. The Air Force has provided pilots with bonuses. Those bonuses are increasing. We heard testimony yesterday the Air Force anticipates seeking even higher bonuses. But as you stated earlier, the retention crisis is about more than just money.

Both General Goldfein and your predecessor committed to reducing unpopular additional duties in squadrons, jobs that take pilots away from their core mission. For example, this committee has heard private comments from one frustrated young F-10 pilot who said, “I would give up my flight pay if it meant getting a full-time squadron scheduler.”

Do you share the commitment to reduce this burden of additional duties for our pilots and their squadrons?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator COTTON. What are your thoughts on the best ways to continue to bring down those burdens on our pilots?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, there are a couple things. I think, again, this gets down to squadron leadership. But it is also, every time something happens, there is another, well, we have to train everybody, or there is another computer-based training program that everybody has to sit through and push the yes, no, and next buttons.

I think taking a complete review from the perspective of an airman of what is the extra stuff you are being asked to do—now, some of it is entirely appropriate. If you are asked to be the squadron training officer, you should be the squadron training officer. But there is a lot of other stuff that gets added on that is really



dispiriting, and I think we need to take a look from their perspective on whether every one of those things really is needed. Do we really need to do ladder safety training again this year?

Senator COTTON. With those steps and with the additional civilians that have been added in squadrons, do you think the Air Force will have the remaining combat coded squadrons fully manned by the end of the fiscal year?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I do not know the answer to that, but I think it is probably—I do not know the answer to that.

Senator COTTON. Okay.

I would like to turn my attention now to nuclear modernization. You spoke earlier about this with Senator Inhofe on the B-21, learning some of the lessons about the B-2 and the F-35 program. But I would like to ask about the stated goal of the program to acquire 100 aircraft.

Do you believe that 100 aircraft are sufficient for our National Security Strategy in the future, given the challenges we are going to face from growing A2AD air defense systems in places like Russia, China, Iran, North Korea?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, we certainly need to be able to penetrate to hold targets at risk. I understand that the next piece of the national military strategy at the classified level was finished late last year. I have not yet seen that.

I believe threat drives strategy. Strategy drives force posture. The force posture is dependent on that strategy, which I have not yet been fully briefed on.

Senator COTTON. Okay, thank you.

You spoke with Senator Fischer about nuclear modernization, specifically about the B-21, about nuclear command and control, and about the ground-based strategic deterrent. I do not think you touched on the long-range standoff cruise missile.

What are your thoughts on that missile?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the Air Force has it in its plan. We need modernization across-the-board with respect to the nuclear deterrent.

Senator COTTON. Do you support the LRSO program?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, sir. I do.

Senator COTTON. Now I would like to ascend from nuclear modernization to modernization as a whole and the budget.

The Air Force has a lot of bills coming due, not only nuclear modernization but the F-35 and the B-21 and the KC-46 and the JSTARS and the presidential aircraft replacement program, among other things.

Have you received indications from the senior leadership in the Department of Defense, the Office of Management and Budget, and the White House that their budget request will fully support the Air Force's modernization needs over the coming years?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, as I understand it, there is a top line for fiscal year 2018, and the Air Force and the other services are working through what is the structure under the fiscal year 2018 number. I think we all know we are not going to get out of this in a single year.

Senator COTTON. Are you confident we will in the coming 5 years' defense program?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I am here to try to do that.

Senator COTTON. We will be here to try to help you and our Air Force do that as well.

Thank you, Dr. Wilson. Congratulations again.

Dr. WILSON. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Gillibrand?

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Dr. Wilson, for being here, and for your commitment to public service. We are all very grateful.

One of the good fortunes we have in New York is our talented work force, and the Air Force Research Lab in Rome is a perfect example of an installation that has benefited from the State's ability to attract and concentrate high-skilled workers.

Past Air Force leaders have visited Rome and have been very impressed by the amazing work happening at the lab and its leadership on cyber in the Air Force and beyond. I would love to have you visit Rome and see this critical work firsthand. Will you come to the Rome labs?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, as I mentioned with respect to Alaska and others, I do like to get out of the office and up and out and be where people are. I find that I learn a lot more that way, and particularly in the area of research and development, which is a focus for me. So, yes. All of this will depend on timing.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Of course.

Dr. WILSON. But I do want to come.

Senator GILLIBRAND. It is just really impressive and very inspiring. I think if you get to see what they are doing, you will have more of an interest in supporting their work, so I would like to extend that invitation.

The second issue I am interested in is the issue of PFCs. The Air Force, including the Air National Guard, is dealing with contamination of water supplies across the country as a result of perfluorooctane sulfonates, PFOS, expelled by firefighting units on these bases.

There are two known sites in New York, one at the 106th on Long Island, which was quickly identified and immediately cleaned up, and one at the 105th in Newburgh, which has moved much slower.

My staff has been in constant contact with the National Guard on this matter, and I know it is not unique to New York.

Do I have your commitment to address this crisis head on and work with communities in New York and across the country to ensure that all contamination is remediated in a timely manner so our citizens can have access to clean drinking water?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

My last issue is about LGBTQ issues. As Secretary of the Air Force, you will be responsible for running the Air Force enterprise, including dealing with issues related to LGBT airmen and civilians, and I am concerned by some of the things you have said in the past about the rights and protections for LGBT citizens.

Specifically, in 2012, you stated that you "tolerate" but do not "approve of" LGBT individuals.

Do you still stand by that statement?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, it is not my intention to change any of the policies currently in place with respect to sexual orientation. I think the appropriate thing to do, as I do as a university president, is to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well, I appreciate that you make a commitment to treat everyone with dignity and respect. I think that is really important in a position of leadership and very important as a public servant, because you must value all men and women who serve underneath you regardless of their sexual orientation.

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Strange?

Senator STRANGE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Doctor, here today. I appreciate your willingness to serve, and I have a high degree of confidence that you will do very well in this position.

I especially enjoyed our conversation and your background as a graduate of the academy and a female in the Air Force. As I mentioned, my aunt was one of the pioneering women aviators in World War II, so I know she would be proud to see you in this position, leading the Air Force.

We covered a lot of ground when we talked, and I appreciated your answers. I just want to point out again the importance of Dannelly Field Guard station in Alabama, one of the installations I am very proud of in our State.

It is one of the five being considered, as you know, for the F-35. That process is ongoing. I just want to confirm that you are comfortable with the process and the timing for the selection of one of the two facilities that will ultimately be the destination for that program.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I know that that is underway. As I mentioned, I do not have a very deep insight into what the tradeoffs are, but I am sure I will be briefed on that, if confirmed.

Senator STRANGE. Great. That is a very high priority for me. I am proud of the service men and women that are there. It is an excellent facility, and I look forward to working with you in that process.

Mr. Chairman, that is really the only question I had. I will yield back my time.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Blumenthal?

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your service, Dr. Wilson, and for being here today.

I want to follow up on a couple questions that Senator Reed asked. I know that with respect to most policy questions, you said you need to be briefed, you need to learn more, you need to be better acquainted with the policies and programs ongoing at the Air Force. So there will be a time, I am sure, when we will want to go into greater depth on those issues, if you are confirmed.

But on the issue of the contract that Senator Reed cited, my understanding is that you were cited by the Department of Energy inspector general for lacking sufficient detail in your own invoices. One of them I would like to place in the record, if there is no objection.

Chairman McCain. Without objection.  
[The information referred to follows:]



**Sandia National Laboratories**  
Operated for the U.S. Department of Energy by  
Sandia Corporation

**SECTION I**  
Date: 19-DEC-2008  
Standard Purchase Order: 880974  
Revision: 0

**HEATHER WILSON & COMPANY LLC**  
9229 GUADALUPE TRAIL NW  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87114  
United States

**To National  
Nuclear Security  
Administration  
(NNSA)**

*Please respond to:*

**VIRGINIA LUJAN**  
**SANDIA CONTRACTING REPRESENTATIVE (SCR)**  
**SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES**  
PO Box 5800 MS 1484  
Albuquerque, NM 87185-1484

Phone: (505)844-9101  
Email: [VRLUJAN@sandia.gov](mailto:VRLUJAN@sandia.gov)  
Fax: 505 844-7821

*Submit Invoices to:*

**SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES**  
**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MS1385**  
PO BOX 5800  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87185

Invoice Status Line: (505)845-9600

Supply Chain Help Desk: [phdesk@sandia.gov](mailto:phdesk@sandia.gov)

This Fixed Rate contract between Sandia Corporation and the above named Contractor is authorized for binding commitment by the SCR named above, and is effective on the above date, provided that the contractor accepts the contract terms. These terms include Section I appended hereto and Section II as set forth in SF6432-CO (03-05), found at <http://www.sandia.gov/bus-ops/som/Contractor/Contractor-info.html> by signing the copy of this Signature Page and returning it to the SCR, or by delivering/performing the specified items/services, you are accepting the contract terms.

Authorized Contract Representative

Date

Heather Wilson & Company LLC  
 9220 Guadalupe Trail, NW ✓  
 Albuquerque, NM 87114

**Invoice**

Date	Invoice #
2/3/2009	1

1/860974

<b>Bill To</b>
Sandia National Laboratories Accounts Payable MS1385 PO Box 5800 Albuquerque, NM 87185

P.O. No.		Terms	Project	
880974		Due on receipt		
Quantity	Description	Rate	Amount	
	Consulting Services 1/4/2009 through 2/4/2009	10,000.00	10,000.00	
Constructing Representative: Virginia Lujan, 846-7821 Delegated Representative: Anne Chavez, 845-2071		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>	

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

The IG investigators noted that I think you attended a single meeting on at least two separate occasions and billed two individually owned labs for the exact same time and service.

Because of the lack of detail in the invoices that you submitted, it was difficult to discern what service you provided to whom and when. The document that I just placed in the record is an invoice, which I could show to you to read, but there is nothing to read on it because it is virtually blank except for your name and the invoice number, and an item that says "consulting services."

So just as a matter of procedure and accountability, because this is a profoundly important issue for defense procurement, should there not be better oversight of contractor billing and documentation?

Is this not a bad example—leadership is by example; the best leadership is by good example—of how billing and invoice submission should be conducted?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, in each of the months in which I worked for the national laboratories, I did more than 50 hours a month of work in close consultation with the people at the laboratories.

I was working for them quarter time. I did the work. I complied with the contract, a contract negotiated and signed by the laboratories. The review found actually no fault with me.

The DOE auditors never even bothered to talk to me. If they had at the time, I probably would have been able to reconstruct what I did that month.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Assuming all of that is true, why not invoice it?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the laboratories never asked for that.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Well, I am asking you, as a potential Secretary of the Air Force, whether you will hold contractors to a higher standard than is indicated by this document. It is a forward-looking question. I am not asking you to reconstruct in your testimony now what you did. But should we not expect more from contractors than this kind of blank invoice?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I think we should expect contractors to comply with the contracts which they signed with the government. In this case, I did.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Well, you know, the answer to my question is really a simple yes. That is the right answer, don't you think? Because regardless of what you did, in the future, looking forward, my hope is that we improve contracting involving the United States Government and United States taxpayer money by imposing a higher standard than is indicated or reflected by this invoice.

There is no way of knowing from this invoice even vaguely what you did.

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the people that I worked with were supervising me and knew what I did and that I was doing the work that they were satisfied enough with to offer me a full-time position as the vice president of the laboratory. I did the work. They were happy with the work. I complied with the contract. I will expect anyone who has a contract with the United States Air Force to comply with the contract as well.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Did it occur to you that maybe the United States of America deserved a fuller accounting of your services than this blank slate?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, the United States deserved my best work, and that is what they got.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Well, they may have gotten your best work, but I hope, if you are confirmed, that you will hold contractors providing services to the United States of America to a higher standard than this blank sheet of paper, which is not the only invoice that is as vague as this one. It is in the record, so it will speak for itself.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wilson, I want to congratulate you on your nomination, and I certainly appreciate your willingness to serve at this difficult and complex time.

I also want to point out that you are a native of Keene, New Hampshire, and we are very proud of you in the State. I do not know if you saw earlier, but we had about 40 members of the New Hampshire Army and Air National Guard who were here for the early part of this hearing. They are here for their professional development today, and it is a recognition of the effort that you are taking on.

I want to start with a program that we are very concerned about in New Hampshire, and that is the KC-46A. We have learned recently that the delivery of the first aircraft to Altus and McConnell Air Force bases is likely to miss the target date of 2017.

We are concerned about it because Pease is one of those first bases that is supposed to get the new KC-46A. I understand it is going to be delayed another 6 months to the end of 2018.

There was a recent GAO report that identified Boeing, the manufacturer of the KC-46A, and explained that it struggled to meet scheduled milestones throughout the duration of the program, and it is at least a year behind on most measures.

So I wonder if you could talk about how, if confirmed, you would work to maintain the delivery schedule of aircraft and prevent further delays, because, as we know, this is not the only delay that we are seeing. I am not even going to get into the F-35, though we discussed it when you were in my office.

But can you tell us how you might approach this problem?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, I think there are a number of things. You have to set realistic schedules upfront, and you have to have very good program managers who are authorized, and often very small and focused program management offices of exceptional professionals to manage these programs.

Then, of course, you hold people accountable for results. Sometimes people set out schedules and timelines that are too ambitious upfront, but I think getting those realistic upfront, and then, finally, making sure that requirements do not change in the process. Fix those requirements and build the system.

As a university president, the worst thing you can do is start changing the design after you have started construction in the laboratory or the building. You have to fix it up front and then come in and build to print and get it on a tight timeline. I think the same is true for most major weapons systems.

Senator SHAHEEN. Should we be looking at—it is my understanding that for a lot of these oversight positions that people are in, that they are only in those positions several years, and then they are moved on.

What kind of a challenge does that present as we look at long-term projects that we are doing in terms of new aircraft?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, you are right. There is turnover in that field. Developing the capability in the acquisition field has been an issue in the past. It may well be an issue today.

But one of the other things is procuring things on a tight time frame. I think the A-10 was procured on a very tight time frame. The F-16 was certainly tighter than some of the other aircraft that

we built. Getting somebody as a program manager and saying, "All right, you are going to be in this assignment for 4 years and here is what we expect you to accomplish. We do not expect miracles. We do not want a 15-year program. We want tight turns, and then we will iterate and innovate after that." I think that generally has been more effective at getting capability out to the service in a cost-effective way.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

We had an interesting hearing yesterday in the Emerging Threats Subcommittee. One of the presenters talked about the new challenges of the hybrid warfare, cyber warfare that we are facing, and that we are not doing enough within our military to develop ways to address that, that we are very focused on conventional warfare and that we are not focused enough on the unconventional warfare, which is much of what we are facing today.

So I appreciate that we are still going to need the role of the Air Force, but what should the Air Force be looking at as you all are thinking about this unconventional warfare challenge that we are all facing?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, when people say unconventional warfare, sometimes they really mean guerrilla warfare, but I think you are talking about cyber and—

Senator SHAHEEN. I am actually talking about a combination. I am talking about cyber. I am talking about the kind of efforts that we saw in Ukraine and Georgia, to some extent. I am talking about what we are seeing with Russia.

So what else should we be thinking about?

Dr. WILSON. Senator, we need to be thinking about the full range of potential conflicts, all the way from low-intensity warfare through a near-peer adversary and nuclear deterrence. I think there are new techniques, and cyber is one of them, that can be used both by nation-states and by terrorists or insurgents to achieve their political objectives. But we need to be able to pay both offense and defense in all of those realms.

Senator SHAHEEN. I am glad to hear that, because right now, I do not think we have a strategy. We are playing defense, and we are not playing much offense.

So thank you. I look forward to working with you.

Dr. WILSON. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Dr. Wilson, I just want to mention to you that one of the enduring frustrations, a source of anger and discontent in this committee and amongst the American taxpayers, is cost overruns and the way we do business and acquire weapons systems.

I was just looking at, in 2001, where there was a proposal for an F-35 that was going to cost \$233 billion, and we were going to build 2,800 of them. Today, they cost \$391 billion and about 400 less. The first trillion-dollar weapons system in history. Four hundred thousand dollars for a helmet. Stuff you cannot make up.

So we have tried to make some changes, and have in the acquisition system here in the Armed Services Committee. But I have to tell you, we have not gotten a lot of cooperation from the Department of Defense.



We have made changes such as separating AT&L into two different divisions. We got nothing but resistance.

So I agree with all of the comments that you have made and that of my colleagues about the dire situation we find ourselves in, and the absolute necessity of avoiding a continuing resolution. But when you have scandals like this, \$233 billion to \$239 billion cost of a weapons system, then it is hard for us to make a case for more funds to defend the Nation.

So there are a lot of challenges that we face, but I find myself continuously frustrated by the cost overruns, whether it be a \$3 billion cost overrun on the Gerald R. Ford or whether it be now we are having cost overruns associated with the tanker.

It goes on and on, and it has to stop. We are pretty well aware that we can do a lot, but we cannot do everything unless we have a cooperative environment over where you work or will be working.

So I hope that, if not the highest, the next highest priority that you have is to address this broken acquisition system.

Frankly, I grow tired of fighting with the Pentagon. I get tired of seeing these scandals and calling people to account.

But the fact is, in reality, back on the F-35, to my knowledge, not a single person has been held accountable for a \$160 billion cost overrun—not a single person that I know of, certainly not the manufacturer who comes before this committee and tells us what a great job they are doing.

So there either has to be accountability and truth in contracting, and the American taxpayers get their investment, or we are going to face further crises, such as we are facing now.

One of the reasons why we have not got enough money is because we have wasted it. We have wasted so much, so many billions of dollars, time after time after time.

So my strong recommendation to you is that we start firing some people. We start penalizing contractors. We break up this iron triangle of the military-industrial-congressional complex. I hope that you will devote some energy in that direction.

Senator Reed?

Senator REED. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for holding the hearing. I want to thank Dr. Wilson for her testimony today. I presume there will be additional questions for the record.

Senator REED. Thank you, Dr. Wilson.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon, at 11:38 a.m., the Committee adjourned.]

[Prepared questions submitted to The Honorable Heather A. Wilson, to be Secretary of the Air Force by Chairman McCain prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

##### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REFORMS

*Question.* The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act included the most sweeping reforms since the Goldwater Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

Do you support these reforms?

*Answer.* I am becoming more familiar with the reforms enacted in this legislation and their impact on the Air Force. To the extent I understand their broad outlines, I support them and will more fully evaluate them if confirmed.

*Question.* What other areas for defense reform do you believe might be appropriate for this Committee to address?

Answer. I have no recommendations for further reform at this time.

#### DUTIES

*Question.* What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Secretary of the Air Force?

Answer. The Secretary of the Air Force is responsible for all affairs of the Department of the Air Force in accordance with title 10 of the U.S. Code, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. These functions include organizing, supplying, equipping, training, maintaining, and administering the Air Force.

*Question.* What recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions of the Secretary of the Air Force, as set forth in section 8013 of title 10, United States Code, or in Department of Defense regulations pertaining to functions of the Secretary of the Air Force?

Answer. None at this time.

#### QUALIFICATIONS

*Question.* The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act amended section 8013 of title 10, United States Code, to require that the Secretary of the Air Force “to the greatest extent practicable, be appointed from among persons most highly qualified for the position by reason of background and experience, including persons with appropriate management or leadership experience.”

What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?

Answer. I have 35 years of professional experience in a range of leadership and management roles in the military, government, private industry and higher education.

Since 2013, I have been the President of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, an engineering and science research university located in the Rushmore Region of South Dakota. As the chief executive reporting to the Board of Regents, I have been responsible for all matters related to the operation, performance, and financial management of the university.

From 1998 through 2009 I was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where I served on House Armed Services Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. While the Chair of the Subcommittee on Technical and Tactical Intelligence, the Committee conducted a review of the nation's overhead intelligence collection architecture and initiated oversight of the President's Terrorist Surveillance Program, which led to significant revisions to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Before being elected to the Congress, from 1995 through 1998, I was a Cabinet Secretary in New Mexico's state government where I administered an agency with over 2,000 employees and a \$200 million budget responsible for foster care, adoption, juvenile delinquency, children's mental health, and early childhood education.

From 1989 through 1991 I was the Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control on the National Security Council Staff at the White House responsible for advising the President through the National Security Advisor on matters related to NATO and the negotiation of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.

I was an Active Duty Air Force officer from 1982 through 1989. Following the completion of graduate education, I served at Headquarters Third Air Force at RAF Mildenhall, England where I was responsible for base planning and host country negotiations for the arrival of nuclear capable cruise missiles at RAF Molesworth. I then served at the United States Mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium in the office of Defense Plans, and briefly in Vienna, Austria at the Conventional Forces in Europe arms control negotiations.

From 1991 to 1995 and again from 2009 to 2013 I worked as a senior advisor and consultant to several national laboratories as well as defense and scientific industry on a wide range of programs related to nuclear weapons, non-proliferation, arms control verification, intelligence and the defense industrial base. In 2011 to 2012 I was also a candidate for the U.S. Senate.

I have served on the boards of two publicly traded corporations—Peabody Energy (NYSE: BTU), and Raven Industries (NASDAQ: RAVN)—as well as numerous advisory and non-profit boards including the CIA advisory board on Biological Warfare, the National Security Agency Research Advisory Board, and the Congressional Panel on the Nuclear Security Enterprise.

I am a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and a Rhodes Scholar with Masters and Doctoral degrees in International Relations.

While I was not a military pilot, I am an instrument rated private pilot. I am also the spouse of a retired air national guardsman, giving me a deeper understanding of the guard and the important role of families and family support for our airmen.

In sum, I am a seasoned and successful senior executive with very broad administrative and national security experience and deep roots in the United States Air Force.

#### MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

*Question.* If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish?

*Answer.* While I have been away from federal service for several years, my initial impression is that we must restore the readiness of the Air Force so that it can defend the vital national interests of the United States. In addition, I will work with Congress to address the constraints imposed by the Budget Control Act so that the Air Force can be cost effectively modernized to meet a range of threats now and in the future. I intend to bring renewed focus to the training and education of airmen, particularly with respect to the quality of command at the squadron and wing level. Working with my colleagues in the other services and under the guidance of the Secretary of Defense, I will seek to bring business-minded reforms to the Air Force to get high quality capabilities at the best price for the taxpayer. Finally, I expect to review and further develop the Air Force research and development priorities to ensure we are investing in basic and applied research that will keep the Air Force ahead of adversaries for the long term.

*Question.* In your view, what are the major challenges, if any, you would confront if confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force?

*Answer.* Since the passage of the Budget Control Act in 2011, the number of people in the Air Force has declined significantly while the demand for air and space power has increased. During this period the Air Force made supporting the warfighter a priority. In its 26th year of continuous combat operations, the decline in readiness to fight peer or near-peer adversaries and deferral of modernization is the greatest risk and the biggest challenge we face.

*Question.* If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these challenges?

*Answer.* While there is no instant fix to the readiness problem, we must immediately start recovering this year. Over the next 5 years, working with the Congress and the Secretary of Defense, I will seek to steadily increase the size of the Air Force to fill the vacancies we have for today's missions.

There are numerous modernization and procurement projects underway—fighters, bombers, tankers, intelligence platforms, space capabilities, and our nuclear deterrent. In each case, I will ensure we systematically review timelines and costs to get the capabilities we need in a timely way at the best possible price.

#### RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS

*Question.* What are your views on the state of the Air Force's relationship with the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?

*Answer.* Based on pre-confirmation meetings, I believe the relationship is good, but there is also room for improvement. I respect the role of the Congress under our constitutional system of divided power. If confirmed, I will seek to understand concerns and address them directly. I will also be forthright about the challenges we face and transparent in my recommendations to address those challenges.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between the Congress and the Air Force?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to develop a relationship of mutual respect based on trust and competence. I think it is important to communicate frequently and frankly. I will listen carefully to your ideas for reform and improvement.

A significant number of issues important to Members of Congress happen at the local level and can be handled at the local level, and I will seek to enable meaningful relationships between our Air Force units and your local offices.

*Question.* The committee has experienced frustration with the timeliness of responses from the Air Force on requests for information, questions and inserts for the record, and reports required by law.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure such requests from the committee are met in a timely manner, with comprehensive responses and detailed information?

Answer. I will review recently instituted process changes intended to improve the quality and timeliness of responses. I'll monitor results and direct that adjustments be made accordingly.

Part of the solution to this problem is likely to be improved responsiveness to informal requests for information so that formal reports are not required. In that regard, I will review congressional interaction guidance so that Congress gets accurate information in a timely way.

#### TORTURE AND ENHANCED INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES

*Question.* Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2–22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014, and required by Section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114–92)?

Answer. Yes

#### AIR FORCE MILITARY END STRENGTH

*Question.* Senior Air Force leaders have stated on many recent occasions that the Air Force is the smallest size in its history, that it cannot get any smaller, and has numerous manpower shortfalls, particularly in the maintenance and fighter pilot career fields. While the Air Force's fiscal year 2017 budget submission did not request an increase in military end strength, the fiscal year 2017 NDAA authorized an increase in Air Force Active end strength to 321,000. Subsequently, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force made statements that the Air Force's Active Duty military end strength should be increased to 350,000.

In your view, can the Air Force meet national defense objectives at the end strength levels authorized in the fiscal year 2017 NDAA? Could the Air Force meet those objectives at end strength levels in fiscal year 2018 and beyond that would be necessary when a return to 2011 Budget Control Act discretionary spending caps is mandated?

Answer. My initial view is that we have a mismatch between our strategic objectives and the military means we have available to confront and deter threats. The Air Force is too small for what the nation expects of it.

Unless the Air Force receives funds above the caps imposed by the Budget Control Act, it will not be able to achieve the readiness, modernization, and force structure required to meet emerging threats.

The 321,000 airmen authorized in this fiscal year is a step in the right direction to restore the readiness of the force. The Air Force has estimated that 350,000 airmen are required to perform today's missions. I have no reason to question that estimate.

*Question.* Do you believe the Air Force needs additional force shaping tools requiring legislation beyond those tools that Congress has provided the past few years, to include extending the numerous authorities that expire at the end of fiscal year 2018?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully examine existing authorities in order to determine which force shaping tools are necessary to recruit and retain skilled airmen. I am unaware of additional force shaping tools that are required at this time.

*Question.* What are your views on the appropriate size and mix of the Active Duty Air Force, and the Reserve components?

Answer. In general, our assessment of threats and our national security strategy to meet those threats should drive force structure—including the mix of Active, Guard, and Reserve forces. Particularly in the Air Force, Guard and Reserve units are highly capable and vital to our national security. I don't have sufficient information to determine the optimal mix of Active, Guard, and Reserve components at this time.

*Question.* What total force end strength should the Air Force field to support the National Military Strategy?

Answer. I understand that the classified national military strategy was updated in late 2016, but I have not yet been briefed on it. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense and the Air Force Chief of Staff to guide an evaluation of the force structure needed to support an updated military strategy.

*Question.* How would you, year over year, increase the Air Force's end strength? How long would it take to build an Air Force of 350,000 regular airmen, and what would be the cost?

Answer. The Air Force estimates that expansion of 4,000 to 5000 airmen a year to an end strength of 350,000 is a sustainable growth rate to recruit and train air-

men with the skills and experience levels required. At this time, I have no reason to question that estimate.

#### AIR FORCE RECRUITING AND RETENTION

*Question.* The recruitment and retention of quality airmen, officer and enlisted, Active Duty and Reserve, is vital to the Department of the Air Force.

How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the Air Force in successfully recruiting and retaining high caliber personnel during a sustained period of increasing or decreasing end strength?

*Answer.* The Air Force reports that it continues to meet its recruiting targets in both numbers and quality. Retention of highly trained airmen, particularly in high demand career fields, is a challenge and the Air Force is falling short on retention. This is particularly evident for pilots, but also in other well compensated specialties that are in demand outside the service.

*Question.* What initiatives would you take, if confirmed, to further improve Air Force recruiting and retention, in both the Active and Reserve components?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review the current recruiting and retention initiatives authorized by Congress and used by the Air Force to evaluate their effectiveness. It is my view that one of the most important things we can do to improve retention of pilots and maintainers is to improve readiness—flying hours, spare parts, aircraft availability etc. Readiness has a direct effect on morale and retention.

*Question.* What do you believe will be the impact, if any, of the new retirement system effective in fiscal year 2018 on recruiting and retention in the Air Force?

*Answer.* I am unaware of any reliable estimates of impact at this time. If confirmed, I will review available estimates of the impact.

#### PILOT RETENTION

*Question.* Anticipated increases in pilot hiring by commercial airlines are likely to apply pressure on aviator retention for all the services, but most acutely for the Air Force. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force has recently described this impending pilot shortage as a national problem, and not just limited to the armed forces. The U.S. Government is not likely to ever match the salaries of commercial airline companies, especially as shortages grow more acute and compensation increases to attract a shrinking pool of eligible pilots.

If confirmed, what immediate steps would you take to retain the necessary numbers of aviators in the Air Force?

*Answer.* While the bonus authority provided in the National Defense Authorization Act is helpful, we will not be able to compete on a purely monetary basis with commercial aviation over the next decade. Increased readiness levels—particularly flying hours—will likely have a direct effect on pilot retention. We will almost certainly have to increase pilot production and review other retention initiatives including reduced additional duty requirements, quality of service and quality of life improvements.

*Question.* Do you agree that aviation incentive pays and bonuses should be tailored to target communities experiencing shortfalls, and not uniformly offered to every pilot at the maximum rate regardless of platform?

*Answer.* Yes

*Question.* What other long-term initiatives would you use to provide a more lasting solution to aviator retention in the Air Force?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will evaluate all options and their effectiveness. In addition to monetary incentives, increases in readiness and flying hours will likely have a positive impact on retention and morale.

*Question.* Given the high cost of training new aviators, do you believe the Air Force is subsidizing the airline industry with a pipeline of ready-trained aviators at a fraction of the cost to the airline? How would you recommend addressing this dynamic?

*Answer.* The demand for commercial pilots is significantly higher than the supply, particularly for pilots with sufficient experience to fly for the airlines. I expect the airline industry to continue to recruit highly qualified pilots to meet their needs from all sources, including from the Air Force. In a free market, when pilots have completed their service obligation for the Air Force, I would not describe this as a subsidy.

There is a national shortage of pilots. While there are a number of private tuition assistance programs to increase the number of commercial pilots, experienced Air Force pilots will continue to be in demand.

*Question.* The Air Force states their most critical pilot shortages are in the fighter aircraft career fields, where the Air Force is currently 500 fighter pilots short of re-

quirements. The Air Force believes that shortfall could grow to more than 1,000 by the end of the decade. One of the challenges is that the Air Force no longer has a robust inventory of fighter cockpits sufficient to train all of the newly graduated pilots that would be required to sustain an experienced and combat ready Air Force.

What initiatives would you pursue to address the lack of training opportunities that would mitigate fighter pilot manning shortfalls and help sustain a healthy fighter pilot inventory?

Answer. In my discussions with the Air Force, the problem seems to be less of a lack of training opportunities and more of a lack of ability to train due to the small size of the force combined with high operations tempo. With 55 fighter squadrons and a shortfall of approximately 800 fighter pilots, the Air Force is unable to support today's fight and, at the same time, effectively train.

We cannot assume that the demand for fighter squadrons will decline in the near term. We need to increase manpower, ensure sufficient spare parts and trained maintainers, reduce additional duty requirements not related to flying and make as much time available as possible for mission training and readiness.

#### READINESS

*Question.* The Air Force Chief of Staff testified in March, 2016, "Readiness remains both an imperative and a struggle for us. Less than half of our combat aircraft are fully prepared for a high tech fight against a capable, well equipped force."

What is your assessment of the current readiness of the Air Force to meet national security requirements across the full spectrum of military operations?

Answer. Senior Air Force leaders have testified that less than 50 percent of the conventional air force is ready for all of the combat missions assigned to them. While the Air Force has put a priority on nuclear deterrent operations and support for counterterrorism, the Air Force is not fully ready to fight against a near-peer competitor.

*Question.* What is your assessment of Air Force readiness to conduct a mobilization in a national emergency?

I am not familiar with the specific readiness rates of Guard and Reserve forces. If confirmed, I will be looking more closely at readiness of different units, including the Guard and Reserve.

What specifically would a fully-funded whole "ready" force look like, and how much time would it take to achieve?

Answer. A ready force would have adequate well trained airmen to fight against a range of enemies in air, space and cyberspace. Airmen would have sufficient well-maintained equipment and flying hours in realistic situations to deter or prevail in any fight.

*Question.* What readiness-related accounts are you currently executing at maximum capacity, and if you were given more funding today, what would be the top near-term priorities in which you would invest to restore full spectrum readiness as soon as possible?

Answer. I have not yet been briefed on the specific accounts and the best path to recovery, but it seems clear that shortages of maintenance manpower and pilots is a very important factor. If confirmed, I will seek to understand more fully the priorities for recovery in order to systematically restore readiness.

*Question.* The Air Force has difficulty articulating its readiness levels because of the diverse missions it accomplishes, as well as its large proportion of garrison-based capabilities such as space and nuclear missile forces.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to more accurately measure and articulate comprehensive Air Force readiness levels?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the commanders of our Major Commands, and the Headquarters Air Force staff to validate our readiness measures and report them accurately.

#### FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE

*Question.* Recently, Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work issued implementation guidance on the civilian workforce hiring freeze directed by the President. The guidance authorized exemptions for "positions in shipyards and depots" that "perform direct management of inventory and direct maintenance of equipment."

For what types of workers and mission functions is hiring still frozen by the President's order?

Answer. I have been told by the Air Force that it is fully complying with the President's Executive Order and DOD guidance for freezing all civilian vacancies regardless of funding source. The Air Force is applying the authority to exempt spe-

cific positions as necessary to meet national security and public safety responsibilities.

*Question.* If every year you are losing depot workers to retirement and attrition, how are you going to be able to increase readiness if you need more funding and end strength, yet are unable to hire more civilians to work?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will evaluate the Air Force's exemption process and determine if depots need additional exemptions within the current authority granted to the Secretary of the Air Force.

*Question.* Which readiness-related functions are at the most risk because of this hiring freeze?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review which readiness-related functions, if any, are at risk.

#### ACQUISITION ISSUES

*Question.* The National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 made many changes to defense acquisition processes, including reinserting service chief influence and accountability into acquisition processes.

Do you support the acquisition reform provisions in the Fiscal Years 2017 National Defense Authorization Act?

*Answer.* We need to get good ideas from the drawing board to the flight line faster and at lower cost. I am becoming more familiar with the reforms enacted in this legislation—particularly experimentation and prototyping—and will seek to identify early opportunities to use these new tools. I support the intent of these changes.

*Question.* What roles do you see for developmental planning, prototyping, and experimentation for fielding of future Air Force capabilities?

*Answer.* Experimentation and prototyping are tools that can help get good ideas into the hands of airmen faster and at lower cost. Experimentation can help shift the culture from risk aversion to one that celebrates and rewards productive failure. A willingness to “fail fast”, harvest lessons and continue to innovate should be celebrated in a technically advanced Air Force.

*Question.* Do you agree the services should exploit non-developmental or commercial off-the-shelf solutions to meet Air Force requirements? Would this help put capabilities into the hands of airmen more quickly?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* How can the Department and the Air Force better access and integrate commercial and military technology to remain ahead of its potential adversaries?

*Answer.* Too many companies will not supply the Defense Department or other federal agencies because it is too hard to do business with the government. With private sector research and development exceeding that done in the military, we have to be able to buy capabilities developed in the commercial sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Air Force Acquisition Office to identify more and better ways to buy commercial products and services that are a good value for the Air Force.

*Question.* What additional acquisition-related reforms do you believe the Committee should consider?

*Answer.* I am not aware of additional reform authorities needed at this time. If confirmed, I will advise the committee of any additional acquisition reforms needed as I identify them.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you synchronize your acquisition responsibilities with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?

*Answer.* While the Secretary focuses on budgets and acquisition, and the Chief has authority for requirements, in reality, a close working relationship is essential to make decisions that are the best for the warfighter and get the best value we can for the taxpayer.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the size and capability of the Air Force acquisition workforce?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review the size and professional development of the acquisition workforce. While it varies by program, in general, I think we are well served by highly competent, empowered program managers with focused exceptional teams of professionals supporting the program manager.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the Department of the Air Force has an acquisition workforce of the size and capability needed to manage acquisition challenges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess the state of the acquisition workforce and make appropriate adjustments to the organization, operating guidelines and professional development.

*Question.* Recent press reports cite an email that you sent to a major defense contractor in which you advised the contractor to take the position that “competition

is not in the best interest of the government” in an attempt to avoid recompeting an existing contract with the Department of Energy.

What is your view about the value of competition for Department of Defense contracts?

Answer. Competition generally improves the quality and price of the things we buy and can drive innovation.

Conducting a contract competition for management of a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) is expensive and disruptive if there is not a clear benefit to doing so. In this particular case, the cost-plus fee the government paid for managing that lab was significantly less than the fee paid at other DOE labs which had been through re-competition more recently. In my opinion, it was unlikely that the DOE would have saved money or improved lab performance through re-competition of the management of this federal facility at that time. That perspective was the basis for my recommendation.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you advocate for competition of Air Force contracts?

Answer. Yes, if it's in the best interests of the government.

#### AUDIT READINESS

*Question.* The Department of Defense and the Services remain unable to achieve a clean financial statement audit. The Department also remains on the Government Accountability Office's list of high risk agencies and management systems for financial management and weapon system acquisition. Although audit-readiness has been a goal of the Department for decades, it has repeatedly failed to meet numerous congressionally directed audit-readiness deadlines.

What is your understanding and assessment of the Air Force's efforts to achieve a clean financial statement audit in 2017?

Answer. I support the Air Force having auditable financial statements and systems. If confirmed, I will assess the progress towards being audit ready by the end of fiscal year 2017.

*Question.* In your opinion, is the Department of the Air Force on track to achieve these objectives, particularly with regard to data quality, internal controls, and business process re-engineering?

Answer. I am not fully informed on the status of the Air Force efforts to comply with the requirement to have auditable financial statements. If confirmed, I will assess these matters.

*Question.* If not, what impediments may hinder the Air Force's ability to achieve this goal and how would you address them?

Answer. If confirmed, I will become more familiar with the progress and work remaining to be done in this area.

*Question.* What steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure the Air Force achieves these objectives without an unaffordable or unsustainable level of one-time fixes and manual work-arounds?

Answer. The Air Force should have auditable financial statements and Air Force financial systems should be configured in such a way that the finances are able to be audited.

#### NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE

*Question.* What are your views on the necessity of maintaining a nuclear triad?

Answer. We must maintain a safe, secure and reliable nuclear deterrent. The deterrent has been effective for over 70 years. The air and ground legs of the triad are a core mission of the Air Force and will continue to be a core mission.

*Question.* What are your views on the condition of the ground-based leg of the nuclear triad, and the urgency of the need for its recapitalization?

Answer. The Minuteman III is aging and it needs to be replaced. It was built in the 1970s, further life extension is no longer feasible and continuing to rely on it for the long term is not cost effective. If confirmed, I will be informed in more detail about the operational and cost of maintenance issues that will influence the timeline for replacing the Minuteman III.

*Question.* What priority would you give to the following Air Force nuclear modernization programs within the overall Air Force acquisition budget over the next 5 to 10 years: the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, the Long Range Standoff Weapon, a nuclear-capable variant of the F-35, and modernization of the nuclear command and control infrastructure?

Answer. I believe that each of these modernization efforts is an important element in the U.S. nuclear deterrent. The Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and Long Range Standoff Weapon will replace systems that are operating decades beyond



their originally intended service lives. The dual capable F-35 aircraft will continue to extend the umbrella of our nuclear deterrent over our allies.

I am not fully informed on the planned upgrades to our nuclear command, control, and communications systems and, if confirmed, will be fully briefed on this effort.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you affirm that you will give priority attention to continued implementation of the recommendations of the 2014 Nuclear Enterprise Review, especially those recommendations concerning the training, readiness, and morale of service personnel assigned to the nuclear mission?

Answer. Yes.

#### F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

*Question.* The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program, the largest and most expensive acquisition program in Department of Defense history, was formally initiated as a program of record in 2001, and subsequently adjusted to a total planned buy of 2,443 aircraft for the U.S. The program has not yet completed the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase, now projected for an additional seven-month delay and an additional \$500 million in cost overruns. The full rate production decision is not due at least until 2019, 18 years after its inception. At currently projected annual procurement rates, the last delivery of the Air Force's F-35A is now planned for the year 2040.

The Senate Armed Services Committee report accompanying S. 1376, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, required the Secretary of Defense to assess the current requirement for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter total program of record quantity, and then revalidate that quantity or identify a new requirement for the total number of F-35 aircraft the Department would ultimately procure. The Department provided an interim response that stated a reassessment of the total procurement quantity would be provided at a later date.

If confirmed, will you direct a reassessment of the Air Force's F-35A total program procurement quantity, currently established at 1,763 aircraft?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully support the review of the F-35 program as directed by Secretary Mattis so that the Air Force has the capability it needs to protect our vital national interests against threats now and in the future.

*Question.* President-elect Trump recently stated, "Based on the tremendous cost and cost overruns of the Lockheed Martin F-35, I have asked Boeing to price out a comparable F-18 Super Hornet!"

In your view, what are the alternatives for the Air Force to purchasing 1,763 F-35A fighter aircraft? Should the Air Force consider restarting the F-22 production line, purchasing advanced fourth generation fighters still in production such as enhanced F-15s and F-16s, or developing a next generation fighter aircraft beyond the F-35A's capabilities?

Answer. I fully support the review of the F-35 fighter program directed by Secretary Mattis.

As we evaluate needs and options, there are some things I will keep in mind.

The last time an American soldier or marine was killed in combat by enemy aircraft was August 15, 1953—during the Korean War. Public reports indicate that, in the current fight against ISIS, the United States and its coalition partners have used more than 40,000 munitions against the enemy with deadly effect. Ninety percent of these strikes were conducted by the United States Air Force.

While we have dominated the air for the last 26 years of continuous combat operations, we must continue to maintain the advantage in air and space power against emerging threats. Our potential adversaries are not standing still and there is cause for concern.

While current aircraft like the F-16, and F-15 can be effective in lower threat environments, against well defended targets and the newer aircraft being developed and deployed by our adversaries, they are likely not good enough.

As part of the review directed by Secretary Mattis, I would expect the Air Force to evaluate the cost of re-starting the F-22 production line and the effectiveness of the F-22 against emerging threats.

We need to have an Air Force with a range of capabilities that can win every fight. That will require modern, stealthy aircraft that can penetrate defended airspace, and see and kill the target before the enemy even knows what is happening.

Going forward, in procurement of major systems, time is money. We have to keep the time from conception to operational capability short. If we don't, technology of subsystems changes and design discipline erodes, which results in increased cost.

## B-21 LONG RANGE STRIKE BOMBER

*Question.* On October 27, 2015, the Air Force announced the award of the engineering and manufacturing development (EMD) contract for the new B-21 bomber. The fiscal year 2017 NDAA directed enhanced reporting of B-21 program cost, schedule, and performance data to the Government Accountability Office for more frequent assessments and focused oversight.

If confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, what will be your role in the management of the B-21 bomber program to insure cost, schedule, and performance remain on track?

*Answer.* The Chief of Staff and I will work together so that the requirements remain stable, achievable and affordable and the B-21 is delivered on time, and on budget.

*Question.* The Air Force publicly released the adjusted average procurement unit cost (APUC) of \$511 million in fiscal year 2010 constant dollars, and \$3.5 billion FYDP funding reduction, both of which were adjusted downward due to the independent cost estimate based on the winning bid.

In your view, why would it be necessary for the Air Force to keep the total value of the B-21 EMD program contract award classified, despite the fact that the Air Force budget has included an unclassified request for the EMD phase each year since fiscal year 2012 and each fiscal year's actual expenditures are publicly available?

*Answer.* As a nominee, I have not received classified briefings on the B-21. I am aware that there are ongoing conversations between the Air Force and members of the committee and members of the committee staff on this issue.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the committee is kept informed about classified programs and their costs so that the committee can perform its oversight role.

*Question.* What actions shall you take if confirmed to ensure that the provisions of section 211 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2013 are met?

*Answer.* The B-21 has been designed from the outset to be a nuclear capable bomber. Nuclear capability is not a modification or "add-on" feature. My role will be to ensure that the B-21 is capable of carrying strategic nuclear weapons when it achieves initial operating capability and that it will be certified to use nuclear weapons not less than 2 years later.

I have been informed at the unclassified level that nuclear certification requirements have been confirmed at the program's latest design review.

## PRESIDENTIAL AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT (PAR)

*Question.* The Air Force's total cost estimate for PAR program development is \$4.3 billion in "then-year" dollars. After President-elect Trump stated, "costs are out of control, more than \$4 billion," the Boeing CEO stated his company will, "get it done for less than that... We're going to make sure that he gets the best capability and that it's done affordably."

If confirmed, how will you ensure the Air Force will keep the development costs "less than that," especially as the Air Force plans to sign a development contract with a cost-plus reimbursement structure?

*Answer.* In January, Secretary Mattis directed the Deputy Secretary of Defense to guide a review of the requirements for the aircraft in coordination with the White House Military Office in order to reduce program costs.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Air Force meets the Administration's intent to provide the best taxpayer value while meeting executive airlift needs for the Office of the President.

## EC-130H COMPASS CALL RECAPITALIZATION PROGRAM

*Question.* The Air Force has plans to buy 10 business jet aircraft to replace the capabilities provided by the current EC-130H Compass Call aircraft. These plans include using some form of rapid acquisition procedures that would lead to selecting a particular airframe very quickly. This approach causes some concern because selecting an aircraft for this program could give the selected aircraft contractor a particular edge winning later competitions for modernization programs for other Air Force capabilities, such as programs to modernize the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), signals intelligence aircraft and airborne warning and control aircraft.

How would you suggest the Air Force ensure that subsequent competitions are not unduly influenced by a near-term rapid acquisition?

Answer. It is my understanding that one contractor filed a bid protest regarding the Compass Call program in February and that it is currently under review.

While I have not been briefed on the bids or the protest, it is my understanding that the Compass Call aircraft replacement program is quite different from the modernization of JSTARS.

In the case of Compass Call, the Air Force needs a contractor to move the current equipment into a new airframe. It's a mechanical design and wiring job.

Modernization of JSTARS will be much more complex, involving the development of an improved JSTARS system. This is a very different challenge requiring different capabilities from the contractor.

Based on this understanding, it is my view that the Air Force should approach each competition independently to get the right contractor for each job, with the appropriate capabilities, in order to get the best value for the taxpayer.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Air Force reviews the results of the bid protest and acts accordingly.

*Question.* If the Air Force cannot provide such assurances now, should the Air Force hold a broader competition now for aircraft that would reach beyond the more narrowly defined Compass Call modernization program?

Answer. I understand that one contractor has challenged the bid process and I have not been briefed on the proposals or the challenge. That said, based on my understanding of the difference in these projects set out above, my view is that the Air Force shouldn't increase the cost and delay the new airframe for Compass Call to benefit higher capability contractors who are likely very competitive for JSTARS.

The Air Force needs a robust industrial base and I see no advantage to the Air Force mission or the taxpayer from blending these two very different procurements.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Air Force takes into account the results of the bid challenge and proceeds accordingly.

#### REPLACEMENT OF THE E-4B NATIONAL AIRBORNE OPERATIONS CENTER (NAOC)

*Question.* The E-4B will be reaching end of life in the late 2020's. This is a unique asset for performing the full range of the Secretary of Defense's Title 10 responsibilities, including nuclear command, control and communications. There is concern that a possible split of the missions of the NAOC amongst separate future aircraft could cause a loss of functionality and interplay between the E-4B's current mission sets.

What are your views on the E-4B replacement program, and will you ensure that any replacement program ensures that the Air Force will retain the ability to perform the full E-4B mission set?

Answer. I understand that the Air Force is conducting an analysis of alternatives for the replacement of the National Airborne Operations Center. The analysis is due in fiscal year 2018. If confirmed, I will keep the committee informed on the results of this review.

#### MUNITIONS

*Question.* Air Force munitions inventories, particularly those of precision guided munitions, have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies and operations short of major combat, such as in the current operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Air Force has sufficient inventories of munitions to meet combatant commanders' needs?

Answer. Over the past 2½ years, the Air Force has reportedly used over 40,000 munitions in operations against ISIS. Congress has supported the Air Force by authorizing Overseas Contingency Operation funds to replenish these munitions.

It is my understanding that the Air Force is using these funds to buy munitions and industry has reached the limit for current industrial capacity for some munitions.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Air Force continues to explore opportunities to increase munitions manufacturing capacity.

This may also be an area where the three military services need to work more closely together and with industry to improve advanced manufacturing capability so that industry can respond to the needs of the service.

*Question.* How will the Air Force adapt to self-imposed Department of Defense restrictions on area attack and denial munitions in accordance with the Ottawa Agreements?

Answer. With respect to area denial munitions, the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines (APL) bans the development, production, acquisition, stock-

piling, and retention of all anti-personnel landmines. The U.S. is not a signatory to the Ottawa Convention. However, there is a Presidential Policy Directive that restricts use of anti-personnel landmines. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continues to work closely with the Army on alternatives to anti-personnel landmines.

With respect to area attack munitions, I am aware that Department of Defense (DOD) policy restricts the use and sale of cluster munitions after 2018 that have a greater than one percent chance of leaving unexploded ordnance behind on the battlefield. It is my understanding that the Air Force currently has approximately 2,000 area attack and denial munitions that meet the DOD policy and will continue to be available for warfighter use after the January 2019 deadline. In addition to these munitions, it is my understanding that the Air Force is developing alternative munitions that will meet both the warfighter area attack requirements and the DOD cluster munitions policy.

#### SPACE

*Question.* The Secretary of the Air Force was assigned new oversight responsibilities for space programs in the Department of Defense when the position was designated as the principal DOD space adviser (PDSA).

If confirmed, would you propose any changes to National Security space policy and programs?

*Answer.* I look forward to my responsibilities as principal DOD space advisor and chairing the Defense Space Council. The Air Force is responsible for over 90 percent of the Defense Department's space assets on orbit and the nation is heavily dependent on space capabilities for navigation, communication, command and control, intelligence, and precision targeting.

I will seek to lead Department efforts to deepen our understanding of the growing threat to our space assets, refine our strategy for space control, and organize and equip the Air Force to meet the threat. In addressing these issues, I will work closely with the other services and federal agencies to align efforts where needed.

*Question.* There is growing concern about the vulnerability of our nation's space-based systems and its supporting architecture.

Do you agree, and, if so, what would be your priorities for addressing these vulnerabilities?

*Answer.* Yes.

As mentioned above, I will seek to lead Department efforts to deepen our understanding of the growing threat to our space assets, refine our strategy for space control, and organize and equip the Air Force to meet the threat. In addressing these issues, I will work closely with the other services and federal agencies to align efforts where needed.

*Question.* What do you perceive as the threats to our national security space satellites?

*Answer.* Space is no longer a sanctuary. In any conflict, it will be a contested environment. I was serving on the House Intelligence Committee when China successfully tested an anti-satellite missile nearly a decade ago. While I have not been briefed on classified matters for several years, it is my understanding that the threat to space assets has continued to advance.

*Question.* Do you support the development of offensive space control capabilities to counter those threats?

*Answer.* Yes. We need to think of air, near-space and space as a continuum that the United States must protect through all phases of potential conflict.

*Question.* According to a recent study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), fragmented leadership has undermined the Department's ability to deliver space capabilities to the warfighter on time and on budget. One repeated cause for concern has been fractured decision-making and many layers of bureaucracy.

Do you believe the existing space acquisition structure is sufficient? If not, what changes do you believe are appropriate?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review the acquisition structure for space to ensure the warfighter is getting the capabilities we need at a reasonable price.

*Question.* Do you support more competition in the launch of Department of Defense payloads?

*Answer.* I believe competition can result in cost savings for the government. At the same time, commercial launch providers may not be able to meet launch requirements for national security space payloads as those requirements are currently crafted.

I also believe that it is very difficult for commercial launch providers to supply government customers at competitive prices because of the constraints imposed by federal acquisition rules. If those rules are the best way to serve the Air Force and

the taxpayer well over the long term, their use is justifiable. But if our processes and regulations are impeding the accomplishment of the mission, we should review our processes and improve them.

*Question.* The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act prohibits the use of Russian rocket engines after December 31, 2022. Are you committed to ending United States dependence on the use of Russian rocket engines as soon as possible, perhaps even before December 31, 2022?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the Air Force's commitment to ending United States dependence on the Russian RD-180 engine. The Air Force is currently working with industry to develop launch capability and transition from the RD-180. I understand that the Air Force estimates it will take until 2022 to have new launch capability available. I understand that the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act authorized the Air Force to buy 18 more RD-180 engines through December 31, 2022 for launches through 2024. If the transition can be done faster than 2022, I would support an earlier transition.

#### CYBER AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE

*Question.* Cyber is an issue that cuts across many departments and agencies of the Federal Government, from the intelligence community to the Department of Defense, the FBI, Homeland Security, the State Department, the Justice Department, and so on. This fact, and the complexities associated with the cyber domain, severely challenges the ability of diverse agencies to integrate and collaborate effectively.

Do you believe the Air Force is organized and postured appropriately to address the full spectrum of cyber threats to Air Force air, space, and cyberspace operations?

*Answer.* While the Air Force is currently providing cyber forces to Combatant and Joint Commanders, I don't think any element of government or the private sector is prepared for the full spectrum of cyber threats.

*Question.* Do you have recommendations for improving inter-service and inter-agency orchestration of offensive and defense cyber capabilities?

*Answer.* While the strongest national capability for both cyber offense and cyber defense is in the National Security Agency, each of the services also have cyber forces. There likely needs to be a focus in all three services on developing common understanding of cyber operational capabilities, training and deployment processes as well as developing specific areas of focus and expertise.

*Question.* As the Department prepares to release its new electronic warfare (EW) strategy, and considering the Air Force has relied upon Navy and Marine Corps EW capabilities since retiring the EF-111 Raven aircraft in 1998:

How do you envision the future of Air Force electronic warfare capabilities?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Air Force provides the Defense Department's electronic warfare capability against command and control systems with EC-130H COMPASS CALL aircraft. The Navy and Marine Corps provide the majority of the Defense Department's electronic warfare capacity against radar with the EA-6B and EA-18G.

Specialization by agreement among the services in the kind of electronic warfare capabilities provided to combatant commanders makes sense to me for assets that are important, but small in numbers.

*Question.* Because of the difficulty in determining and defining the point where cyber operations and electronic warfare operations merge, how would you organize, train, and equip the Air Force to minimize gaps and seams with regard to threat assessment, requirements determination, material solutions, and concept of operations development for these two critical mission areas?

*Answer.* The Air Force has collocated the divisions responsible for cyber operations, cyber requirements, and electronic warfare in the Pentagon to allow for collaboration on requirements and programs.

While both electronic warfare and cyber operations can have similar effects—disabling an enemy's systems rather than physically destroying them—the method, equipment and concept of operations is quite different.

Ultimately, a combatant commander must have an integrated system of command and control in order to accomplish military objectives by a variety of means.

#### AIR FORCE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

*Question.* The Air Force's Air Operations Center 10.2 system upgrade program recently experienced a Critical Change (Major Automated Information System equivalent to a Nunn-McCurdy critical program breach) that resulted in development costs doubling and a 3-year delay.

What major improvements would you like to see made in the Air Force's development and deployment of major information technology systems?

Answer. If confirmed, I will become more familiar with this particular program.

As a general principle, information technology is likely an area where it makes sense to take advantage of commercially available systems, or allow greater flexibility to buy new capabilities rapidly when it can be done securely or with reasonably low risk.

*Question.* How will you encourage process and cultural change in organizations so that they maximize the benefits that new enterprise information technology systems can offer in terms of cost savings and efficiency?

Answer. The potential cost savings from enterprise information technology systems and how the Air Force has organized its IT systems is an area where I will have to learn more, if confirmed.

From my experience in higher education and child welfare, improvements in information technology enterprise systems usually take longer and cost more than estimated—particularly when transitioning data and tools from legacy systems.

Though new enterprise IT systems may enable performance improvements, they don't always improve efficiency or save money.

*Question.* What is the relationship between Air Force efforts at implementing enterprise information technology programs and supporting computing services and infrastructure to support Air Force missions, and efforts being undertaken by the Defense Information Systems Agency?

Answer. If confirmed, I will need to learn more about how the Air Force is modernizing its information technology systems, and how it can improve performance and reduce cost by aligning with or relying upon the Defense Information Systems Agency.

*Question.* How will you ensure that appropriate business process reengineering is undertaken and accomplished before initiating new business systems, IT program development, and deployment?

Answer. While business process reengineering is required by statute before initiating a new business system acquisition, it is also just good management practice to continually review processes to streamline and eliminate unneeded steps at all levels of the organization.

While the motivation to reduce unnecessary costs that drives the private sector to continuously improve processes does not exist in government, the frustration of inefficient processes contributes to dissatisfaction among high performing airmen and wastes taxpayer money.

If confirmed, process reengineering will be required before any business system acquisition. More importantly, if confirmed, I would seek to reinforce that process improvement teams and other quality management tools are the standard way the Air Force should operate in general, and not just when buying information technology.

*Question.* What role will the Air Force's research and testing enterprise play in the development and deployment of Air Force business IT systems?

Answer. With a much larger commercial market, business IT systems an area where the Air Force can benefit from private sector development and will more than likely focus on purchasing commercial products rather than research and development of unique systems.

If confirmed, I would anticipate that the Air Force will continue to advance science and technology in intelligent and autonomous systems, complex data visualization, human/machine interface, computer science, and cybersecurity.

#### AIR FORCE-RELATED DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE

*Question.* What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Air Force's organic and commercial defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?

Answer. If confirmed, I will examine these systems and processes. I understand that Air Force policy requires acquisition leaders to assess the industrial base throughout each program's lifecycle, and there are defense department efforts to evaluate and ensure access to a robust defense industrial base. I am nonetheless generally concerned that the difficulty of doing business with the government discourages medium and small businesses and innovative technically oriented businesses from viewing the defense department as a desirable customer. In a reversal from the immediate post-World War II era, there is by far more research and development done in the commercial sector than done by the defense department. We must ensure that the Air Force can benefit from private sector innovation.

*Question.* How should Air Force acquisition leaders consider impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that the Air Force takes industrial base impact into consideration when planning major procurement and long term support of weapons systems and munitions. When possible, maintaining multiple sources of supply for components and leveraging commercially capability and capacity benefits the Air Force.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to improve identification, monitoring, assessment, and timely actions to ensure that risk in the Air Force-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to develop, produce, and sustain technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?

*Answer.* At this time, I do not have any changes in mind. If confirmed, I will keep the committee informed if I identify changes that need to be made.

#### AIR FORCE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

*Question.* What is your understanding and assessment of the role that Air Force science and technology programs have played and will play in developing capabilities for current and future Air Force systems?

*Answer.* The Air Force science and technology program advances capabilities in all mission areas. More than at any time in our history, rapid innovation moved quickly to the battlefield will determine who will prevail in conflict. The Air Force must continue to invest in path-breaking research and development and get new capabilities from the lab bench to the flight line faster than our adversaries.

*Question.* How will you ensure that promising Air Force science and technology programs will successfully transition to operational warfighting capabilities?

*Answer.* We need to tighten the connection between intelligence, operations, research and acquisition. I strongly support rapid prototyping and experimentation on tight time cycles for new capabilities, and using rapid acquisition authorities to provide needed capability to the warfighter.

*Question.* If confirmed, what metrics would you use to judge the value and the investment level in Air Force science and technology programs?

*Answer.* Metrics for research and development are inherently difficult and often are not related to operational success. Common metrics used in higher education and commercial industry like patents awarded, license agreements signed, percent of sales from new products and royalty revenue are not really relevant to Air Force research. Moreover, the Federal Government has more latitude to support basic research with long term potential than the private sector, which often operates in a maximum 3 to 5 year time horizon.

I am unaware of what metrics the Air Force currently uses to evaluate the value of science and technology programs, or how the Air Force prioritizes research areas.

I would expect metrics like number of people involved in research, percent of the budget spent on research, numbers of Ph.D. students or research scientists engaged in Air Force sponsored projects, numbers of active projects, numbers of Small Business Innovative Research grants, numbers of active research partnerships and average project duration are likely monitored and measured by the Air Force research enterprise.

Given that even the best metrics are of questionable value in research enterprises, it is probably more important to seek to develop and protect a sub-culture in Air Force research and development that cultivates and rewards highly creative innovators, encourages interdisciplinary partnerships, and rewards fast-paced productive failure.

#### RELIGIOUS GUIDELINES

*Question.* In your view, do Department of Defense policies concerning religious accommodation in the military appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs, including individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

*Answer.* Air Force commanders have a responsibility to ensure that the spiritual needs of all airmen are met. This responsibility, unique to the military, is carried out through the Chaplain Corps. Commanders must avoid the official endorsement of any particular religion, while also being able to freely exercise their own religious beliefs. Air Force policy must continue to ensure that all airmen are able to choose to practice their particular religion or subscribe to no religious belief at all.

*Question.* Do you agree that the primary role of the military chaplaincy is to provide for the free exercise of religion by all servicemembers and that military chap-

lains are sufficiently trained to perform or provide for this constitutional right in today's pluralistic military community? If not, why not?

Answer. The Air Force Chaplain Corps provides spiritual care and ensures that the spiritual needs of all airmen and their families are met. A chaplain advises Air Force leaders on matters related to religious, spiritual, ethical, moral and morale concerns and advocates for the religious and spiritual needs of airmen and their families.

The Chaplain is a valuable member of the military unit as airmen deal with not only the joys and pains of life that all of us know, but with the unique spiritual questions and pressures combatants face. In my experience on Active Duty and as the wife of a guardsman, military chaplains at the unit level carry out these responsibilities well.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the role of military chaplains to provide for the religious and spiritual well-being of all members of the armed forces, regardless of their faith beliefs?

Answer. Air Force Chaplains "provide and provide for" the spiritual needs of airmen and their families. If the chaplain cannot personally "provide" for the need of the airmen and their family due to tenets of their faith, they seek to "provide for" the need of the airmen and the family.

Chaplains provide religious worship and rites, pastoral care, counseling and spiritual care for airmen. Chaplains will not perform duties incompatible with their faith and noncombatant status.

*Question.* Do you believe that current policies provide sufficient guidance to military chaplains who conduct non-religious command training where attendance is required or encouraged to allow chaplains to discuss their religious faith anecdotally and respectfully in a pluralistic setting to support the training objectives?

Answer. I am not familiar with the specific details of current guidance to military chaplains. It is my understanding that Air Force guidance makes clear that chaplains adhere to the tenets of their faith and they are not required to participate in religious activities, including public prayer, which are inconsistent with their faith tradition.

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

*Question.* What is your assessment of the Air Force's sexual assault prevention and response program?

Answer. I served on the House Armed Services Committee in 2003 when the Air Force Academy sexual assault scandal led to intense Congressional scrutiny. The Fowler Commission, which investigated the Air Force Academy scandal, concluded that a systematic failure in Air Force leadership helped foster a breakdown in values which led to the pervasiveness of sexual assaults.

In the almost 15 years since that scandal, I think the Air Force has made significant progress in three areas.

First, the systems in place to support and respond to victims are better and are more widely known. The procedure that allows airmen to initially get care without having to commit to participating in a criminal investigation as a victim is widely understood and used. The Air Force is consolidating violence response, recovery and care under the Air Force Surgeon General to provide airmen and commanders comprehensive clinical and non-clinical response support, especially during a crisis.

Second, the education and training of airmen about sexual assault prevention is standard practice and widely deployed.

Third, Commander accountability for command climate, as well as responsibility for the thorough and impartial investigation of and response to allegations of assault have been reinforced.

While it is difficult to assess, the increase in sexual assault reporting in the Air Force over the past few years is, I think, a positive sign of increased trust in the system that did not exist with respect to the Academy and Air Force leadership in 2003.

*Question.* What additional steps would you take, if confirmed, to address the problem of sexual assaults in the Air Force?

Answer. If confirmed, my objective will be to reduce the incidence of sexual assault in the Air Force, to ensure victims are cared for, to ensure allegations are investigated properly, to ensure perpetrators of sexual assault are appropriately punished, and to ensure that retaliation against victims who report is not tolerated.

I am aware that the Air Force is seeking to get beyond "awareness" to implement prevention strategies that have proven results, like bystander intervention training. Programs like bystander training and focusing on leadership excellence at the



squadron level is intended to address the culture and climate issues, rather than just the manifestation of harassment, assault or retaliation.

As a university president responsible for implementing the requirements of Title IX on my campus, I am familiar with bystander education and think that this may help reduce the incidence of sexual assault in the Air Force by influencing the peer culture in Air Force units. As part of this effort, I am aware that the Air Force is in the process of hiring a prevention specialist at the installation level who will be responsible for implementing sexual assault and violence prevention activities that have proven to be effective. If confirmed, I would support this initiative.

*Question.* What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources the Air Force has in place to prevent sexual assaults and to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault?

*Answer.* My understanding of awareness and prevention training is addressed in the previous answer.

The Air Force has Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution teams which are formed to respond to sexual assault cases. These units receive comprehensive training to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the adequacy of Air Force resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

*Answer.* The Air Force has a Special Victims' Counsel Program to provide legal representation to victims of sexual assault.

The Air Force also has a Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution capability to ensure that investigations comply with best practices and victims get needed support. The Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution capability is made up of specially trained Air Force Office of Special Investigation agents, judge advocates (including trial counsel), paralegals, and victim liaisons. Air Force personnel in these positions are specially trained and qualified individuals assigned on a case-by-case basis.

Once an investigation is initiated, a Victim Witness Assistance Program liaison is assigned to help the victim to navigate the military justice system, provide the victim case information, help the victim use military and civilian community resources, and facilitate access to legal assistance.

Medical and psychological help for victims is consolidated under the office of the Surgeon General.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the Department of the Air Force special victim's counsel program?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Air Force began the Special Victims' Counsel program in 2013 and that this program has helped to build trust in the military justice process. It gives victims more meaningful input on the disposition and resolution of their cases.

Since 2013, over 2,800 clients, of which 83 have been children, have been represented by special victim's counsel. According to anonymous survey results provided to clients at the end of the case, 99 percent of respondents would recommend a special victim's counsel to others who have reported a sexual assault and 99 percent were satisfied with their representation.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove the disposition authority from military commanders over violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

*Answer.* The foundation of military discipline is the commander's authority to set standards, to require airmen to meet those standards, and to hold airmen appropriately accountable when they fail to meet standards. The military justice system is the commander's ultimate tool to ensure a disciplined force. Removing commanders' disposition authority undermines the effectiveness of the military justice system.

Commanders do not and cannot make their decisions in a legal vacuum. Instead, every commander is informed and advised by his or her staff judge advocate throughout the life of a case, from report and investigation through disposition and adjudication. The military justice system depends on both a judge advocate who advises a commander and the commander who then decides what happens with a case. This system best ensures fairness, justice, and discipline and keeps the commander responsible and accountable for the climate, training, prevention and response to infractions in the unit.

Our primary objective should be to reduce the incidence of sexual assault. Command responsibility is vital to the success of that effort.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the Air Force's protections against retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault?

Answer. All reports of sexual assault as well as all reports of retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault or any crime must be investigated. Substantiated allegations must be referred for appropriate command action.

Recognizing the issues and the importance of the issues surrounding retaliation, the Air Force has already taken significant steps to prevent and respond to retaliation, especially related to reports of sexual assault.

Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Victim Advocates and Special Victims' Counsel are able to identify victims' concerns about retaliation and address them early and effectively through the installation Case Management Group—the support system led by commanders.

Complaints about retaliation can also be made to and handled by command, AF Office of Special Investigations, the staff judge advocate, the inspector general, or the Equal Opportunity office.

#### CHILD ABUSE IN MILITARY FAMILIES

*Question.* Recent press reports indicate that the number of incidents of child abuse in military families has increased.

What is your understanding of the extent of this issue in the Air Force, and if confirmed, what actions will you take to address it?

Answer. I have been informed that the rate of child maltreatment in the Air Force has remained stable at a low rate for over a decade.

The Air Force Family Advocacy Program provides clinical services, safety planning, risk management, prevention services and advocacy to military families. Early identification and reporting to the Family Advocacy Program is the key to keeping children and families safe.

As a former foster and adoptive parent and the former Cabinet Secretary for the child welfare system in New Mexico, the issues surrounding child abuse and neglect and responses to it are familiar to me. If confirmed, I will continue to assess the effectiveness of these programs.

#### MILITARY HEALTH CARE

*Question.* Section 702 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 transferred oversight and management of military hospitals and clinics from the military services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).

How would you ensure a rapid and efficient transfer of the operations of Air Force medical facilities to the DHA?

Answer. I understand that planning for the transition is underway and that the Air Force is committed to supporting a timely transfer of operations as required by the law. If confirmed, I will ensure an efficient transfer of oversight and management of hospital and clinic operations.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Air Force reduces its medical headquarters staffs and infrastructure to reflect the changing scope and size of its mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will become more familiar with this transition. It is my understanding that the Air Force and the other services are planning the transition to Defense Health Agency management of hospitals and clinics. If confirmed, I will rely on the Surgeon General to ensure there is a fully developed plan that identifies the specific functions and assets to be transferred to the Defense Health Agency or eliminated as redundant. The Air Force Surgeon General will be assigned appropriate staff at the headquarters level to perform remaining responsibilities.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the quality of health care and access to health care provided to Air Force military personnel and their families?

Answer. It is my understanding that satisfaction with quality of health care delivered at Air Force military treatment facilities has consistently scored over 95 percent with the military health system goal being 90 percent. Satisfaction with inpatient care has consistently been between the 75th and 90th percentile.

I also understand that the Air Force is in its second year of a "Trusted Care" initiative that applies the same principles used in aviation safety to the goal of eliminating instances of harm to patients. It is my understanding that there is a significant reduction of "harm events" with strong performance against national healthcare benchmarks.

Finally, to improve healthcare access, the Air Force has implemented policies to increase the number of same day appointments while streamlining or eliminating specialty care referrals.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work with the Air Force Surgeon General to improve the healthcare experience for Air Force military personnel and their families?

Answer. If confirmed, I will rely on the Air Force Surgeon General to continue to operate an exceptional healthcare system using best practices for safety, quality, and access.

More than one million patients entrust the Air Force with their healthcare. Through continuous process improvements and development of performance management metrics, the Air Force Medical Service continues to meet or exceed most of the Military Health System benchmarks for patient satisfaction and outcomes.

I will continue to support this system.

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Question.* What is your assessment of the Air Force's suicide prevention program? Answer. Suicide is a terrible tragedy for the individual and for so many others whose lives are forever changed—family, friends, and colleagues. It is also a loss for the Air Force. Too often, it leaves people wondering what they could have done, or how they failed to see the pain of someone close.

While the Air Force is committed to suicide prevention, and has a number of initiatives underway to address it, I am unfamiliar with the effectiveness or deployment of these efforts. If confirmed, I will be fully briefed on these programs to evaluate what else should be done.

Sadly, as a university president, the challenges of depression and other mental health issues and suicide prevention are not unfamiliar to me. Suicide among the under 25 age group is a major issue in society at large.

*Question.* If confirmed, what role would you play in shaping suicide prevention programs and policies for the Department of the Air Force to prevent suicides and increase the resiliency of airmen and their families?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support the continued development and support of effective suicide prevention strategies by the command leadership and the Surgeon General.

#### SENIOR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ACCOUNTABILITY

*Question.* While representative of a small number of individuals in DOD, reports of abuses of rank and authority by senior military and civilian leaders and failures to perform up to accepted standards are frequently received. Whistleblowers and victims of such abuses often report that they felt that no one would pay attention to or believe their complaints. Accusations of unduly lenient treatment of senior officers and senior officials against whom accusations have been substantiated are also frequently heard.

What are your views regarding the appropriate standard of accountability for senior civilian and military leaders of the Department?

Answer. I expect senior leaders to lead by example and uphold the high standards of behavior we expect of every airmen. Allegations of inappropriate behavior by senior leaders will be taken seriously, investigated fairly and dealt with appropriately.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that senior leaders of the Air Force are held accountable for their actions and performance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that allegations are investigated and that substantiated allegations are referred for appropriate command action.

#### BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENTS

*Question.* The Department of Defense has repeatedly requested a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

Do you believe another BRAC round is necessary? If so, why?

Answer. I understand the Air Force believes it has significant excess infrastructure. I have not yet reached the same conclusion based on the information I have seen. If confirmed, I will review the supporting analysis carefully.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, how would you set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation within the Department of the Air Force?

Answer. If confirmed, and Congress were to authorize a DOD BRAC round, I would direct the Department to evaluate the operational needs of the Air Force to accomplish the missions that the nation expects of us. I believe threat drives strategy, strategy drives force structure and force structure drives infrastructure needs. I would also direct an assessment of projected needs taking into account new and emerging technologies including increasing numbers of remotely piloted vehicles, high performance fighters, joint operations training, and new weapons systems on the distant horizon that may require different training and basing options than we have today.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the responsibilities of the Air Force in working with local communities with respect to property disposal if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round?

*Answer.* In the wake of previous closures, the Air Force worked with local communities so that base closure could result in redevelopments into trade ports, industrial, recreational, and residential areas. This effort to redevelop was successful in some communities and less successful in others. The Air Force must also address any environmental cleanup responsibilities associated with base closure.

*Question.* It has been noted repeatedly that the 2005 BRAC round resulted in major and unanticipated implementation costs and saved far less money than originally estimated.

What is your understanding of why such cost growth and lower realized savings occurred?

*Answer.* I was skeptical of cost saving estimates while serving in the House of Representatives before the 2005 BRAC round. At that time, the Defense Department could not provide a clear explanation of the basis for their cost estimates or a clear accounting of what savings had been realized from the previous round of BRAC.

*Question.* How do you believe such issues could be addressed in a future BRAC round?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to improve the quality of analysis done on this issue so that the Defense Department and the Congress can make good decisions informed by rigorous analysis and validated data. In that way, we can make better decisions to support the mission at the lowest cost for the taxpayer.

#### OPERATIONAL ENERGY

*Question.* In his responses to the advance policy questions from this committee, Secretary Mattis talked about his time in Iraq, and how he called upon the Department to “unleash us from the tether of fuel.” He stated that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that were exploited by the enemy.”

Do you believe this issue remains a challenge for the Department of Defense?

*Answer.* Yes. Supporting forward deployed troops and bases with fuel and water is a very expensive Air Force mission.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, what specific steps will you take to unleash the Air Force from the tether of fuel?

*Answer.* I will support the continued research, development and deployment of technologies that reduce fuel use and turn waste into fuel and water at forward locations. I must recuse myself from particular matters involving the research being done at the South Dakota School of Mines.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, what priorities would you establish for defense investments in and deployment of operational energy technologies to increase the combat capabilities of warfighters, reduce logistical burdens, and enhance mission assurance on our installations?

*Answer.* If confirmed I would continue to support a range of energy initiatives, particularly related to reducing the logistical burdens of energy supply at forward locations through advanced research and development.

On our installations, I would expect the Air Force to continue to enhance energy assurance by reducing reliance on single external sources of supply and improving energy efficiency in ways that save money. Efforts that provide the Air Force with the ability to continue operations, recover from energy interruptions, and sustain the mission are priorities.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will you consider operational forces’ energy needs and vulnerabilities during training exercises, operational plans, and wargames?

*Answer.* I understand that war games and studies have concluded that while U.S. Forces are considerably more lethal than in the mid-1990s, they consume more fuel. Adversary attacks on fuel storage and resupply systems should be factored into training exercises, operational plans, and wargames.

#### ENERGY AND ACQUISITION

*Question.* How can our acquisition systems better incorporate the use of energy in military platforms, and how, if at all, are assessments of future requirements taking into account energy needs as a key performance parameter?

*Answer.* When we buy systems, energy use should be a consideration.

## ENERGY RESILIENCY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ISIL

*Question.* Back in July after a coup attempt, the Turkish Government cut off power to Incirlik Air Base, which is the primary platform for launching coalition airstrikes in the fight against ISIL. For roughly a week, deployed units had to operate relying backup generators, which is expensive and is certainly not the preferred method of operation given the demanding tempo of sorties against ISIL. Just last month, the Air Force described an incident in the past (via open source) in which a RPA mission based in the U.S. was flying a targeting mission overseas. Because of a power outage stateside, the RPA feed temporarily lost visual and the target was able to get “away and is able to continue plotting against the U.S. and our allies.”

If you are confirmed, how will you specifically address and make energy resiliency and mission assurance a priority for the Air Force, to including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to improve combat capability for deployed units on our military installations and forward operating bases?

*Answer.* Ensuring the Air Force has the energy it requires where and when it needs it is critical to the mission. I am aware that recently the Air Force issued its overarching policy for energy projects. One of the priorities is to make sure critical missions and capabilities continue to have the energy to function. If confirmed, I will continue to support this effort.

*Question.* Do you support the J-4’s enforcement of the energy supportability key performance parameter in the requirements process?

*Answer.* The energy key performance parameter is mandated by statute and Defense Department directive for all new acquisition programs that have an operational energy impact. The Air Force will comply with the requirement.

*Question.* Section 2805 of the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA gave the Department new authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and mission assurance, to help address and mitigate against incidents like Incirlik, not to mention secure micro-grids to help prevent cyber-attacks.

If you are confirmed, will you commit to use section 2805 to support mission critical functions, and address known energy vulnerabilities with projects that are resilient and renewable?

*Answer.* Yes.

## ENVIRONMENT

*Question.* If confirmed, will you comply with environmental regulations, laws and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you make the same level of investment for DOD’s Environmental Research Programs?

*Answer.* I understand that the 5 year defense program plans level funding for environmental research. While I am not familiar with the focus and results of the environmental research program, in general, it is my perception that the Air Force should increase its research and development efforts.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness and protect the environment on and around U.S. military installations?

*Answer.* Yes.

## MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES)

*Question.* What is your vision for the management and development of the Air Force senior executive workforce, especially in the critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess the current Senior Executive Talent Management and Development processes and ensure our executives are equipped to lead and manage the Air Force. In particular, I will focus on the acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Air Force has the number of senior executives it needs, with the proper skills to manage the Department into the future?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will evaluate if the Air Force has the right number of Senior Executives and if they have the skills required to successfully lead the Air Force.

## CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Secretary of the Air Force?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Answer. Yes.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION

##### ABUSIVE ON-LINE CONDUCT

*Question.* Recently, the Committee considered testimony on reports that certain members of an unofficial Marine Corps Facebook group were found to be posting degrading comments and sharing nude photos of female servicemembers. Members of the group included a number of Active Duty servicemembers, former military members, and military retirees.

What is the current Air Force policy for use of social media by airmen?

Answer. Specific to social media, I understand that the Air Force has testified that its social media policy does not tolerate bullying, hazing, or any instance where an airman inflicts any form of physical or psychological abuse that degrades, insults, dehumanizes, or injures another airman regardless of the method of communication. The Air Force expects airmen to sustain a culture of trust, dignity and respect.

*Question.* In your view, is this policy adequate to address abuses such as what occurred in the Marines United incident?

Answer. I am not in a position to make that determination at this time. I understand that the Air Force is currently reviewing its policy, practice, and legal authorities in this area. If confirmed, I will consider the analysis and recommendations that result from the Air Force review.

*Question.* If confirmed, what action would you take to ensure that members of the Air Force are not subjected to abusive on-line conduct?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force has policy, legal authority and training to prevent and to respond to abuses. I will expect leaders at all levels to reinforce the expectation that everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect.

*Question.* What legislative authorities, if any, do you believe are necessary to address this problem?

Answer. At this time, I do not have any recommendation for additional legislative authority. I am aware the Department of Defense and the Air Force are reviewing current law and may recommend additional authority. If confirmed, I will participate in this review.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROGER F. WICKER

##### INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE

1. Senator WICKER. Dr. Wilson, earlier this week, General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, testified before our House counterparts that—relative to Russia—United States European Command (EUCOM) has prioritized “ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] collection platforms” to improve timely threat information. He went on to say he needed ISR platforms in “greater numbers than he has now”.

In the past few years, this committee has heard very similar and specific refrains from other combatant commanders (COCOMs), specifically from United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), and United States Pacific Command (PACOM). Some of those requests infer need

for capacity, some capability. Either way, the consistent theme is a greater need for ISR, and in many cases, the theatre of operations at issue can make meeting those needs quite costly.

The Air Force is a significant provider to the COCOMS of ISR platforms, primarily through unmanned aerial systems. What is your approach to the Air Force ISR platform inventory?

Dr. WILSON. As more and higher quality intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities have become available, the demand for them has increased geometrically. Information that, in the Gulf War 26 years ago, might have been available to a two-star air commander in a headquarters, is now available to captains in tactical fights.

If confirmed, I will focus my efforts in two areas. First, cost-effective expansion of ISR capabilities. Second, effective systems for tasking, processing, exploitation, and dissemination so that the military gets maximum value out of ISR platforms and the information we gather from them.

As with other aircraft, the shortage of remotely piloted aircraft pilots is also an issue we will have to address. I do support the recruitment and training of enlisted remotely piloted vehicle pilots.

2. Senator WICKER. Dr. Wilson, what assurances can you provide that you will thoroughly investigate all options in development for affordable, ultra-long endurance ISR platforms to better serve the strong demands of our combatant commanders for additional ISR?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate cost-effective options to meet requirements for future intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms.

ISR is an area where we need to think about “endurance” applied to the architecture and not just individual systems or nodes. What matters is timely information from the ISR system to the warfighter, not what “bird” the information comes from.

This is an area where experimentation, close cooperation with industry, and system integration could get a lot more help to the warfighter at a more modest cost. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about how the Air Force is analyzing these possibilities and supporting efforts to consider “outside the box” solutions.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

##### FUTURE JOINT PACIFIC ALASKA RANGE COMPLEX INVESTMENTS

3. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, you testified about the importance of readiness in order to best counter near-peer threats. One of the best way to do this is with realistic training, like in Alaska’s Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). There is at least \$100–150 million in threat upgrades that would improve the JPARC’s threat density to better replicate Integrated Air Defense System (IADS) of today and tomorrow. What are your thoughts on increasing the threat density in the JPARC, when do you think that might occur, and can I get your commitment to look at making this critical investment in the JPARC?

Dr. WILSON. Investment in operational training infrastructure is vital to readiness. The JPARC is one essential component of that infrastructure.

It is my understanding that there are plans to add “Joint Threat Emitters” followed by variants of our newest and most capable high fidelity threat emitters, the Advanced Radar Threat System to the JPARC.

I also understand the Air Force is systematically upgrading many of the legacy threat systems currently in place at JPARC to more capable and reliable digital systems.

##### OCONUS KC-46

4. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, General Stephen M. Goldfein, USAF, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, has committed to take a hard look at Alaska for Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) basing of the KC-46. The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) outlines criteria that the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) should consider when basing the OCONUS KC-46. What is your opinion on the need to modernize the Northern Air Bridge, and can I get your commitment to take a hard look at Alaska for the OCONUS basing of the KC-46 and to strongly consider those factors in the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, I believe Alaska should be considered when the Air Force executes its strategic basing process for the next beddown of OCONUS K-46 aircraft as the Northern Air Bridge is extremely important to global operations. Alaska will get a hard look.

As I mentioned in answers to questions during my hearing, when it comes to basing decisions, I support the strategic basing process that evaluates locations based on an objective assessment of what the warfighter needs. I will support a process that is fair and impartial and I know that, for every state that is happy with a basing decision, there will likely be 49 states that are not happy.

#### 168TH AIR REFUELING WING ACTIVE ASSOCIATION

5. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, the Fiscal Year 2015 NDAA directed the Air Force to conduct a business case analysis on converting the 168th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) to an Active association. What is your opinion on this conversion and can I get your commitment to work with the Alaska National Guard on potentially forming this association?

Dr. WILSON. Although I have not had an opportunity to review the analysis, my understanding is that the intent was to find a way to meet all Alaskan area air refueling requirements. If confirmed, I look forward to making sure Air Mobility Command works with the Alaska National Guard and others to understand the requirements and ensure we are meeting them in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Certainly, consideration should be given to an association if it makes the most sense.

#### F-35A TO EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE

6. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, will you continue to support strategic basing decisions and the record of decisions of your predecessors, including the beddown of the F-35s at Eielson Air Force Base, and will you also work to—assuming funding is made available—to keep the current beddown timeline for Eielson Air Force Base?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

#### NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATIONS

7. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, the Air Force is currently looking at unit associations with the Alaska National Guard for three separate units—the 168th ARW, the Alaska Guard combat rescue triad (210th, 211th, and the 212th), and the future F-35A beddown. If confirmed, will you commit to taking a close and detailed look at each of these associations, which I believe will significantly benefit both Active and Guard forces?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring opportunities like this that can increase effectiveness and efficiency. I appreciate the strategic importance of basing in Alaska for both local rescue capabilities and western looking contingencies.

#### SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTING

8. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, in March 2015, the Department of Defense (DOD) issued a report to Congress, the “Assessment of Justification and Approval Requirements Implemented Under Section 811 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (‘section 811’).” The report found that in fiscal year 2014 no 8(a) sole-source contracts were awarded that required an 8(a) justification and approval (J&A). DOD stated it could not determine the cause for this decline. There have been numerous reports from 8(a) firms that the decline in awards is due to tougher J&A standards for and scrutiny on the firms themselves, not the sole-source contracts that could be awarded to these firms. If confirmed, how would you encourage DOD to work more effectively with Native community-owned contractors, particularly regarding 8(a) sole-source contracts?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the status of the 8(a) program and removing barriers to small and medium sized businesses generally. If confirmed, I would expect the Air Force Small Business and Acquisition Program Offices to work together to identify and fix inappropriate policy barriers and seek contract opportunities that fit the 8(a) program requirements.

9. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, section 811 does not prohibit direct awards greater than \$22 million (adjusted from \$20 million due to inflation), it has encouraged greater—if not excessive—levels of approval for comparatively small contracts. This unnecessarily high level of approval then led to zero contract awards above \$22 million to 8(a) corporations, according to a 2014 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report. How would you encourage such awards above \$22 million, when appropriate, to Native community-owned contractors given the additional scrutiny experienced by these firms?



Dr. WILSON. I would expect that Air Force Small Business and Acquisition Program Offices to work together to explore policy and opportunities that fit the 8(a) program requirements.

10. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, do you agree that section 811, similar to the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA), allows for the approval of a justification for an 8(a) sole-source to be approved by someone other than the Head of Agency and can the Head of Agency have the legal ability to delegate the approval authority for an 8(a) justification?

Dr. WILSON. It is my understanding that section 811 established statutory limits and any existing delegations to approval authority still exist.

11. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, shouldn't the level of agency approval by the appropriate agency official be tied to the dollar value of the contracts, as is done under CICA?

Dr. WILSON. It is my understanding that current approval levels as established remain and are still followed within the Agency. If confirmed, I don't come to this position with a predetermined view of what the approval levels should be for this program.

12. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Wilson, while section 811 does not require a "Head of Agency" approval for sole source contracts over \$22 million, DOD—to include the Air Force—has interpreted it to require that level of approval. In addition, current law establishes higher levels of approval commensurate with higher contract values. If confirmed and given the authority of the Secretary, do you commit to streamline the approval of contracts above the \$22 million threshold to below the "Head of Agency" level and to the approval levels that are already matched to the contract risk incurred by the Air Force? If so, will you also issue a memo to contracting officers within the Air Force informing them of your decision to establish that authority at levels that are appropriate to the size and risk of the contracts in question, consistent with what is already in law?

Dr. WILSON. It is my understanding that current approval levels, as established, remain and are still followed within the Air Force. If confirmed, I would expect that Air Force Small Business and Acquisition Program Offices would work together to continuously evaluate policies and procedures to improve results consistent with the law.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAVID PERDUE

##### JOINT SURVEILLANCE AND TARGET ATTACK RADAR SYSTEM RECAP

13. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, under the current Air Force plan, the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) fleet is facing at least a year-long capability gap, and there will be nearly a decade with a fleet below 10 aircraft, which means tiered readiness and degradation of primary flight training. What do you plan to do to avoid a capability gap?

Dr. WILSON. Based on my understanding, you are correct that there will likely be a capability gap as the E-8C JSTARS are retired. The demand for this capability will likely not decline. If confirmed, I will consider whether there are options to minimize this potential gap.

14. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, given the operational demand for these platforms and the cost of keeping the legacy airframes flying, assuming Congress provides the resources, can you assure me the Air Force will make a decision and move this program forward by making a contract award in fiscal year 2017?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed I will look into the plan for contract award.

15. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, is the JSTARS Recap one of the crucial Air Force programs that could be delayed by failure to pass a full-year Defense Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2017?

Dr. WILSON. My understanding is that failure to pass a full-year Defense Appropriations bill will affect the JSTARS Recapitalization Radar Risk Reduction effort and put Initial Operational Capability in fiscal year 2024 at risk.

16. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, could the Air Force accelerate the program once a decision has been made on the winning bid?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will look into options for potential acceleration.

17. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, is there an annual cost related to delay in executing the Air Force acquisition strategy?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will look into the program details and can identify any cost related to delay at that time.

18. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, are there cost savings associated with acceleration?

Dr. WILSON. It is my understanding that the outcome of source selection will provide insight into potential cost saving opportunities.

19. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, do you agree that the JSTARS Recap must remain a top modernization priority to meet combatant commander requirements and that further delay has a negative impact on meeting those requirements?

Dr. WILSON. JSTARS Recapitalization is an Air Force modernization priority. With support from Congress, the Air Force will continue to execute the JSTARS program in order to meet combatant commander requirements.

#### DEPOT MAINTENANCE

20. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, the Air Force has maintained a three-depot strategy for some time now. Will you continue to support a requirement for three depots?

Dr. WILSON. It is my understanding that the three depots are integrated and give the country capacity irrespective of what is available in the private sector. While these requirements can change over time, if confirmed, I come with no predisposition to change the three-depot structure.

#### A-10 REPLACEMENT

21. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, due to budget pressure and sequestration, the Air Force decided to prematurely retire the A-10, a platform that performs close air support to the warfighter. The Air Force is still in need of a suitable replacement for the light attack fleet. Can you talk about your plan for replacing the A-10 fleet and ensuring we have the right platform to perform the vital close air support mission?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force has made the commitment to keep the A-10 through 2021 and I support that decision. I am aware that the Air Force is also interested in an experiment to evaluate light attack aircraft for uncontested environments. If confirmed, I will review the Air Force plan on the future of the A-10.

#### NATIONAL AIRBORNE OPERATIONS CENTER REPLACEMENT

22. Senator PERDUE. Dr. Wilson, I was fortunate to recently tour the National Airborne Operations Center (NAOC), the E4-B. In case of national emergency or destruction of ground command and control centers, this aircraft provides a highly survivable command, control, and communications center to direct U.S. Forces, execute emergency war orders, and coordinate actions by civil authorities. This is a unique and very vital asset, and there is concern that a possible split of missions of the NAOC amongst separate future aircraft could cause a loss of functionality and interplay between the E-4B's current mission sets. What are your views on the E4-B replacement program, and will you ensure that any replacement program ensures that the Air Force will retain the ability to perform the full E-4B mission set?

Dr. WILSON. I understand that the Air Force is conducting an analysis of alternatives for the replacement of the National Airborne Operations Center. The analysis is due in fiscal year 2018. If confirmed, I will keep the committee informed on the results of this review.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

##### STATUS OF FORCES/FISCAL YEAR 2017 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

23. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, last week, Major General Martin briefed my staff on the Air Force's portion of the \$30 billion fiscal year 2017 request for additional appropriations. When compared with where things stood in 1991 during Operation Desert Storm, he said that the Air Force today has 59 percent fewer fighter squadrons, 30 percent fewer people, and 37 percent fewer aircraft. He also noted that current aircrew readiness is at near all-time lows. These numbers are striking and paint a stark picture of our current ability to project power. Can you describe for

us how the fiscal year 2017 budget amendment will fill current readiness challenges?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force is the smallest, oldest, and least prepared in its history. Since the enactment of the Budget Control Act in 2011, the size of the Air Force has decreased further and the demand for air and space power has increased.

The fiscal year 2017 budget amendment will increase Air Force topline by \$7.4 billion (\$6.8 billion base/\$.6 billion Overseas Contingency Operations). Combined with the fiscal year 2017 Appropriations Bill, it will help readiness recovery, fill critical gaps and improve future lethality.

The funding will allow the Air Force to sustain end strength growth to address manpower shortfalls in maintenance, pilots, ISR, cyber and Battlefield Airmen. The Air Force will add needed funding for weapon system sustainment, and upgrades to multiple platforms to keep our current fleet viable. Space and cyber operational shortfalls will be addressed and we will invest in infrastructure that directly impacts readiness and training. Funds will also be used to address threats to base resiliency and cyber communications, as well as improvements to the nuclear enterprise.

My major concern is that, if we have a continuing resolution for fiscal year 2017 rather than an appropriations bill with only five months remaining in the fiscal year, the Air Force would likely have to suspend non-combat flying hours, freeze civilian hiring, slow filling critical career fields, slow or stop depot level maintenance, and suspend starting new programs. The pilot shortage that is already a problem would become worse, as would readiness levels.

We won't get out of this in a year. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense and the Congress to get beyond the Budget Control Act and restore the force.

24. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, why is it so vital to fund this amendment and increase the Air Force budget, regardless of spending increases in other areas of the Government?

Dr. WILSON. A primary responsibility of the Federal Government is to provide for the common defense. Without security, it is not possible to enjoy our liberties.

Today's Air Force is the smallest, oldest and least ready in our history.

This comes at a time when we are a leader in the global response against ISIS and facing a resurgent Russia, rising China, destabilizing Iran and unpredictable North Korea. The Joint Force requires airpower to be successful and demand exceeds our ability to support the fight. Our Air Force is too small for what the nation expects of us.

As competitors continue to close the capability gap, we must recover readiness and invest in future capabilities that allow our Airmen to win decisively. Passing the Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations Bill and supporting the budget amendment is a first step to provide the Air Force that our Joint Force requires and that our nation expects.

25. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, the Senate Armed Services Committee has received several briefings that highlighted the efforts our near-peer adversaries are taking to close the military capabilities gap we have long held; their efforts are deeply concerning. What are the Air Force's plans to strike a balance between current readiness and future modernization in order to reestablish a capabilities gap?

Dr. WILSON. I share Secretary Mattis' priorities: improving warfighter readiness, and building a larger and more lethal force. If confirmed, I will work with him to ensure we appropriately balance the needs of today and the demands of tomorrow.

26. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, how will you envision making that happen while also ensuring that existing commitments to airmen and their families are upheld?

Dr. WILSON. As a leader, I am values driven, mission focused and people oriented. People are the strength of the Air Force. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to ensure we balance our priorities while always keeping Airmen and their families in mind.

#### ANTI-ACCESS/AREA DENIAL

27. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, the Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) challenge is not confined to the South China Sea, as evidenced by Russia's attempts to expand its influence in its near abroad with interventions in Georgia and Ukraine, and contentious behavior in and around the Baltic Sea.

Operating in an A2/AD environment will require superior technology, well-trained personnel, and the combined military efforts of the Services. What is the Air Force's

role if it were necessary to conduct combat operations in a well-defined A2/AD theatre?

Dr. WILSON. You are correct in your assessment of air space challenges beyond just the China Sea. In any combat operation, the Air Force must gain and maintain air superiority. The establishment of air superiority then allows ground and other forces to achieve tactical, operational, and strategic objectives.

As I mentioned in my confirmation hearing, we sometimes take air superiority for granted. The last time an American ground troop was killed by enemy aircraft was April 15, 1953—in the Korean War. With adversaries modernizing and our readiness to fight a near-peer competitor at a low, we cannot take this for granted.

28. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, can you describe the capability and discriminators that 5th generation aircraft, such as the F-35, have over the current legacy fleets and what impact they will have on future air superiority?

Dr. WILSON. Fifth generation fighter aircraft are more survivable and more lethal than fourth generation aircraft. Discriminating attributes include stealth, maneuverability, advanced integrated avionics, and networked interoperability between aircraft and other systems.

29. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, do you believe that current fourth generation aircraft will be as survivable in the robust A2/AD environments that are being established?

Dr. WILSON. No. Adversaries are modernizing their defenses in ways that will make current fighter aircraft more vulnerable.

30. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, do you believe that the United States has sufficient capacity to fight in more than one theatre if a crisis were to erupt today and, if not, what force levels are necessary to operate in more than one theatre?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force's ability to fight in more than one theater depends on the size and scope of the operations and the theaters in question.

31. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, how does the A2/AD threat in Europe compare to that of the South China Sea?

Dr. WILSON. There are similarities and differences. Both involve adversaries that employ modern weapons technology designed to defeat US airpower and deny or degrade forward air bases. In each theater, potential adversaries also possess highly capable, long range and layered integrated air defense networks to deny entry into their airspace.

The biggest difference is geography. Europe has numerous partner airbases which lie a relatively short distance from the likely area of any conflict. By contrast, in the South China Sea, there are few airbases and they are hundreds, if not thousands, of miles away from each other. Air superiority is more fragile because we don't have lots of basing options and air bases are increasingly vulnerable to long-range attack systems currently being modernized by our adversaries.

#### NUCLEAR DETERRENCE-SPACE

32. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, a strong nuclear deterrent is arguably a foundational requirement of our national security. Our near-peer adversaries continue to modernize their nuclear capabilities, highlighting that a robust deterrence posture will be necessary for decades to come. General Paul J. Selva, USAF, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified in front of the House Armed Services Committee that "the nuclear deterrent is the joint force modernization priority, and ... is bigger than just the bombers, ICBMs [intercontinental ballistic missiles] and submarines, it is command and control, it's space, it's tankers and it's a much bigger enterprise than just the three legs of the Triad." Given Russian and Chinese development of capabilities that place our space assets at risk, Congress must view nuclear modernization holistically. What specific steps should we take to both modernize and protect our space-based assets from kinetic and passive attacks?

Dr. WILSON. Space is no longer a sanctuary. In any conflict, it will be a contested environment.

If confirmed, I look forward to my responsibilities as principal DOD space advisor and chairing the Defense Space Council. The Air Force is responsible for over 90 percent of the Defense Department's space assets in orbit and the nation is heavily dependent on space capabilities for navigation, communication, command and control, intelligence, and precision targeting.

I will seek to lead Department efforts to deepen our understanding of the growing threat to our space assets, refine our strategy for space control, and organize and

equip the Air Force to meet the threat. In addressing these issues, I will work closely with the other services and Federal agencies to align efforts where needed.

33. Senator CRUZ. Dr. Wilson, in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, I requested a feasibility study from the Missile Defense Agency on space-based interceptors to complement our terrestrial-based missile defense assets. How would the presence of space-based interceptors or increased sensors impact our ability to identify, track, and intercept ballistic missiles earlier in flight?

Dr. WILSON. I'm not yet briefed on this matter. If confirmed, I will become more deeply involved in matters related to space and space control.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JACK REED

##### SANDIA CONTRACT PURCHASE AGREEMENT

34. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, in June 2013, the Department of Energy Inspector General (IG) issued a report on the contracting irregularities associated with consulting agreements awarded to Heather Wilson and Company, LLC (HWC). The report noted that HWC entered into a consulting agreement in January 2009 with Sandia National Laboratories. This agreement was subsequently converted into a Contract Purchase Agreement (CPA) that would be executed via monthly task orders at a cost of \$10,000 per month.

In response to a lack of requirements for deliverable work products, the CPA was further modified in April 2010 to include the following language: "Task Orders shall contain a requirement for a deliverable such as a Progress Report or statement of completion of work for the task order, and indication of which tasks are ongoing, and what progress has been made on the ongoing tasks."

Did you sign the modified April 2010 Contract Purchase Agreement?

Dr. WILSON. Task Orders were drafted by Sandia monthly. I do not recall that they ever contained any requirement for a written progress report. There were written work products created when they could be produced at the unclassified level, such as memoranda, briefing slides, and other written work products. In general, Sandia was more interested in my engagement with their people in reviews, meetings and working groups than in using my time to write progress reports about those meetings, which would not have been useful for them.

I cannot confirm whether this CPA document was concluded in this form.

35. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, were you aware that the modified April 2010 Contract Purchase Agreement required a deliverable product detailing the work you performed?

Dr. WILSON. Yes, with the "deliverable product" defined by the monthly Task Orders which were written by Sandia monthly. The work was done and the task orders were complied with.

36. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, the 2013 Inspector General report noted that the task orders from Sandia issued under the modified April 2010 Contract Purchase Agreement did not incorporate the language requiring deliverable products. During your confirmation hearing I asked you if you were aware of the requirements to provide evidence supporting the work you performed under the contract. You stated "I did the work. I complied with the contract." I further asked if you reviewed the final contract before you signed the agreement and you replied that you did.

While the Task Orders did not include the requirement for deliverable products, the modified Contract Purchase Agreement did include the requirement. If you reviewed the contracts before you signed them, per your testimony before the Committee, why did you not fulfill the requirement to provide Sandia with deliverable work products in support of your monthly consulting payments?

Dr. WILSON. I did fulfill the requirement, as defined by Sandia in its Task Orders. The agreement you quote above says task orders shall include product "such as" progress reports. Sandia established the task orders monthly and requested written materials or reports when the entities asking for my help wanted written materials or reports. It was more common for them to request my presence working and engaging with their teams on a problem, plan or process, most often in classified settings.

I believed then and now the labs wanted my timely input and participation at the appropriate level about ongoing, frequently classified matters. Paying me to write after-the-fact reports regarding the same would have given the labs and the government no added value for money spent.

## SANDIA CONTRACT STRATEGY TEAM

37. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, according to the November 2014 Special Inquiry report by the Department of Energy, Sandia National Laboratories formed an in-house Contract Strategy Team that was focused on securing “a noncompetitive extension of the Sandia Corporation contract with the Department.” The IG investigation further found that “the plan developed by the SNL [Sandia National Laboratory] Contract Strategy Team represented an apparent violation of 31 U.S.C. § 1352, Limitation on use of appropriated funds to influence certain Federal contracting and financial transactions. In this case, appropriated funds were used to pay the recipients of a Federal contract, both SNL employees and consultants, salaries and fees for developing a plan intended to result in influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of the Department or a member of Congress in connection with the extension of the SNL contract.”

Were you a member of the SNL Contract Strategy Team?

Dr. WILSON. No.

38. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, did you consult with the Contract Strategy Team regarding Federal contracts?

Dr. WILSON. No.

## LOS ALAMOS CONSULTING AGREEMENT

39. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, in June 2013, the Department of Energy IG issued a report on the contracting irregularities associated with consulting agreements awarded to Heather Wilson and Company, LLC (HWC). In August 2009, HWC entered into a consulting agreement in August 2009 with Los Alamos National Laboratory to perform 50 hours of work per month at a cost of \$10,000 per month.

Per the IG report, the draft statement of work for the contract included requirements to deliver work products to support the monthly consulting payments to HWC. The report further found that the language was “deleted from the final task order even though a Los Alamos contracting official informed the NNSA [National Nuclear Security Administration] Contracting Officer that deliverables would be established in individual task assignments.” However, when the IG asked for documentation of these task assignments “Los Alamos was not able to provide any documentation showing what tasks and activities HWC was directed or scheduled to perform on a monthly basis.”

During your confirmation hearing I asked you if “there was a negotiation about what would be in the contract and what would not be in the contract.” You responded that there was a negotiation “mostly with respect to the statement of work.” Did you negotiate to exclude the requirement for deliverable work products in the final statement of work for the Los Alamos agreement?

Dr. WILSON. In general, lab leaders wanted my active engagement with them and their teams, often in classified settings, rather than written reports. There were some occasions where written products including memos, briefings, and analytical products were requested and provided. I believe that the editing and negotiation referred to above appears to relate to a draft exchanged between Los Alamos Lab and the local National Nuclear Security Agency office. I do not recall seeing any statement of work that included a requirement for monthly written reports, nor would I have likely objected to preparing monthly work products if that is what Los Alamos Lab wanted. Paying me to write after-the-fact reports regarding meetings in which we were actively engaged as a team would have been unlikely to give the labs and the government added value for money spent.

40. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, regardless of whether or not the contract included a requirement to provide deliverable works products, did it occur to you that the Federal Government deserved a more detailed accounting of the services you performed given the unusual nature and your consulting agreement with Los Alamos and the large sums of money you received on a monthly basis?

Dr. WILSON. As a consultant, I was responsive to the desires and instructions of the client. I did the work asked of me to a high standard in the way that was useful for my clients and complied with the contracts.

41. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) (FAR 31.205–33, Section F) explicitly states “evidence necessary to determine that work performed is proper and does not violate law or regulation shall include—

- (2) Invoices or billings submitted by consultants, including sufficient detail as to the time expended and nature of the actual services provided; and

- (3) Consultants' work products and related documents, such as trip reports indicating persons visited and subjects discussed, minutes of meetings, and collateral memoranda and reports.

Were you aware of this specific provision in the FAR that requires consultants to submit invoices with detailed information to substantiate the work performed for payment?

Dr. WILSON. In the case of the Nevada Test Site, the work performed was verified by the President of the Nevada Test Site and the Assistant to the President sitting in the room at the time of each of the day-long quarterly advisory board meetings for which I was compensated. The meetings were generally conducted at the Top Secret-Q or Special Compartmented Information level for nuclear weapons or intelligence discussions. No trip reports were requested of any member of the President's Advisory Board.

In the case of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, all members of the Intelligence Advisory Board were paid the same amount for attendance at the advisory board meetings. The meetings took place in the secure facility at Oak Ridge and were conducted at the Top Secret—Special Compartmented Information level. Oak Ridge did not want trip reports from Intelligence Advisory Board members. Oak Ridge maintained that the contracts were appropriate and the DOE site office in Oak Ridge concurred with the lab. Oak Ridge did not reimburse the government.

With respect to Sandia and Los Alamos, the time expended was as agreed in the contracts and was certified to every month with the submission of invoices. The nature of the services provided were consulting services. The invoices for Sandia and Los Alamos were approved by the contract managers at each laboratory. They were satisfied with the work I was doing and they did not indicate that they needed or desired further detail on invoices.

42. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, the 2103 Inspector General report also noted the irregularities of the invoices that were submitted by HWC for payment. During the period of the Los Alamos contract, 19 invoices were issued by HWC for payment. Every invoice lacked sufficient detail on the services that were provided. According to the IG report, the Los Alamos agreement stated that:

"the Subcontractor may submit monthly billings for the services performed. A breakdown of the specific activities performed for [Los Alamos] must be included on or with each invoice. [Los Alamos] shall pay the Subcontractor, upon submission of acceptable invoices or vouchers, the prices stipulated in this subcontract for work delivered or rendered, less any deductions provided in this subcontract."

However, the invoices submitted by HWC did not include a breakdown of services.

Your company failed to comply with the requirement to submit invoices that included specific activities performed during the month services were provided, and yet, you accepted payment for those invoices. Can you justify your actions?

Dr. WILSON. I provided consulting services to Los Alamos. No other services besides consulting services (e.g. equipment, materials, lab testing, custodial services, construction) were provided to Los Alamos. Travel reimbursement was itemized and receipts for travel were provided. Los Alamos accepted the invoices and did not request changes or greater description of the matters on which I consulted to be listed on the invoices.

The work was done and the contract was complied with. The invoices specified that consulting services were provided and the labs accepted and approved the invoices.

43. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, while the IG found that Los Alamos failed to enforce the requirement for detailed invoices to substantiate payments, do you also bear any responsibility for disregarding the requirement for detailed invoices? If not, why not?

Dr. WILSON. The contract did not require "detailed" invoices. It required specific activities performed. The activity that I performed was consulting services.

I did the work, complied with the contract, and completed invoices that were accepted for payment by Los Alamos. Los Alamos never requested further detail than that which was provided.

#### REPAYMENTS AND SETTLEMENT COSTS

44. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, from January 2009 through part of 2011, Heather Wilson and Company, LLC (HWC) received \$464,000 in payments from four NNSA laboratories for consulting services. These laboratories included Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and

the Nevada National Security Site. Due to the lack of evidence to substantiate the work that was provided, the Department of Energy Inspector General investigated the contracts. As a result, the contractors who operated the laboratories on behalf of the Government paid back at least \$442,877 to the Department of Energy with respect to payments made to HWC. Furthermore, Lockheed Martin, which operated Sandia National Laboratories, agreed to an overall settlement of \$4.7 million for their management failures.

While you were not found guilty of any actual wrongdoing, do you agree that this arrangement gives the perception of wrongdoing?

Dr. WILSON. No. The quality of my work resulted in Sandia recruiting me and offering me a full time senior leadership position responsible for the division of the laboratory with which I worked most frequently—Vice President for non-nuclear defense and intelligence programs. I declined their offer in order to run for the U.S. Senate.

While three of the four labs negotiated and settled this matter, all of them appear to have disagreed with the auditors and none of them admitted wrongdoing.

45. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, did Heather Wilson and Company, LLC reimburse the Government for any of these expenditures? If not, why not?

Dr. WILSON. No. I did the work, complied with the contracts, was not found at fault, and I was never even interviewed by the auditors.

#### NEGOTIATING FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

46. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, the 2008 edition of the House Ethics Manual states that Members must disclose “any job negotiations made with a private employer while the individual is still employed by the House, as well as any recusal from official matters that is necessitated by those negotiations.” The ethics manual further states that “Members and employees should be particularly careful in negotiating for future employment, especially when negotiating with any individual or entity that could be substantially affected by the performance of official duties.”

Per the House Ethics Manual, and House Rule 27, Members must notify the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct within three (3) business days “after the commencement of any negotiation or agreement for future employment or compensation with a private entity.”

Your tenure in the House of Representatives ended on January 3, 2009. An invoice submitted to Sandia National Laboratories for consulting work indicated you began consulting work for the lab on January 4, 2009—the day following your departure from Congress.

Based on these dates, did you start negotiations with Sandia during your tenure in the House of Representatives?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

*HW Note:* There have been subsequent changes to the House Ethics Manual and the 2008 edition is not available to me. Some of the rules have changed since then, particularly timelines for types of reporting about post-government employment planning. I sought advice from the committee staff and complied with their guidance and the rules in place at the time.

47. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, if you did start negotiations with Sandia during your House tenure, did you notify the Ethics committee of these negotiations? If not, why not?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

48. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, furthermore, the House Rule states that any Member subject to the notification requirement must recuse themselves, in writing, from “any matter in which there is a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict for that Member.”

During your tenure, you were a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce during the 110th Congress (2007–2008). The Committee had jurisdiction over the Department of Energy, including Sandia National Laboratories. Did you recuse yourself from any matters that would have impacted Sandia as you negotiated this contract? If not, why not?

Dr. WILSON. Yes. There were no matters that would have impacted Sandia during the time I made post-federal employment plans. I was aware of the requirement to recuse in the event that any matters came up and would have done so, based on guidance from the House ethics office.



## CONTACTS WITH U.S. ATTORNEY FOR U.S. ATTORNEY FOR NEW MEXICO

49. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, according to a September 2008 joint report by the Department of Justice Inspector General and the Department of Justice Office of Professional Responsibility, you called David Iglesias, the U.S. Attorney for New Mexico, on October 16, 2006, to express concern that he was delaying prosecution of certain public corruption cases. At the time you made the call, your opponent in the 2006 election was the New Mexico Attorney General who did not prosecute “the courthouse” cases. As such, Mr. Iglesias’ actions were directly related to positions your opponent took. The Department of Justice concluded in their report on the dismissal of Mr. Iglesias that “[t]he evidence we have developed so far shows that Wilson and Domenici in fact called Iglesias shortly before the election, and that the substance of the call led Iglesias to believe he was being pressured to indict the courthouse case before the upcoming election.” As a result of his actions, Senator Pete Domenici was admonished by the Senate Ethics Committee.

The House Ethics Manual in effect at the time provided that a request for background information or a status report “may in effect be an indirect or subtle effort to influence the substantive outcome of the proceedings,” and it further states that the best way to communicate is in writing and make it part of the proceedings.

In your testimony before the Committee, you stated that you called Mr. Iglesias because “an individual or constituent with knowledge of ongoing investigations told me that the U.S. attorney was intentionally delaying corruption prosecutions and I felt as though I had to address that allegation in some appropriate way.”

Who suggested that you call you call Mr. Iglesias?

Dr. WILSON. No one.

*HW Note:* There was no connection between my opponent and “the courthouse” cases. Our campaign advertisements in July, August and September 2006 concerned a case involving my opponent’s failure to prosecute State Treasurer Vigil and large campaign contributions my opponent received from entities and individuals with business pending in her office. The federal Vigil trial ended on September 30, 2006. From on or about October 4, 2006 through the election, the subjects of our advertising related to my opponent were on national security matters, her handling of a child abuse case, and her competence. We had no information connecting my opponent to “the courthouse cases” and I am aware of no information that has ever connected her to those cases.

50. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, did you discuss your call with Mr. Iglesias with anyone before or after you made the call?

Dr. WILSON. No, not until after Mr. Iglesias made his public allegations in February or March 2007.

51. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, during our meeting prior to your confirmation hearing, you explicitly stated that you did not talk directly to any Member of the New Mexico delegation, including Senator Domenici, about this matter. Did you have any contact with Senator Domenici’s staff about this matter?

Dr. WILSON. I did not have any contact with Senator Domenici or his staff about the allegation communicated to me or my telephone call to Mr. Iglesias until after Mr. Iglesias made his public allegations in late February or early March 2007. I was also not aware that Senator Domenici had contacted Mr. Iglesias in October 2006 until after Mr. Iglesias made his public allegations in February or early March 2007.

52. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, during your confirmation hearing before the Committee you agreed to cooperate with this Committee in response to congressional requests. If you refuse to answer these questions, what legal provision gives you the privileged right to refuse to answer a question from the Committee regarding your suitability for confirmation?

Dr. WILSON. This is an ethical question, not a question of privilege. As I said in my confirmation hearing, a constituent trusted me with information of concern to them. I did not betray them then, and I will not betray them now.

53. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, do you truly believe it is “appropriate” to contact a U.S. attorney in this manner which is clearly contrary to the ethics rules that govern the conduct of Members of the House of Representatives?

Dr. WILSON. It was not contrary to the ethics rules. In fact, the Ethics Committee, under the Chairmanship of Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH) did a preliminary review including interviewing Mr. Iglesias and decided not to initiate an investigation of this matter.

54. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, why didn't you communicate in writing in accordance with the House Ethics Rules?

Dr. WILSON. My actions were in accordance with the House rules. My inquiry was not a status report or request for information about any particular case or person. This matter was reviewed by the House Ethics Committee under the Chairmanship of Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH) after Mr. Iglesias made public accusations. The committee interviewed Mr. Iglesias and decided not to initiate an investigation of this matter.

55. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, claiming a sitting U.S. attorney is "intentionally delaying corruption prosecutions" is a serious allegation. If you believed the allegation had merit, why didn't you raise your concerns through proper channels to ensure the allegation would be investigated officially?

Dr. WILSON. There are a variety of ways to appropriately address an allegation of impropriety. In this circumstance, I had been informed of the perception of one person, but nothing more. The allegation was deeply troubling to me, but not substantiated by any further information or corroboration, and people can have different perceptions of the same set of facts.

One appropriate way to address an allegation of this kind is to confront the individual involved and ask them about it. That is the course I chose. Mr. Iglesias denied delaying prosecutions. I told him that I would take him at his word, and I did.

56. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, do you think you demonstrated the best judgement in this situation, and if so, please explain?

Dr. WILSON. Acting ethically is important. While I felt strongly that I could not ignore the allegation, and potentially tolerate the behavior if the allegation was true, I also was aware that it was a perception of a single individual.

The matter had to be resolved. I did so in a way that was entirely appropriate.

#### RESPONSIVENESS TO CONGRESS

57. Senator REED. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, do you agree to respond in a timely manner to letters and inquiries from individual Senators and Representatives?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

##### THREE-DIMENSIONAL EXPEDITIONARY LONG-RANGE RADAR

58. Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Wilson, in October 2009, the Air Force initiated a competition to design a replacement for its antiquated surveillance radar, which has been in service since 1968. The new Three-Dimensional Expeditionary Long-Range Radar (3DELRR) will become the principal Air Force long-range, ground-based sensor for detecting, identifying, tracking and reporting aircraft and missiles in real-time under a wide variety of conditions. The program's initial Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) phase and Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP) was issued in November 2013, and its first major contract was awarded in October 2014. The award set off a 2-year long series of protests and legal challenges by competing applicants. As you may be aware, the Government is considering auctioning off radio frequency spectrum in the 1300–1350 MHz sub-band. Of concern, one of the competitors for the contract award is offering a solution in the radio frequency that potentially will be sold and no longer available to the Government.

As Secretary of the Air Force you will be responsible for making important acquisition decisions and a steward of taxpayer dollars. If confirmed, will you commit to review the Government's potential sale of radio frequency spectrum that will directly impact the 3DELLR program and render one of the offered solutions inoperable—costing the taxpayer to reengineer the radar?

Dr. WILSON. Sale of radio frequencies is outside the direct authority of the Air Force. During my time serving on the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications I was aware of the pressure on the military to give up spectrum for commercial purposes. I am not aware of whether a final decision has been made on auctioning this spectrum.

If confirmed, I would be willing to work with you on this specific issue to see if a resolution can be found.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

59. Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Wilson, earlier this year, the Air Force introduced a new Energy Flight Plan identifying a long-term vision to enhance mission assurance through energy assurance. The Air Force is also pursuing projects to provide cost-effective, cleaner energy solutions to ensure continuous operations in spite of potential energy supply interruptions. What challenges do you see in continuing to advance these energy efficiency initiatives across the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. I primarily see opportunity. Congress has provided a tool box including enhanced use leases, power purchase agreements, performance contracts and more that allows the Air Force to leverage third-party financing for power production, energy efficiency and resiliency. In some cases, appropriations will be required for things like microgrids.

60. Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, will you commit to pursuing cost savings through energy efficiency and alternative resources?

Dr. WILSON. Mission assurance and reduced operating cost are driving the Air Force's energy efforts. In many cases, efficiency and alternative energy sources can both contribute to mission assurance and provide cost savings. If confirmed, I will be interested in research and development that reduces energy and water demand at forward locations to reduce the cost of supply and free up airlift resources for other missions.

## SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH/SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

61. Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Wilson, the Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) programs invest a small percentage of research and development funding at DOD and other agencies into small businesses that are working on innovative solutions to our national security challenges. There is strong bipartisan support for these public-private partnerships because they work and provide a good return on the investment. One of the most well-known SBIR success stories is the development of Lasik Eye Surgery. Originally developed for Air Force pilots, today millions have taken advantage of this technology.

The SBIR and STTR programs also help diversify our industrial base, attracting new suppliers—a third of participants in SBIR each year are new companies. Last year, Congress reauthorized the SBIR and STTR for 5 years as part of the Defense Authorization bill.

What role do the SBIR and STTR programs play in meeting the DOD mission?

Dr. WILSON. The SBIR and STTR programs provide innovative technology solutions for the Air Force and meet the needs of the warfighter. I am familiar with the programs and I will support them, if confirmed.

62. Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Wilson, what recommendations do you have to improve the acquisition process to support small businesses working on innovative technologies?

Dr. WILSON. Too many companies will not supply the Defense Department or other federal agencies because it is too hard to do business with the government. With private sector research and development exceeding that done in the military, we have to be able to buy capabilities developed in the commercial sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Air Force Acquisition Office to identify more and better ways to buy commercial products and services that are a good value for the Air Force.

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

## CYBER

63. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, I view the National Guard as uniquely positioned to train cyber warriors capable of responding to needs at the state and federal levels. In New York and many other States, skilled private sector technology employees could bolster our capabilities to prevent and react to cyber threats. What role do you see for the National Guard in countering cyber aggression and responding in the event of a mass cyber-attack?

Dr. WILSON. As I mentioned in my testimony before the committee, I think it makes sense to explore whether the Air Force should rely more heavily on National Guard units for cyber capability so that the Air Force could leverage talent from the private sector and the private sector could benefit from Air Force training. The National Guard's ability to operate in either state or federal status could also be beneficial, depending on the nature of a crisis.

The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act allows and encourages the services to experiment with direct commissioning programs. Cyber may be an area where we should try something new.

64. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, I believe the success of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) and DOD's cyber initiatives will be determined by our ability to attract and retain the highest caliber individuals to join the ranks of our cyber warriors. How will you lead the Air Force in recruiting, training, and retaining the best cyber warriors?

Dr. WILSON. Computer scientists and computer information technologists are in very high demand; we will not be able to compete on salary alone.

In this area, we may need to be very creative in our approaches to recruitment, retention and organization of the force. While the call to service and the opportunity to engage in activities that are prohibited outside of the military have appeal, we may need to do more. If confirmed, I would be interested in reviewing the recruitment model the Navy uses for nuclear engineers, which I have watched be very successful on my university campus at a relatively low cost compared to ROTC. As mentioned above, we may need to review the mix of Active, Reserve and Guard Forces, and I'm interested in tasking the Air Force to look at the possibility of direct commissioning.

#### COMBAT INTEGRATION

65. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, I am closely following the efforts of all the Services to integrate women into combat roles. The Air Force was in a unique position, as most positions were already open to women when Secretary Carter ordered the Services to open all positions to women. Yet, I understand that the Air Force has identified outreach about career opportunities as a challenge in the process. What can the Air Force do to improve outreach and education about the positions that are now open to women?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will ensure our outreach, recruiting and marketing efforts are reviewed and kept up to date.

Women have been flying in the Air Force since 1976 and virtually all pilot positions were opened to women in 1991 when the Congress repealed the 1948 law that prohibited women from flying in combat. With the exception of very few positions, the Air Force has been fully integrated for over 25 years.

Unlike the Army and the Marine Corps, which opened a very large number of direct combat positions, the final few career fields in the Air Force that opened to women in 2016 have very small numbers of people assigned to them and are very exclusive. The right recruiting approach may be more personalized and targeted.

66. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, what other challenges do you think might be impacting the rates of women entering and completing pipeline training in these careers fields and how might you address these challenges?

Dr. WILSON. With respect to positions newly open to women in the Air Force, the most significant difference is likely physical strength, particularly upper body strength. Combat rescue and pararescue career fields are physically demanding and the standards are high—as they should be.

The career field is small to begin with; a smaller percentage of women than men are likely to be qualified for consideration; and women are a smaller percentage of the force. As a result, and as expected when the Defense Department made the decision to open these fields to women, there will be a disparity in participation.

It has been a long time since I participated in Air Force physical training and intercollegiate sports, but I have been made aware of significant advancements in sports medicine and data driven injury prevention through my participation as a university president in the NCAA and college sports. The science of strength and conditioning has advanced significantly and there are some differences between men and women in injury prevention and physical training of which the Air Force may already be aware.

The important point to me is that these positions are open to qualified women and that the Air Force may use the talents and abilities of every airman to defend the nation.

#### MILITARY JUSTICE

67. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, I am sure you are as appalled as I am by the recent reports of cyber stalking, harassment, and exploitation of female

servicemembers by fellow male servicemembers. I understand that the Air Force has formed a task force to address the issue. What do you plan to do to ensure this scourge is eradicated from the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force has policy, legal authority and training to prevent and to respond to abuses. I will expect leaders at all levels to reinforce the expectation that everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect.

68. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, the 2016 Sexual Assault Gender Survey found that almost half of female Air Force cadets experienced sexual harassment. Military research has consistently identified a strong positive correlation between the occurrence of sexual harassment in a military unit and the occurrence of sexual assault within the unit. What can we do to ensure all Air Force cadets are free from sexual harassment?

Dr. WILSON. While I experienced what I believed to be discrimination based on gender when I was a cadet, I did not personally know anyone who was sexually harassed or assaulted in the 4 years I spent at the Air Force Academy. In some ways, perhaps, because having women at the Academy was so new and the scrutiny so intense, we may have been protected from some of the corrosive cultural phenomenon that may have arisen in later years.

Focusing on leadership excellence at the squadron level is intended to positively influence the culture and climate in the Air Force, including the Air Force Academy.

69. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, have you spoken with the prospective commandant of cadets about this issue? If so, what is the plan to combat this issue at the academy?

Dr. WILSON. No.

#### NATIONAL GUARD

70. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, as you know, the Arctic is becoming more and more important to our national security policy. New York is home to the only ski-equipped C-130s in the world. These LC-130 "skibirds" perform vital missions on behalf of the National Science Foundation in Antarctica, as well as training in Greenland. They have also been part of joint training missions with Canada. However, these planes are aging, and are in need of modernization in order to continue their amazing work. What role do you see the Air Force playing in Arctic operations?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force plays and will continue to play a significant role in Arctic operations. The Northern Air Bridge, exceptional Arctic training areas, strategically important natural resources and the build-up of Russian forces in the Arctic are all factors that draw our attention. I am currently unfamiliar with the LC-130 and its missions, and, hence, uncertain about how renewed focus on the Arctic might impact the unit.

71. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, do I have your commitment to include funding for modernization of these vital aircraft in the upcoming budget?

Dr. WILSON. I can't commit to modernization of these specific aircraft at this time as decisions about the budget have not been made and I have not been privy to individual items and the trade-offs within it.

It is my understanding that the Air Force has a modernization plan for the C-130H aircraft, that would, I believe, include the LC-130s.

72. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, I was so pleased that the 914th at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station was chosen to convert to a KC-135 mission. I was there last year and was pleased with the progress. The one thing we need now is a KC-135 flight simulator, to serve both the 914th and other units. We currently have an empty building on the base, built to hold a C-130 simulator, making the basing of one that much easier for the Air Force. If confirmed, do I have your commitment to work with me on basing a simulator at Niagara Falls?

Dr. WILSON. I appreciate your concern for training for our airman. I understand that Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station is in consideration for a KC-135 simulator. Air Mobility Command will work with Guard units and Guard headquarters as it relocates our KC-135 simulators to meet demand. While it would be great to have a simulator at every base with KC-135 aircraft, that may not make sense if the simulator isn't used sufficiently to justify the cost. If confirmed, it is my view that a regional approach is likely the right way to go to meet the training needs of the tanker force, and I believe that is the plan being pursued by Air Mobility Command.

73. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, as you know, the Air Force remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) operators contribute critical capabilities to our national defense. In New York, we have two Air Guard units actively engaged in the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) mission—the 107th in Niagara Falls, and the 174th in Syracuse, which is also one of the only training units for MQ-9s. I am concerned about the Air Force's challenge in recruiting, training, and retaining our talented uniformed RPA workforce. What can lawmakers do to assist the Air Force in keeping up with the considerable operational demand generated by the need for RPA capabilities?

Dr. WILSON. I understand that the Air Force is finalizing two new Active-Associate squadrons for MQ-9 operations, one of which will be located in Syracuse with the 174th. I also understand that Congressional support for getting to a normal pace of operations for remotely piloted aircraft would help increase pilot retention. If we have a year-long continuing resolution rather than a budget for fiscal year 2017, I would expect the pilot retention problem will worsen.

74. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, last year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) included a provision to shift a significant portion of the MQ-9 pilots to enlisted airmen. I worked with the Committee to clarify that this might not work for the National Guard, which cannot simply move pilots to different jobs, and I hope that the Air Force is interpreting the legislation with that understanding. Do I have your commitment to look at whether the National Guard may be treated differently in this transition?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

75. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, as you know, the 106th Air Rescue Wing in Gabreski flies the Combat Rescue Helicopter. I am deeply concerned by the Air Force's decision to modernize the Active component's helicopters first, and not start on the Air Guard's aircraft until the last 3 years of the project. Our airmen regularly go out on rescue missions, and they should not be forced to use the oldest helicopters for years to come—this goes against the Air Force's usual focus on concurrent and proportional fielding, and I will continue to push back against it. What are your thoughts on modernization of the combat rescue helicopter fleet? Will we have your support?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will receive more information on Air Force plans for delivering the Combat Rescue Helicopter.

76. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, as you know, there have been concerns raised by the National Guard over the role and staffing of title 32 military technician positions. These positions have different benefits afforded to them compared to their Active Guard Reserve (AGR) counterparts, which is part of the reason the airlines are so successful at hiring away our pilots. Do I have your commitment to work with me on addressing the concerns of our TAGs [The Adjutant General] and military technicians?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

#### LGBT RIGHTS

77. Senator GILLIBRAND. Dr. Wilson, during the hearing, I asked you a question about your views on LGBT [Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgendered] individuals and you responded that it is not your intention to change any of the policies in place with regard to sexual orientation. Will you also support retention of existing inclusive policies for transgender troops?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I have no intent to alter any policies established by my predecessors concerning transgender troops. I am aware that the Office of the Secretary of Defense is monitoring the implementation of this DOD policy.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD BLUMENTHAL

##### DIVERSITY OF FORCE

78. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, will you respect and uphold recent DOD efforts already in place that strengthen and diversify our force—including combat integration, the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell, and permitting transgender servicemembers to serve openly?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I have no intention of changing the policies in place and will treat all servicemembers with dignity and respect.

79. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, will you commit to equally protecting and upholding the rights of all members of the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

## F-35

80. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, I would ask that you look for ways to invest in F-35 capacity, capability, and production ramp to reach full rate production (80 aircraft per year) by 2021. If confirmed, will you commit to this committee that the Air Force will not back down from their planned procurement of this 5th generation aircraft?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will fully support the review of the F-35 program as directed by Secretary Mattis so that the Air Force has the capability it needs to protect our vital national interests against threats now and in the future.

81. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, from an acquisition standpoint, the F-35 international partners and foreign military sales countries have played a critical role in both the development and production of the F-35 program. It is my understanding that the international investment in the program has allowed the United States to reduce its cost per jet by more than \$10 million per aircraft in addition to the benefits of interoperability and nation building that this program has and will continue to play for decades to come. How will you continue to build these relationships with our international partners and foreign military sales countries to enhance the role they play in this program?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will guide the Air Force to continue to engage partners and foreign military sales customers to ensure interoperability is maintained with our allies and keep costs down.

82. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, do you support an expansion of this program?

Dr. WILSON. I support working closely with our allies where it enhances collective self-defense and keeps costs down. If there are ways to expand that effort, I am open to them.

83. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, how does this align with the current administration's focus on turning inward rather than building relationships with our allies and partner nations?

Dr. WILSON. America is stronger when we align ourselves with allies who share our interests and values. If confirmed, I will support Defense Department policy in this area.

## HUEY REPLACEMENT

84. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, do you agree that to protect our national security, the UH-1N helicopters need to be replaced as soon as possible?

Dr. WILSON. I understand that the Air Force is proceeding with a full and open competition to replace the UH-1N helicopters. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Staff to ensure that the requirements are validated and stable so that the UH-1N replacement is delivered on time and within budget.

85. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, will you commit to prioritizing this acquisition program is moved forward as soon as possible, if confirmed?

Dr. WILSON. I will seek to guide this program forward as authorized by the Congress, getting the capability needed within schedule and budget. If the fiscal year 2017 budget becomes a year-long continuing resolution 7 months into the year, this and other programs may be affected.

86. Senator BLUMENTHAL. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, will you fully review all procurement options to meet the mission set, including production ready, mature aircraft, as the Air Force requested last year?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force remains committed to delivering a UH-1N replacement with needed capabilities on schedule and within budget.

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOE DONNELLY

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WEATHER MISSION

87. Senator DONNELLY. Dr. Wilson, as you know, military and intelligence operations depend upon accurate and timely weather data for their success. In addition to the projected near-term gap in polar weather data as the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program comes to an end, the Department of Defense also lacks a long-term solution to the need for persistent weather coverage over the Indian Ocean and the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of operations. I understand the Air Force may include funding in the fiscal year 2018 budget request to address this imminent gap by moving an aging Geostationary Operational Environment Satellite (GOES), such as GOES 14, to the Indian Ocean. GOES 14 was launched in 2009 and is approaching the end of its expected service life. The Air Force must allocate resources toward a U.S.-owned, long-term solution to our need for weather imagery to support CENTCOM operations. It is my understanding that this need can be met without a large, expensive satellite, but rather through more flexible approaches like launching an appropriate instrument as a hosted payload. I do believe it is critical that this sensor capability is provided by a U.S.-controlled asset. Will you commit to ensuring adequate funding in the fiscal year 2018 budget request for defense weather capabilities, if confirmed—including funds to begin building a weather imager?

Dr. WILSON. Weather is a critical capability. I understand that the Air Force has examined a host of innovative short term options as well as multiple options to meet the longer term need. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Air Force examines all options available to meet the need in the short term and the long term.

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

## FOCUS ON THE PACIFIC

88. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, a strong presence in the Asia-Pacific plays a significant role in promoting the security and stability of the region. As an area of strategic importance to the United States, how is the Air Force positioned to meet its requirements in the region?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force has continuous presence with assigned forces in South Korea, Japan, Guam, Alaska, Hawaii, and other locations. The Air Force also sends units forward and makes its presence known routinely throughout the theater.

89. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, what if any additional resources would you recommend for the Air Force in the region?

Dr. WILSON. None at this time. The ability to deploy Air Forces on short notice demonstrates resolve in support of our regional allies and partners.

## CIVILIAN WORKFORCE

90. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, how do you view the role of the civilian workforce in terms of achieving improved Air Force readiness and force structure growth?

Dr. WILSON. Air Force civilians are serving in many critical areas that directly contribute to readiness. From maintainers and depot workers who keep the aging fleets mission ready, to highly-valued child-care workers providing peace of mind for Airmen so they can focus on the mission at hand. As such, the Air Force relies heavily on its civilian employees when it comes to improving readiness.

91. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, do you believe that the civilian workforce is a critical force multiplier when it comes to the Air Force's capability, capacity, and lethality and accomplishing its mission objectives?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

92. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, do you agree with the President that the Federal civilian workforce, to include the Department of Air Force, needs to be reduced across the board?

Dr. WILSON. We need to use every dollar taxpayers give us to get the most lethal force possible. The Air Force should always be reviewing mission requirements to ensure that we have the right people with the right skills to accomplish the mission.



93. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, do you believe attrition based workforce shaping, replacing every three departing employees with one new one, is an effective means to manage a workforce?

Dr. WILSON. I believe the Air Force should retain the flexibility to propose in our budget request the numbers of people and the talent needed to ensure mission success.

94. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, what will you do to control contracted services costs and make sure that we do not needlessly or carelessly spend taxpayer dollars on contracted labor because of hiring freezes or reductions to civilian employees?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, the Air Force will continue to comply with the President's guidance that contractors will not be used to circumvent the hiring freeze.

#### ATTRACTING FUTURE SKILLED AIRMEN

95. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, this committee has received testimony from all of the Services on the need to modernize and adjust the overall military posture to combat emerging threats like China and Russia with advancing technologies in addition to rogue nations and terrorist threats. If confirmed, what modifications, if any, would you recommend in the recruiting and retention of uniformed and civilian personnel to attract new technical skillsets?

Dr. WILSON. I understand that the Air Force is meeting its recruiting targets and that the biggest challenge is retention. I am interested in how the Air Force might use new authorities given to us by the Congress for direct commissioning programs for highly technical fields like cyber. I'm also interested over the long term in how we might meet needs and retain talent with technically oriented positions and units in the Guard and Reserve.

#### DIVERSITY

96. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, recently, 33 retired general and flag officers released a statement saying: "More than half a century of history and research has made clear that an inclusive military that prioritizes talent and ability over social judgment and personal prejudice is an essential ingredient of an effective fighting force. This is especially true in a diverse Nation like ours, which molds millions of individuals from countless different backgrounds into a unified whole capable of defending our nation and its interests." Do you agree that our military should be inclusive and that servicemembers should be judged on the basis of individual merit?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

97. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, former Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James said, "I feel anyone who's qualified should be able to serve" in the Air Force. Do you agree?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

98. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, do you support the existing DOD policies, directives, and implementation guidelines regarding open service by LGBT troops? If so, will you fully embrace them as the senior leader of the Air Force setting the example for those you lead?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I do not intend to change the policies currently in place in the military. I will treat all servicemembers with dignity and respect.

99. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, do you agree with Secretary Mattis' affirmation before this Committee that women and LGBT troops are part of our lethal fighting force?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

#### ENERGY RESILIENCE

100. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, military commanders and strategists have long discussed the role energy consumption plays in national defense. How would you recommend the military utilize operational energy improvements in conjunction with other force shaping tools?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I would continue to support a range of energy initiatives, particularly related to reducing the logistical burdens of energy supply at forward locations through advanced research and development.

101. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, over the last several years, the Air Force has taken important steps to address its energy security. In February 2016, the Air Force established the Office of Energy Assurance which is tasked with taking an enterprise-wide approach to energy projects that provide resilient, cost-effective, and cleaner energy to Air Force installations around the country. The Air Force is now operating a 19-megawatt solar array in Nevada and a 16.5-megawatt solar array in New Jersey. In January 2017, the Air Force issued a new Energy Flight Plan which is the Air Force's long-term vision for enhancing mission assurance through improved energy resilience. If confirmed, will you commit to the committee to maintain the effort already underway by the Air Force to enhance its energy resilience posture?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will continue to support Air Force efforts to develop resilient energy systems that allow it to continue to perform its missions in the face of increased cyber, physical and natural threats to bases, installations, and the nation's electric infrastructure that powers these bases and installations.

102. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, the use of energy savings performance contracts (ESPC) by the Air Force present an opportunity to partner with energy service companies to reduce the Air Forces' energy bills with improvements guaranteed by the companies. This can lead to saving taxpayer money. If confirmed, will you ensure that the Air Force continues to pursue, where appropriate, ESPCs that prevent the Government cost savings while improving energy efficiency for Air Force installations?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

103. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, emergency power generation systems used by military installations can often be unreliable and have high operation and maintenance costs. The NDAA directed the Secretary of Defense to develop a comprehensive plan to improve emergency power generation readiness while expanding fuel flexibility and reducing maintenance costs. If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Committee to ensure emergency power generation systems maintained at Air Force installations are reliable and operated in a cost effective way?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will continue the Air Force's focus on mission assurance through energy assurance to develop resilient, cost-effective back-up systems of all types.

#### SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, the Maui Space Surveillance Site is an invaluable asset for this Nation where Air Force space professionals have for decades provided vital information for our space and national security establishments. With the rise in the importance of space, it will undoubtedly become more valuable. If confirmed, will you do what you can to visit the site to see the outstanding capabilities and to recognize the great uniform and civilian team charged with the operations?

Dr. WILSON. As much as I would love to visit the site, it will be difficult to get to for reasons you well understand—primarily time and distance. If possible, I will come to Maui, but it is more likely that I will have an opportunity at some point to visit operations on Oahu.

105. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, we are seeing a rapid growth in the space in both the commercial and government sector. What is your perspective on how the Air Force can leverage the growth of the commercial sector in space?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I look forward to my responsibilities as principal DOD space advisor and chairing the Defense Space Council. The Air Force is responsible for over 90 percent of the Defense Department's space assets in orbit and the nation is heavily dependent on space capabilities for navigation, communication, command and control, intelligence, and precision targeting.

With respect to launch services, I believe competition can result in cost savings for the government. At the same time, commercial launch providers may not be able to meet launch requirements for national security space payloads as those requirements are currently crafted.

I also believe that it is very difficult for commercial launch providers to supply government customers at competitive prices because of the constraints imposed by federal acquisition rules. If these rules are the best way to serve the Air Force and the taxpayer well over the long term, their use is justifiable. But if our processes and regulations are impeding the accomplishment of the mission, we should review our processes and improve them.

If confirmed, I will be interested to learn more about how the Air Force is currently considering commercial space capabilities, beyond just launch, as it develops America's space strategy.

106. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, how can space be leveraged to support of the Air Force's needs for improved resiliency and responsiveness?

Dr. WILSON. The Air Force provides space-based capabilities to civilians and warfighters including navigation, communication, command and control, intelligence, weather, and precision targeting.

In any future conflict, space will be a contested domain and we need to think of air, near-space and space as a continuum that the United States must protect through all phases of potential conflict. Thinking in this way is likely to make our systems more resilient and robust.

#### POST GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

107. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, after leaving the House of Representatives, you signed contracts to consult for Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and the Nevada National Security Site. What was in the statement of work for these contracts and how was progress measured to authorize payments?

Dr. WILSON. I no longer have copies of the statements of work.

At Oak Ridge National Laboratory I served on the Intelligence Advisory Board of about 20 people. This board would meet about 4 times a year to receive briefings, ask questions and provide advice at the Top Secret/Special Compartmented Information level on intelligence related programs. The meetings were generally a day long and each Advisory board member was paid a flat fee for attending. The Vice President responsible for Global Security was always present and authorized payment.

At the Nevada Test Site I served on the Presidential Advisory Board of about 10 people. The Board met 4 times a year for a day, or a day and a half. The agenda was set by the President of the Test Site and included discussions of major challenges or problems, review of programs, presentations and discussions of programs underway at the test site. Discussions were usually at the Top Secret level. On one occasion, I was also asked to come to the test site a day early to review several special access programs. The President and his assistant were in the room and authorized payment.

At Los Alamos, I primarily reviewed and advised programs under the Vice President for Global Security and the Field Intelligence Element, in addition to the President and some other program offices related to nuclear materials. I met quarterly with the President of the Laboratory to discuss matters including stockpile certification, nuclear weapons policy and any other matters of interest to the President.

At Sandia, I served on the Intelligence Advisory Board and the Non-Proliferation Advisory Board. I also did extensive work with the division responsible for intelligence and non-nuclear defense programs, including cyber security, space assets and special access programs. I assisted with strategic planning, program reviews and assisted the laboratory with the reestablishment of their distinguished speakers' series. I was available to provide insight on matters related to pending legislation, advice on national security policy matters or congressional operations. I was available to all Vice Presidents as well as the President of the laboratory and program managers who sought my advice or assistance. I was in frequent contact with the Sandia contract manager about the work that I was doing, often multiple times a week. The contract manager monitored progress and satisfaction with the work being done.

108. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, reflecting back on the issues which came out of your post-House of Representatives consulting contracts with Los Alamos, Sandia, Oak Ridge and the Nevada National Security Site, given what you know now, presented with the same opportunities again, would you do anything differently in terms of your work with the four entities before, during and after the period of performance of the contracts? If yes, please describe what you would change.

Dr. WILSON. The work I did was viewed positively by the labs and I am glad I made contributions to national security that mattered.

#### POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

109. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Wilson, President Trump recently issued an executive order barring his appointees from working on matters related to former employers or clients for 2 years. What, if any, impact will this executive order have on your work as Secretary of the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. In accordance with the ethics letter I submitted, I will recuse myself from matters related to the South Dakota School of Mines and Raven Industries as well as a number of non-profit entities for the time periods specified in the letter. I don't expect this executive order will impact my work as Secretary of the Air Force.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARTIN HEINRICH

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

110. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, the recent emphasis by the military on readiness has come at the expense of research and development (R&D), which is critical to our continued and future readiness.

For example, the Department has significantly reduced R&D dedicated to space systems, dropping from \$5 billion to less than \$1 billion over the past 6 years (fiscal years 2009 to 2016). How will you prioritize R&D in the Air Force, and will you grant Air Force Research Labs with the authorities to hire, take risks, and modernize its facilities?

Dr. WILSON. As I mentioned in my testimony before the committee, the Secretary and the relevant committees of the Congress, have a particular responsibility to take the long view. If confirmed, I will review and further develop Air Force research and development priorities to ensure we are investing in basic and applied research that will keep the Air Force ahead of adversaries for the long term.

SPEED OF CONTRACTS

111. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, one of the frustrations I hear from both businesses and Air Force units is the amount of time it takes to get through the contracting process to an award. Yet, it is more important than ever that the Air Force respond quickly to ever-changing threat environments. As Secretary, how can we further accelerate contracting authority, particularly as it applies to space systems?

Dr. WILSON. I share your concern. Too many companies will not supply the Defense Department or other Federal agencies because it is too hard to do business with the government, and we have to get capabilities from the drawing board to the flight line faster.

If confirmed, I will work with the Air Force Acquisition Office to identify more and better ways to buy products and services that are a good value for the Air Force in a way that is simple for Air Force units and the businesses that want to cost-effectively support the military.

112. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, will you encourage the utilization of contracting authorities that make it easier to leverage commercial-off-the-shelf technologies (COTS) and industry talent?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

SPACE ACQUISITION

113. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, Air Force Space Command's General Hyten set forth the Space Enterprise Vision last year, which called for a more responsive and resilient approach to space. Industry has made great strides in technologies that may address these challenges, including small satellites and inexpensive launch vehicles. How will the Air Force make the most of existing industry investments in the small satellite market?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will chair the Defense Space Council and deepen Air Force partnerships with industry to find innovative ways to leverage commercial capability in ways that make sense for the military.

114. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, what role do you envision Operationally Responsive Space continuing to play in executing this vision?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I would expect the members of the Defense Space Council and Space Command to consider how the Operationally Responsive Space Office can best address the urgent needs of combatant commanders and what role it plays in the larger shift in thinking about space as a contested environment in any future conflict.

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE FUEL SPILL

115. Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Wilson, in 2015, I was able to join the Secretary of the Air Force to celebrate the installation of the first pump-and-treat well to address

the fuel plume at Kirtland Air Force Base. As of this week, extraction wells have now pumped more than 159 million gallons of groundwater for treatment by the new system, which removes all fuel-related contaminants from the water. Under your leadership, will the Air Force continue its financial commitment to completely protect and clean-up Albuquerque's water?

Dr. WILSON. Yes. If confirmed, I will stand by the Air Force's commitment to ensure contaminated water does not reach drinking water wells, reduce and eliminate the contamination plume, and meet regulatory standards.

I am also interested in whether we can learn things from Air Force remediation efforts at this and other sites that lead to new techniques and technologies to reduce the cost of water purification or improve clean-up of ground water contamination.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ELIZABETH WARREN

CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

116. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, how do you view the role of the civilian workforce in terms of achieving improved Air Force readiness and force structure growth?

Dr. WILSON. Air Force civilians are serving in many critical areas that directly contribute to readiness. As such, the Air Force relies heavily on its civilian employees, as it does every member of the team, when it comes to improving readiness.

As I mentioned in my hearing, almost half of the Air Force are civilians. They are very important members of the team.

117. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you agree with the President that the Federal civilian workforce, to include the Department of Air Force, needs to be reduced across the board?

Dr. WILSON. We need to use every dollar taxpayers give us to get the most lethal force possible. The Air Force should always be reviewing mission requirements to ensure that we have the right people with the right skills in the right places to accomplish the mission.

118. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you believe attrition based workforce shaping, replacing every three departing employees with one new one, is an effective means to manage your workforce?

Dr. WILSON. I believe the Air Force should retain the flexibility to propose in our budget request the numbers of people and the talent needed to ensure mission success.

119. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, what will you do to control contracted services costs and make sure that we do not needlessly or carelessly spend taxpayer dollars on contracted labor because of freezes or reductions to civilian employees?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, the Air Force will continue to comply with the President's guidance that contractors will not be used to circumvent the hiring freeze.

DIVERSITY OF THE FORCE

120. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you agree with Secretary Mattis that women and LGBT troops are equally valuable parts of our lethal fighting force?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

121. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you support the existing DOD policies, directives, and implementation guidelines regarding open service by LGBT troops?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

122. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if you decide to modify in any way the policies, directives, and guidelines regarding open service by LGBT troops, will you first provide members of the Committee with a written explanation as to how such a modification would enhance readiness, cohesion, and morale?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will to the extent that there are policies specific to the Air Force (rather than DOD).

123. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you support the existing DOD policies, directives, and implementation guidelines regarding women in combat?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

124. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if you decide to modify in any way the policies, directives, and guidelines regarding women in combat, will you first provide members of the Committee with a written explanation as to how such a modification would enhance readiness, cohesion, and morale?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

125. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, will you be committed to a zero-tolerance approach to harassment or similar behavior?

Dr. WILSON. I support Air Force policy that proscribes sexual harassment in either of its recognized forms, encourages and supports reporting of sexual harassment, investigates allegations of sexual harassment fairly, takes appropriate action up to and including termination, and prohibits retaliation for reporting sexual harassment. I believe any violation of the policy merits a consequence.

126. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed, what actions will you take to prevent something like Marines United from happening in the Air Force?

Dr. WILSON. Specific to social media, I understand that the Air Force has testified that its social media policy does not tolerate bullying, hazing, or any instance where an Airman inflicts any form of physical or psychological abuse that degrades, insults, dehumanizes, or injures another airman regardless of the method of communication. The Air Force expects airmen to sustain a culture of trust, dignity and respect.

I understand that the Air Force is currently reviewing its policy, practice, and legal authorities in this area. If confirmed, I will consider the analysis and recommendations that result from the Air Force review.

If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force has policy, legal authority and training to prevent and to respond to abuses. I will expect leaders at all levels to reinforce the expectation that everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect.

#### DEFENSE INNOVATION UNIT EXPERIMENTAL

127. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, commercial technology is moving faster than ever before, and the defense acquisition system has struggled to keep up. The Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, or DIUx, has partnered with the Air Force on several rapid prototyping demonstrations. Do you believe that missions such as DIUx enable us to capture commercial innovation quicker and more efficiently?

Dr. WILSON. I believe DIUx and other efforts like it can provide a means to quickly capture commercial technology and innovation. As I mentioned in my hearing, we also have to make sure that innovations can be integrated, operated, and sustained by capable young people in high stress combat situations far away from the innovators who developed the systems.

I am also interested in how the lessons learned at DIUx can be incorporated more broadly in Air Force acquisition so that capabilities get from the drawing board to the flight line faster.

128. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, if confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, will you support DIUx?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

#### NUCLEAR COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATION

129. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, General John E. Hyten, USAF, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, recently said that Nuclear Command, Control, and Communication (NC3) was his highest priority for nuclear recapitalization. He said that "any delay, deferment, or cancellation of NC3 modernization will create a capability gap potentially degrading the President's ability to respond appropriately to a strategic threat." Do you agree?

Dr. WILSON. While I have not been briefed recently on classified nuclear command, control and communications modernization efforts, I have no reason to question General Hyten's assessment.

The greatest risk we face with this and other systems is budget uncertainty and the potential for a year-long continuing resolution 7 months into the fiscal year. We have to get beyond the Budget Control Act and re-establish greater normalcy in budgeting and appropriations to avoid delay and deferment of important modernization programs.

130. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, our track record at executing modernization programs without delay, deferment, or cancellation has not been great in recent

years. How do you think the Air Force should mitigate risk to the NC3 system from delays or deferments to the program of record?

Dr. WILSON. Clear and achievable requirements, reasonable timelines, empowered and accountable program managers, and predictable funding are keys to successful modernization programs.

PRIOR RECORD

131. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, after leaving Congress in 2009, you received contracts from four Department of Energy (DOE)-owned and contractor-operated research centers. Did you negotiate any of these contracts while you were still a Member of Congress?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

132. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, did you consult with the Ethics Committee about your ongoing negotiations and subsequent contracts?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

133. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, according to internal documents obtained from the DOE investigation into your contracts with these four laboratories, a Los Alamos National Laboratory official stated that you refused his request to provide an accounting of your time and work. Is this accurate, and if so, can you explain your decision not to do so?

Dr. WILSON. No. I do not believe it is accurate.

134. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, the DOE IG also found that the original agreement you signed “specifically prohibited activity related to ‘business development.’” Did you know that the agreement you signed prohibited activity related to business development?

Dr. WILSON. Yes.

135. Senator WARREN. Dr. Wilson, do you consider your efforts to obtain a no-bid contract extension for Sandia to be business development?

Dr. WILSON. My advice to the Lockheed-Martin contract manager was what I thought Lockheed-Martin should do, not Sandia.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GARY C. PETERS

CYBER AND REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT TRAINING

136. Senator PETERS. Dr. Wilson, the 110th Attack Wing in Battle Creek has two critical missions that will be important to the Air Force for years to come: flying remotely piloted aircraft and a cyber operations squadron. It’s important that these missions are resourced properly given the demand from combatant commanders and the competition from the private sector for airmen with these skills. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring there are adequate training slots for Guardsmen to prepare for the RPA and cyber operations missions?

Dr. WILSON. Based on what I know, I don’t see a reason why this should be a problem. Both the remotely piloted aircraft and cyber missions are vital and appropriate missions for the Guard. Training is the key to readiness and mission success, and we are short of operators in both of these fields. They need to be trained.

RPA RESOURCES

137. Senator PETERS. Dr. Wilson, the 110th Attack Wing has only one RPA console despite having space for two more. Given the demand for RPAs to provide intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance as well as strike capability, it’s important that this mission is fully resourced. Will you commit to reviewing resourcing of the RPA mission at places like the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base?

Dr. WILSON. If confirmed, I will review this high-demand program to ensure we are using the resources we have to accomplish the missions expected of us cost effectively.

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[The nomination reference of the Honorable Heather A. Wilson follows:]

**NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT**

**PN101**

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
March 21, 2017.

*Ordered*, That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

Heather Wilson, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of the Air Force, vice Deborah Lee James.

\_\_\_\_\_, 2017.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. McCain \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed.

☐ **The nominee has agreed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
[The biographical sketch of the Honorable Heather A. Wilson, which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]



**Bio**  
**Heather A. Wilson**

**Education:**

- United States Air Force Academy
  - 1978-1982
  - Bachelor of Science
- Oxford University, England
  - 1982-1985
  - M.Phil and D.Phil, International Relations

**Employment Record:**

- South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, Rapid City, South Dakota
  - President
  - June 2013 – Present
- Heather Wilson for U.S. Senate, Albuquerque, New Mexico
  - Candidate
  - Feb 2011 – Nov 2012
- Heather Wilson & Company LLC, Albuquerque, New Mexico
  - President
  - Jan 2009 – Feb 2011
- United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC
  - Congresswoman
  - June 1998 – Jan 2009
- New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department, Santa Fe, New Mexico
  - Cabinet Secretary
  - Jan 1995 – Feb 1998
- Keystone International, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico
  - President
  - Sep 1991 – Jan 1995
- National Security Council Staff, Washington, DC
  - Director, Defense Policy and Arms Control
  - Jun 1989 – Jul 1991
- Conventional Forces in Europe Negotiations, Vienna, Austria
  - Acting Representative of the Secretary of Defense
  - Apr 1989 – Jun 1989

- U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels, Belgium
  - Negotiator and Defense Planning Officer
  - Jun 1987 – Jun 1989
- Headquarters, US Air Force in Britain (3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force), RAF Mildenhall, UK
  - Negotiator and Political Advisor
  - Jun 1985 – Jun 1987
- Intelligence Center Pacific, Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii
  - Analyst
  - Jun 1982 – Aug 1982
- USAF Officer
  - 1982 – 1989

#### **Honors and Awards:**

- Military Awards
  - Defense Meritorious Service Medal
  - Air Force Meritorious Service Medal
  - Joint Meritorious Unit Award
  - USAF Parachutist Badge
- Federal Civilian Awards
  - National Intelligence Superior Public Service Award
- Academic Awards
  - Paul Reuter Prize, International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva for major contribution to the study of international humanitarian law (1988)
  - Rhodes Scholar (1982)
  - B.S. Summa Cum Laude, USAF Academy (1982)
  - M.Phil, Letter of Distinction, Oxford University (1984)
- Other Awards
  - Semi-Finals, British National Rowing Championships, coxed four (1984)
  - Bronze Medal, American Club Rowing Championships, light eight (1990)

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[The Committee on Armed Services requires all individuals nominated from civilian life by the President to positions requiring the advice and consent of the Senate to complete a form that details the biographical, financial, and other information of the nominee. The form executed by the Honorable Heather A. Wilson in connection with her nomination follows:]

**PART A -- BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE:** Biographical information furnished in this part of the form will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing and will also be published in any hearing record as well as made available to the public.

**1. Name: (Include any former names used.)**

Heather Ann Wilson

**2. Position to which nominated:**

Secretary of the Air Force

**3. Date of nomination:**

3/21/2017

**4. Address: (List city and state of personal residence and full office address.)**

The nominee responded and the information is contained in the committee's executive files.

**5. Year and place of birth:**

Keene, New Hampshire  
12-30-1960

**6. Marital status: (Include full name of current spouse including any other names used, including maiden name.)**

Married  
Jay Roderick Hone

**7. Names of children (if over age 18):**

The nominee responded and the information is contained in the committee's executive files.

**8. Education: List names of secondary and higher education institutions attended, type of school (vocational, technical, trade school, college, university, military college, correspondence, distance, extension, and on-line) dates attended, degree received and date degree granted.**

US Air Force Academy  
University  
June 1978 – June 1982  
Bachelor of Science, 1982

Oxford University, England  
University  
August 1982—June 1985  
MPhil, 1984  
DPhil, 1985

**9. Employment record: List all jobs held since college or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, list separate employment activity periods to show each change of military duty station.**

President  
South Dakota School of Mines & Technology  
Rapid City, SD  
June 2013 – President

Candidate  
Heather Wilson for U.S. Senate  
Albuquerque, NM  
February 2011—November 2012

President  
Heather Wilson & Company LLC  
Albuquerque, NM  
January 2009—February 2011

Congresswoman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC  
June 1998—January 2009

- 10. Government experience: List any advisory, consultative, honorary or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above.**

Advisory Board Member, CIA Biological Threat Program, 2010-2015  
Advisory Board Member, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (1991-1993)  
Advisory Board Member, Nevada Test Site, (2010-2012)  
Advisory Board Member, National Security Agency R&D Panel (2010-2013)  
Advisory Board Member, Scowcroft Institute at Texas A&M, 2015-Present  
Advisory Board Member, Americans for Peace and Prosperity, 2015-2016  
Congressional Panel on the Nuclear Security Enterprise (2013-2014)  
Board Member, NM Workforce Development Board (1996-1998)  
Board Member, SD Research REACH Committee (2013-Present)  
Chair of the Transition, Governor Susan Martinez (2010)  
Co-Chair, Rapid City Cultural Plan Steering Committee (2015-2016)  
Consultant, National Security Agency (2009-2011)

- 11. Business relationships. List all positions currently held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, educational or other institution.**

Corporate Director, Peabody Energy (NYSE: BTU) (2013-Present)  
Corporate Director, Raven Industries (NASDAQ: RAVN) (2016-Present)  
Board Member, SD School of Mines Foundation  
Board Member, SD Science and Technology Authority  
Board Member, Rapid City Chamber of Commerce  
Board Member, Rapid City Economic Development  
Board Member, Destination Rapid City/Main Street Square  
Owner, Flight Time LLC  
Executive Council Member, NCAA Rocky Mountain Athletic Association

- 12. Memberships: List all current memberships and offices that you hold in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations.**

American Association for the Advancement of Science  
Association of Former Members of Congress

Association of American Rhodes Scholars  
 Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association  
 Experimental Aircraft Association  
 National Rifle Association  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars  
 American Legion  
 Reserve Officers Association  
 Association of Graduates, USAF Academy  
 National Association of Corporate Directors  
 Women Corporate Directors  
 Vertex Club, Alex Johnson Hotel  
 Capitol Hill Club  
 Rotary Club of Rapid City

**13. Political affiliations and activities:**

(a) If you have ever been a candidate for or have been elected or appointed to a political office, list the name of the office(s), whether you were elected/appointed/candidate, the year(s) the election was held or the appointment was made, and the term of office (if applicable).

Cabinet Secretary  
 NM Children, Youth and Families Department  
 Appointed  
 1995-1998

U.S. Congresswoman  
 NM-01  
 Elected  
 1998-2009

U.S. Senate  
 New Mexico  
 Candidate  
 2008

U.S. Senate  
 New Mexico  
 Candidate  
 2012

(b) List all memberships and offices held in and services rendered to all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years.

State Central Committee  
Republican Party of New Mexico

(c) Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity for the past 5 years. List each individual contribution and not the total amount contributed to the person or entity during the year.

Diego Espinosa for NM State Senate -- \$200, 6/12/2016  
Kasich for America -- \$200, ~ 4/2016  
Diego Espinosa for NM State Senate -- \$200, 4/1/2016  
Marco Rubio for President -- \$1400, 2/29/2016  
Marco Rubio for President -- \$500, 2/23/2016  
Peabody PAC -- \$1000, 8/9/2015  
McSally for Congress-- \$500, 2/20/2012

14. Honors and Awards: List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, civilian service citations, military awards and decorations, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

National Intelligence Superior Public Service Award (2009)  
USAF Parachutist Badge  
Defense Meritorious Service Medal  
Air Force Meritorious Service Medal  
Joint Meritorious Unit Award  
Paul Reuter Prize from the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, Switzerland for a major contribution to the study of international law (1988)  
Semi-Finals, British National Rowing Championships, coxed four (1984)  
Bronze Medal, American Club Rowing Championships, lightweight eight (1990)  
Governor's Award for Outstanding New Mexico Women (1994)

15. Published writings: List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials which you have written including articles published on the internet.

Book:

International Law and the Use of Force by National Liberation Movements,  
(Oxford University Press, 1988).

**Joint Authorship:**

PTTP  
"The Strategic Case for the Trans-Pacific Partnership," American Action Forum,  
October 27, 2016, with Jacqueline Varas and Rachel Hoff

in a...  
cdk...  
2014  
delaying  
"A New Foundation for the Nuclear Enterprise," Report of the Congressional  
Advisory Panel on the Governance of the Nuclear Security Enterprise, November  
2014

Russ...  
p. 6A  
"Science & Technology Strategies of Six Countries: Implications for the United  
States," (National Research Council of the National Academies, 2010)

**Articles, Columns and other Publications:**

"Congress' Rules Do Address Conflicts," Albuquerque Journal, November 11,  
2013

"Immigration Reform is More than a Fence," Washington Times, November 27,  
2012

"Medical Device Tax a Job Killer," Albuquerque Journal, July 29, 2012

"Stand Up, Refuse Obama's Mandate" Albuquerque Journal, February 11, 2012

"Keeping Safe: Personal Security in Public Life," Roll Call, January 27, 2011

looks set asend...  
"Our Superficial Scholars," The Washington Post, January 23, 2011

(+)  
"What War on Terror?", The Washington Times, October 28, 2010

Alma  
old  
view  
"Restoring Ethics in Government: Eight Ways to Clean Up Santa Fe,"  
NMPolitics.net, April 27, 2010

"ObamaCare Doesn't Tackle Out-of-Control Costs," Albuquerque Journal, April 9,  
2010

"Topic A: Can the Republicans Win in November with a Negative Strategy?," The  
Washington Post, April 3, 2010

?  
"Are We Ready to Win a Cyberwar?," The Washington Post, June 23, 2009

"Red Flags at YDDC Can't Be Ignored," Albuquerque Journal, May 7, 2009

"What Went Wrong – Hermione Clinton," The New York Times, June 8, 2008



- ~~New Medicare Drug Program Gets the Rx It Needs," Albuquerque Journal, March 24, 2006~~
- ~~BRAC  
2004  
Beas  
⊕~~ Cannon Deserves Second Look from BRAC," Clovis News Journal, June 12, 2004
- ~~Curb Role of G.I. Janes? No," New York Daily News, June 1, 2005~~
- ~~"The Case for Geospatial Investment," Military Geospatial Technology, Vol 3, Issue 2, 2005~~
- ~~"All Tools at Our Disposal, Addressing Nuclear Proliferation in a Post-9/11 World," House Policy Committee, Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, January 2005~~
- ~~"Our President and this Congress have Done Well by Military Vets," Albuquerque Tribune, November 15, 2003 with Senator Pete Domenici~~
- ~~"Red Tape Squeezing Natural Gas Supply," Albuquerque Journal, October 6, 2003~~
- ~~"Real Issue Behind Energy Debate is People," Farmington Daily Times, September 28, 2003~~
- ~~"A Sparkling Economy," New Mexico Business Journal, July 2003~~
- ~~"U.S. Needs Comprehensive Energy Policy," Albuquerque Journal, April 3, 2000~~
- ~~"Differentiation and Defense: An Agenda for the Nuclear Weapons Program," House Policy Committee, Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, February 2003~~
- ~~"Increase and Diversify our Supply of Energy," New Mexico Business Journal, August 2001~~
- ~~"It's Time to Add Prescription Drug Coverage to Medicare," PrimeTime, August 2000~~
- ~~"U.S. Needs Comprehensive Energy Policy," Albuquerque Journal, April 3, 2000~~
- ~~"Tax Relief for New Mexico Small Businesses," New Mexico Business Weekly, March 20-26, 2000~~
- ~~"Bills to Balance Budget, Protect Social Security," Albuquerque Journal, November 2, 1999~~
- ~~"Indicting Social Workers Abuses DA's Power," Albuquerque Journal, July 11,~~

1996

"Nuclear Threat – Leadership Wanted," The Wall Street Journal, December 8, 1993

"Missed Opportunities: Washington Politics and Nuclear Proliferation," The National Interest, Winter 1993/94

"Women in Combat," The National Interest, Summer 1993

"Anglo-American Relations After the INF Treaty," in European Defense Cooperation: America, Britain and NATO, Michael Clarke and Rod Hague, eds. (Manchester University Press, 1990).

"Calling the Tune in Vienna," The National Interest, Summer 1989

"Where to Capitalize in Vienna on Gorbachev's Words," The Wall Street Journal, January 3, 1989

"NATO Security Policies: Continuity and Change," NATO Review, 6 (1988)

"Humanitarian Protection in Wars of National Liberation," Arms Control, 8(1987)

16. **Speeches: Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years of which you have copies and are on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated.**

Texts Attached.

✓ "Productive Failure," SD Mines Student Leadership Dinner, January 21, 2016

"Stewarding the National Security R&D Enterprise: Lessons Learned Along the Way," Research Symposium Keynote Address, April 11, 2014

✓ "Tough Choices and Moral Dilemmas in Public Leadership," USAF Academy, February 28, 2014

"Making Room for Mermaids," Women in Science and Engineering Dinner, February 6, 2014

"Dream a Bigger Dream," NM Girls State Keynote Address, June 6, 2012

17. **Commitments regarding nomination, confirmation, and service:**

**(a) If confirmed, will you adhere to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?**

Yes

**(b) Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?**

No

**(c) If confirmed, will you ensure your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record in hearings?**

Yes

**(d) Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to Congressional requests?**

Yes

**(e) Will you promise to enforce or ensure whistleblower protections for all those witnesses?**

Yes

**(f) Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify upon request before this Committee?**

Yes

**(g) Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?**

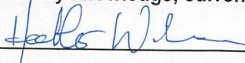
Yes

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[The nominee responded to Parts B-F of the committee questionnaire. The text of the questionnaire is set forth in the Appendix to this volume. The nominee's answers to Parts B-F are contained in the committee's executive files.]

## SIGNATURE AND DATE

I hereby state that I have read and signed the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of my knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.

  
This 16 day of Feb, 2017

[The nomination of the Honorable Heather A. Wilson was reported to the Senate by Chairman McCain on April 5, 2017, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on May 8, 2017.]

