

NOMINATIONS OF: HON. GILBERT R. CISNEROS,  
JR., TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS; CARLOS DEL  
TORO, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY;  
KATHLEEN S. MILLER, TO BE DEPUTY UNDER  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; DR. MARA E. KARLIN,  
TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
FOR STRATEGY, PLANS, AND CAPABILITIES;  
MICHAEL L. CONNOR, TO BE ASSISTANT SEC-  
RETARY OF THE ARMY FOR CIVIL WORKS

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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

### COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JULY 13, 2021

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# CONTENTS

JULY 13, 2021

	Page
NOMINATIONS OF: HON. GILBERT R. CISNEROS, JR., TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS; CARLOS DEL TORO, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY; KATHLEEN S. MILLER, TO BE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; DR. MARA E. KARLIN, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR STRATEGY, PLANS, AND CAPABILITIES; MICHAEL L. CONNOR, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR CIVIL WORKS .....	1
MEMBERS STATEMENTS	
Reed, Senator Jack .....	1
Inhofe, Senator James M. ....	3
WITNESS STATEMENTS	
Warner, Senator Mark .....	4
Kelly, Senator Mark .....	6
McHugh, John .....	7
Del Toro, Carlos, to be Secretary of the Navy .....	8
Advance Policy Questions .....	56
Questions for the Record .....	110
Nomination Reference and Report .....	120
Biographical Sketch .....	121
Committee on Armed Services Questionnaire .....	124
Signature Page .....	134
Cisneros, Hon. Gilbert R., Jr., to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness .....	11
Advance Policy Questions .....	135
Questions for the Record .....	157
Nomination Reference and Report .....	162
Biographical Sketch .....	163
Committee on Armed Services Questionnaire .....	165
Signature Page .....	174
Miller, Kathleen S., to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense .....	14
Advance Policy Questions .....	174
Questions for the Record .....	185
Nomination Reference and Report .....	187
Biographical Sketch .....	188
Committee on Armed Services Questionnaire .....	192
Signature Page .....	198
Karlin, Dr. Mara E., to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities .....	16
Advance Policy Questions .....	198
Questions for the Record .....	218
Nomination Reference and Report .....	221
Biographical Sketch .....	222
Committee on Armed Services Questionnaire .....	227
Signature Page .....	243
Connor, Michael L., to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works .....	18
Advance Policy Questions .....	243
Questions for the Record .....	256
Nomination Reference and Report .....	260
Biographical Sketch .....	261
Committee on Armed Services Questionnaire .....	263
Signature Page .....	271

This hearing is printed to include all available information  
requested or required to be inserted for the record.

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**TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021**

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

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jack Reed (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Committee Members present: Senators Reed, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King, Warren, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Cramer, Scott, Blackburn, Hawley, and Tuberville.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED**

Chairman REED. I would like to call the hearing to order. The Committee meets this morning to consider the nominations of Mr. Carlos Del Toro to be Secretary of the Navy; Hon. Gilbert Cisneros, Jr. to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; Ms. Kathleen Miller to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense [Comptroller]; Dr. Mara Karlin to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities; and Mr. Michael Connor to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. I thank the nominees for their service to the United States and their willingness to assume these important roles.

I would also like to welcome the guests and family members who are with us today. Mr. Del Toro, I welcome your wife, Betty, and son, Chris, and I thank Senator Warner for joining us to introduce you. Mr. Cisneros, I welcome your wife, Jacki, and I thank Senator Kelly for his introduction. Ms. Miller, I welcome your husband, Brian, and thank former Congressman and Secretary of the Army

John McHugh for his introduction via Webex. Dr. Karlin, I welcome your husband, Reuben. And Mr. Connor, I welcome your wife, Shari, and daughter, Gabriela.

Mr. Del Toro, you are well qualified to be the nominee for the Secretary of the Navy, given your distinguished service as a naval officer, years of senior leadership in the Department of Defense, and experience as the CEO of SBG Technology Solutions.

Our naval forces are maintaining an extremely high operations tempo across all areas. The demand for attack submarines, air and missile defense cruisers, destroyers, and strike fighter inventories, and the logistics and maintenance associated with them, is considerable. If confirmed, you will be responsible for recruiting, organizing, training, and equipping the force and guiding policies and programs for the Navy and Marine Corps during this challenging time.

Among the issues you will need to address is the readiness of the Navy and the continuing problems in maintaining its fleet. Deferred ship maintenance, reduced steaming and flying hours, and canceled training and deployments have created serious readiness problems. Cost overruns and delays in schedules have plagued both public and private shipyards, with impacts felt down to the individual sailor and marine. We remember too well the collisions of the McCain and Fitzgerald and the loss of life that resulted. I would like to know what changes you will make to ensure such incidents do not happen in the future, and your plans for improving the capability and capacity to perform maintenance for Navy ships.

Mr. Cisneros, if confirmed as Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, you will face many challenges in ensuring, first and foremost, that our military has adequate numbers of ready and trained servicemembers, of sufficiently high character and talent, to meet our national defense objectives. You will be responsible for military and civilian personnel policy, military family and child care programs, the DOD-run school system, and working with the military services to ensure the health and welfare of the force. Your experience as a former military officer, Member of Congress, philanthropist, and advocate for veterans should serve you well in this role.

One of the many challenges that will require your immediate attention is the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military. As we know from the President's Independent Review Commission that studied sexual assault in the ranks, there has been a dangerous erosion of trust and faith in leaders' ability to effectively address this issue. I would ask that you share your plans for addressing the problem.

Ms. Miller, you are nominated to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense [Comptroller]. You are well suited for this position, with decades of civil service and government experience, including a variety of financial and accounting positions within the Army. You have also served as the Associate Chief Financial Officer for Internal Finance at the Internal Revenue Service.

The Office of the Comptroller is instrumental in preparing and executing the Department's budget and ensuring the resources that Congress provides are allocated to the troops efficiently and effectively. Additionally, the Comptroller is a key player in the Depart-

ment's efforts to achieve a clean audit and to modernize its financial management systems. If confirmed, your role will be critical in ensuring the fiscal year 2022 budget is executed and the Department continues its efforts to achieve a clean audit.

Dr. Karlin, you are nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities. You are highly qualified for this role, with decades of leadership in the Department of Defense and where you are currently serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. You also provided valuable leadership in U.S. national security through various roles at the RAND Corporation and Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

If confirmed, you will serve as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on issues related to defense strategy. This includes issuing guidance to align resources and capabilities, as well as reviewing contingency plans necessary to implement the strategy. One of your first tasks will be to craft the 2022 National Defense Strategy, or NDS, and assess the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies. I would like to know how you will approach the NDS and assess the capabilities the Joint Force needed to prevail in long-term strategic competition with China and Russia.

Finally, Mr. Connor, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, and if confirmed, you will be responsible for overseeing the civil functions of the Army to include functions of the Army Corps of Engineers and various U.S. military cemeteries. Your prior service as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior and as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation should serve you well in this role.

This Committee has been concerned with the slow rate of Army construction projects, and I would ask that you share how you would improve its processes. Additionally, given the increasing importance of environmental resiliency to our national security, I would like to know your plans for incorporating climate projections in the planning and design of civil works projects.

Thank you, again, to our nominees. I look forward to your testimonies.

Because of complications in travel, Senator Inhofe is not here today. He has asked me to introduce his opening statement, and without objection the opening statement is introduced into the record.

[The prepared opening statement of Senator James M. Inhofe follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, today submitted the following remarks for the record at a nomination hearing for: Carlos Del Toro to be Secretary of the Navy; Hon. Gil Cisneros to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness; Kathleen Miller to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller; Dr. Mara Karlin to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Capabilities; and Michael Connor to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.  
As Submitted for the Record:

Thank you, Chairman Reed. I echo your comments and thank our five nominees for being with us and for their willingness to serve the Nation.

Our nation's top military and intelligence leaders have told this committee in recent months that the world is more dangerous and complex than at any point in our lifetimes. I agree with them.

I believe the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) is the right roadmap to deal with these challenges. But we need the right resourcing to make the NDS a reality.

I remain concerned that President Biden's defense budget falls short of the 3–5 percent growth that the bipartisan NDS commission said we need to implement the NDS. Each of the jobs for which you are nominated will be made much harder by these cuts.

Our competitors aren't letting up. Russian and Chinese defense budgets continue to grow, and, combined, they already far exceed our own.

If confirmed, you will be called on to address these and many other challenges.

Mr. Del Toro, last week Chairman Reed and I published an article with the Naval Institute Proceedings that detailed our view that the business of Navy shipbuilding needs to be better understood. I am interested in your thoughts on this topic.

Mr. Cisneros, you will face the daunting task of guiding the personnel and readiness policies of the Department.

You will be challenged to ensure that our troops and their families get the support they need—like high-quality housing, health care, and commissaries—while also working to improve the readiness of the total force under a declining Biden defense budget.

Ensuring readiness will also be an important part of your job as Comptroller, Ms. Miller, and it's made much tougher by the Administration's inadequate budget. I am interested to learn how you will grapple with this dilemma.

Dr. Karlin, the defense budget is not enough to implement the 2018 NDS. The Biden Administration is reviewing the NDS now, and may add even more missions to the next NDS. I am interested to hear what changes you think need to be made.

Mr. Conner, you will establish strategic guidance for the department's Civil Works Program. I am interested to learn which areas you will prioritize and how you will define success.

I look forward to hearing how each of you will address these challenges, if confirmed.

Thanks again for being with us today.

Chairman REED. At this time I would like to recognize Senator Warner for his introduction. Senator Warner, please.

#### **STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARK WARNER**

Senator WARNER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of the members of the committee for their willingness to have me here this morning, and while I am going to speak about my friend of over 30 years in a moment I want to commend the President for nominating the whole panel here, who I think are extraordinarily well qualified. But I am incredibly proud and honored to join you this morning to introduce—and I know I will be followed up by my good friend and colleague from Virginia, Tim Kaine—the President's choice to our next Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro.

The truth is I have known Carlos and his wife, Betty, and Carlos and I were just talking a little bit, his eldest son, Christopher, I think for close to 30-plus year. We first got involved long before I was elected to anything on a topic that is of deep importance to both of us, juvenile diabetes research, and in the 32-plus year since then I have often leaned on Carlos' experience, both in the Navy and the private sector, when I faced tough policy questions, both as Governor and now as Senator.

It is also incredibly timely as we see the episodes taking place in Cuba, where we all stand with the people of Cuba. Carlos' story is uniquely American. After having emigrated to the United States from Cuba, he went on to attend the Naval Academy and served multiple tours of duty across the globe, which included assignments as executive officer of a naval cruiser and as the pre-commissioning

and commanding officer of the USS Buckley, an American destroyer. Subsequent to his career in the Navy, he was very involved—and I am sure he will speak to this as well—with the Presidential Fellowship Program.

From his 26 years of military service to our Nation he has led sailors through times of conflicts and peace. Carlos knows the demands of service and how to lead and support our servicemembers. He was lucky enough to marry Betty, who I hope he will speak about. Tim and I have fond stories of visiting socially with them at their home, them visiting with us, and I think we ought to recognize that Betty and their four kids have seen first-hand the experiences and challenges of our military families and the sacrifices they also are often asked to make on behalf of our Nation.

For his military service, Carlos was honored with the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, whose other recipients include eight U.S. Presidents and Nobel Prize winners.

While following Carlos' retirement from the Navy in 2004, he founded a small IT business in Virginia. Over the past 17 years he has grown that company while navigating all the challenges any startup small business has—meeting payroll, dealing with sometimes crazy government procurement records, and also making sure that he grew that company. His leadership in the private sector has received numerous awards. He has been named a Top Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business and a 2020 small business success story.

As we think about the challenges our Navy faces, on a geopolitical standpoint—and I see these, Mr. Chairman, as you know, more from the intel side, and this distinguished committee sees it directly from the military side—we need someone who brings Carlos' depth and breadth of understanding to be Secretary of the Navy at this critical time.

But I will close in a moment. Just the—I would go on with a long list of Carlos' attributes, but this is a man of enormous, enormous character. He is a proud American. He loves our Navy. He loves this country. And what that character, I think, really will be incredibly important for Secretary of the Navy at this moment in time. He will be an incredible leader of but also advocate for the most important asset our Navy has, and that is not necessarily our ships or technology but the men and women who serve. At this moment in time, with all of the challenges our country faces, here and abroad, on a whole host of fronts, I can think of no one better suited to take on this critically important role. I have known this man and his family for over 30 years. I speak with unquestionable conviction that he brings the character, the intellect, and the experience to be a great Secretary of the Navy, and I urge this committee's favorable consideration of his nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I apologize to Carlos and others. I have actually got to run to an intel session. But thank you again for the opportunity to appear.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Warner. Now let me recognize Senator Kelly for his introduction.

# STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARK KELLY

Senator KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is great to be here this morning, and it is also my great pleasure to introduce Gil Cisneros, nominee to serve as the next Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. I have known Gil and his wife, Jacki, for a number of years. Gil is a fellow Navy veteran, enlisting in the United States Navy in 1989, after he graduated from high school. He was then commissioned an officer in the United States Navy in 1994, through what is called the Boost Program, and after a decade of service, Gil left the Navy and entered the private sector.

He and his wife, Jacki, have dedicated much of their energy to giving back, with a focus on philanthropic endeavors, and especially helping students access higher education. Gil was later elected to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served on both the Veterans' Affairs and the Armed Services Committees. That service touched on a number of issues relevant to the portfolio he would assume as Under Secretary, including addressing mental health and suicide and supporting military families, both during and after military service.

The Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness plays a critical role in supporting the well-being of our defense civilians, servicemembers, and their families, who also make tremendous sacrifices in service of our country. It manages the Department of Defense's educational and health care benefits programs and oversees matters related to morale and quality of life of our servicemembers, while also ensuring the readiness of our forces to meet emerging threats and the demands of researching great power competition.

My 25 years in the Navy taught me that the real strength of our military, the thing that sets us apart from others, is our people. Our continued success depends on supporting our people, giving them the tools to do their jobs, and always having their backs. In this role, that means making sure that the housing, and benefits, and other support programs deliver what our servicemembers and their families need.

Finally, the Under Secretary will play a pivotal role in shaping our Nation's use of the total force, including our National Guard and Reserve components. In a year that saw more Guard activations than at any time since World War II, our country has asked a lot of our National Guard, from natural disasters, to deployments to D.C., and in my home State, a continued deployment to the border to support law enforcement operations.

For all these reasons and more, this role deserves a confirmed and qualified, dedicated Under Secretary who can tackle these challenges in support of our servicemembers. All of us look forward to hearing more about your vision for carrying out this role, and I look forward to working with you and your team to support our great men and women in uniform.

Thank you for being here today and thank you for serving again. I really appreciate it, Gil.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the remainder of my time back to you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Kelly. And now let me recognize, via Webex, former Secretary of the Army, John McHugh. Mr. Secretary.

**STATEMENT OF FORMER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY, JOHN  
McHUGH**

Mr. McHUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all the distinguished members of the committee. And let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation for the opportunity, but really the honor of introducing you to President Biden's nominee to serve as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense [Comptroller], Kathleen Miller.

When I first went to the Pentagon to serve as Army Secretary in 2009, Kathleen had already earned a deserved reputation as a high performer, someone who, no matter the challenge or how difficult the task, would get the job done. As you noted, Mr. Chairman, she has had a long career in the public sector, much of that in the financial management area, as exemplified by her first Federal job, in 2002, with the Internal Revenue Service. But Kathleen moved to the Pentagon in 2005, where her skills and talent were immediately recognized, resulting in repeated advancements and expanded responsibilities.

In 2009, Kathleen held one of the most important jobs in the area of Army financial management. She served as Acting Director of ABO, the Army Budget Office, and in that role she helped lead our efforts to more responsibly develop detailed resource management strategies, even going so far as to helping us close a \$6 billion midyear funding gap that allowed us to make more sufficient investments in our warfighters, both in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In 2009, I was immediately impressed with her cool and nimble head and her very agile mind, and at my first opportunity, in 2010, I eagerly promoted Kathleen to serve as Assistant Chief of Staff G4 for Logistics. That is a civilian rank equivalent to a three-star general, with enormous responsibilities in one of the most important Army offices. Every day thereafter, I knew the G4 would be run at the highest levels of effectiveness and efficiency. And I really became convinced that Kathleen lived by that old TV commercial line, "Never let them see you sweat." I never saw her lose her composure or lose control of herself or the situation, and that is a skill set, as you know, Mr. Chairman, that is not always easily maintained in the often hectic corridors of the Pentagon.

But you really do not have to take my word for it. My successors as well recognized and valued Kathleen's skills, repeatedly advancing her, to a point where today she serves in a position that is generally held to be the most senior civilian posting in the Army, Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, where she oversees an Army-wide enterprise of some 700 military, civilian, and contractor personnel. And her good work has been recognized by her many awards, including Meritorious Presidential Rank Award and a Distinguished Presidential Rank Award, to name just two. But she has received high and repeated praise, all hard earned and all well deserved.

But as important as our resumes really just give you a glimpse as to a person's character, as to their frame of mind, how they view life and work, and so what are those things that really do set Kathleen Miller apart? Well, maybe it was her rural, upState kind of common sense, feet-on-the-ground upbringing that first taught her the values and the need for honesty and hard work and caring about others. Maybe it was the knowledge and the wisdom she ac-

quired through her extensive studies, earning a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and two master's degrees from Syracuse University and the Army War College.

Or maybe even perhaps most likely it was the love, encouragement, and sense of service that she received from her family at an early age that truly set her apart. Her father, Pat, who has sadly passed, served as a Navy pilot. Her mom, Shirley, who I am told is watching this hearing from the blueberry farm back in New York, is a retired nurse, and we have learned over the last 16 months or so how amazing those people are. And her husband, who is there with you today, Brian Pickerall, a Navy veteran as well, Cornell ROTC grad.

When you mix all of these qualities together you get an outstanding public servant who, for nearly 20 years, has served the public, and for the last 15 years has served faithfully the people who wear the uniform of the United States Army. And in short, you get Kathleen Miller, a very special individual.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of a truly worthy nominee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Secretary McHugh, and now I would like to recognize Mr. Del Toro for his opening statement. Go ahead, Mr. Del Toro.

#### **STATEMENT OF CARLOS DEL TORO, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY**

Mr. DEL TORO. Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Inhofe, in his absence, and distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Secretary of the Navy. I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination, and I hope that this hearing will help earn your trust.

I want to thank Senator Warner, in his absence, for his kind words of introduction.

And if I may Mr. Chairman, I would like to quickly again recognize and introduce to the committee my wife of 38 years, Betty, who will undoubtedly serve as a constant reminder to me of the sacrifices of military families. As long as she has my ear—and I assure you that she always will—Betty will undoubtedly serve as a constant reminder to me of the sacrifices of military families. I also want to thank my beloved children, including my oldest son, Chris, who was mentioned earlier, who is here with us today, and my other sons, Marcel, Brice, and John, who could not be here today. They all collectively put up with 17 moves over 22 years in the Navy, and I thank them for that, and much more.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to testify before you and I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Austin for extending me this potential opportunity to again serve our sailors, our marines, our Navy civilian personnel, their families, and our Nation. As President Biden said in his Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, "Democracy holds the keys to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity." I know the value of freedom and democracy because I was born in a country, Cuba, with neither. As a child, my family

and I fled an autocratic communist regime and settled in our new home, the United States of America. At age 17, I joined the Navy and served proudly for 26 years. The United States Navy-Marine Corps Team is sacred to our basic freedoms and to our national security. Should this committee and this Senate vote to confirm me, I will always remember and honor what we are sworn to protect and defend.

As President Biden has previously stated, our Nation is at an inflection point and we face challenges as severe as they are unprecedented. China, with its autocratic system and its determined incursion into the South China Sea and globally, presents a constant naval threat. Russia and other resurgent powers also threaten our global stability. Our adversaries aggressively target the Arctic theater where we must continue being diligent, despite its harsh operating conditions. We must meet these challenges from a position of demonstrated strength and unity.

China's rising military expenditures fueled by a growing economy, coupled with their global adventurism, means that we can no longer take U.S. naval superiority for granted. Access to contested waters requires more robust capabilities and capacity. This demands new thinking about how we invest our defense dollars. I was pleased to see the President's budget request recognize this challenge and invest billions of dollars toward improving readiness and future capabilities. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing these capabilities to ensure our Navy-Marine Corps team has what it needs to project strength and provide a credible deterrent to China and any other adversaries.

The climate crisis also demands U.S. Navy investment precisely because it exacerbates every other challenge that our Navy faces, including great power competition. Already installation resilience is an issue, with vital installations facing threats from rising sea levels. Building energy and environmental resilience into our installations will make them more combat effective. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our community partners, at home and abroad, with Congress, to address these complicated issues.

As Secretary Austin has repeatedly stated we must build teamwork and always care for those that defend our Nation. We must continue to build a Navy-Marine Corps team where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We must recruit from the widest possible talent pool. Diversity of experience, thought, and background always makes for a more combat effective team. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our leadership to make sure every sailor, marine, and civilian in the Department feels safe, welcome, and included.

Creating such a force also means we must hold accountable those who do not treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of who they are.

There is also the inexcusable issue of military sexual harassment and assault. It must end. I appreciate the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, and if confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Congress to find impactful solutions.

In closing, I again thank our sailors, our marines, our civilian personnel, and their families whose professionalism, commitment, and abilities never cease to amaze me.

I also thank my parents in heaven for summoning the courage to leave Cuba and communism with me in tow as an infant and for having both worked two jobs most of their lives so that my brother, Robert, and I could live and prosper in freedom.

To President Biden and Secretary Austin, thank you for entrusting me with a sacred duty, to support the men and women who defend our Nation's interests and our citizens.

I look forward to answering your questions and I hope, earning your trust, as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carlos Del Toro follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY MR. CARLOS DEL TORO

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Distinguished Members of the Committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Secretary of the Navy. I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination, and I hope this hearing will help earn your trust.

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If I may Mr. Chairman, I would like to quickly recognize and introduce to the Committee my wife of 38 years, Betty, who will undoubtedly serve as a constant reminder to me of the sacrifices of military families. As long as she has my ear—and she always will, I will work tirelessly, if confirmed, to care for our military families. I also want to thank my beloved children, Chris, Marcel, Brice, and John who could not be here today, but who collectively put up with 17 moves over 22 years in the Navy.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to testify before you and am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Austin for extending me this potential opportunity to again serve our Sailors, Marines, our Navy Civilian Workforce, their families, and our Nation. As President Biden said in his Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, "democracy holds the key to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity." I know the value of freedom and democracy because I was born in a country with neither. As a child, my family and I fled an autocratic communist regime and settled in our new home, the United States of America. At age 17, I joined the Navy and served proudly for 26 years. The United States Navy—Marine Corps Team is sacred to our basic freedoms and national security. Should this committee and this Senate vote to confirm me, I will always remember and honor what we are sworn to protect and defend.

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China's rising military expenditures fueled by a growing economy coupled with their global adventurism means that we can no longer take U.S. naval superiority for granted. Access to contested waters requires more robust capabilities and capacity. This demands new thinking.

about how we invest our defense dollars. I was pleased to see the President's budget request recognize this challenge and invest billions of dollars toward improving readiness and for future capabilities. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing these capabilities to ensure our Navy—Marine Corps team has what it needs to project strength and provide a credible deterrent to China and other adversaries.

The climate crisis also demands U.S. Navy investment precisely because it exacerbates every other challenge our Navy faces, including great power competition. Already, installation resilience is an issue, with vital installations facing threats from rising sea levels. Building energy and environmental resilience into our installations will make them more combat effective. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our community partners, at home and abroad to address these complicated issues.

As Secretary Austin has repeatedly stated we must build teamwork and always care for those that defend our Nation. We must continue to build a Navy—Marine Corps Team where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We must recruit from the widest possible talent pool. Diversity of experience, thought, and background makes for a more combat effective team. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our leadership to make sure every Sailor, Marine, and Civilian in the Department feels safe, welcome, and included.

Creating such a force also means we must hold accountable those who do not treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of who they are.

There is also the inexcusable issue of military sexual harassment and assault. It must end. I appreciate the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, and if confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Congress to find impactful solutions.

In closing, I again thank our Sailors, Marines, Civilian Personnel, and their families whose professionalism, commitment, and abilities never cease to amaze me.

I also thank my parents in heaven for summoning the courage to leave Cuba and communism with me in tow as an infant and for having both worked two jobs so that my brother, Robert, and I could live and prosper in freedom.

To President Biden and Secretary Austin, thank you for entrusting me with a sacred duty—to support the men and women who defend our Nation's interests and our citizens.

I look forward to answering your questions and I hope, earning your trust, as well.

Thank You.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much. I am told there might be some technical difficulties about the witnesses hearing from the podium. We are working on those right now.

But let me recognize Mr. Cisneros, please.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GILBERT R. CISNEROS, JR., TO BE  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS**

Mr. CISNEROS. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee, I am humbled to be in front of you today. I enjoyed working with many of you while in Congress, meeting others leading up to this hearing, and I appreciate your willingness to consider my nomination for Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

I want to thank my wife, Jacki, who is here today, for her continued support, and our twin 7-year-old boys, Alexander and Christopher, for their support and a lack of dad time. Though they could not join us here today, I am hopeful that they are at least watching part of this hearing, even if personnel and readiness management does not hold their attention.

I am also grateful to President Biden and Secretary Austin for the confidence they have placed in me.

My family has a history of service to our country. My grandfathers both served in World War II, my godfather served in Korea, and my father and uncles served in Vietnam. I followed their example of service and enlisted in the United States Navy at 18 years old. Today, I am also reminded of my grandmothers, who despite not having much education, showed me how to care for others and put them first. I come before you seeking to continue their legacy.

Caring for the people who make up the Department of Defense's total force is a sacred responsibility. Servicemembers, civilians, and their families bravely sacrifice in defense of our Nation. Regular moves, irregular deployments, and the occasional impromptu all-hands meeting require military families to put country first, mak-

ing difficult tradeoffs regarding where they live, what careers they pursue, and where they educate their kids. Though DOD civilians generally have greater stability than their military counterparts, they also sacrifice pay and flexibility in pursuit of a greater mission.

Having gotten to know many of the folks serving our country, I can tell you nothing inspires me more than hearing why people with vastly different backgrounds choose to serve. For all the things that divide us as a Nation, there are still millions of servicemembers and civilians who put the team, the mission, and our country before anything else. They do it because they care, they want to be part of something larger, and they want to be surrounded by the best of our country.

The Undersecretary of Personnel and Readiness is responsible for allowing the servicemembers, civilians, and families who serve to do so to their fullest potential.

If I am lucky enough to be confirmed, I would have three core priorities. First, I would ensure that we are doing everything we can to recruit and retain the right people with the right skills to deal with emerging challenges. I understand this committee has been especially focused on the cyber domain. If confirmed, I intend to make sure we are using the new authorities in that area.

Second, I would want to make sure we are taking advantage of our country's greatest asset, our people, to build the most capable, effective force possible. This means our force should look like the country we serve, with different racial, religious, gender, and sexual identities, as well as diverse political, ideological, and geographic backgrounds. To attract and retain all those who want to serve and can meet high standards, we need to create workplaces free of discrimination, sexual assault, and other mission detractors. This committee has paid particular attention to sexual assault and harassment, a focus I shared as a member of the House Armed Services Committee and an issue I am personally committed to. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with the committee to implement new accountability and prevention measures that make a lasting difference.

Finally, if confirmed, I would be committed to ensuring our forces are ready to face current threats while preparing for long-range challenges. I am optimistic that the Department can take advantage of a reduction in operational tempo to continue rebuilding for great power competition. However, our adversaries cannot perceive rebuilding as a weakness, and I am committed to ensuring the Secretary has the information to make decisions that balance these concerns.

I believe my experience, with assistance from the Department's outstanding civil servants, would allow me to serve well in this role, if confirmed. My service in the Navy as both an enlisted sailor and officer of color gives me a unique perspective into our military. I was an active member on the House Armed Services Committee and the Military Personnel and Seapower Subcommittees. There I worked hard to learn the issues and how they impacted my constituents, developing a record of caring for our servicemembers and their families. I relish the opportunity to again work for them and for our country.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to achieve our shared goals and ensure the people who make up the total force remain the most ready and capable in the world. Thank you for the chance to appear in front of you today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gilbert Cisneros follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY MR. GILBERT CISNEROS

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe and distinguished members of the Committee, I am humbled to be in front of you today. I enjoyed working with many of you while in Congress, meeting others leading up to this hearing, and I appreciate your willingness to consider my nomination for Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

I want to thank my wife Jacki, who is here today, for her continued support, and our twin 7-year-old boys, Alexander and Christopher, for their support and a lack of Dad time. Though they could not join us here today, I am hopeful that they are at least watching part of the hearing, even if personnel and readiness management does not hold their attention.

I am also grateful to President Biden and Secretary Austin for the confidence they have placed in me.

My family has a history of service to our country. My grandfathers both served in WWII, my godfather served in Korea, and my father and uncles served in Vietnam. I followed their example of service and enlisted in the U.S. Navy at 18 years old. Today, I am also reminded of my grandmothers who—despite not having much education—showed me how to care for others and put them first. I come before you seeking to continue their legacy.

Caring for the people who make up the Department of Defense's total force is a sacred responsibility. Service members, civilians, and their families bravely sacrifice in defense of our Nation. Regular moves, irregular deployments, and the occasional impromptu all-hands meeting require military families to put country first, making difficult tradeoffs regarding where they live, what careers they pursue, and where they educate their kids. Though DOD civilians generally have greater stability than their military counterparts, they also sacrifice pay and flexibility in pursuit of a greater mission.

Having gotten to know many of these folks serving our country, I can tell you nothing inspires me more than hearing why people with vastly different backgrounds choose to serve. For all the things that divide us as a Nation, there are still millions of service members and civilians who put the team, the mission, and our country before anything else. They do it because they care; they want to be part of something larger; and they want to be surrounded by the best of our country.

The Undersecretary of Personnel and Readiness is responsible for allowing the service members, civilians, and families who serve to do so to their fullest potential.

If I am lucky enough to be confirmed, I would have three core priorities:

- First, I would ensure we are doing everything we can to recruit and retain the right people with the right skills to deal with emerging challenges. I understand this committee has been especially focused on the cyber domain. If confirmed, I intend to make sure we are using the new authorities in that area.
- Second, I would want to make sure we are taking advantage of our country's greatest asset—our people—to build the most capable, effective force possible. This means our force should look like the country we serve, with different racial, religious, gender, and sexual identities, as well as diverse political, ideological, and geographic backgrounds. To attract and retain all those who want to serve and can meet high standards, we need to create workplaces free of discrimination, sexual assault, and other mission detractors. This committee has paid particular attention to sexual assault and harassment, a focus I shared as a member of the House Armed Services Committee and an issue I am personally committed to. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with the committee to implement new accountability and prevention measures that make a lasting difference.
- Finally, if confirmed, I would be committed to ensuring our forces are ready to face current threats while preparing for longer-range challenges. I am optimistic that the Department can take advantage of a reduction in operational tempo to continue rebuilding for great power competition. However, our adversaries cannot perceive rebuilding as weakness and I am committed to ensuring the Secretary has the information to make decisions that balance these concerns.

I believe my experience, with assistance from the Department's outstanding civil servants, would allow me to serve well in this role if confirmed. My service in the Navy as both an enlisted Sailor and officer of color gives me a unique perspective into our military. I was an active member on the House Armed Services Committee and the Military Personnel and Seapower subcommittees. There, I worked hard to learn the issues and how they impacted my constituents, developing a record of caring for our service members and their families. I relish the opportunity to again work for them and for our country.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to achieve our shared goals and ensure the people who make up the total force remain the most ready and capable in the world. Thank you for the chance to appear in front of you today.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Mr. Cisneros. Ms. Miller, please.

**STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN S. MILLER, TO BE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE [COMPTROLLER]**

Ms. MILLER. Yes, good morning. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to be before you today. I know from my role as a senior career Army official how vitally important the bipartisan work of this committee is to our Nation and to all the men and women of the Department of Defense. I appreciate and am grateful for your service and honored by your consideration of my nomination to serve as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller.

Secretary McHugh, sir, thank you for your warm introduction. I appreciated working under your leadership during your tenure as the Secretary of the Army.

I also want to express my deep gratitude to President Biden, Vice President Harris, Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Under Secretary McCord for their trust and confidence in me and their support for my nomination.

I would like also to express appreciation to all those who serve this Nation, both in uniform and out, for their unwavering dedication to our democracy. I would like to express a sincere and heartfelt "thank you" to the many appointees, civil servants, and military personnel who took time to mentor, teach, and encourage me throughout my career.

I am grateful for the support of my extended family and friends. First and foremost, my husband, Brian Pickerall, a Navy veteran and fellow Cornell graduate. He is my rock and my harbor, and he is here with me today. Also my parents, Pat and Shirley Miller, who taught me the values of hard work, persistence, truth, and compassion. Mom is watching from her farm in upState New York, and while Dad is no longer with us, as a former Navy pilot, I think he would be very pleased to see his eldest daughter here today before you. I would also like to thank my siblings, in-laws, and our friends for the love, support and encouragement they have given me in this process.

I was a student at the Army War College on 9/11. That horrible day, nearly 20 years ago, cemented my passion for public service and my belief in a strong national defense using all elements of national power. Since then, I have led large, diverse, Federal organizations, and some of my key accomplishments include implementing new financial systems at the Internal Revenue Service; building and executing Army budgets; implementing Army logistics systems; and overseeing numerous reform activities. In my current

role, the team I lead executes Army-wide administrative programs and provides support services, including human resources, financial management, and facilities for the Army's headquarters. I have been recognized by two different Presidents with the prestigious Presidential Rank Award for my contributions.

My top priority, if confirmed, is enabling the continued security of this Nation through the work of the Department of Defense Comptroller: building adequate, defensible budgets; providing Congress accurate and timely information about those budgets; and stewarding the resources authorized for and appropriated to the Department.

I will, if confirmed, prioritize a strong relationship with the congressional committees on all matters under the purview of the Comptroller. I will, if confirmed, also give full effort and attention to the Department's financial audit, building on progress made to obtain a clean opinion. I will, if confirmed, further the Department's performance improvement work making DOD more effective through workforce development, the expanded use of technology, and data-informed decision processes.

Finally, I will continue serving as a role model to the military members, civilians, and contractors of the Department, leading with compassion, commitment, respect, and integrity.

I am truly honored to be here today. Thank you again for your service to the Nation and for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kathleen Miller follows:]

JOINT PREPARED STATEMENT BY MS. KATHLEEN MILLER

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I know from my role as a senior career Army official how vitally important the bi-partisan work of this committee is to our Nation and to all the men and women of the Department of Defense. I appreciate and am grateful for your service and honored by your consideration of my nomination to serve as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller.

[Secretary McHugh, Sir, thank you for your warm introduction. I appreciated working under your leadership during your tenure as the Secretary of the Army.]

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Finally, I will continue serving as a role model to the military members, civilians, and contractors of the Department, leading with compassion, commitment, respect, and integrity.

I am truly honored to be here today. Thank you again for your service to the Nation and for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Ms. Miller. Now let me recognize Ms. Karlin.

**STATEMENT OF DR. MARA E. KARLIN, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR STRATEGY, PLANS, AND CAPABILITIES**

Dr. KARLIN. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. It is an honor to be here alongside my fellow Department of Defense nominees and in front of a committee whose active, thoughtful, and bipartisan approach to critical national security issues is admirable. I am grateful to President Biden, Secretary Austin, and Deputy Secretary Hicks for their trust in my ability to serve as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the family, friends, colleagues, and mentors who have supported me. In particular, thank you to my parents, Charlene and Hooshang, who are watching this hearing from Wisconsin, my siblings, my husband, my children, and my extended family for their endless support and love. When this country welcomed my dad from Iran, he immediately knew how lucky he was, and both he and my mom made sure we always understood and remembered that.

I began my national security career as an intern and then as a civil servant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy during the Bush administration, and I have since served in a variety of roles throughout the Pentagon for six Secretaries of Defense. If confirmed, I would be honored to return to the Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities team as the Assistant Secretary of Defense.

In addition to my time in the Pentagon, I was a professor and Director of Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, worked at think tanks, and wrote two books on military history and defense policy. My academic background and strategic planning experience at the Department will inform my approach to this key role, if confirmed.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities is at the tip of the spear for the Department in designing and implementing the National Defense Strategy. This is a respon-

sibility that I take very seriously. I appreciate that the members of this committee have played an instrumental role in recognizing the shift toward strategic competition as outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Indeed, I worked closely with Secretary Mattis' staff to host him at Johns Hopkins for the release of the National Defense Strategy, and I served as a staff member of the National Defense Strategy Commission. Both are a testament of how critically I view these efforts.

If confirmed, I would be honored to help craft the Department's vision of the future security environment, articulate objectives and priorities, and apply this strategy to future investments and activities, including the fiscal year 2023 budget and our military force posture. We have an obligation to ensure that our plans, posture, and partnerships are predicated on sound strategy and adequate resourcing. If confirmed, I hope to support the Secretary in articulating and executing this vision. Ensuring the National Defense Strategy's effective implementation will be critical, and I look forward to partnering with members on this committee throughout that process.

Nuclear deterrence would also be a top priority, if confirmed, and I appreciate that members of this committee are rightfully invested in ensuring that nuclear modernization initiatives account for a changing global threat picture. Our nuclear forces remain essential to prevent our adversaries from ever employing nuclear weapons. If confirmed, I would work toward ensuring that our nuclear deterrent is safe, reliable, and effective, not only to deter China, Russia, and North Korea, but also to ensure credibility with our closest allies.

In my current role as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, I have the privilege of serving as a principal advisor to Secretary Austin on issues related to international security strategy and policy. I am grateful for his steadfast leadership and commitment to amplifying civilian voices within the Pentagon. If confirmed, I would work alongside the Secretary to elevate civilian leaders while working in close coordination with my military colleagues at the Joint Staff, combatant commands, and Military Services.

I recognize the many challenges that we face, and have great respect for the work of this committee and your thoughtful oversight of the Department. If afforded the opportunity to serve in this capacity, I commit to consulting with Congress to shape and implement our defense strategy, and to ensure that our approach is aligned with our mission. Our military and the American people deserve no less from their senior defense leaders.

I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Mara E. Karlin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY DR. MARA E. KARLIN

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. It is an honor to be here alongside my fellow Department of Defense nominees and in front of a committee whose active, thoughtful, and bipartisan approach to critical national security issues is admirable. I am grateful to President Biden, Secretary Austin, and Deputy Secretary

Hicks for their trust in my ability to serve as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the family, friends, colleagues, and mentors who have supported me. In particular, thank you to my parents, Charlene and Hooshang, who are watching this hearing from Wisconsin, my siblings, my husband, my children, and my extended family for their endless support and love. When this country welcomed my Dad from Iran, he immediately knew how lucky he was, and both he and my Mom made sure we always understood and remembered that.

I began my national security career as an intern and then as a civil servant in the office of the secretary of defense for policy during the Bush administration, and I have since served in a variety of roles throughout the Pentagon for six Secretaries of Defense. If confirmed, I would be humbled to return to the Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities team as the Assistant Secretary of Defense.

In addition to my time in the Pentagon, I was a professor and director of Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), worked at think tanks, and wrote two books on military history and defense policy. My academic background and strategic planning experience at the Department will inform my approach to this key role, if confirmed.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities is at the tip of the spear for the Department in designing and implementing the National Defense Strategy. This is a responsibility that I take very seriously. I appreciate that the members of this Committee have played an instrumental role in recognizing the shift toward strategic competition as outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Indeed, I worked closely with Secretary Mattis's staff to host him at SAIS for the release of the National Defense Strategy and I served as a staff member of the National Defense Strategy Commission; both are a testament of how critically I view these efforts.

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Strategy's effective implementation will be critical, and I look forward to partnering with members on this Committee throughout that process.

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ensure credibility with our closest allies.

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I recognize the many challenges that we face, and have great respect for the work of this Committee and your thoughtful oversight of the Department. If afforded the opportunity to serve in this capacity, I commit to consulting with Congress to shape and implement our defense strategy, and ensure that our approach is aligned with our mission. Our military and the American people deserve no less from their senior defense leaders.

I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Ms. Karlin. Now let me recognize Mr. Connor, please.

#### **STATEMENT OF MICHAEL L. CONNOR, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR CIVIL WORKS**

Mr. CONNOR. Thank you. Chairman Reed, distinguished members of this committee, I am honored to appear before you today

as President Biden's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. I am grateful and appreciative of your consideration of my nomination today.

Thank you for the opportunity to recognize my daughter, Gabriela, who is here with me today. She, along with my wife, Shari, and son, Matthew, have made sacrifices over the years that have allowed me to engage in public service for some time now. I deeply appreciate their support.

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works is an important position under any circumstances, given the responsibilities of Corps of Engineers for infrastructure, ecosystem health, maintaining waterways, managing flood risks, and protecting wetlands. These are all incredibly important functions for communities across the Nation. Today these responsibilities take on new significance amid the backdrop of a pandemic-impacted economy that must also build resiliency to the effects of climate change, while ensuring equity amongst the communities being served.

I am humbled to be nominated to work with the military leadership of the Corps and the talented civilian workforce to carry out these important responsibilities. I also believe I am well prepared to address the challenges ahead given my extensive experience, both inside and outside of government. As a former Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior Department and Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, I directed strategy and managed a large Federal water resources agency responsible for facilities and programs similar to those of the Corps.

My prior positions also provided extensive experience working directly with the Corps of Engineers. At Reclamation, we collaborated in developing climate resilience strategies, coordinating flood control and water management operations, protecting endangered species and engaging in river restoration projects, and advancing dam safety risk management efforts. As Deputy Secretary, I worked with the Corps in its role as a regulator, and even collaborated on an international issue involving poorly maintained infrastructure that threatened the United States' interests in the Middle East. And as Counsel to the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I worked on numerous legislative initiatives related to the Corps. I believe that this experience, coupled with my background as a both an engineer and lawyer, provide a unique set of qualifications to be an effective Assistant Secretary of the Army.

If confirmed, my personal background will also inform my views as I oversee the vast responsibilities associated with the Corps. I grew up in New Mexico, a State rich in natural resources, with the exception of water. I am proud of my Native American heritage and my roots in an agricultural community, Las Cruces, New Mexico. I grew up witnessing the important role the Federal Government plays in supporting and protecting the economic foundation of many communities while providing access to the recreational resources that enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

If confirmed, I will be focused and committed to the work necessary to fulfill my responsibilities and meet the challenges facing the Corps and its stakeholders, your constituents. Of course, the Corps cannot be successful on its own, and my years in public serv-

ice have reinforced the importance of collaboration. I commit to the task with a sense of humility and a keen understanding of the need to work with State and local leaders, the public, affected stakeholders, and Members of Congress to most effectively carry out the Corps of Engineer's mission. I am equally committed to increasing coordination within the Federal Government-a whole-of-government approach that is more effective and efficient in addressing the effects of a changing landscape across the country.

Finally, with your support, I will be proud to join a Department led by Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Secretary Wormuth, who have made clear their intent to lead with transparency, integrity, and the highest ethical standards in carrying out the Defense Department's and the Army's vital missions. I am equally committed to these principles.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Michael L. Connor follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY MR. MICHAEL L. CONNOR

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished Members of this Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA-CW). I am grateful and appreciative of your consideration of my nomination, and I will quickly summarize some key points of my written statement.

Thank you for the opportunity to recognize my wife, Shari, and daughter, Gabriela, who are with me today. They, along with my son Matthew who could not be here, have made sacrifices that have allowed me the opportunity to engage in public service for many years. I continue to deeply appreciate their support.

I am also appreciative of the colleagues and organizations that have weighed in with their support of my nomination.

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works is an important position under any circumstances given the responsibilities of USACE for Infrastructure; Ecosystem Health; Maintaining Waterways; Managing Flood Risks; and Protecting Wetlands.

These are all incredibly important functions for communities across the Nation. Today, these responsibilities take on new significance amid the backdrop of a pandemic-impacted economy that must also build resiliency to the effects of climate change, while ensuring equity amongst the communities being served.

I am humbled to be nominated to work with the military leadership of the Corps of Engineers and the talented civilian workforce to carry-out these important responsibilities. While humbled, I also believe I am well-prepared to address the challenges ahead given my extensive experience, both inside and outside of government. As a former Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, I directed strategy and managed a large Federal water resources agency responsible for facilities and programs similar to the Corps.

My prior positions also provided extensive experience working directly with USACE. At the Bureau of Reclamation, I worked closely with the Corps in developing climate resilience strategies, coordinating flood control and water management operations in numerous river basins, protecting endangered species and engaging in river restoration projects, and collaborating on dam safety risk management efforts. As Deputy Secretary,

I worked with USACE in its role as a regulator, and even collaborated on an international issue involving poorly maintained infrastructure that threatened the United States' interests in the Middle East. And as Counsel to the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I worked on numerous legislative initiatives related to USACE authorities. I believe that this experience, coupled with my work and educational background as a both an engineer and lawyer, provide a unique set of qualifications to be an effective ASA.

If confirmed, my personal background will also inform my views as I oversee the vast responsibilities associated with the Corps. I grew up in New Mexico, a State rich in natural resources (except water) and which has a land base that is one-third in Federal ownership. I am proud of my Native American heritage and my roots in

an agricultural community, Las Cruces, NM. I grew up witnessing, on a daily basis, the important role the Federal Government plays in supporting and protecting the economic foundation of many communities and providing access to the recreational resources that enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

If confirmed, I will be focused and committed to the work necessary to fulfill my responsibilities and meet the challenges facing USACE and its stakeholders—your constituents. Of course, the Corps cannot be successful on its own, and my years in public service have reinforced the importance of collaboration. I am absolutely committed to this principle and commit to the task with a sense of humility and a keen understanding of the need to work with State and local leaders, the public, affected stakeholders, and Members of Congress to most effectively carry out USACE's mission. I am equally committed to increasing coordination within the Federal Government—a “whole of government approach”—to more effectively use each agency's resources and expertise to creatively address a changing landscape in many areas of the country.

Finally, with your permission and support, I will be proud to join a Department led by Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Secretary Wormuth who have made clear their intent to lead with transparency, integrity, and the highest ethical standards in carrying out the Defense Department's and the Army's vital missions. I am equally committed to these principles.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. I look forward to answering your questions.

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

There are a series of questions which all civilian nominees must respond to. You may do so simultaneously.

Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

Chairman REED. Have you assumed any duties or taken any actions that would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

Mr. DEL TORO. No.

Mr. CISNEROS. No.

Ms. MILLER. No.

Dr. KARLIN. No.

Mr. CONNOR. No.

Chairman REED. Exercising our legislative and oversight responsibility makes it important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive testimony, briefings, reports, records, and other information from the Executive branch on a timely basis. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify before this committee when requested?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

Chairman REED. Do you agree to provide records, documents, and electronic communications in a timely manner when requested by this committee, its subcommittees, or other appropriate committees of Congress, and to consult with the requestor regarding the basis for any good-faith delay or denial in providing such records?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

Chairman REED. Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established by this committee for the production of reports, records, and other information, including timely responding to hearing questions for the record?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

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

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

Chairman REED. Will those witnesses and briefers be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes.

Ms. MILLER. Yes.

Dr. KARLIN. Yes.

Mr. CONNOR. Yes.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much.

Mr. Del Toro, as Secretary of the Navy you have huge responsibilities. One area is the introduction of new, unmanned vessels into the fleet, which many feel could be one of the more decisive technological revolutions that are taking place right now. But what we have heard is that the appropriate systems for development of propulsion and communications systems that would be needed to make these unmanned systems operate in the fleet has had some concerns. And I would like to get your assurance that you would not approve plans to shortchange the orderly development activities in order to accelerate fielding of these unmanned systems, i.e., we have got to get the science and technology right. Would that be your position?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes, Mr. Chairman, and let me reinforce how critically important unmanned systems will be for the future combat effectiveness of our capabilities, and particularly in the Indo-Pacific as well too. It is important first to ensure that we have the right concept of operations to fully integrate them with our existing concepts of operations for the use of naval military forces. It is equally important to ensure that they are fully integrated with all of our existing platforms—air, surface, and subsurface, as well too. And so it is incredibly important, Chairman, and I will ensure that we do not advance those technologies until they are ready to do so.

Chairman REED. Mr. Cisneros, Secretary Austin has presented to the Congress, and the administration has supported his presentation, significant changes in the Uniform Code of Military Justice regarding sexual assault and other matters. Doing this would require time and resources. The major military justice reform enacted

in 2017 required a 2-year implementation timeframe, every bit of which was needed. And critical to this process, the fact the President must republish the manual for courts martial and ensure that ongoing investigations and prosecutions are not jeopardized by rushed implementation.

As we move through this legislative year, do you commit to keep the committee informed of our assessment of the time, resources, and the qualified personnel necessary to effectively implement any changes that Congress would introduce?

Mr. CISNEROS. Thank you, Senator, for that question. Yes, I commit to supporting Secretary Austin in implementing these new recommendations, as well as keeping the committee informed as the process and the status of those ongoing process of getting those completed.

Chairman REED. And with your experience as a naval officer and as a naval enlisted man, do you understand that this is just one aspect of a multiple challenge of prevention, changing climate and culture, and ultimately leadership, and will you push hard for those changes?

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes, Senator. There is a culture shift that needs to happen, and I commit to working with the branches, well, the various branches, the different branches of service, to help implement those cultures throughout the DOD, both civilian and military.

Chairman REED. Thank you. Ms. Karlin, one of your major responsibilities will be drafting the National Defense Strategy, the NDS. We are in a competition with China and Russia—everyone admits that—but the notion of, quote, “strategic competition” is not particularly well defined. What recommendations would you have as you approach the next NDS for much more specifically defining strategic competition, the long-range strategic objectives we have, vis-à-vis China and Russia?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator Reed, I thought the 2018 National Defense Strategy was an exceptional document, and if confirmed, I would seek to build on it with the 2022 National Defense Strategy. If I were to have the opportunity to work on it, I would absolutely want to focus on the point you are driving home—how do we understand what strategic competition is, what is the appropriate role for the Department of Defense in that competition, and what is the appropriate role for the broader interagency?

Chairman REED. Thank you very much. Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Well, thank you very much, and Mr. Del Toro, let me talk to you for a few moments. As Secretary of the Navy, you will have the good fortune of receiving military advice from the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Our nation’s current leaders, those two gentlemen in these positions, have a combined 75 years of experience in the Navy and Marine Corps, respectively. Do you plan to have a close relationship with the Navy and Marine Corps Service chiefs, and will you listen to their professional military advice, and will you advocate on behalf of the Navy and the Marine Corps to the Secretary of Defense?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, there is probably no more important issue than that. The Navy-Marine Corps team must effectively

work as a team, and I have deep respect for the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations. And if confirmed, I will coordinate and seek their advice on every issue that is before us and before the Congress. It is simply incredibly important for us to be able to work as a team, and for me, again, if confirmed, as the chief executive officer of the Department of Navy, to provide that leadership and guidance to them as well too, as to the actions and to effect the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead for us.

Senator WICKER. If they give you advice concerning additional needs that are not yet proposed, I hope you will feel free, and obligated, actually, to pass that along to the appointed leadership.

Let me also ask you this, about the 355-ship Navy, which is a part of the statute enacted by the Congress and signed into law by the President of the United States. Admiral Gilday has explained, in recent hearings, that based on the top line in this administration's budget request we can afford a Navy of only about 300 ships, not the 355 in the statute. In fact, given the Navy's decommissioning plan, in the immediate future that number would drop to 290, not 355.

At the same time, the CNO has maintained, publicly, that the Navy has to grow to meet the challenges of an aggressive China and a resurgent Russia, and he has stated that the statutory requirement for a 355-ship Navy remains an important goal.

So, Mr. Del Toro, the admiral who will serve as your principal advisor for the Navy is on record stating that we need the larger Navy in order to compete with the global competitors like China. Do you agree with him, and if so, what would be your plan to grow the Navy, given the current budget constraints?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, this is an incredibly important issue, and I fully support the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act that has as a goal a 355-ship Navy. I believe that as our Nation shifts from a land-based strategy over the past 20 years, fighting the wars in the Middle East, to a more dominant maritime strategy in the Pacific, particularly in our efforts to deter China, I do believe that our Navy-Marine Corps team will need additional resources to be able to fully field the combat effectiveness we will need as a nation to do so. And I am committed—in fact, it is my responsibility—to make that case to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the administration, moving forward, in the fiscal year 2023 budget, if confirmed.

Senator WICKER. Well, you know, actually I think everyone should remember that. The 355 is not something that came out of the minds of the Congress. It was listed as a requirement by the admirals and generals out there, who are actually doing the work to make our Nation secure.

Let me say that I was particularly pleased with one thing in your statement, and I was concerned about another thing in your statement. You say, "Our nation is at an inflection point and we face challenges as severe as they are unprecedented in China, with its authoritarian system and its determined incursion in the South China Sea, and globally presents a constant naval threat. Russia and other resurgent powers also threaten stability." That is a true statement, and I agree with it. I find it ironic that you would then

say, a few sentences later, "I was pleased to see the President's budget request recognize this challenge."

I do not agree that it does, and I can just tell you, Mr. Del Toro, that I think there is a bipartisan majority on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the dais in this committee, to help you find more resources to do exactly what you said is necessary, vis-&-vis China and Russia, and other threats that we have, and I look forward to working with you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Wicker. Let me recognize Senator Shaheen, please.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, and congratulations to each of our nominees this morning. Thank you for your previous service and for your willingness to continue to serve, if confirmed in these important posts.

I want to begin also with you, Mr. Del Toro. Last week, Senator King and I went with Deputy Secretary Kath Hicks to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which is shared between New Hampshire and Maine, and one of the things we looked at was one of the first shipyard infrastructure optimization projects that is in the works at the shipyard to more than double its drydock capacity, make it much more efficient. They are making great progress. It was very impressive to see what is happening there.

Unfortunately, there are also significant cost overruns with the project. Now if we are going to keep our nuclear subs operating we have got to ensure that this project gets completed. So I would ask you, if confirmed, what steps do you intend to immediately take to ensure that this project remains on schedule and to address future cost overruns?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, it is incredibly important to ensure that all of our platforms, all of our projects remain on cost and on schedule. As a small business owner for the past 17 years, I know the value of a dollar, and if confirmed, I understand the responsibility that I would have as Secretary of the Navy to ensure a return on investment that the American taxpayers make in supporting our Navy.

It is incredibly important, and I have tremendous amount of experience, both in the Navy and in the private sector, in managing projects. It is incredibly important to ensure that, for one, requirement creeps do not interfere with the continuing cost of projects, having the right program managers in place and the right oversight from their leadership to ensure that these projects stay on track.

When we identify problems that are challenging problems, we immediately pay attention to them and take necessary actions to correct them. So it takes a team to make that happen. They have to have the support from their senior or civilian leadership in the military as well for it to be an effective solution.

So as someone who has actually managed projects for 40 years, I look forward to the challenge, if confirmed, to be able to work with my teammates on the Navy-Marine Corps team to be able to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, I appreciate that sentiment and hope that you and Admiral Gilday will come back to this committee with

specific measures that you are taking to address the potential cost overruns. As you know, our four public shipyards are critical to ensuring that our Navy remains operational and competitive.

Dr. Karlin, I was pleased to hear President Biden address steps that the administration is taking to help our Afghan allies who worked so hard alongside of our troops for the last 20 years. As you know, we have had a backlog of special immigrant visa requests for years, to help get those Afghan allies out of harm's way. Right now we have thousands in the queue. So can you talk about what you would like to see, if confirmed, to help ensure that we can make sure that those Afghans who helped us are not threatened by the Taliban, them and their families, and then killed?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, my understanding is that there is an extremely robust effort across the Department, and indeed the inter-agency, on this exact important issue that you raise, and if confirmed, I would absolutely prioritize, frankly, our unparalleled network of allies and partners, which is not only the right thing to do but it is also what sets us apart from strategic competitors.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I keep hearing about the robust effort but we have not seen the particulars on that effort, and I think it would be very important for Congress to see exactly what the administration is proposing. So I would urge you to look into that as soon as possible, if confirmed.

Can I also ask you about what other measures you think that we can take to help address the threat to Afghan women and girls, now that we are withdrawing our troops?

Dr. KARLIN. I think it is critical that we maintain a relationship with the Afghan government and with our Afghan partners. I believe the President and the Secretary of Defense have been quite clear on that. We have seen tremendous gains by Afghan women and girls, in particular, over the last two decades, and along with our closest allies and partners it will be important to continue helping them.

Senator SHAHEEN. I agree, and I hope you will do everything possible to try and address that need. One of the things I have heard from women leaders in Afghanistan is that the more Americans can speak out at a high level about the threat, the more helpful they see it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. Let me recognize Senator Ernst, please.

Senator ERNST. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to our witnesses for being here and for your commitment to our great United States of America. And, Mr. Cisneros, if I could start with you, please. The preservation of Force and Family Program, which is being led by our Special Operations Forces really should be introduced to the whole of our Department of Defense. This program supports many different domains, so your physical, mental, cognitive, family, and psychological health of our greatest assets, which are our servicemembers.

And can I have your commitment that you will work across the Defense Department to implement aspects of this program to provide the best care to those who serve?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, I couldn't agree more that the people that are serving in our military are our greatest assets, and them and their families sacrifice so much. And, if confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work with this committee and within the Department to do what we can to best serve our people and make sure that we are taking care of their needs.

Senator ERNST. Thank you very much. It has been a highly successful program within SOCOM, and again, would love to see that pressed out DOD-wide, at least those pieces that we can implement as soon as possible. So thank you for that commitment.

And then moving on, Ms. Miller, I always ask questions about the health of our finances at DOD, and, of course, DOD has maintained a very robust budget for many, many years, yet they have struggled to pass a financial audit. And in a time where the administration is looking to flatten the defense budget, we really do need to make sure that every dime of taxpayer dollars are used appropriately within DOD, and that they are used effectively to outpace our adversaries.

So can you please explain how you would intend to ensure the Department gives their full effort and attention to a financial audit?

Ms. MILLER. Yes, Senator. Thank you for that question. I will start by saying that I believe the benefit of the financial audit is not just from the end-State audit report but from the process that we move through to understand our material weaknesses and fix them, to understand where our financial systems are compliant with generally accepted accounting principles and where they are not, to fix them.

And so in the process of moving through an audit, we are going to find places where we can improve our business processes and hopefully gain some efficiencies. I was very pleased to read the 2020 audit statement and see that the number of material weaknesses have been reduced, that we did have 24 full independent audits. We had 8 unmodified opinions in those audits. And so I hope to, if confirmed, build upon the progress that has been laid down in the audit area and continue to move us closer to that goal, using the outcome of the audit findings to bring efficiencies to the Department.

Senator ERNST. I appreciate that very much. Thank you. It is important, and I think the way you described it is quite apt in that, you know, the findings along the way, but correcting those deficiencies as we go, it is part of the process. And while I do not know that we will ever achieve a 100 percent clean audit at the DOD, there is obviously strength in working toward that and correcting as we go. I appreciate your outlook on that, and I do think that we can continually improve our financial well-being at the DOD and making sure that we are protecting our taxpayers. So that is fantastic.

But under the constraints of the flat budget, of course then that gives the Department a number of challenges as well. How can we continue to innovate and develop these new capabilities to meet our strategic needs within your realm?

Ms. MILLER. Yes, thank you, Senator. I believe that, if confirmed, the first thing I would want to do is get a briefing on the detailed

audit plans that are in progress, so that I have a better understanding of where we should focus our efforts to gain the most benefit up front as soon as possible.

So I have not had the ability to see those audit plans in detail yet, but if confirmed, I would do that and look to focus and sharpen our approach to the audit, in an atmosphere of potentially flat budgets.

Senator ERNST. And certainly we do have challenges, as well, with the different types of tracking and data systems within DOD. I know that that has been an issue in the past. But certainly, you know, if you are confirmed, I look forward to working with you and assisting in any way that I can.

So thanks to all of our witnesses. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Ernst. Senator Gillibrand, please.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for testifying today, and thank you for your commitment to serving others. It really does make a difference.

I would like to direct my first two questions to Mr. Cisneros and Mr. Del Toro. As you know, President Biden asked Secretary Austin to commit a review to how to deal with sexual assault better. The recommendation from the commission of all the crimes they looked at was to remove every single one of them out of the chain of command. And they did that because they believe that professionalization and an unbiased review by a trained military prosecutor would do two things: one, create more confidence in the system, that it was being done professionally; and two, remove bias that is somehow undermining the system overall.

For example, despite this committee's 8 years of intense focus on reducing the rate of sexual assault in the military, and increasing the rate of prosecution and conviction, unfortunately the rate of sexual assaults has stayed steady, at about 20,000, but the rate of cases going to trial and the rate of cases ending in conviction have sadly continued to decline. So we are not getting better on any measurable.

We also have data and statistics about racial bias within the military. The Marines perhaps have the worst data. For Marines, black marines are 2.61 times more likely than white marines to be found guilty at general courts martial proceedings that are, quote, "typically reserved for the most serious offenses and for which guilty findings carry more severe ramifications." We also see across-the-board racial bias, at approximately two times more punishment for black and brown servicemembers across all services.

So this committee has been working on solutions for the past 8 years. We have had multiple hearings. And the solution that 66 members of the Senate have agreed on is to have a bright line at all felonies, to make sure that these types of crimes are taken out of the chain of command, given to trained military prosecutors to eliminate bias, and to make sure the most professional decisions are being made.

The bright line is something that has been done by our allies. It has been done in Israel, the U.K., Germany, Netherlands, Australia, and Canada, and they did it for defendants' rights, because they believed if you could be put to jail for more than a year of

your life you deserved an unbiased, professional review. So military justice experts have recommended a bright line.

We carved out uniquely military crimes, such as going AWOL, such as not following an order, but we leave in place all serious crimes. And as you know, there was a recent report out of Fort Hood saying at the command climate there was so toxic that it was permissible for both sexual assault and sexual harassment. That report was because a woman named Vanessa Guillen was murdered. We have a record that she had been harassed, and we know that she was murdered. There are many cases where women are murdered and are also experiencing things such as sexual assault and sexual harassment within the ranks.

And so the bright line does two things. One, it creates the professionalization that we hope will fix the sexual assault problem, but two, it makes sure that defendants have rights for our servicemembers. President Biden has said in the past that he would remove all serious crimes from the chain of command, including murder, and he has accepted the recommendations of this military commission.

So I have two questions for both of you. One, will you support President Biden's commitment to take sexual assault and related crimes out of the chain of command?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, yes. I believe that is a direction that—what he is suggesting, and they are moving, and I will do what I can, if confirmed, to support that.

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, first let me thank you for all the efforts that you have done. You have shown tremendous courage and conviction in raising this incredibly important issue across the Nation and in our military services. As a commanding officer who actually served on one of the first mixed-gender crews on the USS Buckley, there is no greater responsibility than the care for the men and women who serve under your command, so I applaud your efforts.

With regards to your question, I fully support the Secretary's independent review committee and all the recommendations that they have made. I know that the Deputy Secretary of Defense is putting together an action plan to implement all those recommendations, and I intend to fully cooperate with all the recommendations that come out of that committee.

Senator GILLIBRAND. I intend to offer an amendment within this committee to make sure all the recommendations are implemented.

And second, will you remain an open mind looking at the bright line idea of all felonies as a way to professionalize our entire military justice system, so we do not have one system for some and have two unequal and separate systems, but have one system where every servicemember can have access to justice?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, you know, that was an important topic when I served on the House Armed Services Committee, the military justice system and the injustice that sometimes happened through it, and how, as you have stated, that people of color seem to get harsher punishment. And if confirmed, that will continue to be a priority of mine, and I will do what I can to support the Secretary as well as the President and their initiatives to change that.

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I also share the Secretary of Defense's view that there is absolutely no room for racial bias in our military

service, and I absolutely will remain an open mind when addressing all these issues.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our witnesses, and for the record I am going to submit a question for Mr. Connor about a dredging issue in New York. Thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Gillibrand. Let me recognize Senator Cramer, please.

Senator CRAMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to all of the witnesses. I am going to start with you, Mr. Del Toro. Thank you for the generosity of your time last week. I enjoyed our conversation very much. And I always appreciate being ahead of Senator Sullivan so I can be the first Senator to use the word "Arctic," albeit in a different context. But obviously the Arctic is getting a lot more attention, as you and I spoke, and getting more attention from the Russian military, getting more attention from the China military, obviously. It is becoming an important domain and has great strategic value.

With that in mind, obviously good intelligence surveillance, reconnaissance work with becoming more important, as that region gets busier. And I know one of the options that the Navy is looking to fill its requirements is the MQ-4C Triton, as you and I talked about. The Triton is a similar variant to the Global Hawks that we fly out of the Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota. In fact, between our existing expertise, communications, architecture, contractor presence, runway and base infrastructure, the ground-based detect and avoid radar, and our proximity to the Arctic—yes, Grand Forks is close to the Arctic—I think Grand Forks would be a really smart choice for operating something like the Triton on an Arctic ISR mission.

When confirmed, can you commit to fresh thinking when it comes to new and evolving missions and looking at all of the best options to execute Navy missions, and not just the traditional options or only Navy bases?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, first let me thank you for your commitment to the Arctic. The Arctic is not just an issue of national security. It is an issue of economic security to our Nation. It is incredibly important that the Navy-Marine Corps team remain fully engaged in the Arctic.

I am also a supporter of commitment to our nuclear triad in every possible way. As you know, the Navy plays a very key, important role in maintaining the nuclear triad, and as you know, Columbia is our No. 1 procurement priority in the United States Navy. And if confirmed, I commit to you that I will remain committed to both the Arctic and our nuclear triad.

Senator CRAMER. At a conference last week, Mr. Del Toro, Rear Admiral Mike Studeman, the top intelligence officer in the INDOPACOM, said the naval intelligence officials sum up to the current situation with China in two words used by Douglas MacArthur in discussing the failure to head off World War II, and those two words are "too late."

Admiral Studeman said that it is too late in comprehending the deadly purpose of a potential enemy, too late in realizing the mortal danger, too late in preparedness, too late in uniting all possible forces for resistance.

Do you agree with Admiral Studeman's assessment that we are too late in confronting China, as he mentioned, and what would you do as Secretary of the Navy to address this assessment?

Mr. DEL TORO. Well, Senator, as I stated in my initial opening statement, China is our No. 1 pacing threat and our greatest threat, not just to our national security but to our economic security as well.

I tend to be an optimist. I do not believe that we are too late. I think what we need to do now and moving forward is make the right investments so that we can deter China in every possible way, part of the Navy-Marine Corps team, working with our Joint Forces in the Indo-Pacific theater and across the world.

So I tend to be an optimist, Senator. I think there are many opportunities that lie ahead, and if confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, I hope to dive in maybe head first, or perhaps feet first—not quite sure yet—but I hope to dive in quickly to resolve some of these issues that we are facing.

Senator CRAMER. Well, whether head first or feet first, you will be up to your head, for sure.

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes, sir.

Senator CRAMER. But thank you for that. I was going to ask about new technologies and rigorous engineering, but the Chairman handled that one very well. Thank you for your answer.

Ms. Miller, I know that the Deputy Comptroller job does not directly include the responsibilities of acquisition reforms. However, with your future responsibilities over budget, obviously in fiscal matters, your past responsibilities over planning and execution of all those things, I want to ask for some help in thinking about how to fix a problem that I see, and that is the problem of protests and lawsuits.

Some of the protests and lawsuits can delay or even cancel a very important program, and, of course, just recently the most recent victim is the JEDI program, which has now been canceled. In fact, I would submit to you that some of these protests and lawsuits do a more effective job of holding up our progress than our enemies could do if they were working that hard at it.

So if it is a lawsuit that goes before a judge, that doesn't either have an understanding or maybe a commitment to the same things that our military has a commitment to, it becomes even worse. I am just wondering, from a comptroller perspective, how does a program that gets delayed indefinitely or canceled affect military readiness, and do you have any thoughts, at least for today that we can start thinking about, how we might be able to fix this?

Ms. MILLER. Senator, thank you for that question. You raise a really important point about how do we continue to deliver cutting-edge technology quickly to our fighting forces, and how do we do so economically? And certainly I am not a lawyer, so I tread hesitantly upon the ground of legal controversies with contracting.

But I would say that at the present we have to follow the rule of law in terms of contracts and contract disputes, and that there may be room inside of there for relooking at that, given the kinds of delays that we have experienced, moving forward.

I also believe that there are a number of alternative contracting capabilities. OTAs, in particular, have been used incredibly effec-

tively recently, as we have moved forward through the COVID response. And I believe looking at other alternative contracting authorities that have already been granted by this body would be an important part of looking at how to streamline our contracting and acquisition processes going forward. So, sir, if confirmed, I would be happy to dig into that a little bit more with my colleagues in Acquisition, and bring forward some additional ideas.

Senator CRAMER. I appreciate all that. I do appreciate your optimism, and all those alternatives still get menaced by lawyers, of which you dodged that bullet, I understand. But thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Cramer. Senator Blumenthal, please.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all of you for your service and for your willingness to continue that service to our country. I am impressed with every one of you, and I look forward to supporting you. I would like to ask a couple of questions of Mr. Del Toro, and I appreciate, first of all, your conversation with me yesterday and your commitment to our submarine program, which I know you regard as vital. I would like to invite you to visit Electric Boat and the sub base in London at your very earliest opportunity. I know you know a lot about the program, but I think you will be deeply impressed by the ongoing efforts, very expert and efficient work by Electric Boat on both the Virginia-class and the Columbia-class submarines. And I welcome your commitment to continuing the construction pace or cadence at two Virginia-class submarines a year and ongoing efforts on Columbia.

I want to raise with you an issue that has really been, I think, ignored, and that is that the theft of weapons, lost or stolen weapons from our armories. The Marine Corps and the Navy are involved in it, and June 15, 2021, the Associated Press reported that the United States military has had more than 1,900 weapons lost or stolen over the past decade. I do not expect you to be completely up to speed on this issue now, or any of the other witnesses, but I would like you to report back to me on how the Navy and Marine Corps tracks and accounts for sensitive conventional arms, ammunition, and explosives. You may be aware that recently a staff sergeant in the Marine Corps pleaded guilty pursuant to a plea arrangement, to larceny of military property and other charges in connection with lost and stolen weapons and explosives. And I think that simply drove home the point about the urgency of this issue.

Ms. Karlin, I welcomed your answer to my colleague, Senator Shaheen, about both the Special Immigration Visa program and also the plight of women and others in Afghanistan who will be left behind once we withdraw. And I know that the President has very good intentions, and we all have hopes about what will happen there, but hopes and good intentions are not a strategy. I do not know whether you are prepared now to provide more specifics about what we are going to do to protect those women and their rights, or others who will be left behind, having relied on our past commitments, but I would welcome your more specific response now, or in writing afterward.

Dr. KARLIN. Thank you, Senator. Our partners are incredibly important, both for what we have done in the past in Afghanistan and what the future of Afghanistan looks like. If I am confirmed, I would hope to work very closely with my colleagues in Indo-Pacific Security Affairs and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to ensure that those partnerships remain meaningful.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Well, what I would like is more specifics about what can be done to protect those folks. And I know that there is an evacuation plan for the interpreters and others who worked with us. I would like to know what more can be done for people who will remain in Afghanistan. And if you are not prepared to do it now, I would like it in, say, within a specific period of time after your confirmation. I know a week is probably short, but a couple of weeks. And I think that we are looking for some kind of more specific commitment.

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, I would be more than willing to give you a longer answer separately. I would just say at this time I think it will be important to maintain meaningful relationships with our Afghan partners to ensure that we have robust indicators and warnings, so that we have an understanding of how and in what ways the situation on the ground is changing and to make sure that we are monitoring that closely, not just with colleagues inside Afghanistan but also with other relevant allies and partners.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Mr. Cisneros, I am essentially out of time, but I would like you to respond in writing to the concerns about military suicide, raised by the recent Brown University's Cost of War Project, which I think is deeply alarming, indicating that the rate of suicide in the military is 2.5 times the rate in our general population. If you could respond in writing, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

Mr. CISNEROS. Suicide deaths have increased in the broader U.S. general population, and sadly our servicemembers are not immune to trends that occur in society. Like the broader civilian population, within the military populations those who are younger and males are at a higher risk for suicide. It is my understanding that a best practice when comparing populations is to account for the higher percentage of individuals in the military who are younger and male. After accounting for age and sex differences, military suicide rates typically are comparable with those of the U.S. adult population. If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department's continued efforts to take a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention at the individual, relationship, and community levels. We need to continue to follow best practices from emerging research areas to support targeted prevention efforts, while also taking into account the unique characteristics of our population. The Department must also continue to address mental health and other risk factors, while promoting protective factors. One suicide is one too many.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal. Senator Cotton, please.

Senator COTTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Mr. Del Toro, thanks for taking the time to visit yesterday. I want to speak today about what we discussed yesterday, in particular the health of the surface Navy. After several incidents involving ships like the Fitzgerald, the McCain, the Bonhomme Richard, the surrender of two patrol boats to the IRGC Navy, I became concerned that there might be some cultural problems, in our surface Navy, in particular. So I asked some distinguished former

leaders of the sea services to conduct anonymous and large-scale interviews to review this.

That report just came back to me as well as Congressmen Gallagher, Banks, and Crenshaw yesterday. We have released it publicly. And I found a lot of what was in there very concerning, and I think you probably share some of my concerns.

The most concerning thing, aside from the fact that 94 percent of all the sailors interviewed thought that the Navy has a crisis of leadership and culture, on the surface, is that they said that they have seen little institutional focus in their training over the years in warfighting and lethality. They think that these are not isolated incidents but cultural problems.

I want to stress, at the outset, that this is not a partisan or political or ideological issue. It spans multiple administrations, multiple Secretaries of the Navy, multiple CNOs. It probably goes back to 1991 and the loss of a pacing peer competitor in the Soviet Navy.

Some of these are probably familiar to you, at least in their nascent form, from your final days in the service. I think they have gotten worse since then. I am going to go through a few of them for you, and I want to stress again, these are not my words or the words of Congressmen Gallagher, Banks, or Crenshaw. These are the words of our sailors.

First concern, a number of officers think administrative tasks are overburdening commanders and that the Navy promotes skills that office chores instead of operational excellence, and that this crushing bureaucratic load too often chases out good officers and NCOs.

Once confirmed, can I get your commitment, Mr. Del Toro, to take a look at this challenge of administrative tasks becoming so burdensome that they squeeze out operational focuses?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, let me first thank you for your concern for our surface Navy. For as long as the Congress has decided to maintain and support a Navy, our sailors and our marines have sailed on our ships and upon our seas in a very challenging and difficult environment. And I appreciate your commitment to that.

I will confirm to actually look at all the administrative burdens that our surface Navy has to contend with and ensure that my primary focus is based on warfighting, training, and skills.

Senator COTTON. Thank you. A second concern is the so-called "zero defects" mentality, where sailors often call it the "one mistake maybe," that one mistake could result in the end of an officer or NCO's career. They said this fosters resentment and attrition in the force.

John Lehman, former Secretary of the Navy, one of your predecessors, has pointed out that some of the finest and most storied admirals of World War II, some of whom have ships and ship classes named after them now, probably could not have survived in this environment. It reminds me of what Lincoln is supposed to have said of Grant. When people complained that Grant drank too much, Lincoln said, "Find out what whiskey he drinks and send a case to all my commanders." But that there is too big a fear of a single slip-up ending a career.

So can I get your commitment that you will look at this so-called "zero defects" mentality as well, so that the commanders can focus

on doing their job without a worry of constantly fearing the loss of their job?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, let me first attest that Josephus Daniels did away with drinking in our Navy, and I do not condone drinking on board Navy ships, or anywhere else in our military services.

But to this issue of zero defects, we have to empower our commanders to be able to exercise their authorities. There is no single most solemn responsibility for a commander of any unit, particularly a commanding officer of a ship at sea, than their responsibility to ship handle. And it is important not to have a zero defect mentality. You are correct. Far from the individuals that you mentioned I would argue that there are many other more contemporary naval leaders, distinguished leaders, who suffered through issues in their own career. I, myself, had many challenges throughout my career. And so it is important to not have a zero defect mentality when training our future leaders of the United States Navy.

Senator COTTON. Thank you. And I understand that some defects have to result in serious consequences, as do the sailors who are cited in their report. But they were very clear that zero defects is hurting their leadership.

A third issue is the suffocating micro-management that they cited. Because of advances in information technology and communications technology, admirals and commodores now can reach across hundreds of miles and look over the shoulder of ship commanders. That is not only stifling to dynamic leadership but it also creates a real risk of those leaders failing in an actual fight, because that communication is very likely to be severed. Can I get your commitment to look into this challenge of micro-management and making sure you have the appropriate levels of command and control across the chain of command but it is not stifling our ship commanders?

Mr. DEL TORO. I will look into this issue of micro-management. You know, there are times for good leaders to micro-manage and there are times for good leaders not to micro-manage. Unquestionably, for example, when a ship is in a restricted maneuvering, under very difficult challenges, the commanding officer of that ship, for example, has 20 years of experience in ship handling. That is a proper time to micro-manage and to continue to train your junior officers, for them to be able to accomplish their missions.

I think that this issue of micro-management obviously has been impacted in positive ways sometimes. You know, our systems have become far more integrated, our combat systems have become far more integrated, and there are advantages to that. But to your point as well, too, we have to be able to empower our unit commanders to be able to do their jobs, and do their jobs effectively, and then back them up.

Senator COTTON. Thank you. My time has expired. There are other findings in this report that I will provide to you, unrelated topics like the instability and the short-changing of surface warfare officer training or the corrosive influence of certain kinds of attention to media or social media. But I will provide it to you. I will provide some written questions for the record as well.

I just want to say, I think our surface Navy is in need of some help, and they need to get their fighting edge back. That is the con-

sistent theme I heard from officers, from NCOs, from sailors at all levels. As a former commander yourself, a very rare thing in the history of our Navy for the Secretary of the Navy to have commanded ships at sea, I think you are uniquely positioned to address this issue.

You have got a lot of other priorities, like shipbuilding, but as we have heard this morning, you have got a lot of fingers in that pie as well. This is a place where your leadership could make the single biggest difference, and make sure that our sailors and their leaders are ready to fight and win tonight against a peer competitor like China. And I will do everything I can, as will this committee, to help you make those changes that the surface Navy needs, but first and foremost it is a question of leadership, and we will need your leadership on it.

Mr. DEL TORO. Thank you, Senator. If confirmed, I commit to taking on those opportunities.

Senator COTTON. And maybe after you have been on the job for a couple of months, if you can get back to me on all these things and we can talk about what you found, when you have looked into it.

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes, sir.

Senator COTTON. Thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Cotton. Senator Hirono, please.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I like to start by asking all of the nominees the following two initial questions, and I would like a verbal response from you on these questions.

Since you became a legal adult, have any of you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors or committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

Mr. DEL TORO. No.

Mr. CISNEROS. No.

Ms. MILLER. No.

Dr. KARLIN. No.

Mr. CONNOR. No.

Senator HIRONO. Have any of you ever faced discipline or entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?

Mr. DEL TORO. No.

Mr. CISNEROS. No.

Ms. MILLER. No.

Dr. KARLIN. No.

Mr. CONNOR. No.

Senator HIRONO. A number of my concerns have been touched upon by other members of this committee, so I will go over some of these very quickly.

Dr. Karlin, both Senator Shaheen and Senator Blumenthal have expressed their concerns, which I share, about what will happen to Afghan women and girls after we leave. So I just want you to know that I share this concern and my expectation is that you will be focused on what you can do to support the women and girls.

In particular, a number of us signed a letter, sent a letter to the President, asking him to quickly appoint an ambassador at large for global women's issues as a point person for the administration

on these issues, with regard to Afghan women and girls, and I would expect that you would be working with that person.

Dr. KARLIN. Thank you, Senator, for raising this important issue along with your colleagues. If confirmed, I would absolutely commit to the women, peace, and security work that we have seen as playing such an important role globally.

Senator HIRONO. For Mr. Del Toro, you have asked a number of questions about the importance of the modernization of the shipyards, and these are issues that Senator Shaheen and I always bring up at these hearings. I would like your commitment also to really focus on what we can do to reduce the significant cost overruns that we are experiencing with the new dry dock construction that is happening at Portsmouth, because the next dry dock on the agenda for the Navy is the one at Pearl Harbor. So I would like to reiterate my concern, along with that of other Senators, that you will be very focused on what we need to do to proceed with these matters.

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I had the good fortune of building one of our Navy's newest destroyers and lived in a shipyard, practically, for a year and a half while she was being built, and having first-hand experience with dry docks and shipbuilding. And I want to applaud you and the other Senators on this committee for your commitment to our shipyard capacity and building industry. It is incredibly important to our national security. It is incredibly important to our economic security for the Nation as well too. And I know that the Navy has a SIOP plan to invest in our shipyards, \$20 billion over the next 20 years. I know that there is legislation before the Congress to try to include additional money through the shipbuilding industry as part of the infrastructure plan. I applaud all those efforts.

And I fully commit to you that I, if confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, that I will look into this particular issue with regards to cost overruns, and do everything that I possibly can to correct the situation and put it back on track.

Senator HIRONO. I think timing of the building of the dry dock in Hawaii is very critical, and we cannot afford to have huge cost overruns and delays. I appreciate your reiteration of paying attention to these areas.

For you again, Mr. Del Toro, the Indo-Pacific area of operations, which is a huge AOR, includes many island nations such as Palau, Micronesia, Samoa, Marshall Islands, et cetera. Do you agree that our continued collaboration with these countries plays a vital role to our national security?

Mr. DEL TORO. It absolutely plays a vital role to our national security. It becomes increasingly more important as we face the growing threat of China and the Indo-Pacific. Logistics becomes incredibly important. We have to advance our platforms and our troops as much as possible. Collaborating with all these countries and islands is incredibly important. And I look forward to, if confirmed, to be able to strengthen our maritime diplomatic strategy in the Indo-Pacific and work with all these communities.

Senator HIRONO. I will be very interested in what you will do to strengthen these relationships with these island nations, because I think we have an ongoing commitment to these island nations. We

could do more to help them with their economy, to strengthen their positions in the Indo-Pacific area, especially with China's whole-of-government approach to these island nations.

Again for you, Mr. Del Toro, it is concerning to me that over a year has passed since the investigation into the fire on the USS Bonhomme Richard occurred. This was a 4-day fire, and it destroyed a \$4 billion amphibious warship at a time when we can ill afford to lose any of our ships. So I would ask that you focus on what is taking so long in this investigation. It has been over a year—that is somewhat unusual in these circumstances. And I would like to hear from you as to—of course, after you are confirmed—as to what is happening with this investigation.

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, if confirmed, I commit to looking into the issues with regards to the timing of these investigations, and more importantly, looking into the substance of what occurred.

Senator HIRONO. Also, I note that there is a huge range of numbers in terms of the number of ships that we will eventually have, and I note that there is, in the 2018 NDAA, we are talking about a 355-ship Navy, and then I have seen ranges going from 398 ships to 512 ships. How can we even proceed with these kinds of numbers being tossed out? So I would be very interested in talking with you further, once confirmed, of course, as to whether we can get more accurate numbers about our shipbuilding schedule.

Just one more thing for Mr. Connor. The Army Corps of Engineers has a huge role in Hawaii, particularly with regard to the upcoming—the renewal of the leases for training ranges in the State. And without these training ranges it will be very difficult for the military, particularly the Army and the Marine Corps, to stay in Hawaii, as far as I am concerned.

So I would invite you to come to Hawaii and to be able to recognize how important it is, as we go forward with these renewal of leases, that the community is very much kept abreast of what we plan to do. I would welcome your coming to Hawaii for that purpose.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Hirono. Let me recognize Senator Scott, please.

Senator SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Tillis.

First off, congratulations to each of you on your nominations, and I wish you the best of luck, and thanks for your willingness to serve.

So my questions are for Mr. Del Toro. First, do you agree that we are seeing increasing pressures from our adversaries around the world, and especially China?

Mr. DEL TORO. I do, Senator.

Senator SCOTT. And do you agree that it seems like our adversaries are getting bolder, if you look at, whether it is Communist China threatening Taiwan, or whether it is Iran getting closer to the Venezuelan dictator, Maduro, or Putin trying to control the Black Sea, the Arctic, and the eastern Mediterranean? So are those examples of where we are seeing that our adversaries are getting bolder, day after day?

Mr. DEL TORO. I do, Senator.

Senator SCOTT. Do you think it is important for America and our allies that we have a stronger and a bigger Navy?

Mr. DEL TORO. I believe that it is important for us to have the right mix of ships, capabilities, and lethality that is necessary to address this increasing threat that we are seeing to our national security, and our economic security.

Senator SCOTT. So if you look at the President's budget, he doesn't really intend to focus on adding more ships. It is more on research and development rather than procurement. So if you look at that budget, can you say that when you look at, you know, what we talked about, the threats and the bold action by our adversaries, that we actually are looking at a budget that makes some sense, in where we are and the issues we are dealing with worldwide?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I was not here when that budget was being put together, nor do I have detailed knowledge of the analysis that went into putting that budget. I do know that our Nation and our Department of the Navy felt—was presented with threats with regards to increasing OPTEMPO, for example. We had threats to the readiness of the fleet, for example, that had to be addressed. At the same time, I always do believe that it is incredibly important to make the right investments in modernization. We can't be fighting the wars of yesterday. We have to fight the new wars of tomorrow, that include cybersecurity and space and many other challenges that are presented.

So if confirmed, I look forward to jumping into the fiscal year 2023 budget and being able to address all these significant challenges in a serious way.

Senator SCOTT. Thank you. Have you participated in any of the game scenario in the Indo-Pacific where it appears that when people are doing those now that we will not be able to—American and our allies will not be able to defend Taiwan if it is invaded by Communist China?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I haven't recently, but I am a graduate of the Naval War College, and I participated in war-gaming when I was at the Naval Academy, as part of the advanced research program at the War College. I have not had access to the necessary classified op plans and war games today, but I very much look forward, if confirmed, to ensure that I dive into that immediately so that I can better understand the threat and what we need to do to match that threat.

Senator SCOTT. So do you have any feel, based on the budget that has been proposed by the President, that America is in a position with our allies to be able to defend Taiwan, if, God forbid, Communist China attacks?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, it is incredibly important to defend Taiwan in every way possible, and it takes a holistic view of our national commitment to Taiwan. We should be focused on providing Taiwan with as much self-defensive measures as humanly possible, and if confirmed to the Navy, I am going to be exclusively focused on the China threat, and exclusively focused on moving our maritime strategy forward in order to protect Taiwan and all of our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific Theater.

Senator SCOTT. Do you think we should be clear that there are no ifs, ands, or buts about it, we will defend Taiwan if attacked by Communist China?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, we should be clear about our foreign affairs intentions and our support of Taiwan in every possible way.

Senator SCOTT. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Scott. Now let me recognize, via Webex, Senator Peters, please.

Senator PETERS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the recognition. I also wanted to thank Senator Kaine for allowing me to take his slot. Thank you very much, Senator Kaine.

First off, to our nominees, congratulations on your nomination and your willingness to serve. These are all incredibly important jobs, and are all jobs that are going to take all of your skills and talent in order to perform, so thank you for your willingness to do that.

My first question is for Mr. Cisneros. The Fairness for Veterans Act was included in fiscal year 2017 NDAA, and what this act did is it helped veterans who may have received a bad-paper discharge because of behaviors that they exhibited, but it turns out those behaviors were the result of PTSD or traumatic brain injury that basically went undiagnosed, folks who performed admirably in combat situations but when they came home had the kinds of behaviors that you would expect from someone who is suffering from these injuries.

So the Fairness for Veterans Act allows folks to go to a board, and if they have credible evidence to show that they are indeed suffering from PTSD, which led to behaviors that led to a bad-paper discharge, they can have that status changed, and most importantly, can get the treatment that they have earned and that they deserve from the Veterans Administration in VA hospitals.

The Department has had some success with this program since it went into place, but it is clear there is more work to be done. Approximately 1,500 warfighters have had their status changed as a result of this process. It has been estimated by some veterans groups that up to 40,000 may be in that situation. But unfortunately we have seen a very uneven application of the criteria that was put forth in the legislation, we have seen reductions in board staff, and we have seen the absence of deadlines, and all of those, according to veterans' legal defense groups and other veterans organizations has led to a success rate that is simply unacceptable.

So my question to you, Mr. Cisneros, will you commit, if confirmed, to working with me to ensure that these review boards are resourced appropriately and the men and women who will have a right to go before these boards, to have their cases adjudicated?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, thank you for that question. PTSD, I have personal reasons why this is so important. My father, a Vietnam veteran, went over 30 years before he was finally diagnosed with PTSD, and this is something that we need to do a better job in our military. And Senator, if confirmed, I commit to work with you to see how we can better improve this process to ensure that we are not only including this board but also making changes to help those that are serving in uniform, dealing with their mental health issues.

Senator PETERS. Thank you. Thank you. I look forward to working with you, if confirmed.

Mr. Connor, the Great Lakes are an extraordinary resource for the Nation, but they are ones that are facing some both significant environmental and navigational challenges. The Corps is responsible for overseeing many projects that are absolutely vital to our region, as well as the country. For example, the Soo Locks are in need of major repairs and upgrading. They serve as a gateway to transport nearly 80 million tons of goods and raw material. We have the Brandon Road Lock and Dam project, which is right now assisting us in combatting evasive Asian carp. And the Corps is also going to oversee a New START project that we are hopeful will begin this year, which is the Great Lakes Resiliency Study.

So my question to you, sir, if confirmed, what are your priorities for the Corps in the Great Lakes region?

Mr. CONNOR. Senator, my priorities are just as you just stated, resiliency, whether it be with respect to projecting the impacts of future change on the Great Lakes or taking care of the existing infrastructure that is critical to commerce for the benefit of the states in the Great Lakes region. That is the challenge ahead. How do we maintain our existing infrastructure for the challenges now and the challenges we expect? How do we build new projects to carry out the functions that we need them to do today and continue in the future? And then the study, overall, to anticipate changes to the ecosystem and the environment around the Great Lakes. I understand all those factors are critical to your State and the other states in the region, and I look forward to working on those issues, if I am confirmed.

Senator PETERS. Great. Well, thank you.

Mr. Del Toro, as we spoke earlier, cybersecurity is a major challenge faced by the Department of Defense and all of us, all through society, and certainly cyber is now a warfighting domain, just like any other warfighting domain. Could you talk a little bit about how you believe that we should be educating our Navy and Marine Corps leaders, and not just those cybersecurity professionals, which clearly have to be highly trained, but how our Navy and Marine Corps leaders, all of them, need to have training in cyber as a warfare domain.

Mr. DEL TORO. Thank you, Senator. Cybersecurity presents a tremendous risk to our national security and our economic security, without question. China and other countries have attacked us from a cybersecurity perspective, and this is a domain that we need to pay a lot of attention to and to train our most senior leaders in order to be combat effective against it.

It is going to require skills training, skills training up and down the entire chain of command. It is going to require significant investments to protect our infrastructure as well too. And if confirmed, you know, I look forward to really digging in and taking a look at what capabilities we really currently have with regards to defensive and offensive measures as well too, in order to curtail the tremendous threat that I think our Nation faces, both militarily and economically as well, with regards to cyber.

Senator PETERS. Great. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Peters. Senator Tillis, please.

Senator TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here, and congratulations on your nomination.

Mr. Cisneros, since 2004, Congress has enacted more than 240 provisions of law directly targeted at enhancing sexual assault prevention and response capabilities in the Armed Forces. A recent GAO report on military sexual assault and harassment states that of those 240 provisions only about 9 percent addressed prevention.

As the nominee for Under Secretary of Defense P&R, you are going to be overseeing the implementation of sexual assault and harassment reform in the military. How do you see your potential role overseeing this reform as the DOD has still not fully implemented all 240 enacted provisions? And also, how much more focus do you think we should place on the prevention component versus what we do after the act?

Mr. CISNEROS. Well, Senator, thank you for that question. I think prevention is very important in what we do. I know when I was serving in the U.S. Navy I was the diversity and inclusion officer at a couple of my commands. I was responsible for conducting sexual harassment training and ensuring it got done at my commands, and I think it is very important to ensure that that type of training is getting done. We need to focus on prevention, and if confirmed, that is definitely an area that I will make sure that we address.

Senator TILLIS. I hope it is an area that we can do a better job of tracking progress and show some real sustainable results, positive results, moving forward. It has been up and down, which actually leads to my next question.

There has been a real shift here in the Senate, and also, I think, in the House, in removing the commanders from the prosecution decision of certain offenses. You are probably aware of a bill that is being discussed now, may be considered an amendment, may be considered on the upcoming NDAA. I believe that prior reforms of the UCMJ that have been implemented, in most cases we gave the Department about 2 years to implement. I am not sure if you are familiar with the scope of the proposal that is being spearheaded by Senator Gillibrand. I am actually very sensitive and supportive of a number of things that Senator Gillibrand wants to do.

But what do you think about a 6-month implementation timeframe for something as sweeping as being proposed?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, the Secretary has made it clear what direction he is taking the IRC recommendations and taking those to the White House, which my understanding is the President has approved. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary in implementing these changes, and doing so as timely as we can.

Senator TILLIS. Yes. I think that it would be very helpful just to get feedback, when you are confirmed, on some of the problems. I think that we could really win a battle and lose a war if we don't get the operational side of it down, and dealing with the fact that the caseload is going to be there. I think the transition could be disruptive and actually create challenges.

Mr. Del Toro, I have got to get parochial a little bit here. The Fleet Readiness Centers, FRCs, down in North Carolina at Cherry Point, provides depot services for a lot of advanced aircraft today.

If you go down there, it is like you are walking back to the 1950's, in terms of the facilities. They are out of date so much so that Lockheed is thinking about implementing its own private depot-level maintenance facility for the Joint Strike Fighter.

I am not going to get in—what I am going to do is submit question for the record similar to what I did a couple of weeks ago. We have got a lot of 5-year military construction projects that were supposed to come online as late as next year that haven't even been programmed. One that was programmed, I believe, in 2018, has not been built. So if confirmed, I would like to get your commitment to review some of these projects that are in the pipeline, and explain to me why they are not programmed or why the upfit of that facility is for some reason still not on the priorities list for the Navy. Can I get your commitment to do that?

Mr. DEL TORO. Absolutely, Senator. Depot maintenance is incredibly important, and, you know, we're spending only 1 percent of our top line in the Department of Navy on infrastructure. So it is incredibly important to pay close attention to these issues, and I look forward to working with you and your staff.

Senator TILLIS. Well, thank you all, and I am sorry I didn't have time to get to the other questions. We are going to have a vote here shortly, so I won't run over. We will be submitting some questions for the record.

Thank you all, and once again, congratulations.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Tillis. Let me recognize Senator Kaine and thank him for his patience.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and what a distinguished panel. And I just want to weigh in on the nomination of Carlos Del Toro to be Secretary of the Navy. I was so pleased to have my senior Senator, Mark Warner, here to do the introduction. Mr. Del Toro and his family have been close friends of mine for quite a long time, and I echo everything that Mark said about the professional qualifications, the patriotism, and most especially, the character of this nominee, and I look forward to supporting you as you continue your public service to the country. And to all of you, this is a uniquely qualified panel.

Mr. Del Toro, I want to really focus my questions on you. As you know, the Navy is so important to Virginia. And I think Senator Cotton may have touched on this issue. After the collisions of the McCain and Fitzgerald in 2017, the Navy reinstated surface warfare officer training programs that, in 2003, had been sort of moved—I don't know exactly how I would describe it—they weren't so much the in-person training programs as they had been pre-2003, and it was more materials that were submitted to surface warfare officers so that they would become familiar with them. In the study of those tragic collisions there was a decision made to sort of return back to a more robust surface warfare officer training, and so we have done that.

But the surface warfare environment has changed so dramatically in the last 20 or 25 years. Commercial shipping has gone up about, I think, 250 percent globally since the mid 1990's. There is now GPS spoofing that can mess around with navigational accuracy on surface ships and others. The areas of congestion in sea

lanes are not now limited to a couple of places in the world. Congestion is much more common all over the world.

And so I guess I would like to ask you, with the experience that you had as a surface warfare officer, including being the commander of a destroyer, what would your approach be to making sure that the surface warfare officer training component is every bit a match for the kinds of training that is, you know, sub officers or Navy aviators do? How would you approach that topic, which I know you are so familiar with?

Mr. DEL TORO. Thanks for raising this incredibly important issue, Senator. As I said earlier, sailors and marines have been going down for the ship since the beginning of our Navy, and they are the backbone of our Navy in so many different ways.

I was blessed, perhaps, by a quite robust training pipeline for our junior officers as they first entered the fleet. I do believe that the model that has been implemented again by the Navy, post-2017, is the right model. It has the dedicated resources that are necessary to properly train our junior officers in the very basics of ship handling and rules of the road and proper operations of the equipments that are necessary to keep these platforms safe, and to be able to effectively fight them as well too.

So I am actually quite inspired by the changes that have been made in our surface Navy over the course of the last 4 years since those two very tragic incidents. And let me simply add that I will, if confirmed, always carry the memories and the honor of the lives that were lost in those instances with me as a constant reminder of our solemn responsibility to our Americans who served in the military.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Del Toro. Mr. Cisneros, congratulations. I do have a question for you to followup Senator Tillis. I completely agree with Senator Tillis that in the area of sexual assault and sexual harassment that prevention is key. And I will be self-critical. I think we spend more time here thinking about the important topic of investigation, analysis, prosecution, and consequences, but we don't spend the time on prevention. I am going to leave after this questioning to go to a HELP Committee hearing where there is a President Biden nominee for a key position in the Department of Education. Similarly, in that committee, we spend a lot of time on Title IX procedures. What is the right way, on a college campus, or a K-12 campus that complaints of sexual assault or harassment should be investigated, and what should the standard be, and what rights should folks have, what should the consequences be? We need to spend time on those things. But we spend so little time talking about prevention. And if you look at who are most likely to be victimized by sexual assaults or harassment, it is more likely to happen when you are in the 18-to 24-year-old age range. Whether you are in the military, on a campus, at a high school, in the workplace, out in society, this is a problem that anyone can experience, but the most acute time where you are at risk is in sort of 18-to-24, and many perpetrators are also in that same age range.

So I would just say, as I conclude—my time is up—that I really agree with Senator Tillis that all of us, this side of the dais, your side of the dais, we need to spend more time on the prevention side

of this, and look at best practices that are out there and figure out how to replicate them. So I hope, and have confidence, that you will approach the topic in that way.

And with that, Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator Kaine. Let me recognize Senator Blackburn, please.

Senator BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to each of you on your nominations, and thank you for your time today to answer our questions.

Mr. Cisneros, I want to start with you, and let me just say I am going to have questions for the record for each of you. I know I am not going to get through all of this. But Mr. Cisneros, we talk a lot about readiness in this community and, of course, through the years, whether I was in the House or here, working with Fort Campbell and many of our families that are there, we have talked a lot more than just about personnel and training and equipment. We talk about families and family readiness. And I think that as we look more holistically at our military, and as we look at dwell times and retention, then we need to look at the family readiness component. And I would like to hear from you how you think we can better account for family readiness, and what we can do with some of the programs that have been successful, like the Family Advocacy Program and the New Parent Support Program, which has been vital for many of our young men and women, the Exceptional Family Member Program.

All of these are overseen by the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness. So do you believe that when we are looking at these and trying to find ways to account for these that we are receiving the right degree of feedback from these participants in these programs?

Mr. CISNEROS. Well, thank you, Senator, for that question, and thank you for your work on this topic and taking time also to speak with me when we did earlier, a month or two ago.

You know, there is saying, right. You recruit the member but you retain the family.

Senator BLACKBURN. That is right.

Mr. CISNEROS. It is so important that we need to focus on these family topics. For example, when I was in the House of Representatives I remember sitting in a hearing where spouses were there talking about the exceptional family members, and how, when you say like take a more holistic approach, these members were like at joint bases and they could not go use the local facilities there because it was not their branch of service. They had to go to the closest—you know, if they were in the Navy, the closest Navy base or the closest Army base, whatever branch of service they were in.

I believe we need to take a look at those issues and figure out, with so many joint operations going on, how do we serve the members as whole and not just the member of our—

Senator BLACKBURN. Is this going to be a priority for you, because we are sharing the same concerns.

Mr. CISNEROS. Mm-hmm.

Senator BLACKBURN. I think we just need to make certain that this is a priority.

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes, ma'am. If confirmed, taking care of our military families is definitely a priority, and I believe that is part of taking care of our people, which is one of my core values that I will focus on, because, you know, our families, whether it be housing or whether it be the Exceptional Military Child Program, we need to ensure, as I said, retain the family, and definitely——

Senator BLACKBURN. That is right. I need to move on.

Ms. Miller, I can see that you want to weigh in on this. Can I ask you to submit to me, in writing, your thoughts on how we improve this?

[The information referred to follows:]

Ms. MILLER. DoD families are the support backbone for all those who serve in uniform. If confirmed, I will work with the USD(P&R) and the Department to ensure family support programs are appropriately resourced in DoD budget submissions.

Dr. Karlin, I do want to come to you, because I think China and our nuclear strategy is going to be increasingly important, and we are about to run out of time. But as we look at the NDS, if confirmed, you are the one that is going to need to begin authoring the next NDS. I want to hear from you how you would prioritize China in that, and then also, China expanding their nuclear arsenal and how that affects us. And we are about out of time, but I would love to hear your response to those two.

Dr. KARLIN. Thank you, Senator. I am profoundly concerned about this issue, and if confirmed, if I have the opportunity to lead the next National Defense Strategy I can assure you that that would be a priority, ensuring the Department understands how to approach this challenge and has the capabilities and the investments that are in place to ensure that we can prevail in it.

Senator BLACKBURN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Blackburn. There is a vote ongoing, which I must attend. I will now recognize, via Webex, Senator Warren. Then I will recognize Senator Hawley, and also after Senator Hawley, Senator Tuberville. And by that time I will be back to be able to recognize other members who may be on Webex.

Senator Warren, you are recognized.

Senator WARREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all our witnesses for being here. Congratulations on your nominations.

Mr. Connor, I am very pleased to hear from a nominee with your deep experience and understanding of Native American policy and natural resources issues. I am, however, very concerned about the Dakota Access Pipeline and what it reflects about the Army Corps of Engineers' relationship with Tribal nations. Several Tribal nations with homelands along the Missouri River have sued the Corps over the Dakota Access Pipeline. I joined with a number of my colleagues to support the Tribes' cause. A Federal district court found that the Corps violated Federal law when it failed to prepare an environmental impact statement before granting approval for the pipeline to run under Lake Oahe.

I am concerned that the pipeline continues to operate without a completed environmental review, despite the legal requirements. So, Mr. Connor, will you commit to making sure that the Corps follows the law and that this situation with the Dakota Access Pipeline is addressed as quickly as possible?

Mr. CONNOR. Senator, thank you. Absolutely. The Corps will be following the law with respect to the directions of the court and all other applicable laws and policy with respect to completing the work on the Dakota Access Pipeline, and that includes addressing the issues identified by the court and robust Tribal consultation. And I think that is the next step. Tribal consultation is not a check-the-box exercise. It has got to be robust, meaningful, and that means it has got to be substantive in the interaction with Tribes.

So I look forward to working on this issue, if I am confirmed. I understand there is a solid schedule that has been put together to finish the work on the environmental impact statement, and it is my intent to oversee that, not, obviously, interfere with that. The Corps is doing good work with very substantive direction now from the court, and we will be overseeing that and ensuring that the laws are followed.

Senator WARREN. Well, I very much appreciate hearing you say that you are going to make sure that the laws are followed. You know, I think you have your work cut out for you here. The district court has noted, I think with some exasperation, that the Corps has dragged its feet on making a decision about whether to use its enforcement powers to halt operation of the pipeline, even though the pipeline is, in the court's words, quote, "an unlawful encroachment."

So let me just ask, Mr. Connor, will you commit to promptly exploring the appropriate use of the Corps' enforcement powers in this case?

Mr. CONNOR. Yes, Senator, I will promptly look into that issue, if I am confirmed.

Senator WARREN. Good. Well, I want you to look into it and I want you to enforce the law here. This is about the Federal Government's fulfillment of its trust and treaty obligations to Tribal nations, and about the Corps' adherence to Federal law. So I hope you agree that this deserves your urgent attention.

I have heard a lot of complaints from Tribal representatives that over the years the Department of Defense has not done enough to consult Tribal nations or to respect the Federal Government's Nation-to-Nation relationship with them. So let me ask the question another way, Mr. Connor. Will you commit to ensuring that the Corps respects Tribal nations and the Federal Government's obligations to our Tribal nations?

Mr. CONNOR. Senator, that will be one of my highest priorities. I have spent a long time in government. I have spent a long time working on Native American issues on behalf of Tribes and trying to improve the relationship of the Federal Government as a whole with Tribal nations. You have my strong commitment that I understand the concerns. I have heard them many, many times over the years, I understand them, and I want to act on them and improve that relationship, improve the Federal trust responsibility, improve the way we do consultation. It will be one of my highest priorities, if I am confirmed.

Senator WARREN. Strong commitment, highest priorities. That is what I like hearing. Thank you, Mr. Connor. I am looking forward to working with you to ensure that we are treating Tribal nations

with the respect to which they are entitled, both legally and morally. Thank you.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I think now we go to the next person.

Senator HAWLEY. Thanks to all of the nominees for being here. It is good to see you, Mr. Del Toro. I want to start with you. I want to start with China. I have become a broken record in this committee on this subject, but I have been asking just about everybody who is up in front of us, including the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary Hicks, about the fait accompli scenario involving Taiwan with China. I ask about this because China and PACOM is our pacing theater, and the fait accompli scenario in Taiwan is our pacing threat.

So let me just ask you what I have asked them, whether or not it is vital that the United States maintain the ability to defeat an attempted Chinese fait accompli takeover invasion of Taiwan. Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, virtually everybody else I have asked this question to, has said yes, it is vital, but I would like to get your view on this. Do you think it is vital that we maintain the ability to deter and, if necessary, defeat a fait accompli, Chinese fait accompli against Taiwan?

Mr. DEL TORO. Absolutely so, Senator.

Senator HAWLEY. Very good. And given that, do you think that the Navy ought to prioritize this scenario as it develops operational concepts?

Mr. DEL TORO. Absolutely so, Senator.

Senator HAWLEY. Great. That is great. I like those answers.

Dr. Karlin, I enjoyed speaking with you. I think it has been a couple of months ago now, but I enjoyed our conversation. You said, when we spoke, that this fait accompli scenario against Taiwan, and I am quoting you now, has “absolutely got to be one of the key scenarios used to shape the 2022 NDS development,” and you went on to say it should be a higher priority than scenarios involving North Korea, Russia, or other possible contingencies with China. I agree with that 100 percent. Do you stand by that, I assume? I assume you haven’t changed your view in the last couple of months.

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, I absolutely do stand by that, and I also want to thank you for your leadership on this really important issue.

Senator HAWLEY. Well, that is kind of you to say. Earlier this year, Secretary Austin told me that, and I am quoting him now, “Combat credible forward deterrent posture is instrumental to the U.S. military’s ability to deter and, if necessary, deny”—emphasis, deny—“a fait accompli scenario.” Do you agree with this emphasis on denial, a strategy of denial in PACOM and as it relates to China, specifically?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, I want to ensure that China does not think that it should take any of these actions today, does not try to take them in the future, and if it does, we have a military that can prevent it from happening successfully.

Senator HAWLEY. Good. Very good. Still with you, Dr. Karlin, if I could. The force planning construct in the 2018 NDS shifted focus, in a pretty significant way—and you and I talked about this

a couple of months ago—from maintaining our ability to fight and win two simultaneous regional conflicts to fighting and winning a single war against a near peer or peer competitor, a great power conflict, while deterring opportunistic aggression simultaneously. So pretty big difference there.

Do you agree with that force planning construct that the 2018 NDS adopted?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, I have not dug into the classified information behind this. If I am confirmed, that would absolutely be a priority. Nevertheless, I do absolutely believe, as the Secretary has said, China needs to be the pacing threat.

Senator HAWLEY. Let me just ask you about the two-war construct that governed much of our strategic thinking for a long period of time, that the 2018 NDS departed from, again, pretty significantly. Is it your sense that we should return to a two-war force construct and that ought to govern our thinking, our strategic planning, operational planning going forward, or do you think that the trajectory that the 2018 NDS set us on is broadly correct?

Dr. KARLIN. I think, Senator, the U.S. military, going forward, needs to be prepared across the spectrum of conflict. However, looking at the future security environment and the challenges that we see from strategic competition, it particularly needs to prioritize the challenge that we see from China.

Senator HAWLEY. Well, I am glad to hear you say that. I just want to register on the record my own concern about returning to a two-war construct. I think given the unique challenges that we have with great power competition—you have mentioned now China multiple times, which is excellent—I think that the earlier construct that governed our thinking from the 1990's forward is outmoded, outdated, and it is certainly something that I would oppose, if there was a move to return to that. So I look forward to working with you on this, if you are confirmed.

Mr. Del Toro, let me come back to you, still on the subject of China. It has the largest navy now in the world and it continues to outpace many of our own modernization efforts, which obviously is a big concern. Let me ask you about our current funding levels. At these levels, is it your view that our Navy can both maintain readiness and pursue the modernization that we need to do in order to outpace the growing Chinese threat?

Mr. DEL TORO. So first let me say, Senator, that I do believe that China may have more numbers of platforms, but we are a more powerful and capable and experienced Navy than any other Navy on the globe. Having said that, though, we have to remain conscious of the fact that that naval superiority may not always be there either, and we have to make the necessary investment in the fiscal year 2023 budget to ensure that we abide by the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, as I said before, that is committed to a 355-ship Navy, and make those investments, not just in numbers of platforms but capability and lethality. As you well know, Senator, we have to invest in missile technology, hypersonics, computing power, all the cybersecurity, all those other technologies that are going to advance our ability to deter China in the Indo-Pacific.

Senator HAWLEY. I am glad to hear you say that, and I have to say I have got real concern about this year's budget, about these funding levels in terms of our ability to both maintain our readiness, which is itself a significant challenge, and pursue the modernization that we are going to need. So I look forward to, if you are confirmed, to working with you on this.

I need to yield to Senator Tuberville. I have a few more questions for Dr. Karlin and Mr. Del Toro both. I will give those to you for the record. Thanks again to all the nominees.

Chairman REED. Let me thank Senator Hawley and recognize Senator Tuberville.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you very much. Thank you for your service. You all look hungry so I will be quick.

Dr. Karlin, you know, if confirmed, you will be responsible for missile defense review, a subtask of the Global Force Posture Review. China has rapidly expanded their long-range strike capabilities. For 2 years in a row, the INDOPACOM commander's No. 1 unfunded priority has been a missile defense system for Guam. Do you believe that in order for our military to properly pivot Indo-Pacific that we need a defense system on Guam to defend against advanced Chinese cruise ballistic missiles?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, Guam is a key operating location for the U.S. Department of Defense, and we need to ensure that it is appropriately protected. While I have not dug into the classified details behind this issue, if I am confirmed I can promise you it would be a priority of mine.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you. Do you believe that the missile defense architecture to defend Guam should include a variety of capabilities including the 360-degree sensor coverage and a wide range of tools to defeat ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles?

Dr. KARLIN. Senator, while I cannot speak to specific platforms since I am not privy to the classified information, I do think the need for such a capability, ensuring Guam is appropriately protected, is absolutely important.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Would these two INDOPACOM commanders wanting the Aegis Ashore system to defend Guam, do you agree with their assessment?

Dr. KARLIN. I have not read the classified information behind this one either, sir. That said, I think we need analytically rigorous and operationally effective capabilities to ensure that our military can do what it needs in this key region.

Senator TUBERVILLE. You have got a lot of reading to do.

Dr. KARLIN. Indeed, sir.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Mr. Cisneros, 300 million young men and women, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 years old, capabilities of being in our military to defend this great country. We were recently told only 450,000 of those 30 million were capable and qualified to be in our military. How are we going to overcome that?

Mr. CISNEROS. Well, Senator, there are a lot of issues that kind of go in with that, and one of the issues that do not really have a lot of is physical fitness. A lot of these young men and women do not meet the standards. It is important that we maintain these high standards. We want the best and the brightest, to be able to recruit the best and the brightest. I know you know a little bit

about recruiting. And, you know, if confirmed, definitely recruiting and retention, because I believe you cannot talk about recruiting without also talking about retention, because we want to recruit the best and the brightest but we also want to make sure that we maintain them, their skills and the knowledge that we give them.

And so I am committed, if confirmed, to do what we can to help our services in their recruiting efforts, to make sure that we can do the best that we can to get the best and the brightest.

Senator TUBERVILLE. We cannot drop our qualifications, though. You know, I keep hearing our commanders and people that come in front of this committee say that, you know, we are changing some standards that they have to go through. Instead of running 2 miles they just have to walk 1 mile. I can't believe that the United States of America would drop its qualifications, especially for what is so important, our military. And our education system. Only half the kids in this country can read over the sixth-grade reading level. That is embarrassing. And we would hate to send them to the military to have to learn to read, after coming out of high school. So we have got a lot of work to do.

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, I agree. I believe it is important for us to maintain our high standards in the military, and if confirmed, I will work with our different services to ensure that we do that.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Mr. Del Toro, thank you for your service. I think you are going to be great in this position. As a former Aegis destroyer commander you have got the qualifications. We all know that China is a huge threat. Who is going to be our most important allies around China, for us to fall upon?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, that is a marvelous question, and there are going to be many allies. We have many allies and partners right now in the Indo-Pacific theater, and we continue to strengthen those alliances and those partnerships, more so as we advance our troops and our logistics into the Indo-Pacific theater. It is important to respect each and every one of them and respect their concerns as well too, and to work very collaboratively with them—diplomatically, economically, and militarily as well, so that we can present a really combined deterrence to China and how China wants to accomplish its economic goals around the globe.

Senator TUBERVILLE. As we have talked, our allies are one of our most—our biggest asset, you know, other than the men and women who fight in our military. We need to continue to build, especially for China. They do not have a lot of friends. We do, and we need to count on those friends. So we hope that you would build on that.

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

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Tuberville. Let me recognize, via Webex, Senator Duckworth.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, and thank you all for being here today. According to numerous studies, paid family leave offers clear advantages to both employers and families. For employers, it increases employee morale, productivity, and retention of key talent. For employees, it provides economic security, has a positive effect on infant and maternal health, and reduces infant mortality rates.

Yet depending on the branch of service and family situation, many servicemembers currently only receive 2 or 3 weeks of paren-

tal leave. Now that is actually an improvement, because when I had my baby, my husband, who was on active duty, only got 10 days. So 2 to 3 weeks is better than that, but it is still not good enough.

Servicemembers in dual military relationships have to decide who is the, quote, "primary caregiver" and who is, quote, "secondary caregiver." It is an artificial distinction that devalues the role of one parent compared to the other in the early days of an infant's life. And currently servicemembers who accept a long-term foster placement do not receive any guaranteed paid parental leave, despite the obvious need to spend time bonding with a foster child and helping them adjust to their new home for the first few weeks after they arrive.

That is why I introduced the Servicemember Parental Leave Equity Act, which would ensure that all caregivers in the military get access to 12 weeks of paid parental leave, whether they are a birth parent or not. Paid family leave is critical for the physical, mental, and psychological health of military families who are welcoming new family members. The children of servicemembers already face frequent moves and parents who work long hours, have rigorous training requirements away from home, and can be deployed for months or years on end, often to dangerous locations.

Mr. Cisneros, as a veteran yourself I know you see first-hand the pressures that military families face. Do you agree that we can do more to promote the development, long-term emotional health, and stability of military children?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, thank you for your service and thank you for this question and really your dedication to supporting our military families. I do believe we can do more to support our military families, and if confirmed, I am looking forward to working with yourself as well as this committee to see how we can further support our military families who sacrifice so much and give up so much in order to support their servicemember, their spouse who is serving our country, as well as, you know, our military families are serving our country as well.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. You know, we cannot change all the operational requirements that take military parents away from their children, but we can extend parental leave benefits to give all parents, not just the ones who give birth to the child, adequate time to bond with and care for their children at the beginning of their parent-child relationship. Research from many sources has consistently shown that this early bonding time can lead to better developmental outcomes for children in the long term as well as improve parent-child relationships that can last for years. It is a foundation that is especially important for a servicemember who may have to be away from home later in their child's life.

As you said, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you, Mr. Cisneros, to prioritize policies that improve the health and resilience of military families.

Now helping military children should be motivation enough to increase parental leave, but this policy will also, I believe, bolster military recruitment. Mr. Cisneros, in your written testimony, you stated recruitment and retention of top military personnel is of great importance to both this committee and the DOD. In order to

recruit and to retain the best and brightest, DOD must modernize its parental leave policy to be more competitive with the private sector and to remove some of the pressures that force dedicated servicemembers to choose between serving their country or doing right by their family.

Will you commit to exploring opportunities such as the ideas contained in the Servicemember Parental Equity Leave Act to expand the current parental leave policy to ensure that we are recruiting and retaining talent?

Mr. CISNEROS. Senator, thank you for that, and again, thank you for all your work on this subject. I will commit that I am open to looking at options about how we can better take care of our servicemembers and their families and looking at all options that will help with the recruiting and retention, and definitely, you know, giving families time off during the birth of a child is something that definitely needs to be looked at and definitely trying to create a uniform policy throughout the military, for all branches, is something that, amongst other subjects, all different topics that I think is important that we have. And again, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you to see how we can develop options to better take care of our families.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. Well, it needs to cover more than just the birth of a child but also adoptions and fostering as well. Thank you, and I look forward to working to better the lives of our servicemembers in the future.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator Duckworth. Now let me recognize Senator Sullivan.

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses here. Congratulations on your nomination.

Mr. Del Toro, I appreciated our opportunity to have a good discussion yesterday. Same with you, Mr. Connor, so thank you for your time on that.

You know, these issues of culture in the Navy, I know Senator Cotton raised a couple of issues. But I think it would be good here if you could just clarify your intent to focus on the Navy's core mission, which is to win and fight our country's wars, if called upon to do so. Isn't that the main mission of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I could not agree more. I mean, the main mission of the Navy-Marine Corps team is to fight our wars and maintain our peace and be as committed to that as humanly possible. And let me thank you for your commitment to our Nation's national security as well too, and also recognize your commitment, as a White House fellow as well, too, and how you have actually taken the lessons that you learned early on in your career as White House fellow and applied them to these important issues of national security to our Nation.

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you. Well, I think just keeping that core mission readiness, lethality, and if called upon to go win—people do not like to say it—kill people, right, destroy our enemies. That is what we need to do. Everything else is collateral. We have got to keep that focus. So I appreciate you maintaining that focus.

I want to talk about the Arctic. For a number of reasons, our Pentagon—and this has been both parties, has kind of been delinquent on recognizing the strategic importance, national security, economic security, the people, who I happen to represent, in Alaska. America is an arctic nation because of my State. And the Pentagon has been slow to recognize this, slow to recognize the challenges, slow to recognize the national security, economic security dimension. This committee and the Congress have been pushing the Pentagon leadership to wake up to this big, important area of national security and great power competition.

So, Mr. Del Toro, in January 2021, the Department of Navy, the Navy published its Arctic strategy. The Air Force had done this recently. The Army had done this recently. The Secretary of Defense, Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks committed to me, in their confirmation hearings, to fully resource the Arctic strategies of the different services, including the Navy's.

So if confirmed, can I get your commitment to follow through with the pledges made by the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary to fully resource the Navy's Arctic strategy, and for you, within 45 days, you and the CNO to come brief me on the implementation of that strategy? This is very important. Tomorrow the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army are coming in to brief me on the implementation of their Army's Arctic strategy. It was a commitment the Secretary of the Army made to me during her confirmation hearing. So I would like to get that confirmation from you as well.

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, let me assure you that the Arctic strategy is incredibly important to our national security. As you well know, the Navy has operated in the Arctic for many, many years. Our submarine forces, our Marine Corps forces operate in the Arctic. It is incredibly important to our economic security, and I pledge to you that within 45 days, if confirmed, I will come back to you with the Navy's commitment to the Arctic as well too, moving forward.

Senator SULLIVAN. Great. Well, part of that—and I appreciate that—part of that plan is the Navy talks about it will maintain an enhanced presence, strengthen cooperative partnerships, adopt our naval forces for a Blue Arctic, do freedom of navigation operations, not undersea ones—I appreciate the submarine fleet, but FONOPS—and yet I would like you to be able to brief me on how the Navy can achieve these objectives without any icebreakers. We have two—one is broken—for our Nation, without any Arctic deepwater ports and without any ice-hardened surface ships.

Right now the Navy talks a big game, but literally has no ability to execute its Arctic strategy. So I would like to be able to make sure you would brief me on that within the next 45 days.

Mr. Connor, you made a commitment to me yesterday, I appreciated it, on the Arctic deepwater port, to continue the good progress that we have made between the Corps and the city of Nome and the State of Alaska. Can I get your commitment, as we talked about yesterday, to continue that? That is an important element of our overall Arctic strategy, to have infrastructure that can actually handle a Navy destroyer or an icebreaker. Right now there is literally no port between Anchorage and the Bering Strait that

can do that. That is about a 1,300-, 1,400-nautical-mile span of American territory. So we need to change that. Can I get your commitment to continue the progress the Corps and the State of Alaska made on that?

Mr. CONNOR. Senator, yes, you have my commitment to keep working on that issue and the deepwater port. I understand the expanse of Alaska, having been up there a number of times. Chief's report authorization work is proceeding. I will continue to work with you on that.

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you very much. And, Mr. Chairman, unless there are other witnesses——

Chairman REED. There are.

Senator SULLIVAN. Oh, there are. Okay. I will submit additional questions for the record, so thank you very much.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Sullivan, for your graciousness. I appreciate it very much.

Senator SULLIVAN. Yes, of course.

Chairman REED. Let me now recognize, via Webex, Senator Rosen.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you, Chairman Reed, and, of course, Ranking Member Inhofe, for holding this hearing. We have got lots to work on today but I would really like to thank Mr. Del Toro for speaking with me yesterday, and I want to thank all the nominees for your willingness to serve.

But Mr. Del Toro, I really want to speak specifically today about Fallon Naval Air Station. Nevada is proud to host Fallon Naval Air Station. It is home to Top Gun and our Nation's premier carrier air wing, and the SEAL training center. Last year, the Navy requested an expansion of over 600,000 acres of Federal land, and over 65,000 acres of non-Federal land, which would expand the Fallon training complex to 900,000 acres.

Federal land managers currently allow the public to access much of the proposed expansion area for grazing, for hunting, for mineral exploration, and geothermal development, and the Navy's proposal would curtail many of those activities in addition to restricting Tribal access to its really important cultural sites.

So in fiscal year 2021 NDAA we included a provision that Senator Masto and I put in, that we offered it mandates the creation of an intergovernmental executive committee, or IEC, to allow local, State, and Tribal governments this public forum to collaborate, to communicate with the Navy and to give advice on what we need to do, exchange all of that information. It is really important to make sure that if we do expand that it is done so in agreement with others.

And, of course, we do have to worry about modernization requirements, and we have to keep up with emerging threats and technologies. But I have to think about Nevada's natural resources and our cultural resources.

Recently, however, the Navy sent over a legislative proposal to this committee, which unfortunately, after having some of these meetings, was identical to the request from last year. It does not incorporate any of the suggested changes that came out from the local stakeholders or the Nevada delegation.

So, Mr. Del Toro, as the Navy pursues modernization of the range can you commit, if confirmed, to exchanging the information, collaborating with our local, State, and Tribal governments, all the relevant stakeholders, and be sure that you will begin to incorporate these as you try to submit any requests to this committee?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, I want to make sure I am looking at you. First of all, let me thank you, Senator, for your commitment to national security. Fallon, Nevada, the base there is incredibly important to our national security, for our naval aviators, for our SEAL teams, and your commitment has been very long, and we are very grateful to it.

It is incredibly important to expand that naval air station, as you know, and the range, in order to accomplish our national security mission. In doing so, it is also equally important to respect the Tribes that have sacred lands there. And I commit to doing all the things that you said, working with the committee that was established, and I also look forward to meeting with those Tribal leaders as well too. I am not sure if they have actually ever met with the Secretary of the Navy, but I commit to you that I will meet with them and have these critical discussions. I think there are also interagency discussions that need to be had, with the Department of Interior, to try to correct the problem that you mentioned, and I look forward to working with you and your staff on all these issues, to make them right.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you. And so I am hoping that, if confirmed, you will submit a revised legislative proposal that would incorporate the stakeholder input.

But briefly, in just the minute I have left, in 1959, the Navy dropped live and inert ordnance outside of Fallon's B-19 range. We talked about this. Approximately 6,000 acres of land was contaminated at the Walker River Paiute Tribe's reservation. So if confirmed, will you commit to working with me and the Nevada delegation to ensure that the Walker Paiute Tribe is fairly compensated?

Mr. DEL TORO. Senator, if confirmed, I fully commit to working with you and your staff on this incredibly important issue as well.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you. I need to go vote, so I am going to yield back my time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Rosen, and to the nominees, thank you for your testimony this morning. Thank you for your public service, which is outstanding and distinguished, and thank you for again committing to serve the public.

And with that I will adjourn the hearing. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

[Prepared questions submitted to Mr. Carlos Del Toro by Chairman Reed prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

##### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

*Question.* What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Navy?

*Answer.* The Secretary of the Navy leads the Department of the Navy, including his or her staff and the Navy Marine Corps team in all matters as its Chief Execu-

tive Officer, responsible under Title 10 U.S. Code 8013 and subject to the authority of the Secretary of Defense. His or her principal functions include organizing, recruiting, supplying, equipping, training, servicing, mobilizing, de-mobilizing, maintaining, and construction, outfitting, and repair of military equipment, buildings, and other real properties.

*Question.* What background and experience do you possess that render you “most highly qualified” to perform such duties and responsibilities?

*Answer.* I possess over 40 years of experience, leading organizations in both the military and the private sector during times of peace and war. My subject matter expertise in the Navy for 26 years and my current experience as a Chief Executive Officer of a “highly successful” small business for 17 years renders me “most highly qualified” to serve as Secretary of the Navy.

*Question.* In particular, what management and leadership experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed?

*Answer.* I would apply numerous and very diverse leadership and management experiences to my service as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed.

I currently serve as a Chief Executive Officer of a small business that I founded 17 years ago, providing program management services to several federal agencies. As such, we serve as an extension of the Government’s Program Management Teams.

In the private sector, I have served on numerous Boards of Directors and Advisory Boards that have gained me community service and engagement experience relevant to serving as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed. I currently serve on the Stimson Board; the Virginia Governor’s Board of Visitors to Mount Vernon; and the Virginia Committee on Higher Education Board of Visitors Appointments. I have previously served on the Board of a Public University; the Foundation Board of a Community College; and numerous other not-for-profit boards, including Rappahannock Goodwill Industries and the DC Metro area Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Boards.

During my tenure in the military, I gained extensive leadership and management experience fulfilling responsibilities as:

1. The Senior Military Assistant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense’s Office of Program Analysis & Evaluation (now CAPE);
  2. The Pre-Commissioning and later Commanding Officer of our nation’s then newest Arleigh Burke Destroyer, overseeing the construction of the ship and initial training of the crew;
  3. White House Fellow and Special Assistant to the Director of the White House Office of Management & Budget, focused mostly on National Security & International Affairs related agencies;
  4. Director of Training for all Aegis Class Cruisers & Destroyers;
  5. Executive Officer of a Cruiser stationed in Asia, operating extensively with Japan and South Korean naval forces;
  6. Program Manager of a satellite ground station;
  7. Engineering Department Head aboard a destroyer and an aircraft carrier during Operations Desert Storm, Desert Shield, and Provide Comfort;
  8. Division Officer at the end of the Cold War conducting anti-submarine operations in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.
4. If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense regarding the organization and operations of the Department of the Navy?

As a veteran of the Armed Forces and as a small business owner, I have come to understand that no matter what organization I have been associated with, a critical review of an organizational structure, policies, practices, and procedures can reveal areas that can be improved upon to ensure the organization is operating effectively and efficiently. Although I do not have any specific recommendations at this time, I am interested in reviewing the effectiveness to the Department’s Programming, Planning, Budgeting, and Execution system to determine if it is responsive and agile in the era of rapid technology development to support the Department of the Navy. If confirmed, I would like the opportunity to thoroughly review the Department of the Navy’s organizational structures, policies, practices and procedure prior to making any specific recommendations.

In its report, Providing for the Common Defense, the National Defense Strategy Commission cautioned, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.”

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as Secretary of the Navy epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian con-

trol of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws? (DUSN)

Answer. One of the foundational elements and attributes of the United States military has been the establishment of a non-partisan culture that carries out and executes the orders as directed by the civilian leadership of the military. Ensuring we maintain this non-partisan culture, focused on respect, dignity, and unity of action, in the defense of this Nation, is critical in ensuring our military remains one of the most well respected military forces in the world. Should I be confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the civilian leadership of the Department's staff to continue to build upon, reinforce, and strengthen these foundational elements to ensure our marines and sailors have the trust and confidence of the leaders and institutions that direct them.

*Question.* What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as Secretary of the Navy?

Answer. I believe our most significant challenge is the long-term, strategic competition with peer competitors, China and Russia. This long-term challenge is complicated by enduring and emerging threats causing episodic disruptions in the international order by other state and non-state actors. If confirmed, I will lead the Department in accelerating its progress to align strategy to mission; match resources to strategy; adapt existing systems, develop new systems, and demonstrate new ways to use them in order to increase awareness, accelerate decision making and disrupt our adversaries, and deter or defeat, if necessary, this broad range of threats.

*Question.* What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed, and on what timeline?

Answer. Deterring Russia and China is a critical national security priority, requiring a robust "Joint Force" approach. The Navy and Marine Corps have been pursuing a force structure to protect and defend our national interests with a clear-eyed focus on China and Russia. If confirmed, to increase awareness, accelerate decisions and disrupt our adversaries, I will lead the Department's efforts to align and execute our maritime strategy in support of our national security interests as defined by the President and the Secretary of Defense. I will then match resources to that strategy. The Department of the Navy is also uniquely positioned to foster and develop cooperation with our allies and international partners as part of that strategy. Historically, the Naval Services have been a major contributor to global diplomacy. If confirmed, I will fully support the Secretary of Defense's efforts in cooperation with the State Department to build new relationships and strengthen existing ones in the pursuit of national security. I will also master the data and technology space and leverage accelerated prototyping, experimentation and acquisition to rapidly develop the required systems and capabilities to disrupt our adversaries' ability to affect the battle space.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

*Question.* The 2018 NDS prioritizes "great power competition and conflict" with China and Russia as the primary challenges with which the United States must contend, while also recognizing the need to deter and counter rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran, and moving to a "more resource sustainable" approach to counterterrorism.

In your view, what, if any, changes should be considered in reshaping the NDS, taking into account developments since 2018?

Answer. The 2018 NDS identified China and Russia as our strategic competitors and the focus of its implementation. The President and Secretary Austin have affirmed those priorities, which I fully support. Recent challenges, such as the coronavirus pandemic and extreme weather events related to climate change highlight the importance of Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) and a whole of government approach to national security issues. Secretary Austin has emphasized the importance of DSCA moving forward and I see DSCA as a critical enabler to any U.S. response to a future pandemic or other large-scale catastrophe.

*Question.* In your view, how should the Coast Guard factor into NDS implementation?

Answer. The Coast Guard is a naval service and an important partner that brings important law enforcement authorities to the high seas. Together we provide unique and complementary capabilities and capacities to secure our maritime interests at home and abroad. If confirmed, I will continue the work already in place with the Department of Homeland Security and the Commandant of the Coast Guard to ensure effective inter-operability and continued cooperation.

Secretary of Defense Austin has announced that the Department will conduct a Global Posture Review to assess requirements for military capability.

*Question.* If confirmed, what role would you expect to play in that review?

Answer. I understand that the Department of the Navy has been actively involved in the ongoing Global Posture Review, and is participating in the supporting analyses and decision forums. Should I be confirmed as Secretary, I will make it a priority to become fully informed on this effort to guide the Department's continued engagement in the GPR, providing our naval warfighting perspective and helping to constructively shape future force posture decisions in support of Navy and Marine Corps requirements for great power competition.

#### NAVY AND MARINE CORPS READINESS

*Question.* How would you assess the current readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps —across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute their required missions?

Answer. I am confident that the Navy and Marine Corps team stands ready today to execute their missions, deter conflict in any domain, and if necessary, fight and win against any challenger. I recognize readiness challenges exist and the Services are working through the backlogs in maintenance, modernization, and procurement. My understanding is that the Navy and Marine Corps are making steady progress in recovering from and responding to these readiness challenges, in addition to modernizing and transforming the force in ways that most effectively meet the demands of strategic competition to execute the defense strategy. If confirmed, ensuring that our sailors and marines have the materiel, equipment, and training to execute their missions will be one of my top priorities.

*Question.* In your view, what are the priority missions for which current and future Navy and Marine Corps forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?

Answer. Maintaining the nation's advantage at sea remains the most important peacetime and warfighting mission. It requires generating integrated all-domain naval power, strengthening alliances and partnerships, prevailing in day-to-day competition, controlling the seas to deny the objectives of our adversaries, and modernizing the future force. However, the threats to global security are rapidly changing and no longer limited to conventional warfare. Pandemics and other biological risks, the escalating climate crisis, cyber and digital threats, international economic disruptions, protracted humanitarian crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all pose profound and, in some cases, existential dangers. The Navy and Marine Corps play an active role within the Joint Force in responding to all of these threats in order to defend our national security interests. The Navy and Marine Corps team also needs to be trained and ready to support global security missions, to include humanitarian and pandemic response, tackling the climate crisis, enhancing diversity within our force, and protecting economic trade across free and open seas.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you prioritize maintaining readiness in the near term, as compared to modernizing the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure future readiness?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to find the best balance of investments across readiness, capability, capacity, and taking care of our people. All are critical priorities to defend our nation — we cannot field a hollow force. The operating environment of the future will likely not afford us the luxury of time to project force, so having modernized forces in the right places, sufficient size and readiness will be the key to sustaining deterrence, maintaining the peace, and if deterrence fails, then fighting and winning. If confirmed, I will seek risk analysis and assessments to make strategy-driven, data-informed decisions on where risk can be managed and accepted.

*Question.* Does the Department of the Navy have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as the Secretary of the Navy, in measuring its readiness to execute the broad range of potential Navy missions envisioned by 2018 NDS and associated operational plans—from low-intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted high intensity fights? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I understand that the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy titled “Advantage at Sea” builds on the National Defense Strategy and provides guidance to the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard for the next decade to prevail across a continuum of competition, from day-to-day competition to being in crisis to times of conflict. If confirmed, I will fully familiarize myself with the Department's analytic capabilities and tools in measuring readiness and the ability to execute missions. In addition,

I will work closely with the Department of Defense to fully leverage analytic capabilities and tools across the Joint Force. If adjustments are needed, then it will be my responsibility to ensure the Department develops these capabilities, in partnership with the Department of Defense, to ensure we can make strategy-driven, data-informed decisions across the continuum of competition.

*Question.* To what extent has Optimized-Fleet Response Plan (O-FRP) been successful in stabilizing rotational deployments and making them more predictable?

*Answer.* As I understand it, OFRP has been generally successful in generating forces in a more stable, predictable, sustainable, and disciplined manner. In addition, I understand that the Chief of Naval Operations directed an assessment of the Navy's force generation model in 2019. My understanding is that this assessment re-validated OFRP as a sound construct. I am aware of challenges to OFRP due to high operational tempo and ship maintenance delays, and that the Navy is aggressively working to improve on-time maintenance. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Navy to regularly assess OFRP – making improvements as needed.

*Question.* Given the current operational tempo, are the Navy and the Marine Corps able to maintain desired dwell ratios?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic and Combatant Commander demand for forces necessitated multiple extended Carrier Strike Group deployments. I know from my own military experience that this results in increased stress on the force, including impacts to maintenance schedules, training, and quality of life for sailors and their families. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Navy and Marine Corps to assess and attempt to improve dwell ratios while continuing to assess and meet the demands of the Global Force Management Allocation Plan. We will additionally adjust based on the outcome of the Department of Defense's ongoing review of global force posture.

#### NATIONAL SECURITY BUDGET

*Question.* In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). The President has released the DOD budget for fiscal year 2022 which would not provide such an increase, but would be essentially flat.

*Question.* If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of funding for the Department of the Navy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the Department's funding by our ability to meet the mission of the Department to recruit, train, equip, and organize to deliver combat-ready naval forces to win conflicts and wars while maintaining security and deterrence through sustained forward presence. Fundamental to measuring adequacy of funding is analyzing, assessing, and measuring risk so we can make informed recommendations as we develop each budget.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Navy and the Marine Corps require 3–5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP to implement the NDS effectively? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Recent testimony by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps highlighted the key factors the Navy and Marine Corps face in sustaining and modernizing the naval power necessary to address the potential challenges posed by our nation's strategic competitors. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Service Chiefs to understand the resource requirements generated from their classified analysis and to examine opportunities for reform and efficiency to maximize the return for every dollar received. The President's Interim National Security Strategy commits to ensuring our armed forces are equipped to deter our adversaries and to defeat emerging threats. Secretary Austin has committed to matching resources to strategy. Numerous strategic reviews are on-going and Secretary Austin has announced his intent to develop a National Defense Strategy that supports President Biden's strategy. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of the Navy fully supports Secretary Austin's direction for a more integrated Joint Force that leverages our allies and partners while also ensuring that appropriate funding for unique naval contributions to our Nation's defense are prioritized within our budget requests.

*Question.* Given the President's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget request, will the Navy and Marine Corps be adequately funded to fight one major power rival, while maintaining deterrence and stability in other regions of the world? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* The Fiscal Year 2022 President's Budget resources the capabilities most needed for strategic competition and drives investments that advance key priorities

to defend the Nation, take care of our people, and succeed through teamwork. I agree with Secretary Austin that the fiscal year 2022 budget request reflects a commitment to continued U.S. naval dominance, including a properly sized and well-positioned defense industrial base. Today, the Navy and Marine Corps, as part of the Joint Force, stand ready to deter conflict in any domain and, if necessary, to fight and win against any challenger. Much has changed since I served in uniform; if confirmed, I will work closely with the Service Chiefs to understand the classified analysis that informs future budget requests and ensure that we remain the world's preeminent naval power.

*Question.* Given the President's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget request, will Navy and Marine Corps' budgets be adequate to execute operations, maintain readiness, procure needed weapons and equipment, modernize capabilities, and sustain sailor, Marine, and family quality of life? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* As I currently understand, the Fiscal Year 2022 President's Budget is sufficient to meet current mission requirements. Developing a properly prioritized balance between readiness, modernization and capacity, while ensuring a healthy defense industrial base, will be critical in future budgets as the Department keeps pace with China and its regional ambitions. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for the resources needed to sustain naval forces and will work with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Service Chiefs to strike the correct balance in our investments.

Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that not later than 10 days after the President's submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief must submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of his or her armed force.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you agree to support the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps in providing their unfunded priorities lists to Congress in a timely manner?

*Answer.* Yes.

#### ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

*Question.* Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are one of our greatest comparative advantages in competition with near-peer rivals.

What do you see as the role of the Department of the Navy in building relationships and interoperability with allies and partners?

*Answer.* In order to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges, we must have allies and partners who are aligned with our national security objectives and interoperable with our own maritime forces. The Department of the Navy should work closely with allies and partners through bilateral and multilateral engagements to strengthen their maritime capabilities and to increase our ability to operate effectively together to deter threats and defeat our adversaries. The Department of the Navy has many tools available to strengthen relationships with allies and partners and to ensure the United States is and remains their security partner of choice in the face of growing foreign influence from our strategic competitors, especially China.

*Question.* If confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, what specific actions would you take to prioritize and strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships, and take advantage of opportunities for international cooperation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will focus the Department of the Navy's security cooperation efforts on strengthening our maritime partnerships and alliances, and empowering allies and partners to improve their maritime capabilities as well as to increase their interoperability with us and among one another. Through a range of Security Cooperation opportunities—bilateral and multilateral exercises; cooperative deployments, key leader engagements, support to armament cooperation, and training and education of and with our partner and allied military personnel—we can strengthen our partnerships and enable our allies and partners to face regional and global threats alongside our own maritime forces. Using these and other means, we can also build new partnerships with others and enable them to contribute to our collective effort to deter threats and counter our strategic competitors.

*Question.* What would you do, if confirmed, to support the seamless integration of partner nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB)?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the defense industrial base relies on both domestic production and material and components from other nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB), and that the Navy is responsible to ensure programs are procured in a cost efficient manner while also ensuring that critical industrial capabilities are maintained domestically or within the NTIB for national security purposes. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for cooperative

programs between the DoD and partner nations within the NTIB in order to accomplish the Navy mission.

#### INDO-PACIFIC REGION

*Question.* What are the key areas in which the Department of the Navy must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to deter Chinese aggression and, if necessary, prevail in a potential conflict with China?

*Answer.* China continues to develop sophisticated military capabilities to include surface, air, and undersea platforms, while demonstrating aggressive behavior that flouts the rules-based order, and threatens regional stability and security. Meeting this challenge will require a combination of greater investment and increased actions: Investment in modernization of weapons and systems; force posture assessment and infrastructure investment; focusing priorities to the Indo-Pacific region; and continued engagement with allies and partners.

If confirmed, I will lead the Department of the Navy's efforts to support the joint force to meet the challenges presented by China. I pledge to work with the Congress to develop, field, and maintain a robust, integrated Navy and Marine Corps team of combat-ready forces.

*Question.* How would you assess the threat to Navy forces and facilities from Chinese missile forces? In your assessment, have Navy investments, posture shifts and/or new operational concepts sufficiently addressed this threat?

*Answer.* I would assess it as significant. However, a more detailed response to this question requires specific information to which I do not currently have access. I am aware that China continues to develop and field sophisticated military capabilities to include an increasingly sizable and sophisticated conventional missile force. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are increasing emphasis on controlling the seas in conflict to provide joint and allied forces with the freedom of maneuver to protect our national interests. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to thoroughly examine this topic in order to make informed decisions and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

*Question.* In your assessment, what are the priority investments the Department of the Navy could make that would help implement the NDS in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* I believe conducting forward operations; gaining greater access to operational and logistics bases and gaining the right force posture in Indo-Pacific region are essential to preserving the international order and maintaining our deterrence position. Investments in a relevant force structure with the right capabilities and capacities to deter and defeat adversaries are also critical. In addition, we must prioritize the training and exercising of naval forces, especially in concert with regional allies to establish strategic maritime partnerships and enhance interoperability with our allies in support of a free and open system in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* What is your current assessment of the risk of operational failure in a conflict with China as a result of a critical logistics failure?

I am unable to address the specific operational risks in a conflict with China; however, I recognize that our logistics capabilities and capacity are critical to any successful campaign and especially in a denied environment against peer competitors. Assessing naval logistics capabilities in support of naval and joint operations will be one of my top priorities if I am confirmed.

#### EUROPE

*Question.* What are the key areas in which the Navy must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to deter Russian aggression and, if necessary, prevail in a potential conflict with Russia?

*Answer.* Russia remains determined to enhance its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage. As it continues to develop its military capabilities, the Russian pattern has been to apply military force and coercion to destabilize international order.

In the face of strategic challenges from an increasingly destabilizing Russia, we will assess the appropriate structure, capabilities, and sizing of the force, and, working with Congress, shift our emphasis from unneeded legacy platforms and weapons systems to free up resources for investments in the cutting-edge technologies and capabilities that will determine our competitive advantage in the future.

*Question.* In your view, are there investments the Navy should prioritize for the competition with Russia below the level of direct military conflict in order to counter Russian malign influence and hybrid warfare operations?

*Answer.* I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. I am aware that the maritime domain is particularly vulnerable to malign behavior below the threshold of war and our competitors are exploiting

new approaches to advance their interests, to include using social media, infiltrating global supply chains, and leveraging space and cyber. I believe it is important that we recognize these threats and compete in these spaces. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to thoroughly examine this topic in order to make informed decisions and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

#### ACQUISITION

*Question.* Congress expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the other Service Chiefs.

If confirmed, how would you synchronize your acquisition-related responsibilities and those of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, with those of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy's acquisition process is codified in the Department of the Navy's Gate Review process, which leverages the authority and expertise of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (ASN RD&A), the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to provide for the warfighting needs of sailors and marines. This collaboration enables the accurate translation of warfighting requirements into technical requirements that are executable and affordable. If confirmed, I will work with the key stakeholders within the Department to ensure that the Gate Review process effectively manages the trade-offs between requirements, cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and total ownership cost and ensure accountability in DON acquisitions.

Section 804 of the Fiscal Year 2016 NDAA authorized DOD to employ an acquisition approach ("Middle Tier Acquisition") that was intended to support the rapid delivery of new capability to meet emerging operational needs.

*Question.* In your view, what benefit has the Department of the Navy derived from its utilization of Section 804 authority?

*Answer.* The speed of technology development today is greater than any point in our history. As I understand it, Section 804 authorities provide the Department the authority to conduct middle-tier acquisitions through specially tailored requirements and acquisition processes. It enables the Department to accelerate the prototyping of selective technologies or equipment to inform requirements, acquisition, and concepts of operations as well as rapidly field systems where the requirements and capabilities are mature. As a result, I understand that the Department has been able to accelerate the development of capabilities in advance or parallel to the development of the formal requirements, enabling learning at the speed of relevance to meet emerging threats.

*Question.* What risks accrued?

*Answer.* As I have come to understand, the use of Section 804 authorities does not add risk to the acquisition process or program as the Department continues to ensure these efforts are managed properly. By prototyping early in the development of requirements, and in some cases, building a small quantity rapidly, Middle Tier of Acquisition has the opportunity to reduce risk versus a traditional acquisition approach in which technologies are not proven until major resources are committed. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department judiciously use authorities such as Section 804, consistent with Congressional direction and the Department's review and oversight processes.

*Question.* If confirmed, what processes would you put in place to ensure appropriate oversight of the Department's use of 804 authorities? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be committed to continuing appropriate oversight of Middle Tier of Acquisition Programs in alignment with the intent of Congress and OSD policy. This includes a focus on ensuring programs entering into Middle Tier of Acquisition are using the appropriate adaptive acquisition pathway, management rigor is maintained, and lessons learned continue to be shared across the Department's enterprise.

*Question.* What best practices can the Navy and Marine Corps employ to generate realistic and technically achievable specifications, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas such as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence?

*Answer.* I believe the Department must continue to leverage the entire Research Development Test & Engineering enterprise to develop realistic specifications in rapidly-evolving areas as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence. Ensuring close collaboration between the requirements, technical, and acquisition

teams will enable the Department to develop technically achievable capabilities for the Navy and Marine Corps. If confirmed, I will continue to review best practices and leverage the work of the S&T enterprise to reach the most promising technologically advanced solutions at pace to meet warfighter need.

*Question.* In your view, would the Navy and/or Marine Corps derive benefit from participating in a greater number of joint acquisition programs? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* I believe that where there are common requirements that meet Service specific needs, Joint programs can save money by eliminating duplicative research, development, test, and evaluation and by realizing economies of scale in procurement, operations and support. I believe the DON should consider all options when establishing new acquisition programs, including joint solutions with other Services. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of the Navy pursues opportunities to participate in Joint Programs where the Services involved have studied their requirements and determined that requirements are well aligned.

One long-standing special civilian personnel management program is the DOD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project (commonly known as AcqDemo).

*Question.* Should AcqDemo continue as a temporary authority or be made a permanent program?

*Answer.* Highly educated, skilled, and experienced acquisition professionals are key to providing the warfighters the products they need to compete and win. In my view the flexibilities inherent in AcqDemo, such as simplified hiring processes and job classifications, help the Department achieve its mission by ensuring there is a highly qualified workforce able to respond to evolving mission needs. If confirmed, I will consult with organizations currently using this authority and work with Congress to ensure the Department has the necessary tools to recruit and retain a professional acquisition workforce to support Navy programs.

*Question.* In either case, should AcqDemo be expanded?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness as well as organizations currently using this authority and work with Congress to ensure the Department has the necessary tools to recruit and retain a professional acquisition workforce to support Navy programs.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the Department of the Navy has an acquisition workforce of the size and capability required?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy has developed an Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan that establishes the vision for shaping the future acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I will review this plan to ensure the Navy has the necessary tools to attract, develop, retain, and incentivize a diverse workforce. Leveraging commercial best practices, existing hiring authorities, and data-driven solutions, as well as modern training tools, expanded training opportunities and increased experiential learning will be essential to meet current and future workforce needs.

#### TEST AND EVALUATION

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapons systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, and operationally suitable?

*Answer.* It is critical that weapons systems and equipment undergo rigorous testing to certify their safety, effectiveness, and suitability for operational use. It is my understanding that the Department of Defense has an Urgent Capability Acquisition process to fulfill urgent operational needs, as in the case of impending or ongoing conflict, with minimal testing. If confirmed, I will ensure Navy weapons systems are thoroughly tested and evaluated to meet the needs of the warfighter.

*Question.* What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other streamlined acquisition processes?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen the Department's efforts to ensure developmental and operational test and evaluation communities are fully integrated into rapid acquisition and streamlined acquisition processes. These communities play an important role in supporting streamlined acquisition processes by informing program decisions and ensuring these systems are tested and evaluated according to their intended use. If confirmed, I will make informed program decisions based on system performance data, and that risks are clearly documented and understood.

*Question.* Are you satisfied with Department of the Navy test and evaluation capabilities?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy is continuously assessing the adequacy of test and evaluation capabilities to support current and future acquisition programs. The Navy has significant critical test capabilities that must be maintained, but as new technologies mature into programs of record there will be a need to invest in new capabilities. Prioritization and balancing legacy and future test requirements will continue to be a challenge. If confirmed, I will leverage existing forums and processes such as budget development, acquisition program reviews, Navy/Joint test and evaluation investment processes, to identify test capability gaps and make informed investment decisions.

*Question.* In which areas, if any, do you feel the Navy should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?

*Answer.* In my view, the Navy must continue to make investments across the enterprise in modeling and simulation test capabilities that will support collecting performance data earlier in the acquisition process and build a more efficient and effective approach to test and evaluation. The Navy needs to continue to make investments in cybersecurity test capabilities, directed energy and autonomy. If confirmed, I will support continued investment in the modernization of legacy test capabilities to ensure they are ready and adequate to support customer requirements.

#### AUDIT

*Question.* Do you support efforts to drive the Navy to obtain a clean financial audit opinion?

*Answer.* I absolutely support the requirement for the Department of the Navy to obtain a clean financial audit opinion. Annual financial statement audits enhance transparency, validate an organization's accountability of the resources entrusted to it, and drive business process efficiencies and stronger internal controls. If confirmed, I will support efforts that push the Department of the Navy to earn and sustain a clean audit opinion.

*Question.* Do you think the Navy should invest funding as needed in audit activities and audit remediation activities to achieve the goal of obtaining a clean financial audit opinion?

*Answer.* I support the Department of the Navy obtaining a clean audit opinion. My experience in the business world, where my company had a long history of clean audits, provides me practical, first-hand experience in the process of undergoing an audit and obtaining an opinion. Audit and the outcomes of a clean financial audit opinion—improved and more efficient business processes, better internal controls, data-driven decision making, and sustained effective stewardship of our resources—pays dividends beyond the financial management and comptroller organizations. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of the Navy makes additional investments to drive necessary business process re-engineering and system modernization efforts to correct audit findings. My experience shows me there will be a positive return on investment from obtaining a clean audit opinion.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you hold Department of the Navy civilian and military leadership accountable for achieving Navy and Department audit goals?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would hold leaders and process owners accountable for audit progress by having clearly stated, prioritized, and actionable remediation plans and goals. My “tone-from-the-top” would make it clear that I expect leaders to use audit and audit remediation as management tools to pinpoint and fix our problem areas. I intend to use robust governance, data supported metrics, and frequent performance assessments/metrics to hold leaders and process owners accountable for audit progress. What gets measured also gets done, so if confirmed, I will monitor and push for progress by using and emphasizing metrics that enable the Department to quantify progress throughout the year.

#### REFORM OF DOD BUSINESS OPERATIONS

*Question.* What ideas would you explore and implement, if confirmed, further to reform the Navy's business operations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will explore lean and agile governance to remain ahead of rapid technological advances, enabling immediate access to enterprise data for informed decision-making, and measuring performance based on mission-derived outcomes. I will leverage business intelligence and data analytics tool to ensure all business decisions are data driven, derived from information collected, stored, and managed from a secured and centralized platform. I would develop a plan to sunset all redundant business capabilities and transition to a dynamic visualization platform. I will invest in the modernization of technologies, skills and processes such as advanced data analytics, cloud computing and continuous process improvement to keep pace with our business partners, our allies and our adversaries. This ap-

proach will enable a continuous performance improvement loop where we design, measure, analyze, and improve upon established performance objectives. It is vital that this living management framework be agile enough to maintain alignment with evolving technology.

*Question.* Why is the reform of business operations relevant to Navy missions, in your view?

*Answer.* The need to reform our business processes and respond with urgency to emerging global events is inextricably driven by the Navy and Marine Corps missions to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval force that is capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas. Just as we modernize the naval warfighting strategies, our business operations need to be relevant, and agile enough to support the combat-ready sailors and marines.

#### SAFETY

*Question.* The Department of the Navy continues to experience non-combat related injuries, fatalities, and mishaps that undermine its ability to execute mission-critical taskings, even when its sailors and marines are successfully trained.

*Answer.* What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that all Department of the Navy personnel are protected from coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for reporting mishaps, hazards, and near misses?

Developing and implementing a culture of safety is paramount in the military to identify, and put into place, mitigations to reduce or eliminate safety risks to personnel and/or equipment. From my experience as a Commanding Officer of a Navy ship, I fully understand the risks to our sailors and marines. The environment we ask our sailors and marines to operate in is dangerous. Critical and honest feedback is vital in an organization that values safety. Any attempts to coerce, discriminate, or retaliate against individuals that report mishaps, hazards, or near misses should be dealt with aggressively and swiftly to remove that bias from the organization. If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough review the Department's safety policies, practices, and reporting procedures to ensure there is a consistent standard and means for our sailors, marines, and civilians to report safety issues across the Department.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the root causes and corrective actions related to the tragic sinking of an Amphibious Assault Vehicle in July 2020, as well as the June 2017 and August 2017 collisions of USS Fitzgerald and USS John S. McCain?

*Answer.* My understanding is that root causes related to these incidents were associated with materiel readiness of the equipment, inadequacy of the training and certifications, and a false sense of urgency to complete assigned tasks. All three of these mishaps were completely avoidable and should never have happened, and in my view, directly represent a failure of leadership (across all echelons) to ensure the safety of their units. My understanding is that both the United States Marine Corps and United States Navy have conducted a thorough review of these mishaps and have implemented recommendations to strengthen training and certifications, reinforced or implemented new procedures to report safety issues, mishaps, or near misses, as well as, reviewed materiel issues that may have contributed to the mishaps. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to review the Department's safety culture, practices, and procedures to ensure there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, a consistent standard, and the means of reporting across the Department to capture critical feedback from our sailors and marines.

#### COST OF RECAPITALIZING THE FLEET

*Question.* Despite the Navy's existing 355-ship requirement and Secretary Esper's goal of having a fleet of 400–500 ships, the Navy is currently operating with approximately 297 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that the Navy has underestimated recent shipbuilding costs.

How would you characterize the risks to NDS implementation posed by the current shortfall in battle force ships and tactical aircraft?

*Answer.* Having the right amount of battle force ships and tactical aircraft is an important component to achieving Navy and Marine Corps goals in support of the President's Interim National Security Strategy objectives. Our peer competitors are expanding their naval forces as well as their global reach and areas of operation. It is my understanding that the Navy's goal for its future fleet structure is an innovative, distributed architecture, to include a combination of manned ships and unmanned vessels. I also understand the Navy is exploring alternative "future fleet" designs that support the NDS. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Sec-

retary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Congress on this effort.

*Question.* Do you agree with CBO's assessment that there is significant cost risk associated with the Navy's shipbuilding plan?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that there is cost risk associated with any procurement program, particularly those that incorporate new designs and capabilities. I further understand that the Navy and CBO use different estimating methods and make different assumptions about the design and capabilities of some future ships, which have resulted in higher cost estimates from CBO. If confirmed, I will work to better understand the two different cost-estimating practices and reconcile these differences, to ensure the Department is accurately capturing cost risk to procurement programs.

*Question.* What adjustments to individual shipbuilding programs are necessary and appropriate to reduce the risk of erosion in cost, schedule, or performance?

*Answer.* While each shipbuilding program is unique, eliminating erosion in cost, schedule, or performance requires a properly structured acquisition strategy, a fair and reasonable contract, and stability in shipbuilding planning and budgets. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy leverages all existing authorities to develop acquisition strategies appropriate to the specific shipbuilding program, including Multi-Year Procurement and Economic Ordering Quantity funds. In addition, I will support efforts to drive workload stability and predictability for the shipbuilding industrial base and execute supplier development efforts as directed by Congress.

*Question.* To reduce the operational risk?

*Answer.* In my view, improving on-time delivery of ships is essential to reducing operational risk. It is my understanding that the Navy is working with the shipbuilding enterprise to identify areas for improvements in the shipbuilding yards, such as capital expenditure for facility improvements, workforce development and producibility improvements in manufacturing, to increase on-time performance trends. If confirmed I will support these efforts to increase productivity in both public and private shipyards.

#### IMPROVING GOVERNMENT TECHNICAL CONTROL IN SHIPBUILDING

*Question.* A June 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than the initial budget; were delivered at least six months late; and were marked by dozens of deficiencies. As an example, the first procurement dollar for the Ford-class was spent in 2001. Twenty years later, construction on the lead ship is \$2.8 billion over the original budget estimate, the ship was delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.

Do you believe acquisition performance on recent lead ships has been satisfactory?

*Answer.* Although I understand that lead ship development in any class comes with complex challenges in technology development and integration, design, ship construction, and testing, I believe that the Department must do better. It is my understanding that the Department is addressing these challenges through processes that leverage the expertise of the requirements and acquisition communities to reduce overall risk and improve business cases for upcoming lead ships, and through designation of Senior Technical Authorities to provide oversight and risk management of new classes of ships. If confirmed, I will continue to build on these efforts to improve performance and establish more effective processes for working with industry to deliver capability to the Fleet.

*Question.* In a March 27, 2019 hearing before the Seapower Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition acknowledged the challenges of building lead ships and highlighted four initiatives to improve performance: (1) better integration of requirements and acquisition; (2) improved sub-system prototyping; (3) matching necessary government talent to program needs; and (4) investing in the right technologies.

Where does the Department of the Navy stand on implementation of each of these four initiatives, and what metric is the Navy applying to assess the effectiveness of each initiative on its performance in building lead ships? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Although I do not have any specific details, my understanding is that the Department is implementing the initiatives to improve shipbuilding performance. I believe that the four pillars highlighted are consistent with a systems engineering approach adopted by Admiral Rickover in the development of the Nuclear Navy, and with Admiral Wayne E. Myer when he developed the AEGIS program. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the Department implements these initiatives to improve

performance in shipbuilding programs and to develop additional approaches to meet the challenges associated with lead ship construction.

*Question.* If confirmed, what other options would you explore for improving lead ship performance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to better control “requirements creep,” create more efficient processes and support more cost effective contracting approaches. In addition, I will look to collaborate with industry early in the design stages to understand any production challenges that may not be obvious to Navy designers. I will work to ensure the Navy has the appropriate focus on mitigating technical risks in ship design efforts to improve shipbuilding cost, schedule, and performance outcomes.

#### FORCE STRUCTURE REVIEWS

*Question.* The former Secretary of Defense reviewed the Department of the Navy’s Integrated Naval Force Structure Assessment, which was intended to re-validate or update the previous 355-ship requirement.

What do you consider to be appropriate requirement for fleet size, given the current and future strategic environment?

*Answer.* Although I am aware of the Department’s Integrated Naval Force Structure Assessment and the subsequent Office of Secretary of Defense Force Naval Force Structure Assessment (2020), I have not had access to the studies due to the classification associated with the studies. As a general comment, the United States Navy and Marine Corps must be sized appropriately to support the Joint force today and in the future, to deter and if required, defeat strategic competitors such as China and Russia. In order to do this, the Navy and Marine Corps must have enough ships, submarines, aircraft, and amphibious platforms to project power from the sea. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps team is sized appropriately to carry out assigned missions in support of the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* In March 2020, the Acting Secretary of the Navy chartered the Future Carrier-2030 Task Force—a 6 month study designed to examine the future of the aircraft carrier and carrier-based aviation (manned and unmanned) for 2030 and beyond. Former Secretary Esper’s plan for the fleet included having as many as 6 light carriers and 100 unmanned surface vessels.

What are your views on the need to considering alternative aircraft carrier designs and the advantages such new designs might bring to bear in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

*Answer.* The strategic environment is rapidly changing due to the pace and fielding of technologically advanced missiles and other weapons, such as cyber and space, designed to reduce the United States Navy’s advantages at sea. As such, I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps team should critically look at all alternative platforms, to include alternative aircraft carrier designs, as well as, practices, techniques, and procedures to enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps team retain the advantage at sea.

*Question.* In your view, to what extent will unmanned systems, air, surface and undersea, contribute to the Navy’s vision of distributed operations and how will unmanned platforms augment and amplify the ability of a distributed naval force to successfully compete against a near-peer competitor fleet?

*Answer.* I believe the development and integration of Unmanned Systems in all warfighting domains, as a part of the Department of the Navy’s force architecture, is already providing key enablers and is a force multiplier for providing combat capacity against peer competitors and adversaries. It is important to develop a seamlessly integrated manned/unmanned force, with unmanned systems contributing the unique and disruptive elements that they can provide. In any competition against peer competitors who enjoy numerical advantages, the augmenting value and cost effectiveness of teaming with Unmanned Systems cannot be overstated.

*Question.* In his Force Design 2030, the Commandant of the Marine Corps stated unequivocally, “I assess that the current force is unsuited to future requirements in size, capacity, and specific capability.”

Do you agree with the Commandant’s assessment and his plans for reshaping the Marine Corps?

*Answer.* I believe that the Marine Corps Force Design 2030 represents a transformational change that recognizes the new operating environment and which aligns to the Interim National Security Strategy as well as Secretary Austin’s goals and objectives for the Department of Defense. I support the Commandant’s vision and

his bold efforts to transform this Service. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant and the Congress on this effort.

*Question.* In light of the Commandant's assessment, should the Navy and Marine Corps' requirement for amphibious ships remain the same, or be decremented, in your view?

*Answer.* Amphibious ships and the forces they deliver provide the nation with a crisis response capability that remains forward deployed and ready. Amphibious ships carry USMC F-35Bs to locations unreachable by other assets, and provide credible conventional deterrence on a daily basis. I understand the Navy and Marine Corps worked closely together to determine that a mix of 28–31 amphibious ships, as well as 35 Light Amphibious Warships, best supports global presence demands and is necessary to conduct crisis response. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations to ensure that our fleets remain in balance to deter or defeat a peer adversary.

#### FORD-CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

*Question.* The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's most recent annual reports cited the reliability of four systems: the electromagnetic aircraft launching system; advanced arresting gear; dual band radar; and advanced weapons elevators, as the most significant risks to the performance of the Ford-class program. Only 7 of the 11 elevators on the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78) have been turned over to the Navy due to ongoing technical issues, notwithstanding the Navy's acceptance of the ship in May 2017. The reports also noted that the demonstrated reliability of the catapults, arresting gear, weapons elevators, and radar is either orders of magnitude below the requirement or remains unknown.

What are your views on the acquisition program for the Ford-class aircraft carrier?

*Answer.* While the FORD Class has faced challenges with development and construction delays, the program incorporates advances in technology such as a new reactor plant, propulsion system, electric plant, Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Advanced Arresting Gear, machinery control, and integrated warfare systems that are expected to increase lethality, and lower life cycle costs through reductions in maintenance and manning requirements. Although I believe the FORD Class carrier will prove to be a critical combat enabler, future acquisition programs must take a deliberative systems engineering approach to assessing the maturity of new technologies prior to a construction decision.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the current capability and reliability of each of the key systems on CVN-78?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the FORD Class program continues to show significant progress and has improved system reliability for new technologies such as Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Advanced Arresting Gear, Dual Band Radar, and Advanced Weapons Elevator. Although I understand some work is still required to complete the elevators, the systems turned over to the ship are making good progress with at-sea testing with the Air Wing onboard. If confirmed, I will review the Navy's strategy to improve system reliability growth for key systems to ensure they meet operational performance parameters.

*Question.* What is your view of the sufficiency and efficacy of the measures being taken to ensure these key systems are stable for the next Ford-class aircraft carrier, USS John F. Kennedy (CVN-79), and those that follow?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the reliability growth of key systems will increase as those systems continue to mature and operate during at-sea periods. If confirmed, I will examine the Navy's strategy to improve system reliability growth for key systems and review how the Navy and industry are addressing lessons learned to ensure they are being applied to the fullest extent to increase reliability drive down costs of follow-on ships.

#### COLUMBIA-CLASS SUBMARINES

*Question.* Navy leaders have testified that if a higher Navy topline or outside funding is not provided, the investment required by the Columbia-class program will result in equivalent reductions elsewhere within the Navy budget.

If confirmed, what would be your recommendation for funding the Columbia-class program?

*Answer.* If confirmed, Columbia would remain my #1 acquisition priority. Continuing to fully fund the program will be essential to ensure on time delivery of the COLUMBIA Class, so that the nation's sea based strategic deterrent requirements continue to be met as the OHIO class is retired. I would also continue to prioritize

efforts to reduce cost and schedule risk, strengthen the industrial base, and improve affordability.

*Question.* If confirmed, what mitigation options would you consider in the event the Columbia-class program incurs schedule delays that prevent the lead ship from deploying in 2031?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure COLUMBIA delivers on time. Near term action to mitigate COLUMBIA deployment delays must be focused on removing risks to the on-time delivery of COLUMBIA SSBNs. As risks to delivery arise, I will consider all mitigation options and work with the relevant teams involved to manage risk.

#### ATTACK SUBMARINE FORCE LEVELS

*Question.* The Navy's current requirement for attack submarines is at least 66. However, the Navy currently has just 50 attack submarines in the fleet inventory.

What options, including improved maintenance and life extensions of current submarines, as well as increased new construction, exist to ensure the Navy deploys attack submarines sufficient to meet the combatant commanders' requirements and other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) needs?

*Answer.* I understand the Navy's attack submarine force will be below its target strength in the late 2020s. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy evaluates all options to improve maintenance execution, extend the service life of the remainder of the *Los Angeles*-class, and improve new construction performance to meet the combatant commanders' needs. Additionally, if confirmed, I will continue the Department's evaluation of strategies to increase the production rate of *Virginia*-class submarines in the future.

#### SHIP MAINTENANCE

*Question.* The Navy has experienced continuing problems maintaining the current fleet of some 296 ships, including experiencing cost overruns and delays in schedules. These problems have plagued both public and private shipyards.

To update and improve the capability of the Navy-owned public shipyards, the Navy has been pursuing a Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP). The Committee is not aware of a specific plan to expand the capacity or improve the efficiency of private sector shipyards.

If you are confirmed, what steps would you take to improve the capability and capacity of the industrial base to perform maintenance for Navy ships?

*Answer.* I understand the importance of the private ship repair industry in maintaining the Navy the nation needs. If confirmed, I will work to look for opportunities to partner with industry to leverage private investment to improve private shipyard capacity.

#### MISSILE DEFENSE

*Question.* Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) ships perform their mission in support of other Navy assets, as well as in defense of U.S., allied, and partner forces on land. There continues to be higher demand for Aegis BMD ships than the number of ships available at any given time.

Do you view BMD as a core Navy mission?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that BMD is a core mission of the U.S. Navy. The Aegis ships in the United States Navy have a unique and proven capability to defeat ballistic missiles from the sea in protection of the Battle Force or if required, in defense of a land-based target.

*Question.* How would you balance the competing demands for Aegis BMD ships?

*Answer.* Navy BMD units are multi-mission platforms that support the Combatant Commander missions as part of the Joint Force. As such, the Joint Force resource allocation process balances the day-to-day apportionment available. However, if confirmed, I will look to understand the demands being placed on our Aegis BMD fleet, and to determine if there are sufficient number of platforms to support the Combatant Commander requirements in support of the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* Are there opportunities to transition some of the defense of land-based forces to other Navy or land-based assets, with a view to freeing up Aegis BMD ships for maritime-focused missions?

*Answer.* Aegis BMD ships are only one element of the broader U.S. ballistic missile defense architecture. These forces include Ground-based Midcourse Defense, Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, and Patriot Advanced Capability. Depending on the scenario, land-based capabilities may provide a more enduring and holistic approach in defending land targets. As an example, Aegis Ashore in Romania and

Poland are excellent examples of a land-based assets that provides the same BMD capabilities resident in the Navy ships, protecting vital areas of Europe.

#### NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE

*Question.* The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed the importance of all three legs of the nuclear triad, and recommended two supplemental capabilities to strengthen deterrence against Russia, in particular. This past winter, the Department announced deployment of the W76-2 low-yield submarine-launched ballistic missile, and the Navy is currently studying the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the fleet.

Do you support full funding for the modernization of each leg of the nuclear triad and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) weapons complex?

*Answer.* Yes. I support full funding for the modernization of the nuclear triad and the associated weapons design and production capabilities of the National Nuclear Security Administration. Updating our nation's nuclear forces is a critical national security priority and will be key to providing the flexibility and adaptability to meet future adversarial threats.

*Question.* Do you believe the current Navy program of record is sufficient to support the modernization of the sea-based leg of the nuclear triad? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Sea Based Strategic Deterrence is the most survivable leg of the Nuclear Triad, and the *Columbia*-class is the Navy's number one acquisition priority. It is my understanding that the *Columbia* must be on patrol in fiscal year 2031 in order to meet U.S. Strategic Command requirements. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy's program of record remains on scheduled and fully supports the modernization of the sea-base leg of the nuclear triad.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you advocate for the NNSA's W93 warhead program, which is driven by the Navy's requirements?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy is responsible for over 70 percent of the nation's deployable warheads. If confirmed, I will advocate for the Navy programs necessary to meet NNSA and U.S. Strategic Command requirements.

Recently, the Acting Secretary of the Navy stated that he directed the Navy not to fund development of the nuclear sea launched cruise missile in fiscal year 2023 budget. He gave this direction without consulting any other senior DOD officials. This action appears to contradict assurances provided by Secretary Austin that no programmatic decisions on nuclear forces would be made prior to the department's review of U.S. nuclear policies was completed.

*Question.* Do you agree that any changes to U.S. nuclear modernization plans should occur only once a thorough review of US nuclear policies has been completed?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe it would be premature to make any decisions until the Administration's Nuclear Policy Review is completed.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you rescind the Acting Secretary of the Navy's direction to defund this program in fiscal year 2023 and honor Secretary Austin's commitment to deferring action on any programmatic decisions relating to the nuclear sea launched cruise missile until after such a review is completed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to deferring action on any programmatic decisions related to the nuclear sea launched cruise missile until the Nuclear Posture Review is completed.

*Question.* In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to adverse incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces. The review yielded recommendations to improve personnel management, enforce security requirements, increase deliberate senior leader focus and attention, enact and sustain a change in culture, and address numerous other concerns. More than five years later, responsibility for addressing these recommendations and monitoring implementation of corrective actions has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.

In your view, is the Navy maintaining appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the 2014 nuclear enterprise review?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy conducts continuous self-assessments to maintain the appropriate focus on the entirety of the nuclear enterprise and its strategic mission, and communicates the results of these performance evaluations to OSD leadership through the Nuclear Deterrence Senior Oversight Group and Nuclear Deterrence Enterprise Review Group. If confirmed, I will continue this effort to ensure the Navy is maintaining the appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the 2014 nuclear enterprise review.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy continues its efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of the sailors charged to execute and support the Navy's nuclear mission?

*Answer.* The U.S. Navy's contribution to the nation's nuclear deterrent has been steadfast for over 61 years. Ensuring sailors and the families that support them, have the training and support they need to carry out their important and demanding missions must be a foundational element of leadership. One area that concerns me is the ability to recruit and retain the highly skilled men and women that the Navy requires to serve in our nuclear force and the Navy and Marine Corps writ large. Given the all-volunteer force, the Navy and Marine Corps must be an employer of choice, and a place where people want to be part of the Navy and Marine Corps team. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the CNO and CMC to look for opportunities to improve and develop a culture where our sailors and marines feel empowered, have the necessary and required training, have competitive salaries, have opportunities for advancement and leadership, and support for their families.

#### AMPHIBIOUS FLEET REQUIREMENTS

*Question.* What is your view of the need for and size of the Navy's amphibious fleet?

*Answer.* The Navy's amphibious fleet is the cornerstone of the Naval Force's ability to maneuver from the sea to land, in-stride and seamlessly. I understand that the most recent force analysis has identified between 28–31 traditional amphibious ships, as well as a number of other non-traditional amphibious ships, such as the future Light Amphibious Warship. I have not been able to review the underlying assessments due to the classification of the analysis. If confirmed, I am committed to conducting a thorough review of the analysis with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and make recommendations to ensure the Naval Force has the required number of ships to execute the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* What alternatives would you consider to augment amphibious ships in providing lift to Marine Corps units?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department is examining several options to augment traditional amphibious ships. These include the Light Amphibious Warship and Next Generation Logistics ships. In addition, current platforms such as the Expeditionary Staging Base and Expeditionary Platform Fast vessels are providing lift opportunities for the Marine Corps. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to discuss and review alternative lift (both sea and air) platforms that will enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations.

*Question.* In what scenarios would you envision these alternatives being necessary and appropriate?

*Answer.* I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. However, it is my understanding that the Light Amphibious Warship and Next Generation Logistics Ships will augment traditional amphibious ships, and are key enablers that will enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to conduct a deep dive with the CNO and CMC to understand the assumptions, assessment, and analysis to determine the future lift requirement that supports Naval maneuver from the sea.

#### READY RESERVE FORCE (RRF) RECAPITALIZATION

*Question.* DOD has developed a three-pronged recapitalization strategy for the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) and Military Sealift Command surge fleet consisting of a combination of constructing new vessels, extending the service life of certain vessels, and acquiring used vessels.

What is your understanding of the Navy's recapitalization strategy for the RRF and the affordability of acquiring more than 40 sealift vessels as outlined in the latest 30-year shipbuilding plan?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Navy's plans to buy used commercial vessels to replace the aging sealift fleet seems to be a very affordable way to maintain required sealift capability in support of the Joint Force. If confirmed, I am dedicated to continuing to work with our joint partners and Congress to ensure we acquire the right capability at the best value for the taxpayer, as we proceed with our multifaceted approach to extend the service life of selected ships, buy used, and acquire new construction.

*Question.* To what extent do you believe the Navy has identified the appropriate mix of used and new ships to meet sealift and auxiliary requirements?

*Answer.* I am aware that the Navy has several recapitalization programs underway to meet the sealift and auxiliary force requirements. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing Navy's plans so that I can make a personal assessment of the force structure planned for strategic sealift and combat logistics force fleets.

#### UNMANNED SYSTEMS

*Question.* The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment's report on Future Carrier Air Wings makes recommendations for the use of unmanned aircraft to augment "5th Gen" fighters. The fiscal year 2022 budget request includes significant investment in Navy unmanned aerial (e.g., MQ-25), surface (e.g., LUSV and MUSV), and undersea systems (e.g., Orca and Snakehead).

To what extent will these unmanned systems be interoperable with manned naval platforms and utilize existing Navy and Marine Corps communication links?

*Answer.* The assurance of interoperability is an imperative across existing and future naval and joint platforms and systems. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to see that all air, surface, undersea and land-based manned and unmanned systems are interoperable, which I understand is a key tenant of the Department of the Navy's Unmanned Campaign Framework. I will work with the Service Chiefs to determine which legacy communications links can be leveraged for manned/unmanned interoperability.

*Question.* Do you believe these links will be sufficient to conduct operations in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

*Answer.* While I am not completely familiar with all communications links that are available or necessary to execute manned and unmanned teaming, if confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs to assess legacy communications links to determine if they are sufficient to conduct operations during conflict.

*Question.* How do you envision such manned-unmanned teaming manifesting in naval aviation, and with strike-fighters in particular?

*Answer.* In my view, these technologies offer significant opportunity for developing a continuum of manned and unmanned teaming across all warfighting domains. In regards to strike-fighter aviation, unmanned assets can significantly enhance and act as a force multiplier by increasing range, weapons capabilities, ISR enhancements and distribution of the strike force in contested environments. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs to mature or expand such capabilities to address warfighting threats.

*Question.* How will this affect the make-up of a carrier air wing?

*Answer.* The carrier air-wing continues to evolve with the successful development and demonstration of the MQ-25A unmanned aircraft system. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to assess requirements to determine the structure of the future carrier air-wing as the Navy moves forward with programs such as the Next Generation Air Dominance program.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your vision for the increased role of unmanned combat systems in the Navy?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department is committed to developing and integrating unmanned and autonomous systems to the Fleet as a component of the Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advance Base Operations concepts. This includes capabilities such as communications; intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, targeting; refueling; and logistics. Integration of such systems with manned systems will reduce risk to the force, provide access to areas otherwise denied to manned platforms, increase force capability and provide distributed intelligent battlespace awareness. If confirmed, I am committed to fully assessing the potential for unmanned systems for the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* What do you envision as the appropriate balance between manned and unmanned combat aircraft in the Navy's future force structure?

*Answer.* The Department of the Navy must develop and field unmanned systems to ensure the naval forces have the necessary capabilities to address future threats. It is my understanding that the Department has begun development of key unmanned systems and enabling technologies. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department carefully assesses, develops, fields and sustains the required unmanned capabilities to ensure success in any future conflict.

*Question.* The Navy spent approximately \$1 billion on 10 Remote Multi-Mission Vehicles (RMMVs), semi-submersible USVs, prior to cancelling the program in 2016, primarily due to unacceptable reliability.

What lessons learned should the Navy take from the RMMV program?

Answer. The RMMV program and similar programs that have experienced similar outcomes, demonstrates the importance of increasing collaboration between all stakeholders to ensure appropriate linkages between the warfighting requirements, technical requirements, acquisition processes and industry. If confirmed, I will encourage an enterprise approach that focuses on resolving technical, testing, and integration issues while prioritizing reliability and maintainability in earlier program stages.

*Question.* Do you believe that new unmanned systems and subsystems should be prototyped and proven in a real-world environment prior to procurement?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* The Navy divested all legacy Hornets (F/A-18C/D) from its Active component squadrons, and has stopped buying Super Hornets.

What priority has the Navy set for transition to the Super Hornet (F/A-18E/F): in what order will Reserve squadrons, the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center, test squadrons, and the general fleet inventory be transitioned?

Answer. I understand the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron (Blue Angels) is transitioning this year to the F/A-18E/F Block 1 Super Hornet first, followed by the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center (NAWDC) and the Reserve Force.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the rationale for this order of prioritization?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Blue Angels, the NAWDC, and Reserve Component squadrons are following in this respective order based on Active component demand and reserve squadron transitions.

*Question.* What is the Navy doing to improve depot throughput for legacy Hornets and to apply lessons learned to the looming service life extension program for the Super Hornet?

Answer. As I currently understand, improving depot throughput for legacy Hornets is one of the areas where the Marine Corps and Navy have had the most success in recovering readiness through reform efforts. These efforts implemented industry best practices, applied data analytics, re-focused performance based on outcomes, and drove efficiencies throughout the system to successfully address systemic depot throughput issues that led to reduced aircraft availability. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to apply lessons learned from reform efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the Service Life Modification program and increase efficiency across the Department.

*Question.* What is the Navy's plan for upgrading and maintaining its Super Hornet fleet and on what timeline will this plan be executed?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy completed procurement of the F/A-18E/F Naval Strike Fighter in fiscal year 2021, with a total of 678 aircraft, and that delivery of the remaining new production aircraft will complete in fiscal year 2025. I also understand, the Navy intends to use capability upgrades and Service Life Modification to enhance inventory and maintain tactical relevance of the aircraft. If confirmed, I will review the plan and timeline for upgrading and maintaining the Super Hornet fleet to ensure the Navy has the proper mechanisms in place to manage Strike Fighter inventory risk.

*Question.* What capabilities are being added or should be added to maintain the Super Hornet's relevance in the high-end fight?

Answer. It is my understanding that upgrades, including Beyond Line of Sight communications, passive survivability systems, and future weapons capabilities, will deliver lethality and survivability, while ensuring that it can provide the capacity to augment the capability provided by the F-35C. Should I be confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department maintains the right mix of combat aircraft, and is making the required investments in capability and sustainment to maintain the Super Hornet's tactical relevance to carry out required missions as articulated in the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* The Air Force is moving to a disaggregated architecture for air battle management. The Navy, on the other hand, is investing heavily in the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye and P-8 Poseidon to perform the naval battle management function.

Why are the Air Force and the Navy pursuing different strategies?

Answer. I believe that all Services should fully integrate into the Joint architecture and pursue mutually supporting strategies where it makes sense in carrying out Service designated tasks as outlined by the National Defense Strategy. It is my understanding that the Chief of Naval Operations recently certified that the Navy's multi-domain command and control efforts are compatible with the Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADC2) Reference Architecture, and align with the JADC2 Strategy. If confirmed, I am committed to working more closely with the

other Service Secretaries to align our efforts in support of the Secretary of Defense's objectives.

*Question.* Is the Joint All-Domain Command and Control effort compatible with the Navy plan?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, the Chief of Naval Operations recently certified that the Navy's multi-domain command and control efforts are compatible with the Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADC2) Reference Architecture, and align with the JADC2 Strategy. The Naval Operational Architecture is the maritime element of JADC2, and is being worked closely with the Marine Corps and is integrated fully with JADC2 efforts, as well as the Air Force's Advanced Battle Management System and the Army's Project Convergence.

*Question.* What is the Navy's approach to air battle management and how do the Navy and Air Force intend to execute joint air battle management in a high-end fight?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy and Air Force continue to share command and control of operational air forces in combat environments. It is also my understanding that Navy and Air Force platforms are integrated and are fully capable of executing air battle management in a high-end fight. If confirmed, I would work to maximize unity of effort and develop the required joint capabilities and concepts that support the Joint Force to succeed in a high-end fight.

*Question.* Given the new capabilities the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye will bring to the battlespace, and the new tactics and concepts of operation it will enable, does the Navy perceive a need for expeditionary squadrons of E-2Ds? Why or why not?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that there are currently no plans or supporting requirements for expeditionary E-2D operations. If confirmed, I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's contribution to the Joint Force and the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* In your view, what would be the benefits and/or drawbacks of establishing expeditionary E-2D squadrons, similar to those for the EA-18G Growler?

*Answer.* This is an issue I would need to review more, but if confirmed, I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's contribution to the Joint Force and the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Defense Strategy.

#### THE F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER PROGRAM

*Question.* The follow-on modernization of the F-35 is scheduled to bring key warfighting capabilities to the fleet, but the budget and schedule remain in flux. The total number of F-35s planned for the Department of the Navy was set at 680, but the Marine Corps alone has articulated a requirement for 420 F-35Bs.

*Question.* Do you believe that the plan for 680 aircraft can fully accommodate the needs of both the Navy and the Marine Corps?

*Answer.* I am not fully familiar with all requirements outlined by each respective service, but I have been made aware of Department objectives in procuring the goal of 680 aircraft. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the planned buy of 680 total aircraft and working to ensure that number is adequate to meet the challenges faced by the nation.

*Question.* How many of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs will not be upgraded to Block 4?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Marine Corps plans to upgrade the current F-35 fleet. This will include retrofits back through Lot 11 for both F-35B and the F-35C. A small number of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs and F-35Cs will remain in training squadrons, do not require upgrade, and therefore will not be upgraded to a Block 4 configuration.

*Question.* What do you view as the biggest challenges to successful integration of the F-35 into the carrier air wing?

*Answer.* I understand that the first Navy F-35C deployment occurs this summer, and next year the second F-35C deployment will be the first Marine Corps F-35C Tactical Aircraft Integration squadron. I understand that one of the biggest challenges to successful integration of F-35 aircraft into the carrier air wing is the sustainment of the current procurement schedule to include on-time deliveries.

*Question.* The F-35B brings new capabilities and operational possibilities to the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). There has been much discussion of linking MEUs more closely with the Joint Force. However, such new capabilities and operating concepts require investment in shipboard infrastructure, including upgraded data links.

What is your vision for amphibious assault ship connectivity?

Answer. I believe that in order to take full advantage of the cutting edge capabilities, the objective should be for all amphibious ships to have the capability to downlink and share F-35 data.

*Question.* What are the Navy's current plans to achieve that vision?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Navy has installed the Ship Self-Defense System (SSDS) on all Landing Helicopter Assault (LHA) ships and all but two of the Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) ships. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to field the necessary upgrades and infrastructure to support integration of F-35Bs.

*Question.* There has been much discussion about the importance of networking and connecting all Navy and Marine Corps capabilities across air, land, and sea platforms.

What is the Navy/Marine Corps team doing to make machine-to-machine command and control, across multiple domains, a reality?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department is looking to support operational concepts such as Distributed Maritime Operations, by delivering a Naval Operational Architecture that will integrate with Joint All-Domain Command and Control to allow forces to connect with each other and coordinate actions across multiple domains. If confirmed, I will support this critical effort that will ultimately enable machine speed decision making across the Naval force and in conjunction with the Joint Force and our mission partners.

*Question.* Have the Navy and Marine Corps developed and refined the joint operational concepts that will govern this integrated fight?

Answer. I understand that to support the successful implementation of the concepts within the Navigation Plan and Force Design 2030 the Marine Corps and the Navy work closely together to align joint operational concepts, identify current gaps, and develop appropriate modernization efforts to support operational requirements. If confirmed, I commit to a fully integrated Navy-Marine Corps Team.

*Question.* What is being done to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps airborne data links are interoperable—not only with each other—but also with the Air Force and Army platforms, as well as resilient, against peer competitors?

Answer. It is my understanding that there are multiple efforts across the Services to ensure that airborne data links are interoperable and resilient against peer competitors. Project Overmatch is the Navy's initiative to allow forces to connect with each other more seamlessly and coordinate actions across a widely distributed force. If confirmed, I will work within the Department and with the other Services to ensure the Navy can deliver on this critical capability in alignment with Joint Staff-led Joint All Domain Command and Control initiative.

*Question.* Current technologies allow "low probability of intercept/low probability of detection" datalinks to connect 4th and 5th generation aircraft. As well, other platforms, operating across multiple domains can be networked.

Who is leading this effort for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and across the Joint Force, and what progress is being made?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are developing datalink capabilities connecting multiple platforms that will feed into the Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) concept. JADC2, led by Joint Staff, will identify commonalities and gaps in interoperability as well as coordinate technology demonstrations and exercises to test and refine technologies and concepts. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the other Services to protect interoperability across all domains.

#### NAVAL SURFACE FIRE SUPPORT

*Question.* The DDG-1000 program was initiated to fill the capability gap for naval surface fire support. The original requirement for 24 to 32 DDG-1000 ships, each with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems, was reduced to 12 ships, then to 10 ships, then to 7, and finally to 3. The fiscal year 2022 budget request funds the DDG-1000 program as the first ship class to be integrated with the Conventional Prompt Strike weapons system.

In your view, what capabilities and missions should DDG-1000, 1001, and 1002 be equipped to perform?

Answer. I believe these unique stealth destroyers have potential to serve as part of the Navy's fleet architecture. I understand the Navy is exploring alternatives for this platform, to include the ability to deliver new and lethal deterrent capabilities. If confirmed, I will work with the CNO to explore options to leverage Zumwalt class capabilities for Great Power Competition.

*Question.* Do you support CPS integration on the DDG-1000 program?

**Answer.** Conventional Prompt Strike is an important capability and I would support integration on multiple platforms in order to provide a credible surface capability to deter and defeat adversaries. This credible deterrence is particularly vital in our era of Great Power Competition where our peer competitors are quickly increasing the sophistication and capacity of their military capabilities. If confirmed, I intend to discuss the types of platforms envisioned for this capability with the CNO.

**Question.** If confirmed, on what other capabilities would be relied on to meet naval surface fire support requirements?

**Answer.** The Department should avoid limiting itself to a single solution for any important warfighting capability, and that certainly includes this critical mission. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department considers modifying traditional technologies as well as adapting emerging technologies to satisfy naval surface fire support mission requirements.

**Question.** Will the Army's Long Range Precision Fires programs meet the need, in your view?

**Answer.** I understand the Navy and Marine Corps team is looking for lethal solutions that can be adapted to the naval environment quickly and affordably. If confirmed, I would support assessing all options to meet warfighting requirements and especially those options that could be modified and fielded quickly and affordably.

GROUND-BASED ANTI-SHIP MISSILE (GBASM) AND REMOTELY OPERATED GROUND UNIT  
EXPEDITIONARY (ROGUE) FIRES VEHICLE

**Question.** The push for a way for marines to strike and sink ships shooting from land to sea has been a recent priority for the Corps.

How does this weapons system fit into the Marine Corps' war fighting concept?

**Answer.** The Marine Corps is uniquely suited to provide precision fires from land-to-sea to contribute to sea denial operations and enable Fleet maneuver. While this is a significant change from the past two decades of land-based operations, the Marine Corps is implementing this change to maximize its deterrent and combat capabilities in support of future naval campaigns. It is my understanding that this capability is the Marine Corps' number one modernization priority, has immense value to the Fleet Commanders, and will support and reassure our allies and partners.

**Question.** Where does the Corps stand in the process of testing and fielding this system?

**Answer.** It is my understanding that the Marine Corps is on track to field an initial operational capability in fiscal year 2023. The anti-ship missile and its unmanned platform were successfully tested in November 2020. The Marine Corps refers to the initial solution for this capability as the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS), which consists of the same Naval Strike Missile fired by the United States Navy and a robotic version of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. The use of existing systems ensures minimal technical risk to this vital program.

GROUND-BASED AIR DEFENSE (GBAD) AND MEDIUM RANGE INTERCEPT CAPABILITY (MRIC)

**Question.** The Marine Corps is pursuing several unique air and missile defense capabilities under its GBAD program.

Why is an integrated and layered approach to air and missile defense important, in your view?

**Answer.** Strategic competitors and rogue actors maintain robust and varied anti-access and area denial weapons, and these threats dictate an integrated approach to air and missile defense for the Navy and Marine Corps. Because the Marine Corps is committed to operating within the range of enemy weapons, it is my understanding that the Marine Corps will invest in capabilities that can detect, track, identify, and defeat adversary threats. These investments will support the Marine Corps and the Joint Force. It is important to note that as a highly mobile force, the Marine Corps must find air and missile defense systems that have sufficient range to protect assets but are also light enough to be moved by Navy and Marine Corps organic lift.

**Question.** If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Marine Corps systems like MRIC are integrated into the larger air and missile defense architecture?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will work with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations to ensure that service systems are complementary and not duplicative. The Joint Force can best function when range or capability overlaps are sufficient to cover seams and gaps in coverage from one service to the

next. Close coordination between the services is required in this area, and I am committed to ensuring that coordination happens.

#### RECAPITALIZATION

*Question.* The Marine Corps intends to concurrently recapitalize several of its front line systems. The MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and the Joint Strike Fighter are both in production now.

Do you believe that these production plans are realistic in light of the demands on resources associated with maintaining current readiness?

*Answer.* I understand the fiscal year 2022 budget request balances procurement, modernization, readiness recovery and preparing the Marine Corps to invest in the capabilities needed to support future naval and joint operations. The Marine Corps is nearly complete with MV-22 deliveries and continues to ramp up deliveries across the FYDP for the F-35 in order to meet transition timelines and modernize legacy tactical air capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Marine Corps Leadership to ensure that modernization and recapitalization efforts are synchronized and affordable.

*Question.* Have MV-22 readiness rates—both deployed and in garrison/shipborne—achieved desired levels?

*Answer.* It is my understanding the readiness rates for MV-22s have increased steadily over the previous year. While forward deployed units will always be the priority for parts and support, garrison units in training have also seen increases in their readiness rates along with deployed units and are expected to see these rates climb as long as readiness accounts are funded to current levels. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Marine Corps to continue to assess and evaluate progress in attaining full mission readiness for these important programs.

*Question.* Will the Common Configuration Reliability and Maintainability program increase overall readiness, in your view?

*Answer.* I believe that completion of Common Configuration-Readiness and Modernization efforts is one of the critical USMC efforts to improve MV-22 fleet readiness. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Marine Corps to continue to assess and evaluate progress in attaining full mission readiness for these important programs.

*Question.* In your view, will the MV-22 be sustainable over time at an acceptable cost?

*Answer.* Like all programs at inception, the cost per unit to produce such an advanced aircraft like the MV-22 is high. However, the U.S. history of aircraft procurement has proven that programs are more cost effective as they mature. It's my understanding that the Department has undertaken a number of efforts focused on driving sustainment costs to more affordable levels, but this will require vigilance. In my view, no other aircraft can match the unique capabilities of the MV-22. It has revolutionized the way the USMC operates and influences future modernization efforts for other Marine aviation platforms. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to work with industry partners to identify ways to lower the cost of the MV-22 sustainment program.

#### CH-53

*Question.* CH-53K testing is behind schedule and over budget, requiring an additional \$158 million to fund continued testing. In addition, the development program has significant deficiencies that must be corrected before testing can be finished.

What is your assessment of the current status of the CH-53K program?

*Answer.* As the only fully heavy-lift rotorcraft operating in marine environments that supports current and future Joint warfighting concepts, the CH-53K remains a critical enabler for the Marine Corps. I understand the CH-53K will enter Initial Operational Test and Evaluation this summer, and is on track to meet Initial Operational Capability. If confirmed I will monitor this program to ensure that it supports service requirements while being cost efficient.

*Question.* Does it remain on track to achieve initial operational capability and meet the proposed deployment timeline?

*Answer.* Yes, it is my understanding that the CH-53K program is tracking to Initial Operational Capability and proposed deployment metrics.

*Question.* What is the effect of CH-53K delays on the CH-53E fleet?

*Answer.* I understand that the CH-53E continues to support the Marine Corps requirements for heavy-lift, and has sufficient remaining airframe life to absorb the CH-53K program delays to date. Recent efforts like the CH-53E Reset program will ensure that fleet readiness continues to improve. If confirmed, I will work closely with service leadership and industry to minimize any additional delays and ensure

the continued readiness and availability of the CH-53E to execute the heavy lift mission.

*Question.* On overall Marine Corps readiness?

Answer. I understand delays may affect the heavy-lift capacity shortfall and the Marine Corps' ability to effectively execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS). If confirmed, I will work closely with service leadership and industry to minimize any additional delays and ensure the continued readiness and availability of the CH-53E to execute the heavy lift mission.

*Question.* The Commandant has articulated the need for the Corps to move away from "exquisite and costly systems".

Is the CH-53K one such system, in your view?

Answer. The CH-53K is the only heavy lift helicopter in the Department of Defense capable of meeting the challenges associated with the Marine Corps' distributed maritime operations. A heavy lift helicopter is required to deliver equipment, personnel, and bulk liquids in support of Expeditionary Advance Base Operations (EABO). If confirmed, I will continue to work with the service and industry to bring the cost curve down throughout procurement of the CH-53K.

*Question.* What is the total fleet size the Corps needs?

Answer. I understand the Marine Corps continues to refine the support required for Force Design 2030. If confirmed I will work closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that the Service has the appropriate number of aircraft to carryout assigned missions.

*Question.* How many can the Corps afford?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Marine Corps supports the program of record and the requirement based on Force Design 2030.

*Question.* In your view, what role does the CH-53 play in battlefield mobility, particularly given the Corps' requirement to move and sustain ground forces that have become heavier due to the evolving need for additional armor on the modern battlefield?

Answer. As the only fully heavy-lift rotorcraft operating in marine environments, the CH-53K will support Joint and Coalition Forces in a range of future maritime missions. The CH-53K is able to lift a greater payload at sea level and high-altitude conditions, addressing connector shortfalls of the future Marine Air Ground Task Force, such as lifting the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. With a distributed force conducting Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations, the CH-53K is a critical logistical connector.

#### MODERNIZATION OF MARINE CORPS CAPABILITIES

*Question.* The Marine Corps' current concepts for modernization of its amphibious capabilities includes ships, ship-to-shore connectors—such as the Landing Craft Air Cushion—and armored amphibious combat vehicles. Modernization across these systems is complex, technically challenging, and costly.

What is your assessment of the current capability of amphibious maneuver and assault systems in the Navy and Marine Corps?

Answer. In my view, the Navy and Marine Corps' amphibious capabilities, including ships, connectors, and combat vehicles, will be able to meet the needs of the nation if the replacement of legacy systems, to include Amphibious Ships, Amphibious Combat Vehicle, Ship to Shore Connector, and Landing Craft Utility, remain on track. If confirmed, I will work with Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Marine Corps, as well as the Office of Secretary of Defense, on the amphibious requirements to support the National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you prioritize the development and acquisition of capabilities required for sea basing, connectors, and armored amphibious assault and tactical mobility ashore to achieve a full spectrum capability in the Marine Corps?

Answer. I understand the Marine Corps has prioritized the procurement of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as fast as fiscally possible and at a level that industry can support, and that the Navy and Marine Corps have worked closely together on developing the Department's amphibious capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure integrated capability development and acquisition efforts continue.

*Question.* In your view, what is necessary to ensure that modernization of the amphibious force—ships, connectors, and vehicles—is achievable and affordable in both the near and long terms?

Answer. I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps need to modernize to retain overmatch against the pacing threat. The amphibious force is a critical element of the Nation's maritime force because it is a ready, lethal, and forward deployed force that can perform a variety of missions. If confirmed, I will work closely with the

Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a sound investment plan to field the necessary amphibious forces to meet current and future threats.

*Question.* Given the future envisioned by the NDS, high-intensity combined arms combat inland against a peer- or near-peer opponent, are current Marine Corps modernization plans and budgets adequate?

*Answer.* I believe the Commandant has set the Marine Corps on a path to modernization by judiciously reallocating resources from within his own budget. By investing in capabilities such as long-range precision fires, sensors, resilient communication networks, and mobility assets, I understand that the Marine Corps will be able to compete and, if required, defeat strategic competitors and rogue actors. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant and Congress to ensure sustained and adequate funding to achieve this modernization plan.

#### AMPHIBIOUS COMBAT VEHICLE

*Question.* Current Navy and Marine Corps amphibious assault capability includes a large number of self-deploying amphibious assault vehicles (AAV-7) to carry infantry ashore, and a lesser number of small vessels—connectors—that can ferry other vehicles, such as tanks, artillery, and supplies from ship to shore. The Marine Corps is procuring the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as a modernized platform to replace the aging AAV-7 fleet. Despite originally planning for two increments: an ACV 1.1 and ACV 1.2, the Marine Corps made the decision to combine all variants into one program.

In your view, where does armored amphibious assault fit in the set of capabilities required to field a credible amphibious operations capability?

*Answer.* It is my understanding armored amphibious assault is a critical requirement to execute the Expeditionary Advance Base Operation concept and USMC missions. I understand the Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACVs) are performing very well and meeting the Marine Corps' requirements, and that the initial increment, known as 1.1, was so successful that it met almost every requirement, so there was no need to have two versions. If confirmed, I look to understand the details of this procurement program, and to work closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the Service has the necessary platforms to carry out assigned missions.

#### MUNITIONS

*Question.* Navy munitions inventories—particularly for precision guided munitions and air to air missiles—have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, poor program execution, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies.

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

*Answer.* If confirmed I will work with the Combatant Commanders, the Secretary of Defense's staff, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure all weapons and munition warfighting requirements are understood and properly resourced.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes in budgeting and acquisition processes would you recommend to facilitate faster and more accurate Navy munitions replenishment rates?

*Answer.* While I am not currently aware of concerns with munition replenishment rates, if confirmed, I will work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure we are adequately replenishing munitions.

*Question.* How will the Navy adapt to self-imposed DOD restrictions on area attack and denial munitions, consistent with the Ottawa Agreements?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with DoD leadership to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are equipped with the capabilities required by the Joint Force to deter potential adversaries and to fight and win wars. I will ensure that these capabilities comply with all applicable law and policy.

#### FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION

*Question.* In your view, what role should the Navy play in supporting the freedom of navigation in international waters, including in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

*Answer.* The Navy plays a crucial role in ensuring international waters and airspace are free and open, and this freedom of navigation and overflight is vital to the flow of global commerce. Through presence and its global operations, the Department of the Navy plays a pivotal role in preserving these navigational rights.

Protecting this freedom of access is especially important in the strategically contested areas of the South China Sea and the Arctic.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you lead the Navy in engaging our allies in the common cause of ensuring freedom of navigation?

Answer. Freedom of Navigation and overflight is fundamental to the prosperity and economic security of all nations. As President Biden's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance lays out, the United States will continue to defend access to the global commons, including freedom of navigation and overflight rights. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to ensure a shared understanding of the necessity of freedom of navigation, to promote a rules-based order, and to vigilantly assert and preserve the navigation and overflight rights guaranteed to all nations under international law.

#### CYBER AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE

*Question.* Section 1657 of the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) directed the appointment of an independent Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) for each Military Department, to act as the principal advisor to the Secretary concerned on all cyber matters affecting that Department.

*Question.* What do you see as the role of this position in the Department of the Navy?

Answer. I am overall supportive and appreciative of the initiative to standup a PCA within each military department. I agree a dedicated office to coordinate cyber requirements and resources seems prudent given the complexity of fully integrating all facets of cyber within the Department of the Navy. It is my understanding the PCA will oversee the execution of Departmental policies and programs including: (1) the recruitment, resourcing, and training of military cyberspace operations forces, (2) acquisition of cybersecurity tools and capabilities, and (3) cybersecurity and related supply chain risk management of the industrial base. I also understand, the PCA will advise senior leadership on the full spectrum of cyberspace activities and information operations and the threat from adversary activities.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you plan to utilize the Navy PCA as part of your leadership structure?

Answer. If I am confirmed, the PCA would be part of my direct leadership team to keep me informed on cyber issues and threats that may affect the Department and the ability to meet obligations in defending the Homeland or competing with adversaries. In addition, the PCA would be integral in developing, monitoring, and executing the Department's implementation of the DOD Cyber Strategy. I would also look to work with the PCA to determine how to integrate cyber as a warfighting domain, with the more traditional means and methods of warfare.

*Question.* What are the Department of the Navy's top 3 Cyber Challenges, and how will you use the Principal Cyber Advisor to address them?

Answer. I believe the top three cyber challenges with the Department of the Navy are: (1) embracing Zero Trust principles across our traditional information technology, critical infrastructure and weapon systems, and the Defense Industrial Base (DIB); (2) truly embracing cyber as a warfighting domain and expanding our scope of thinking well beyond simply cybersecurity to ensuring we can credibly deliver effects against adversary information systems, critical infrastructure and weapons systems; and finally, (3) the readiness of the Department's cyber mission forces entrusted with not only the protection of DON systems but holding adversary systems at risk with organic non-kinetic cyber capabilities. If confirmed, I would empower the PCA to engage with the organization responsible for acquiring and delivering these capabilities, and recruiting and training the workforce, to ensure our cyber ecosystem is adequately resourced and supported.

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy.

*Question.* In your view, how well postured are the Navy and the Marine Corps to meet the goals outlined in the 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy?

Answer. It is my understanding that Navy and Marine Corps activities and investments have improved the Department's cybersecurity and cyber resiliency posture while also supporting the DoD Cyber Strategy objective to "secure DoD information and systems against malicious cyber activities, including such activity on non-DoD-owned networks." The Department of the Navy continues to pursue initiatives to improve our cyber defense posture and increase resilience through the DON Information Superiority Vision "Defend" line of effort including: (1) measuring cyber risk, (2) driving active monitoring, (3) promoting a cybersecurity culture, and (4) securing the Defense Industrial Base (DIB). These strategic objectives are aligned to the DoD Cyber Strategy. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the Navy and Ma-

rine Corps are postured correctly to detect, protect, and respond to cyberattacks and intrusions. I will also integrate cyber operations into operations to build a lethal joint force to deter and defeat adversaries in cyberspace.

*Question.* What actions would you take, if confirmed, to remediate any gaps between Navy and Marine Corps capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals?

*Answer.* If confirmed, full spectrum cyber operations will be an area of priority for me. The Department must not only fully embrace cybersecurity and cyber resiliency principles but it must also fully embrace cyber as a means of warfare integrated with how it will project power from the sea as a combined Navy and Marine Corps team. I support the creation of the Joint Cyber Warfighting Architecture (JCWA) to ensure Navy and Marine Corps equities are addressed and incorporated into the DOD future warfighting construct. Also, as identified in the Department's 2019 Cybersecurity Readiness Review, there is an urgent need to improve Defense Industrial Base (DIB) cybersecurity for the protection of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI). I will emphasize efforts to increase accountability and accelerate the pace at which we attain complete cyber integration with our warfighting capabilities.

*Question.* In your view, should the Navy and Marine Corps expand acceptable professional qualifications for their cyber workforces to include non-traditional professional credentialing and schooling from so-called technology boot camps and massive online open courses (MOOCs) as an alternative to traditional education, provided candidates meet the necessary technical standards?

*Answer.* The Department should look for innovative ways to train a highly skilled workforce shaped for today, but prepared for tomorrow's needs. Technology boot camps prepare attendees for industry certifications, some of which are accepted qualifications for certain cyber workforce roles. However, I would need to conduct further review to determine if non-traditional credentialing can replace the foundational requirements currently provided by formal education or professional certification. If confirmed, I will look into the educational and technical standards required to determine if non-traditional forms of credentialing can reduce barriers to entry into this work space.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to enhance Navy and Marine Corps information dominance capabilities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue support for the Department of the Navy's Information Superiority Vision, which aims to securely move information from anywhere to anywhere when needed, resulting in improved readiness and our ability to observe, orient, decide, and act faster than our adversaries. Guided by this vision, I understand that the Department will build information superiority by modernizing infrastructure, innovating and deploying new capabilities, and defending networks, systems and data.

*Question.* Given the difficulty in defining where cyber operations and electronic warfare merge, if confirmed, how you would organize, train, and equip the Navy to minimize gaps and seams in these two critical mission areas?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to refining how our Naval forces approach the convergence of not just cyberspace operations and electronic warfare but also space and operations in the information environment. It is imperative that the Navy and Marine Corps must implement the right technologies in these mission areas. The Department must also organize and train with the other Services, including allies and partners, to operate in the multi-domain environment of tomorrow, while staying aligned with DOD regarding organizing, training, and equipping Naval cyber and electronic warfare forces.

*Question.* What progress has the Department of the Navy made in implementing the recommendation of the "Cyber Readiness Review" it conducted 2019?

*Answer.* As I understand, the Department's 2019 Cybersecurity Readiness Review (CRR) highlighted the need to treat data and information as a strategic asset and warfighting capability. The report organized recommendations into five key areas: structure, culture, people, process, and resources. In response to findings in the CRR, the Secretary of the Navy established an empowered CIO responsible for closing a 10–15 year technology gap, leveraging emerging technology to deliver transformative capability, and securing Department of the Navy data regardless of where it resides. I also understand that in the last two years, the Department of the Navy has made substantial progress in modernizing our infrastructure and securing our information for competitive advantage. If confirmed, I will look to understand how the Department is implementing the recommendations, and if any adjustments are required.

## NAVY-RELATED DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE

*Question.* What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Navy's organic and commercial defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?

*Answer.* The Navy continually assesses the health and resiliency of the entire defense industrial base, which includes munitions. It is my understanding that the Navy has worked to identify risks and address supply chain disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and has put in place new processes to identify future risks and issues within the supply chains. If confirmed, I look forward to working across the Department and with OSD to leverage existing authorities and funding, such as the Defense Production Act, to strengthen the supply chain.

*Question.* How should Navy acquisition leaders weigh impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions?

*Answer.* In my view, Navy acquisition leaders must weigh the effects of program decisions on the industrial base when balancing resources and requirements, and should emphasize continued collaboration with industry to improve the health of the industrial base. It is my understanding that the Navy has worked diligently to coordinate government and industry efforts to keep the nation's industrial base healthy and functioning during the coronavirus pandemic by balancing worker safety, economic wellness and National Defense imperatives. If confirmed, I will continue efforts maximize the use of the American workforce to build and sustain our forces.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to ensure that risk in the Navy-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to enable the development, production, and sustainment of technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess the Department's systems and processes for managing risk within the defense industrial base and work with industry to develop recommendations to strengthen partnerships and ensure the health of the industrial base.

## UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

*Question.* Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

*Answer.* Freedom of navigation and overflight are essential to our defense and other national security interests. The Convention's provisions on navigation and overflight rights and freedoms reflect customary international law, and it is in the United States' interest to support these rights and freedoms. Accession to the convention would increase our credibility when we act to protect the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace above.

If confirmed, I will strive to preserve and protect the global mobility of our Naval forces, to include supporting the navigational freedom provisions of the Convention.

*Question.* How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

*Answer.* U.S. military operations benefit from the navigational freedoms provided by the Law of the Sea Convention. The Convention's provisions on freedom of navigation and overflight reflect customary international law. Our nation supports these rights and freedoms. Accession to the convention would increase our credibility when we act to protect the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace above. If confirmed, I will continue to support the navigation and overflight provisions of the Convention as I believe they are vital to U.S. national security interests.

*Question.* In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

*Answer.* All nations have the right to engage in the lawful use of the sea and airspace as provided by international law. If confirmed, I will support and promote our national interest of freedom of the seas. Acceding to the Law of the Sea Convention would strengthen our strategic ability to protect free and open access in the South China Sea and the Arctic.

## OPERATIONAL ENERGY AND ENERGY RESILIENCE

*Question.* The Department defines operational energy as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems and generators. De-

partment of Defense energy requirements are projected to increase due to technological advances in weapons systems and the execution of distributed operations over longer operating distances.

If confirmed, how would you lead the Navy in harnessing innovations in operational energy and linking them with emerging joint operational concepts in order to reduce contested logistics vulnerabilities for warfighters?

Answer. As I understand it, the Navy's and Marine Corps' operational energy investment is focused on increasing range and time-on-station of naval platforms and advancing technologies that support distributed maritime operations, as well as increasing the capabilities of advanced weapon systems and sensors. These technologies provide increased warfighting capabilities to the warfighter while also focusing on reducing the logistics demand of our forward deployed naval forces.

*Question.* In what specific areas, if any, do you believe the Navy needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations and alternative energy resources into the strategic planning processes?

Answer. I believe the Navy and Marine Corps should incorporate energy planning and risk assessments into all relevant programs as part of their strategic planning process, always thinking of ways to save energy-related costs to maximize combat effectiveness. Energy considerations should be seriously addressed in developing effective supply chains for component and warfighting commands. Such assessments are critical to understanding their ability to meet the capabilities required to succeed at their missions.

*Question.* In your view, how can Navy acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms to decrease risks to warfighters?

Answer. It is my understanding the Navy and Marine Corps are currently working to improve energy performance, storage, distribution, and controls to both reduce costs and better support advanced weapon systems and sensors. If confirmed, I will prioritize a continued focus on hybridization platforms and energy management in DON acquisition programs, enabling a more lethal force with greater reach and agility.

*Question.* How can energy supportability that reduces contested logistics vulnerabilities become a key performance parameter in the requirements process beyond just a "check the box" consideration?

Answer. I believe the energy key performance parameter already requires an operational energy supportability analysis. If confirmed, I will ensure Navy and Marine Corps leadership conduct supportability analyses using contested logistics scenarios to maximize strike capability while reducing logistics in contested environments.

*Question.* It is essential that DOD maintain capability to sustain critical operations in the event of an energy disruption—including commercial grid outages.

If confirmed, specifically how would you inculcate energy resilience as a mission assurance priority for the Department of the Navy, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to support mission critical functions and address known vulnerabilities?

Answer. I believe both mission assurance and energy resilience are inextricably linked. Mission assurance assessments are a critical input into the development of the DON's Installation Energy Plans (IEPs) and inform the governance process for mitigating the installations' most critical energy security vulnerabilities. If confirmed, I will focus on addressing the most critical energy security gaps laid out in the IEPs through efforts that enhance the DON's sustainability and deploy renewable energy solutions that work towards accomplishing the President's goals.

*Question.* What progress has the Department of the Navy made in creating individualized Installation Energy Plans to identify and remediate resilience gaps on and off Navy and Marine Corps installations?

Answer. It is my understanding that in December 2020, the Navy completed IEPs for all 70 Navy bases, and the Marine Corps completed 7 IEPs and is working towards completing IEPs for the remainder of its installations by March 2022. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the DON completes all outstanding IEPs and focuses on the most critical installation resilience gaps.

*Question.* How can the Department of the Navy better integrate energy security and resilience as standard components of its Military Construction (MILCON) programs, in your view?

Answer. I understand that, through its IEPs, the DON is creating energy security roadmaps for each installation reflecting evolving mission requirements and resilience gaps both on and off installation. I am also aware the DON has expanded its shore mission integration governance processes to use IEPs to identify and address critical energy security and resilience gaps, using funds available to it under various

programs. If confirmed, I will work to continue to facilitate multiple integration points between energy security and resilience within the MILCON process.

#### INSTALLATION MODERNIZATION AND RESILIENCE

*Question.* Decades of underinvestment in Department of Defense installations has led to substantial backlogs in facilities maintenance, and substandard living and working conditions for sailors and marines.

In your view, how is the readiness of navy shore installations linked to the readiness and lethality of naval power?

Answer. I believe naval installations are central to our Nation's military power; they are a key element of the capabilities required to create ready, deployable forces. Every base plays an important role, supporting the need to generate, project, employ, and sustain forces as part of the DON's warfighting readiness measures.

*Question.* In your view, does the Department of the Navy receive adequate funding for base operations support, writ large? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I understand the DON requires the Navy and Marine Corps to prioritize and balance base operations investments among competing requirements. I realize there are always unfunded requirements for which the DON could use additional investments. If confirmed, I will work closely with my Assistant Secretaries, the DON's Service Chiefs, and the DOD to ensure the DON budgets appropriately meet as many of its base operation requirements as possible within existing funding authorities.

*Question.* Do you have any specific plans to leverage infrastructure modernization to improve the quality of life for Navy and Marine Corps servicemembers and their families, who are under considerable strain as a result of repeated deployments?

Answer. Quality of life for our sailors, marines, and their families is of the upmost importance to me. People are the DON's greatest asset and should be treated as such. If confirmed, I plan to continue the infrastructure modernization already in progress, and push to identify and support other efforts to enhance Servicemember and family quality of life.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you prioritize the resourcing of Navy shipyard modernization going forward, in light of other competing priorities?

Answer. I understand the importance of recapitalizing our public shipyards and fully appreciate the challenges presented by the competing priorities between shipyard modernization and other Navy requirements. If confirmed, I will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the Department is focused on timely funding of public shipyard infrastructure.

*Question.* In your view, has the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program achieved its objective of streamlining local project reviews, resulting in more predictable timelines and solutions for shipyard projects?

Answer. I understand the Department of the Navy is conducting an industrial engineering analysis that will inform the final optimized production plant at each shipyard. Once these plans are completed, and if confirmed, I would work with the relevant stakeholders to identify all required infrastructure investments.

*Question.* If not, how would you adjust the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, if confirmed, to achieve these paramount objectives?

Answer. I understand the importance of the public shipyards in maintaining the Navy the nation needs. If confirmed, I will work with all stakeholders to evaluate the program to ensure it is meeting its objectives and I will make all necessary changes to keep it focused on improving the efficiency of our public shipyards.

*Question.* How will shipyard modernization assist the Navy in achieving its goal of eliminating "lost operational days"?

Answer. I understand modernizing the Naval Shipyards will enable the Navy to improve production capacity, increase throughput and reduce the number of maintenance days so ships can return to the Fleet faster.

#### ENVIRONMENT

*Question.* According to the GAO, the Navy has identified 127 installations with known or suspected releases of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

What is your understanding of the Department of the Navy's strategy for monitoring drinking water on Navy and Marine Corps installations, as well as public and private drinking water off-installation, for PFOS, PFOA, and other contaminants?

Answer. I understand the DON proactively tested all drinking water systems and supplies on Navy and Marine Corps installations and took actions, where needed, to ensure no water supplied for drinking water on these installations contains PFOS and/or PFOA above EPA's lifetime health advisory levels. Additionally, where the

DON suspected potential PFOS and/or PFOA migration off an installation, it obtained well owner permission, sampled those wells, and provided alternative water in cases where there was an EPA lifetime health advisory level exceedance. I understand the DON plans to continue this proactive approach, which I will support if confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you further efforts to identify and remediate PFOS/PFOA contamination on Navy installations, including reserve component locations?

Answer. If confirmed, I would meet with the DON's environmental program leadership to assess strategies, successes, and challenges to date and take action to remove barriers to support investigation and remediation efforts across the portfolio.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing the health concerns of servicemembers and their families regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on Navy installations and in the context of performing military duties?

Answer. The safety of all Servicemembers, civilians, and their family members who live and work on DON installations is of paramount importance. I understand the DON maintains a robust safety and occupational health program that works to identify and control exposures to personnel during execution of their military duties and maintains environmental programs to address potentially harmful contaminants on and migrating off installation. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of health and safety to mission readiness, ensuring commanders comply with recommendations for control measures, including wearing personal protective equipment and advancing technologies and products to minimize or eliminate exposures overall. I would also ensure DON installations address any potentially harmful contaminants that may affect the health of those living and working there.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps personnel at all levels comply with environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

Answer. If confirmed, I will verify that DON environmental policy is aligned with current environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency. I will ensure DON environmental practitioners and military personnel have the necessary resources and training to ensure compliance with the latest standards.

*Question.* What are your ideas for improving collaboration with the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness while protecting the environment on and around installations?

Answer. I am aware the DON works closely with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to identify collaboration opportunities in support of both agencies' missions. I believe both agencies work to preserve undeveloped lands adjacent to military installations and ranges, and have a long history of partnering to conserve and protect military readiness and important environmental resources. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to push innovative solutions such as those under the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, the Recovery and Sustainment Partnership (RASP) initiative, and the Sentinel Landscapes program, and to also seek new authorities, where appropriate, to help streamline collaboration opportunities.

#### READINESS AND RESOURCE IMPACTS FROM EXTREME WEATHER

*Question.* How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on the Navy from recent extreme weather events?

Answer. Given the DON's mission link to the sea, I recognize many DON facilities will continue to be present in flood and hurricane-prone areas. I am aware that more recently constructed buildings perform better under extreme weather and environmental conditions than those that were built many years ago. If confirmed, I will work with DON senior leaders to ensure mission assurance programs identify and address risks to DON installations from extreme weather, storm surge, and sea level rise.

*Question.* Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in Navy infrastructure?

Answer. Yes, I believe the DON must continue to incorporate more resilient designs, as they evolve, into its infrastructure. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring the DON continues to incorporate resilient designs, including appropriate hurricane and seismic unified facilities criteria into its master planning processes.

*Question.* How can the Navy better use existing authorities on extreme weather mitigation granted by Congress in the last few NDAA's?

*Answer.* From my understanding, the DON has been working with Congress to leverage Title 10 authorities to increase energy security as well as tackle issues related to climate change which the President has deemed a national security threat. If confirmed, I will continue to foster the collaborative effort between the DON and Congress to achieve the Administration's goals for both energy and climate change.

#### ENCROACHMENT ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

*Question.* Competition for space and other forms of encroachment continue to challenge the resiliency of DOD ranges and amplify the need for larger hazard areas to execute training, testing, and operations to meet NDS requirements. One issue of particular significance for the Navy has been the potential interference with aircraft radars by wind farms installed around military installations and ranges.

In your view, what is the gap between "as is" testing and training range capabilities, and current requirements?

*Answer.* If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure Navy and Marine Corps test and training ranges are able to support training as well as test and evaluation of new platforms and weapon systems. As the DON modernizes its force, I will ensure the Navy and Marine Corps continue to assess the adequacy of test and training range capabilities, to include land, air, and sea space, required to support the Department's modernization efforts and enable training in realistic environments with these platforms and weapon systems.

*Question.* Specifically, what has the Department of the Navy done to secure or expand operations, testing, and training capabilities at key aviation ranges (e.g., El Centro, Fallon, Barry M. Goldwater Range)?

*Answer.* I am aware the Navy is focused on protecting and modernizing key capabilities at aviation ranges to accommodate development of new warfighting capabilities and create realistic training environments to ensure sailors and marines are proficient at employing these capabilities. As I understand, the DON prioritized the modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex as imperative for realistic Navy training with advanced platforms. If confirmed, I commit to looking into this range, and across all aviation ranges, and working with Congress to advocate for the necessary authorities and resources to enable ready forces. Further, I commit to working with all stakeholders including, but not limited to federal, state, Tribal, and local partners to understand their concerns and develop equitable solutions for access to land, air, and sea space.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you balance the trade-off between energy development and impact on Navy and Marine Corps operations and training?

*Answer.* If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are the best trained and equipped force in the world. Training and testing will remain an irreplaceable component of reaching that goal. However, climate change is a national security issue that must be addressed, and threatens the resilience of our military operations. I will support both of these national priorities by working closely with our sister services, federal agency partners, and energy stakeholders to enable the development of renewable energy compatible with Navy and Marine Corps readiness requirements.

#### SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION

*Question.* What are the key technologies that the Navy should be focused on to support modernization activities?

*Answer.* The 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance outlines a clear approach to regaining and maintaining technical advantage through investments in key modernization priorities: space, autonomy, cyber, quantum science, microelectronics, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and machine learning (AI/ML), and fully-networked command, control, and communication. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department focuses Science and Technology (S&T) funding on critical needs of the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to the development of these key technologies for application to Navy and Marine Corps warfighting capabilities?

*Answer.* The Department of the Navy continues to emphasize acceleration and agility to keep technological advantage and to deliver capabilities faster than our adversaries. It is my understanding that authorities provided by Congress have been particularly beneficial, allowing the Department to develop innovative methods for effective management and mission execution at warfare centers and laboratories. If confirmed, I am committed to prioritizing investments in people, tools, and infra-

structure to enable continuous learning, collaboration, agility, and cutting-edge capability to delivery at speed for our Naval Forces will ensure the preservation of national security and the maintenance of future naval power.

*Question.* How well has the Department of the Navy prioritized limited research and development funding across its technology focus areas?

*Answer.* I believe S&T research is vital to provide for future technologies that support innovative capabilities in shipbuilding, aviation, weapons, and expeditionary equipment. It is my understanding that the Navy's fiscal year 2022 budget request prioritizes research and development, with a 12.4% increase to the RDT&E account, in order to innovate and modernize the force while maintaining and enhancing readiness. Specifically, I understand that the Department's S&T budget request includes investments in fundamental research to support continual advancements in many cutting-edge areas to include AI, quantum sciences and computing, advanced autonomy, cyber security; as well as advanced operational prototypes for the next generation of directed energy weapons and autonomous systems. If confirmed, I will look to continue prioritizing key research that provides the Navy and Marine Corps a competitive warfighting advantage.

*Question.* How is the Navy balancing revolutionary capability advancements, including investments in basic research, as compared to "quick win" incremental improvements that can be rapidly fielded?

*Answer.* I understand the naval S&T portfolio is balanced across the following areas: basic research to build the scientific foundation for future technologies; initiatives that can provide disruptive technologies to the warfighter; transitioning S&T programs to the acquisition community and the Fleet; and prototype development and experimentation with the Fleet and Force to rapidly learn and revise.

I believe it is important to maintain dedicated investment in basic research programs to not only lay the groundwork for future scientific innovation but also develop the next generation of the scientific and technological workforce. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Navy continues to employ a combination of basic research investment, Future Naval Capabilities (FNCs), Innovative Naval Prototypes (INPs), Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfers (SBIR/STTR) processes and prototyping to transition technology to programs of record and directly to the warfighter, both today and into the future.

*Question.* In your view, what steps must DOD and the Navy take to ensure that critical technical information is protected by Navy organizations, industry, and academia?

*Answer.* I believe that it is absolutely critical that the Department take proper steps to protect American intellectual property and technology. It is my understanding that the Office of Naval Research (ONR) is taking steps to develop security and information management procedures built on partnerships with academia and industry. These procedures focus on a shared understanding of the specific research requiring protection and seek to protect research which is deemed critical by the Navy due to potential military application, as well as patents and intellectual property owned by the performer. If confirmed, I will ensure the Navy remains partnered closely with other DoD and federal security, intelligence, counterintelligence, law enforcement agencies to implement innovative, enhanced protection methodologies to guard the military technological capability advantages of the future.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that a greater percentage of the technologies being developed by Navy labs transition into programs of record for deployment to the warfighter?

*Answer.* The Department of the Navy has an impressive technical workforce in the Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE) that works closely with industry, academia and across the government to ensure sailors and marines have the most advanced capabilities. It is my understanding that the NR&DE supports a number of programs to assist the transition existing research investments into homegrown technology development, including partnerships with programs such as FedTech's Defense Innovation Accelerator. If confirmed, I will leverage this strong technical base and encourage the use of existing tools such as Future Naval Capabilities (FNCs), Innovative Naval Prototypes (INPs), Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfers (SBIR/STTR) processes and prototyping to transition technology to programs of record and to the warfighter.

*Question.* How would you ensure that appropriate technologies are transitioning more quickly into programs of record?

*Answer.* Successful transition of technologies from a prototype or demonstration to an operationally relevant, sustainable capability involves numerous challenges in areas such as transition planning, cost of transition, and time required to mature technology. It is my understanding that the Navy is leveraging accelerated acquisi-

tion tools and resident expertise in the warfare centers to identify potential solutions and promising technologies. If confirmed, I will encourage efforts across the entire Navy Research and Development Enterprise to identify actions that will reduce the cost, schedule, and technical risk associated with transition and increase the probability of successful transition to a program of record.

*Question.* What efforts is the Department of the Navy making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to military and national security purposes?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department of the Navy has a number of initiatives that leverage commercial technologies for military applications. NavalX Tech Bridges build networks and connections with the private sector, innovation organizations, local industry, and small business to identify and accelerate technologies for the warfighter. Contracting mechanisms such as cooperative research and development agreements (CRADAs) and Other Transaction Authority (OTAs) have expanded the vendor base. If confirmed, I will continue to work across the Department to reduce the barriers between the DON and industry partners, including nontraditional defense contractors and startup companies.

*Question.* In your view, what steps must DOD take to protect and strengthen our National Security Innovation Base to ensure that critical information is protected?

*Answer.* I certainly recognize the serious nature of evolving cyber threats, which extend to all facets of the workforce and the industrial base. It is my understanding that the Navy is approaching this issue with a sense of urgency, working closely with DoD and partners in the National Security Innovation Base to accurately assess and smartly improve the security posture of the industrial base and protect Navy data. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with OSD and across the Services to address these challenges in a systematic way and in consideration of constantly evolving technologies.

*Question.* Recent budget requests for defense Science and Technology (S&T) have fallen short of the Defense Science Board's recommended goal of dedicating 3% of the total defense budget to S&T. Robust investment in S&T underpins technological advances in our military capabilities and is vital to maintaining our military technological superiority over emerging adversaries. However, over the past few years, the Navy has prioritized near-term research and development over long-term S&T.

If confirmed, what metrics would you use to assess whether the Navy is investing adequately in S&T programs and whether the Navy has achieved the proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T?

*Answer.* In my view maintaining a proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T is absolutely critical to maintaining the long-term technological superiority of the Department of the Navy and the Nation. Many of the technologies available today are enabled by five to fifteen years of basic and applied research. These investments also play a role in developing the next generation of the American technical workforce. For that reason, if confirmed, I will seek to inspire, engage and educate the next generation of scientists and engineers.

#### MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM (MHS) REFORM

*Question.* Do you support the implementation of the MHS reforms mandated by the NDAA for fiscal years 2017, 2019, and 2020?

*Answer.* Yes. I support these reform efforts and recognize the important role that the Military Health System has in keeping our servicemembers healthy and ready to meet their demanding missions, as well as ensuring access to health care for families.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure the efficient transfer of the administration and management of remaining Navy military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the progress that the Department of Navy has made in the efficient transfer of Navy military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency.

*Question.* Will you ensure that the Navy continues to provide the military medical personnel needed to provide care in these facilities?

*Answer.* Yes. I will continue the ongoing collaborative reform efforts between the Department of Navy and the Defense Health Agency. I understand that this work includes assessment of the military health care personnel requirements for supporting the medical treatment facilities.

*Question.* The committee has learned that the Navy has not assigned medical personnel in certain medical specialties to provide full support to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). The committee intends for WRNMMC to be

the premier medical center in the MHS, but without the full support of the military departments to provide key medical staff, the center will not meet this intent.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy assigns the personnel required to meet the staffing requirements at WRNMMC and at other military medical treatment facilities in the future?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the efforts to ensure an efficient transfer of the military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency, including assessment of the military health care personnel requirements at WRNMMC and other military treatment facilities.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy reduces its medical headquarters' staffs and infrastructure to reflect the more limited roles and responsibilities of the Navy Surgeon General?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the current efforts to optimize Navy Medicine headquarters consistent with their readiness responsibilities in support of the Navy and Marine Corps.

#### END STRENGTH

*Question.* The Navy's Active Duty end strength grew from 323,600 in fiscal year 2015 to 347,800 in fiscal year 2021. The Fiscal Year 2022 President's Budget would cut 1,600 sailors. The Marine Corps' Active Duty end strength authorization is also shrinking from 186,200 in fiscal year 2020 to 178,500 requested for fiscal year 2022.

Do you believe that Navy and Marine Corps end strengths are appropriate and sufficient to meet national defense objections? Please explain your answer.

Answer. At this time, I do not have enough information on the operational plans and Navy and Marine Corps requirements to support them. If confirmed, I will work closely with the CNO and CMC to ensure our naval force structure is appropriate and sufficient to meet our national defense objectives.

#### NAVY AND MARINE CORPS RESERVES

*Question.* What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves?

Answer. Our Navy and Marine Corps Reserves play a vital role in supporting our national interests by providing strategic depth and operational capacity to our Active Forces. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we fully leverage the strategic and operational capabilities within our reserve components. Both the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve are integral to ensuring our Nation's security.

*Question.* If confirmed, what objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the organization, force structure, and end strength of the Navy Reserve?

Answer. Before I can make a true assessment of the Navy Reserve's organization, force structure, and end strength, I will need to understand better its capabilities, capacity, and where it can best support the Department of the Navy's Total Force. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Navy to ensure we are fully leveraging the strategic depth and operational capacity within the Navy Reserve.

*Question.* Of the Marine Corps Reserve?

Answer. Likewise, it would be premature for me to provide an assessment of the Marine Corps Reserve's organization, force structure, and end strength. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Marine Corps to ensure we are fully leveraging the strategic depth and operational capacity within the Marine Reserve.

*Question.* Do you expect to meet prior service accession goals for the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves this fiscal year? Please explain your answer.

Answer. At this time, I do not have sufficient information to make an assessment on whether the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves will meet their prior service accession goals. Accessioning sailors and marines and leading the Active Force into our reserve components is a key component of maintaining readiness, as those sailors and marines bring the benefits of extensive training and years of experience. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we are committed to meeting the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves prior service accession goals.

#### RECRUITING AND RETENTION

*Question.* The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service, and

only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative initiatives would you implement, if confirmed, to expand the pool of eligible recruits and improve Navy and Marine Corps recruiting?

Answer. I understand that both Navy and Marine Corps have been successful in meeting their recruiting objectives; however, attracting today's youth will require that the Navy and Marine Corps recruiting continue to adapt to attract this new generation of potential recruits to remain successful. It is my understanding that the services are working to transform recruiting efforts to meet the challenges faced with attracting recruits from a newer generation. Recruiting is focused on both new technologies in advertising and personnel processing and both Services are complementing existing recruiting practices with greater use of social media in an effort to extend their reach and expand their recruiting markets into all communities. If confirmed, I will continue support for the Navy and Marine Corps in their efforts to expand their recruiting marketing by leveraging technology to educate today's youth on value and the benefits of service in our Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* In your view, what effect do current recruiting standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—have on recruit attrition and/or future success in the Navy and the Marine Corps?

Answer. I understand that the Navy and Marine Corps review recruiting and retention data routinely to ensure that recruiting standards align with the Services' needs, and that data shows that tier-one recruits are a good value for both because tier-one recruits tend to have lower attrition and greater likelihood to succeed in technical training pipelines. If confirmed, I look forward to gaining a deeper understanding of the Department's military manpower data and to ensure that the Services balance recruiting standards and retention to enable readiness within the Fleet.

*Question.* What monetary and non-monetary incentives are the Navy and the Marine Corps employing in an effort to retain aviators?

Answer. It is my firm belief that the men and women serving in the Navy and Marine Corps today seek, in addition to fair and adequate compensation, a balance between professional fulfillment, quality of service, and work/life balance. With that in mind, it is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps offer both monetary and non-monetary incentives for aviators. Beyond just specialty pay and bonuses, this would include advanced training and certifications, quality of life initiatives, and, most importantly, certainty in their operational assignments. If confirmed, I'll consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to fully understand the scope of this retention challenge. I also believe dialogue with our aviation leaders and the aviators themselves is essential to understanding the motivators behind a stay or go decision and, if confirmed, I will seek out these additional insights to the aviator retention challenge.

*Question.* Which incentives or combinations thereof have proven most effective?

Answer. While I don't have access to the data needed to respond to this question, I do believe it is the combination of both monetary and non-monetary incentives, coupled with quality of life initiatives that allow the Department of the Navy to retain the aviators required to accomplish their assigned missions. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that the Navy has a realistic plan for aviator retention.

*Question.* What recommendations would you have for increasing the pool of youth who are both eligible and propensed for military service?

Answer. Increasing the pool of youth, both eligible and with a propensity for military service, is certainly a challenge today as there are fewer ties to military service than there were for prior generations. Furthermore, we cannot limit our recruiting efforts to those Americans who already have a relationship with someone in the military or those with an expressed desire to serve. I believe it important that we aggressively work to expand the youth market by focusing our advertising on educating today's youth on the benefits and value of service in the Navy or Marine Corps. We need to communicate that being part of the Navy-Marine Corps team will allow them to be part of something bigger than themselves, and that their service will help them achieve more than they might otherwise. Also, we need to ensure we reach out to communities like where I grew up to ensure we attract young men and women from underserved communities who would otherwise be unaware of the opportunities the Navy and Marine Corps can provide.

#### MILITARY COMPENSATION

*Question.* What is your assessment of the adequacy of military compensation?

*Answer.* Attracting and maintaining a highly skilled, well-trained volunteer workforce is essential to mission accomplishment, and, while today's military compensation is competitive with the civilian sector, there is certainly competition for many of the highly-skilled, well trained personnel who are serving in both the Navy and Marine Corps. If confirmed, I will work closely with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we continue to compensate all sailors and marines competitively for their sacrifice and service. Additionally, we will need to ensure we offer appropriate incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, to retain those sailors and marines with high demand skills that are critical to mission success.

*Question.* What recommendations would you have for controlling the rising cost of personnel?

*Answer.* Just like in the private sector, personnel costs consume the highest portion of overall operating costs. I understand military compensation, relative to the civilian marketplace, remains very competitive—and this is as it should be if the Navy and Marine Corps want to attract, access, and retain talent. I do, however, believe there are opportunities to improve the way we compensate our Servicemembers that will help to control the rising costs of military personnel. If confirmed, I'll consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to assess our personnel costs to ensure that our compensation programs (including special and incentive pays) that target key skillsets critical to today's Naval force are retained, while seeking to eliminate or modify those programs that do not contribute to mission success.

#### THE GI BILL, VOLUNTARY EDUCATION, AND CREDENTIALING PROGRAMS

*Question.* Do Navy and Marine Corps Voluntary Education Programs contribute to military readiness, in your view? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* I believe that Voluntary Education Programs contribute greatly to military readiness. An educated force is a diverse, skilled, adaptable, and flexible force that is more capable of tackling emerging threats and challenges around the globe. Voluntary Education Programs also function as talent management tools by enabling sailors and marines to become more competitive for promotion, assignment, and retention. An educated force will help the Department to accomplish any mission the Nation demands.

*Question.* What progress have the Navy and Marine Corps made in identifying and leveraging credentialing programs, both to enhance a sailor or Marine's ability to perform his/her official duties, and to qualify the sailor or Marine for meaningful civilian employment on separation from the military?

*Answer.* The Department of the Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) program provides sailors, marines, and DON civilians opportunities to obtain licenses and certifications to validate their knowledge and experience and open doors to new opportunities in the Navy and in the civilian community. It is my understanding that Navy COOL currently funds over 2,700 certificates/licenses with opportunities for sailors in every rating. These certifications both professionalize the workforce and can assist sailors in qualifying for meaningful civilian employment upon transition. It is also my understanding that the Marine Corps COOL program provides marines with similar opportunities to attain certification and licenses related to their Military Occupational Specialties. These credentials are tied to civilian certificates and can be carried into the civilian world when marines transition. The majority of Marine Corps COOL users access the site through a mobile device, a unique aspect of Marine Corps COOL. I understand, Navy has also developed a mobile app for smart phone and other portable data devices.

*Question.* What is your vision of the role and mission of the Naval Community College?

*Answer.* The Naval Community College will allow the Department the ability to become a better-educated and more capable force. The degree programs offered by the Naval Community College's general education curriculum will help sailors and marines to develop better critical-thinking skills, while the NCC's professional concentrations will boost readiness by increasing the competence, knowledge, and abilities of sailors and marines in areas that are relevant to mission-critical naval operations.

#### NON-DEPLOYABLE SERVICEMEMBERS

*Question.* In your view, should sailors and marines who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months be subject either to separation from the service or referral to the Disability Evaluation System, as is current Department policy?

*Answer.* The Navy and Marine Corps are expeditionary forces. As such, sailors and marines should be capable of deploying. I do recognize, however, that there will

be situations where it may be in the best interest of the service for a sailor or marine who is non-deployable to be retained. I understand the current policy allows the Secretaries of the Military Departments to retain servicemembers who are non-deployable in excess of 12 consecutive months, on a case-by-case basis, if determined to be in the best interest of the service. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop policies that will enable everyone who enters the Navy or Marine Corps, and those already serving, to remain deployable.

*Question.* Under what circumstances would the retention of a servicemember who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the service”?

*Answer.* My understanding of the current policy is that servicemembers who are non-deployable in excess of 12 consecutive months may be retained, on a case-by-case basis, if determined to be in the best interest of the service. The policy makes sense because there can be myriad circumstances that may warrant an exception. Perhaps a sailor or marines requires more than 12 months to recover fully from an injury or wound that caused their non-deployable status. There could be a situation where a sailor or marine possesses special skills that can be performed from their homeport or base. In both of these examples, it might be worthwhile or necessary to retain the sailor or marine rather than to separate them and have to access and train a replacement. If confirmed, I will ensure that retention determinations for non-deployability are made judiciously and fairly within the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* In your view, should a sailor or marine’s readiness to perform the required specific missions, functions, and tasks in the context of a particular deployment also be considered in determining whether that servicemember is deployable?

*Answer.* Without addressing a specific situation, I would say, yes; generally, a sailor or marine’s readiness to perform the required missions, functions, and tasks of a particular deployment should be considered in determining whether that servicemember is deployable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop policies that will enable everyone who enters the Navy or Marine Corps, and those already serving, to remain deployable.

*Question.* What are your ideas for addressing the challenges of medical non-deployability in the reserve components?

*Answer.* I do not have specific information or data on the challenges of medical non-deployability within the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve, but, if confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand the issue and its impact on the Reserve components and to ensure Reserve sailors and marines are ready to deploy when needed.

*Question.* The new DOD transgender policy (set forth in DODI 1300.28) states “any determination that a transgender Servicemember is non-deployable at any time will be consistent with established Military Department and Service standards, as applied to other Servicemembers whose deployability is similarly affected in comparable circumstances unrelated to gender transition.” The same policy requires commanders to review and approve servicemember requests to transition gender in a manner that “maintains military readiness by minimizing impacts to the mission (including deployment, operational, training, and exercise schedules, and critical skills availability).”

What Department of the Navy standards and policies related to a sailor or marine’s ability to deploy will be applied to transgender servicemembers undergoing gender transition procedures or treatment?

*Answer.* While I have not had an opportunity to become fully informed on the Department of the Navy’s standards and policies regarding deployability, my understanding is that a transgender sailor or marine’s ability to deploy will be handled in the same way as any other sailor or marine undergoing comparable medical procedures or treatment unrelated to gender transition. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop a full understanding of current standards.

*Question.* As the Navy implements the DOD policy, what level of command will be responsible for balancing servicemember requests to transition gender while maintaining military readiness?

*Answer.* I understand the Department of the Navy is in the process of updating its policy to comply with DoD policy. I do not have access to DON-internal deliberations, so I do not know what current level of command will be responsible for that decision. If confirmed, I will work with Department leaders to understand what level of command has been identified and, if necessary, direct revisions to the Department of the Navy policy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that commanders are permitted to deny or delay gender transition requests if it such a request would degrade unit readiness and deployability?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with Department of the Navy (DON) leaders, as well as the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery medical professionals, to ensure DON policies balance the medical needs of affected sailors and marines with a unit's readiness and ability to deploy.

#### MILITARY FAMILY READINESS AND SUPPORT

*Question.* What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for sailors, marines, and their families?

*Answer.* Military families serve alongside our sailors and marines, and I believe that family readiness is inherently tied to unit readiness and our ability to achieve the National Defense Strategy mission. It is crucial that servicemembers can deploy far from home and know that programs and services are in place to support their families during these absences. As a former Naval Officer who spent a significant amount of time deployed away from my family, I am cognizant of the many sacrifices military families make on a daily basis. If confirmed, I will be steadfast in my support for programs that support spouses and families, from child care to personal financial readiness and other life skills to quality privatized housing.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will meet with Navy and Marine Corps leaders as well as military families, to learn about the effectiveness of our family readiness programs. Both the Navy and the Marine Corps offer a wide-ranging assortment of programs and resources to address issues these issues. I am also a firm believer in exercising strong oversight. Family readiness will be one of my main concerns if I am confirmed.

*Question.* Of all Military Services, the Navy has the largest and longest waitlist for servicemembers to receive military childcare services.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that military families are provided with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?

*Answer.* I recall firsthand the importance of childcare while I was on Active Duty. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are exploring a multi-pronged approach to address the high demand of childcare, to include expanding fee assistance, renovating older facilities, and nurturing community partnerships that may more rapidly provide capacity. I understand some installations are collaborating with local municipalities to expand daycare, providing a benefit for military families and their civilian neighbors. If confirmed, I will further consider these approaches and explore other innovative ways to address this critical issue.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you reduce the wait time for sailors to receive access to military childcare in a timely fashion?

*Answer.* Childcare is a critical issue for military families, especially in the current environment and challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will review the current wait time mitigations being employed by the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as their sister Services, to develop an innovative strategy that addresses identified shortfalls. I would want to include recommendations by Senior Enlisted Advisors and hear directly from families to understand their needs and their ideas.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as to Active Navy and Marine families who do not reside near a military installation?

*Answer.* Support for Navy and Marine Reserve Component families presents obstacles not faced by those who reside near a military installation. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership, both Active and Reserve, to make sure these components are benefitting from appropriate support structures. I will also engage families to confirm that their needs are being met. Furthermore, the pandemic caused many industries to use technology for delivery of programs and services. If confirmed, I would ensure that any innovative best practices are incorporated into the delivery of family readiness programs for Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as those who do not reside near a military installation.

*Question.* In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting readiness of the force and family?

*Answer.* Non-medical counseling promotes readiness of the force and family by addressing day to day stressors of military life through supportive, solution-focused counseling.

Although I am not familiar with current Department of Navy processes used to determine when it is appropriate to utilize a DOD Military Family Life Counselor, in lieu of other Family Readiness counseling services, I do know non-medical counseling is a key resource. If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand how that determination is made, the current scope of work performed by DOD Military Family Life Counselors, and how best to utilize all resources moving forward.

#### SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

*Question.* What is your view of the overall effectiveness of the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?

*Answer.* As the parent of a former EFMP spouse and child, I understand the importance of the Exceptional Family Member Program. It is extremely important that sailors and marines are assigned to locations where the required medical services and educational support are available for spouses and children with special needs. I do not have current Navy or Marine Corps internal data regarding the objectives and measures of effectiveness for the EFMP program, so it would be premature for me to provide an assessment at this point. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure this program is poised to best support sailors, marines and their families.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you incentivize servicemember enrollment in EFMP?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand barriers to enrollment and to consider whether incentives may be needed and how best to address them. Our commanding officers and senior enlisted advisors are essential to this process in ensuring our sailors and marines are aware.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you empower military families to advocate and access individualized educational programs and other support to which their family member is entitled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including from public schools in the vicinity of military installations?

*Answer.* Both Navy and Marine Corps provide legal assistance to families when additional educational support is required. I understand the services have hired several skilled attorneys and other professionals, locating them in Fleet concentration areas to support families who encounter challenges. As a parent of children who have both benefited from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and personally experienced the challenges that do exist, I am most sensitive to the existing concerns of our military families impacted by these situations. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to better understand the current challenges servicemembers and their families face in accessing their entitlements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As necessary, I will enlist the support and expertise of others within the U.S. government, and, as needed, members of Congress, to ensure our military families' rights are protected.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you enhance support to a servicemember in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs, regardless of where that family member is located?

*Answer.* I do not have Department of the Navy internal data that would help me understand the current challenges sailors and marines and their families face in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs. I am, however, a beneficiary of TRICARE and, if confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand the scope of the challenges and potential solutions to ensure our servicemembers and their families have the support they deserve, regardless of their location.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would work with Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners and military commanders to ensure that the needs of servicemembers with an exceptional family member are considered in the military housing assignment process?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to better understand the current issues and challenges faced by our families with special needs and to ensure that our Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners meet the housing needs of these families in compliance with all fair housing and disability laws.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you eliminate or reduce the bureaucratic administrative burdens currently experienced by EFMP participants, and ensure that EFMP services are consistent across services?

Answer. I greatly appreciate Congress' Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA directed standardization of the EFMP across the Military Departments. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps, along with their sister Services, are participating on an Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness-led working group to increase standardization and expand communication methods for families with special needs. If confirmed, I will engage with Navy and Marine Corps leaders and EFMP participants to review administrative requirements and understand potential areas to reduce administrative requirements while maintaining data needed to measure program effectiveness and ensure accountability.

#### MILITARY HOUSING PRIVATIZATION INITIATIVE (MHPI)

*Question.* In the Fiscal Year 1996 NDAA, Congress established the MHPI, providing DOD with the authority to obtain private-sector financing and management to repair, renovate, construct, and operate military housing. DOD has since privatized 99 percent of its domestic housing. The Senate Armed Services Committee held three hearings to address concerns voiced by military families living in privatized housing that the program had been grossly mismanaged by certain private partners; that military and chain of command oversight were non-existent; and that in speaking out about the appalling condition of the quarters in which they lived, they were opening themselves and their military sponsors to reprisal.

*Question.* What have the Navy and the Marine Corps done to address sailor, Marine, and family member concerns regarding the untenable living conditions prevalent in certain privatized housing locales?

Answer. It is my understanding the DON has increased Active leadership by installation, regional, and unit Commanders; improved oversight of project owner compliance with Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) agreements, and improved communications to regain resident trust. Of significant importance, in June, the Department reported that all MHPI companies at all DON installations have fully implemented all 18 Tenant Bill of Rights contained in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2020.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to reinforce the accountability of the Navy and Marine Corps chains of command for oversight of the MHPI program as it affects their sailors, marines, and military families?

Answer. The DON must provide safe, high-quality, well-maintained homes to its Servicemembers and their families. If confirmed, I will ensure sustained chain-of-command involvement and oversight. I will drive continued identification of systemic issues and process improvements. In so doing, I will leverage, and remain consistent with, the efforts of the DOD Chief Housing Office and the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force to enhance the quality of life for the DON's most important asset—its people.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to establish accountability in MHPI “contractors”, for strict adherence to the terms of their “partnership agreements” with the Navy or Marine Corps?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure the requirements contained in the NDAA for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 are incorporated in the business agreements with MHPI project companies creating additional accountability for the MHPI project companies.

*Question.* The Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA was clear—the Tenants Bill of Rights for military personnel living in privatized housing must include three basic items: the right to dispute resolution, the ability to withhold rent, and access to a home's maintenance history. Yet DOD's recently released Tenant Bill of Rights included none of these things.

If confirmed, what would you do to address these omissions?

Answer. I understand that in June, the DON reported that all MHPI companies at all DON installations have voluntarily fully implemented the 18 Tenant Bill of Rights contained in the NDAA for fiscal year 2020, including the right to dispute resolution, the ability to withhold rent, and access to a home's maintenance history. If confirmed, I will work with the MHPI companies to incorporate these rights in the business agreements with MHPI project companies.

*Question.* Given the challenges associated with the MHPI, what value do you perceive in the Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA's codification in law of the position of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment?

Answer. I believe Secretariat-level leadership is essential to promulgating effective policy and the guidance necessary to address the challenges associated with oversight of MHPI housing. Congressional codification of the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment ensures the continuity and stability of that leadership.

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Question.* The number of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee. Over the past two years, five sailors assigned to the U.S.S. George H.W. Bush committed suicide.

Has the Navy conducted a comprehensive review of the Bush suicides to determine whether there were any common causal factors?

*Answer.* Suicide is a complex problem. Regarding the tragic deaths on the Bush, it is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all sailors and marines and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

*Question.* If so, what did the Navy find?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. I have not reviewed the report and cannot comment on the individual findings or initiatives. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all sailors, marines, and civilians and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

*Question.* What actions has the Navy taken to prevent the suicides of other sailors assigned to the Bush?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. I have not reviewed the report and cannot comment on the individual findings or initiatives. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all sailors, marines, and civilians and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to maintain a strong focus on preventing suicides in the Active Navy and Marine Corps, the Navy and Marine Reserve, and in the families of your sailors and marines?

*Answer.* The loss of any sailor, marine, or civilian to suicide is one too many, and we must remain committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being for all members of our military community. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all sailors, marines and civilians and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care. In addition to prioritizing suicide prevention strategies that are evidence-based and grounded in data, if confirmed, I will address the health of our unit climates to promote connectedness among sailors and marines as well as providing tools to commanders to enhance unit cohesion, maintain a continued sense of purpose and promote peer support.

*Question.* What are your ideas for preventing suicides by curtailing the misuse of lethal means by sailors, marines, and their families?

*Answer.* I understand that practicing lethal means safety reduces the probability of a suicide attempt. If confirmed, I will raise awareness of the importance of lethal means safety, for example, by encouraging the use of gun locks and proper storage of personally-owned firearms, especially during times of increased stress, as well as promoting a proactive position in disposing unused medications. Also, if confirmed, I will work to ensure family members have access to the same lethal means safety material, recognizing the important role families play in intervention and promoting needed mental health services. I will also work with experts to ensure the Department is doing everything possible to prevent suicides.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of sailors and marines across all Components?

*Answer.* I am not familiar with the level of reporting that the Navy and Marine Corps presently follow. If confirmed, I will review what reporting and tracking tools are used by the Navy and Marine Corps and work with the Services to leverage military and civilian data to assess areas where the Department can improve. Further, if confirmed, I will collaborate with key stakeholders across the Department

of Defense and other federal agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, gleaned best practices, identifying trends and sharing resources.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROGRAMS

*Question.* In your view, are the policies, programs, and training that the Department of the Navy has put in place to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault adequate and effective?

*Answer.* Sexual assault and other harmful behaviors must never be tolerated. Offenders must be held accountable and marine, sailor and civilian victims should have access to the support they need. I understand that both services within the Department are unyielding in their pursuit to reduce the prevalence of these behaviors and ensuring comprehensive care to those who seek help. I understand the Department's commitment to prevention of sexual harassment and assault is comprehensive and includes focus on the culture and climate within the Navy and Marine Corps. There is more to be done and, if confirmed, I will prioritize these programs, ensuring they have the support and resources they need to succeed. I will focus on healthy and positive environments, where leaders at all levels foster a climate in which servicemembers and civilians have the opportunity to thrive.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to increase focus on the prevention of sexual assaults?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will focus on innovative and evidenced-based prevention programs and use data to assess for high risk behaviors. I will increase emphasis on addressing emerging problematic behaviors before they escalate. That includes early interventions to eliminate gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and workplace hostility. I will continue to prioritize professional development, promoting the enduring proficiencies to foster positive behaviors. I will also continue to create policies that support those who come forward and/or are in need of help.

*Question.* What is your view of the necessity of affording a victim both restricted and unrestricted options to report sexual harassment?

*Answer.* We know sexual harassment is underreported. I believe the Department of the Navy should explore all avenues to reduce barriers for marines, sailors and civilians to come forward and report sexual harassment. This includes promoting awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment in order for leaders and peers to intervene early and often. I am aware that Secretary Austin's Independent Review Commission recommended several additional mechanisms to improve sexual harassment prevention, response, and reporting and, if confirmed, will work to make those needed improvements. Increased awareness of the true prevalence of sexual harassment, through enhanced reporting options, will better protect our people and inform our training and policies.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to improve the quality of investigations into allegations of sexual harassment?

*Answer.* Allegations of sexual harassment must always be taken seriously, as harassing behaviors harm our people and can often precede other negative and criminal behaviors, like sexual assault. I have not yet seen Department of the Navy specific data on the quality of the investigations but, if confirmed, will review existing processes and implement necessary improvements to ensure high quality, fair, and thorough investigations are conducted.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the adequacy of Navy and Marine Corps resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

*Answer.* I understand the Department of the Navy has a comprehensive and multi-faceted response system for victims but we will continue to evolve and enhance existing policies, training and processes as needed. If confirmed, I will underscore the high priority for care and support, as well as explore best practices and services. In addition, we must ensure that all Servicemembers—both in the Active and Reserve components— and civilians are aware of and have access to of all resources available to them. Access to the Victims' Legal Counsel and 24/7 medical and supportive services are critical to taking care of our marines, sailors and civilians and they must be appropriately resourced and promoted.

*Question.* What is your assessment of protections against retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault and/or harassment?

*Answer.* Retaliation and reprisal are detrimental actions that negatively impact the well-being of our people. In addition to the harm done to the individual, there is a degradation of trust within a unit and a substantial setback to overall mission readiness. We have a responsibility to hold our leaders accountable. I understand that there is greater emphasis being placed on assessing for retaliatory behaviors among first responders and key stakeholders and those instances are highlighted at

monthly case management group meetings to be swiftly addressed. More needs to be done to bring awareness to what comprises these behaviors, and how to report them should they arise.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove Navy and Marine Corps commanders from case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

*Answer.* Despite previous efforts, sexual assault and harassment remain persistent and corrosive problems. The Secretary of Defense committed that we must do more to counter them and in so doing, consider outside views and ideas, and be transparent where we have fallen short. I agree with him. I am committed to exploring all promising ideas to address these problems. Having said that, military commanders are responsible for everything that happens in their units. As such, they play a key role in the disciplinary process. We must have a military justice system that is effective in an operational and forward deployed environment. While I will always remain open minded about changes to the system, I remain cautious about changes that could negatively impact a commander's ability to lead. If confirmed, I will remain committed to having an open mind and will work towards the effective implementation of any directed reforms.

#### JUVENILE PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:

*Question.* What actions has the Department of the Navy taken to regularize policies and programs for responding to, investigating, adjudicating, and documenting allegations of juvenile problematic sexual behavior on Navy and Marine Corps installations?

*Answer.* I am aware that the Navy and Marine Corps have developed resources for parents regarding healthy sexual development and have issued policies requiring the investigation of juvenile misconduct and referral of allegations of problematic sexual behavior of children and youth to Family Advocacy for assessment, treatment, and victim assistance. It is my understanding that the Family Advocacy Program expanded its portfolio to address problematic sexual behavior in children and youth through a coordinated community response. The ultimate goal of this expansion is to develop the capacity to identify, report, respond, and intervene with appropriate treatment and services to help military-affiliated children, youth, and their families who have been impacted. The most serious cases may warrant referral to civilian authorities for further investigation and/or determination of disposition. If confirmed, I will fully support this policy.

*Question.* How does the Department of the Navy ensure that the victims of juvenile problematic sexual behavior receive the care, treatment, support, and advocacy services they need?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department of the Navy Family Advocacy multidisciplinary teams engage a community approach to intervene and provide services to children and families impacted by problematic sexual behaviors. These teams provide an array of services in a child-focused setting through collaborative relationships with system and community partners and are well-suited to address the needs of children and families impacted by problematic sexual behaviors. If confirmed, I will continue to support this approach to ensure the best care, treatment, and support is readily available in an effort to reduce the risk of problematic sexual behaviors from reoccurring.

*Question.* In your view, does the Department of the Navy have a mechanism to hold accountable, as appropriate, and provide treatment to juveniles who engage in problematic sexual behavior?

*Answer.* I am aware that the Family Advocacy Program reports incidents of problematic sexual behavior to law enforcement to determine whether a separate criminal investigation is warranted. Family Advocacy also provides comprehensive assessments for any impacted children, and recommends or provides evidence-based treatment. If confirmed, I will ensure relationships are established with the Department of Justice and other appropriate civilian authorities to work through issues of jurisdictional authority for prosecution, if and when appropriate.

*Question.* Does the Department of the Navy require any additional authorities to establish and maintain the centralized database on child and youth problematic sexual behavior required by section 1089 of the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA?

*Answer.* I do not have sufficient information to answer this question; however, if confirmed, I will work closely with the Navy and Marine Corps leadership and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to determine whether additional authorities are needed to ensure we are meeting the requirements established in section 1089 of the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA. The well-being and safety of service families, including and especially their children is extremely important to me. Further, I will revise,

as necessary, policies and procedures to reflect best practices to meet the needs of all the families and children served.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE IN NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FAMILIES

*Question.* What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the Navy and Marine Corps, and, if confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?

*Answer.* Domestic violence and child abuse are intolerable and incompatible with service in the Navy and Marine Corps. My understanding is that the data concerning these cases is reflective of national trends. Even one incident of abuse is one too many. Understanding the unique pressures of deployment, extended family separations, and our national security mission are vital to addressing these issues. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure that we equip sailors and marines and their families with the tools necessary to deal with military life stressors in order to reduce domestic violence and child abuse.

*Question.* In your view, what more can the Navy and Marine Corps do to prevent child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?

*Answer.* The youthful demographics of the Navy and Marine Corps, coupled with the demands of the military lifestyle, indicate to me that one of the most important things to do is to engage early and often in order to provide life skills. Teaching sailors, marines, and their family members how to recognize and deal positively with high-tempo operations and the unique stressors associated with military service is key to combating domestic violence and child abuse. If confirmed, I am committed to working with our Navy and Marine Corps leaders to determine which programs make a difference and provide all possible support to our sailors, marines and their families.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Family Advocacy Programs in the Navy and Marine Corps strike the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Family Advocacy Program provides a wide range of services aimed at preventing and responding to violence and other harmful behaviors in relationships and that the program focuses on advocacy, treatment and rehabilitation, and is not disciplinary or punitive in nature. Accountability is handled through the military justice system, which allows the Family Advocacy Program to focus on prevention and treatment. If confirmed, I pledge to work to ensure that we are doing everything possible to address these incidents and that cases of criminal abuse are subject to review and action by the appropriate entities.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE:

*Question.* In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, 14.1 percent of female and 5.1 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

In your view, do Navy and Marine Corps policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide leaders, supervisors, and managers, with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the Navy and Marine Corps?

*Answer.* I understand there are several avenues available for DON civilians and military members to report complaints of harassment and discrimination. Each of these avenues include both formal and informal procedures. The EEO program has a complaints tracking system which EEO officials review, monitor and assess. If confirmed, I will review the DON policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of harassment or discrimination complaints, whether formal or informal, through all programs to ensure the DON has an accurate picture of the prevalence of these adverse behaviors and explore ways to prevent them.

*Question.* Do the Navy and Marine Corps policies and processes for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide leaders, supervisors, and managers, with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators?

*Answer.* I understand the EEO program has a complaints tracking system which EEO officials review, monitor and assess. The system contains a variety of data fields, including the names of the alleged perpetrators. If confirmed, I will review the DON policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of harassment or discrimination complaints, whether formal or informal, through all programs, not just EEO, to ensure the DON has a means of identifying repeat perpetrators.

*Question.* What actions has the Navy and Marine Corps taken to establish a modern, comprehensive harassment prevention and response policy and program for the Department of the Navy civilian workforce?

*Answer.* Harassment jeopardizes combat readiness and mission accomplishment, weakens trust, and erodes organizational cohesion. Harassment is fundamentally at odds with the obligations of Servicemembers and civilian employees to treat others with dignity and respect. I understand there are several avenues available for DON civilians and military members to report complaints of harassment and discrimination. I am not aware of specific actions that the Navy and Marine Corps have taken to address harassment in a comprehensive manner for the civilian workforce. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of the Navy does not tolerate or condone harassment and I will review the DON policies and processes to ensure the policies comprehensively address harassment prevention and response and comply with applicable laws, regulations and policies.

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY (USNA) AND THE RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC)

*Question.* Currently, USNA graduates incur a five-year Active Duty service commitment following graduation. Congress last revised initial Active Duty service obligations for Academy graduates in 1996. Since then, the average real cost per graduate has increased by nearly 20 percent according to the Congressional Research Service. Additionally, recent studies suggest that Service Academy graduates have the lowest junior officer retention rates of all officer commissioning sources, despite being the most expensive.

*Question.* Do you believe the five-year Active Duty service commitment required of USNA graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?

*Answer.* As a Naval Academy graduate and someone who has many years of leadership experience in the military and the private sector, I understand and appreciate the American taxpayer's investment in the Academy and its graduates, and I believe the investment is well worth the cost. Our Service Academies provide exceptional education and training for many of the future leaders of our military, both those serving in uniform and those serving in our outstanding civilian workforce.

*Question.* In your view, does USNA contribute to the pool of Navy and Marine Corps officer accessions commensurate with the attendant costs? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* As a graduate of the Naval Academy, I believe it is certainly an invaluable asset to the Nation. The Naval Academy was established in 1845 to produce professional officers in the Naval Service. The Department of the Navy's current triad of major officer accession programs (Naval Academy, NROTC, and OCS) dates back to 1946 and has served the Navy and Marine Corps well. My understanding is that when factoring in the cost of post-commissioning accession training (i.e. flight school, nuclear power school) and the historically longer retention rates of USNA-sourced officers, the Naval Academy has proven to be an extremely effective commissioning source that is representative of the entire country due to the congressional nomination process. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff to examine the associated costs of running the Naval Academy and look for potential efficiencies without sacrificing the quality of the education and training the midshipmen receive.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support increasing the Active Duty service obligation for USNA graduates by one year, to a six-year minimum?

*Answer.* I have not had the opportunity to assess the impacts of increasing the Active Duty service commitment to a six-year minimum. As you know, I am a graduate of the Naval Academy and served well beyond my five-year obligation. I would have to consider the potential impact a longer minimum commitment might have on recruiting the best of America's youth. If confirmed, I would be willing to explore the potential benefits and impacts of increasing the Active Duty service obligation of Naval Academy graduates.

*Question.* What is the Naval ROTC Preparatory Program and is such a program necessary, in your view?

*Answer.* Although I am not well informed on the specifics of the Naval ROTC Preparatory Program, I believe it is similar to the Naval Academy Preparatory School, except that it provides a pre-college preparatory program for Naval ROTC candidates. If confirmed, I will consult with service leadership to learn the specifics of this program and determine whether it is necessary.

*Question.* The Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies for Academic Program Year 2018–2019 documented another increase in the number of sexual assault reports by and

against Military Service Academy cadets and midshipmen. While noting that the Academies had implemented a variety of activities aimed at the prevention of sexual assault, it called out “little evidence of change in long-standing attitudes that deter reporting and help-seeking.”

What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault, and to ensure that those who report harassment or assault are not subject to retaliation or reprisal—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage?

Answer. I believe the USNA and its current Superintendent are highly dedicated to preventing sexual harassment and assault and protecting those who report such conduct. If confirmed, I will remain committed to ensuring a Department where all members can be free from sexual harassment and assault and are protected from retaliation and reprisal for reporting this conduct. This is especially true at the USNA where the Department’s future leaders are being developed. From my own experiences at USNA, I recognize that the value of our service academies is not just producing college graduates; the far more important value is producing the future leaders of the armed forces and our Nation. These future leaders must be committed to our values and expectations. This includes eradicating sexual harassment and sexual assault and ensuring that victims of harassment or assault are not ostracized and their reputations are not damaged. Stopping retaliation and reprisal is critical and we must continue to focus on it. There is no place in the service for a toxic culture that degrades our readiness.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to ensure the free exercise of religion and the accommodation of religious practices?

Answer. I believe that the USNA provides for the free exercise of religion to the maximum extent possible by all Midshipmen who choose to exercise that right in concert with applicable laws, regulations and policies. My view is shaped by my own experience at the USNA, and I understand the USNA has remained consistent in this approach.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at USNA?

Answer. Suicide is a complex problem. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of midshipmen as well as all sailors, marines, and civilians, and continue to support the Department’s current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care. Increasing the awareness of available resources and educating leaders at all levels on risk factors for suicide can help to ensure sustained connection and prevent suicide deaths from occurring.

*Question.* In 2019, the Secretary of Defense signed Directive-type Memorandum (DTM)-19-011, which established a new policy for handling Military Service Academy graduate requests to participate in professional sports. The policy allows graduates to delay their appointment as an Active Duty officer if the Secretary of the Military Department concerned and the Secretary of Defense approve. This policy would appear to circumvent the requirements of title 10, which requires graduates to complete two years of service on Active Duty as an officer before being able to request permission to pursue professional sports as a member of the selected reserve.

What is your opinion of Military Service Academy graduates who request to delay their Active Duty commissioned service obligation in order to pursue professional sports?

Answer. As a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, I can attest to the positive benefit that the sports program can bring to the institution, the Services, Midshipmen, their families, the alumni, and the community. The sports program has a positive impact upon the esprit de corps, it is a valuable recruiting tool and reaches broader potential applicant pools. An avenue for truly exceptional athletes to pursue professional sports immediately can potentially improve the quality of athlete recruited to the USNA with corresponding positive impacts upon the entire brigade. While the sports program has an extremely positive impact upon the Academy, the Academy exists to prepare young women and men to become professional officers of competence, character, and compassion in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. The young people who enter the Academy and receive the benefit of the taxpayer provided education, understand, as did I, the commitment that entering any military academy entails. If confirmed, I would endeavor to take the time to examine the policy and fully understand the benefits and challenges of the policy.

*Question.* Do you agree that for every Naval Academy graduate who is allowed to postpone his service obligation there are many other USNA applicants who were

not appointed as a midshipman, who would have gladly accepted an immediate commission in order to serve their country?

Answer. As a proud graduate of the USNA, I can unequivocally say “yes.” Admission to the USNA is extremely competitive and is a testament to the quality of the program that generates young officers of character for the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* Last year, one USNA graduate was allowed to delay his commission to play professional football.

If confirmed, under what circumstances would you recall him to Active Duty to fulfil his Active Duty service obligation?

Answer. I am not familiar with the specific circumstances of the delay of any individual Midshipman’s commission. I have not had an opportunity to fully review the DTM related to professional sports; however, it is my understanding that the policy requires DOD to annually review each individual case with input from the Service Secretaries. If confirmed, I would fully examine the policy, consult with the senior leadership of the DON, and consider each case individually consistent with the law and the policy.

*Question.* Recently, the Acting Secretary of the Navy denied a request for a USNA graduate to delay his commission to play professional football.

Do you support this decision?

Answer. While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by Acting Secretary Harker related to a Midshipman’s request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of any individual request, any circumstances related to any request, nor any pertinent factors that Acting Secretary Harker may have considered in making any such decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision, I cannot express an opinion.

*Question.* Do you believe the decision made by the Acting Secretary of the Navy in this recent case was an error or an injustice to the affected officer?

Answer. While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by Acting Secretary Harker related to a Midshipman’s request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of any individual request, any circumstances related to any request, or any pertinent factors that Acting Secretary Harker may have considered in making any such decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision, I cannot express an opinion.

*Question.* In your judgment, is it appropriate for the Board for Correction of Naval Records to undo the Acting Secretary of the Navy’s decision in this recent matter?

Answer. Generally, I understand that the Board for Correction of Naval Records is a statutory Board of civilians who consider requests of servicemembers (sailors, marines, reservists, and veterans) to correct errors and remove injustices with respect to any Department of the Navy records. While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by the Secretary of Defense related to a Midshipman’s request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of that particular request, any circumstances related to that request, nor any pertinent factors that the Board for Correction of Naval Records may have considered in making their decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision and the Board processes, I cannot express an opinion.

#### GENDER INTEGRATED TRAINING IN THE MARINE CORPS

*Question.* In 2019, the Marine Corps integrated 50 female recruits into a historically all-male training battalion aboard recruit depot Parris Island. The Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA requires the Marine Corps to gender integrate basic training at Parris Island within five years, and at San Diego within eight years.

In your view, can the Marine Corps fully execute the gender integrated basic training mandate, on the timeline prescribed by the NDAA, while maintaining the readiness and lethality of the Corps?

Answer. Although I do not know the details of the Marine Corps plans to integrate its recruit training at both Parris Island and San Diego, I understand the first gender-integrated company of marines graduated from boot camp in San Diego this past May. Based on this one data point and the Marine Corps’ record of accomplishing its missions, I expect the Marine Corps has a deliberate plan to complete gender-integration at both recruit depots on time. If confirmed, I will consult with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to understand the Marine Corps plan and to ensure its plans comply with the Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA requirements.

#### WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

*Question.* Section 1034 of title 10, U.S. Code, prohibits taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action against a member of the armed forces in retaliation for making a protected communication. Section 2302 of title 5, U.S. Code, pro-

vides similar protections to Federal civilian employees. By definition, protected communications include communications to certain individuals and organizations outside of the chain of command, including the Congress.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sailors, marines, and civilian employees of the Department of the Navy who report fraud, waste, and abuse, or gross mismanagement to appropriate authorities within or outside the chain of command, are protected from reprisal and retaliation, including from the very highest levels of the Executive Branch?

Answer. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of reporting fraud, waste, abuse, and gross mismanagement and protecting personnel who make such reports from reprisal or retaliation. The Department of the Navy benefits from investigations and reviews based on protected communications; and, whistleblower protections for personnel are essential to the integrity of the Department of the Navy and its programs. I believe that the Department of the Navy takes whistleblower allegations seriously and adheres to applicable law, regulations, and rules regarding whistleblower protections. If confirmed, I will ensure that those who are responsible for investigating retaliation, conduct these investigations thoroughly, that personnel who make protected communications are afforded the protections to which they are entitled under the law, and that appropriate administrative or disciplinary actions are taken against personnel who have engaged in illegal retaliation, in accordance with law, regulation, and policy.

#### GENERAL/FLAG OFFICER (G/FO) REDUCTIONS

*Question.* The Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA reduced the number of G/FOs by about 12% Service-wide. Only the Marine Corps was unaffected by these cuts—gaining one GO billet.

What progress has the Navy made in reducing the number of flag officers and restructuring the flag officer grade pyramid?

Answer. I understand that the Department of the Navy is on track to meet the reduction in general/flag officers mandated by the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA. If confirmed, I will continue to implement the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA and work to ensure we have the right number of general/flag officers in both the Navy and Marine Corps to best accomplish our mission.

*Question.* How have Navy and Marine Corps G/FOs been affected by the layering of post-government employment constraints, including the enactment of section 1045 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2017—applicable only to DOD?

Answer. I am personally unaware of any impacts of the enactment of section 1045 of the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps senior leadership to determine if this statute has had any adverse impacts on the retention of their general and flag officers. If so, I am willing work with the Services' leaders and Congress to explore potential solutions to remedy the impacts of the statute.

*Question.* In your view, are caps on G/FO retired pay adversely affecting Navy and Marine Corps senior officer promotions, assignments, and retention at the 3- and 4-star grades? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I have not seen any data on this subject. Although I do not believe officers enter the Service to get wealthy, I suspect that there are some who view the caps on G/FO retired pay as unnecessary barriers to retention. Our most senior general and flag officers assume tremendous responsibility, and I understand that compensation should be commensurate with the significance of these responsibilities. If confirmed, I will consult with the Navy and Marine Corps senior leaders to determine whether existing retired pay caps adversely affect retention at the 3- and 4-star grades.

*Question.* In your view, do the Navy and Marine Corps have in place sufficient training and resources to provide its G/FOs with the training, advice, and assistance they need to avoid and address conflicts of interest, comply with travel regulations, and ensure that government resources—including employee time—are used only for official purposes? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I believe our G/FOs should embody the highest ideals of integrity and ethics. If confirmed, I will review the existing training and resources to ensure both Navy and Marine Corps provide their general and flag officers with the training, advice, and assistance they need to maintain the highest standards of conduct. If there are any deficiencies, I will ensure we resolve them immediately.

## OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REFORMS

*Question.* The John S. McCain NDAA for fiscal year 2019 contained several provisions to modernize the officer personnel management system. These reforms were designed to align officer career management with the priorities outlined in the NDS.

How are the Navy and the Marine Corps implementing these authorities and to what effect?

*Answer.* I understand the authorities granted by the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA have given the Department of the Navy more flexibility to better manage its officer corps. I am aware that the Navy and Marine Corps have used the authority to merit-reorder promotion selection lists; that Navy has allowed officers to “opt out” of promotion screening to accommodate opportunities for career broadening assignments, instituted “up and stay” policies, and expanded its spot promotions in accordance with the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA authorities. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Secretariat staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to understand the impacts of these changes. In this ever-competitive talent market place, I would support pursuit of additional flexibilities for the Department of the Navy to manage its officers, if needed.

*Question.* Are there other authorities that the Navy or the Marine Corps need to modernize the management of their officer personnel?

*Answer.* At this point, I do not have enough knowledge of the current state of officer management policies to make an informed recommendation. However, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a full understanding of authorities available to the Department in manage its officer personnel. If needed, I would support pursuit of additional authorities that would provide more flexibility for the Department of the Navy to manage its officers.

*Question.* In your view, how could the Navy and the Marine Corps’ scrolling and appointments processes be improved so as to improve permeability between the Active and Reserve components?

*Answer.* I do not have enough information on the scrolling and appointments process to provide an informed recommendation. I do believe, however, that our policies should allow greater permeability for officers to move between the Active (regular) and Reserve components without excessive delays for administrative processing. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Services’ leadership to explore potential solutions that would allow for increased and more efficient permeability between the Active (regular) and Reserve components.

## JOINT OFFICER MANAGEMENT

*Question.* In your view, do the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO), and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to General Officer, continue to be consistent with the operational and professional demands of military service line officers?

*Answer.* I believe that modern warfighting, under the command of our combatant commanders, significantly increases the need for our senior officers to have joint perspectives and experience. To be successful, Navy and Marine Corps officers must have a firm grasp on how the other services operate. In my view, the introduction of Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) qualification is invaluable in developing that knowledge. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the requirements for JQO qualification continue to best prepare our officers to operate in a joint environment and for promotion to General / Flag Officer.

*Question.* What additional modifications, if any, would you recommend to JQO prerequisites necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Service-specific leadership experience, as well as adequate professional development?

*Answer.* At this time, I do not have sufficient knowledge of the current specific JQO prerequisites to make any meaningful recommendations. However, if confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a full understanding of the JQO qualification prerequisites, and should I see a need for modifications, make appropriate recommendations at that time.

*Question.* What are your ideas for improving the JQO system better to meet the needs of reserve component officers?

*Answer.* At this time, I do not have sufficient knowledge of the current JQO system and its implications on reserve component officers. However, I do believe that modern warfighting, under the command of our combatant commanders, significantly increases the need for our senior officers to have joint perspectives and expe-

rience. To be successful, all Navy and Marine Corps officers, Active and Reserve, must have a firm grasp on how the other services operate. If confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to determine whether the current JQO system supports the specific needs of their reserve component officers. If it does not, I will work with them to recommend improvements to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense.

*Question.* In your view, should the requirement to be a JQO be eliminated as a consideration in selecting officers for promotion and assignment?

*Answer.* I believe being a JQO can be an essential qualification for most officers. Our Nation fights and operates jointly under the command of our combatant commanders, so understanding how the other services operate is key to success in a joint environment. Working on a joint staff and completing the required joint professional military education will enable Navy and Marine officers, especially as they become more senior, to effectively integrate naval forces into a joint force. If confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to assess the need for officers to be JQOs for promotion and assignment. Should we desire to change that requirement, I will work the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense to propose statutory and policy changes as appropriate.

#### OFFICER PROMOTION POLICIES AND PROCESSES

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure compliance with the requirements of law and regulation regarding the investigation and promotion board consideration of adverse and reportable information in the context of both general and flag officer and O-6 and below promotion selection processes?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure all Navy and Marine Corps officers nominated for promotion meet the required standard of exemplary conduct in accordance with Title 10, U.S. Code and DoD policy. Toward this end, I will ensure compliance with law and policy regarding promotion selection board consideration of adverse and reportable information for general and flag officers, as well as officers in the grades of O-6 and below. I understand that applicable law and DoD policy require substantiated adverse information pertaining to an officer's record be considered as part of the promotion selection board process. I further understand that the record of each board-selected officer undergoes additional, post-board screening to ensure decisions made by Navy and Marine Corps leadership and the Secretary of the Navy are appropriately and fully informed.

*Question.* Do you believe Navy and Marine Corps procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy procedures and practices for reviewing records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President. If confirmed, I will make sure that all Navy and Marine Corps officers nominated for promotion meet the required standard of exemplary conduct in accordance with Title 10, U.S. Code and DoD policy.

*Question.* In your view, are these procedures and practices fair to the individual military officers proceeding through the promotion or assignment process? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* To the best of my knowledge, the current processes for promotion and assignment in both Navy and Marine Corps are designed to be fair to the individual officer and to the benefit of the service. Promotions are governed by statute and well-developed policies to select the best and fully qualified officers. It is my understanding the assignment processes attempt to match an officer's experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities with billets requiring the same. If confirmed, I will engage both the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure their promotion and assignment (talent management) processes are both fair in design and in execution.

#### PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME)

*Question.* What is your view of the Commandant of the Marine Corps' proposal to replace "non-observed academic fitness reports" with an evaluation that documents how well a Marine did at a professional school, assigns the Marine a class rank, and differentiates high-performing marines from low performers?

*Answer.* I support the Commandant's proposal to require a thorough performance evaluation for marines attending professional schools. We should expect 100% effort and acknowledge exemplary performance from marines attending professional schools. By sending a Marine to a professional school, the Commandant is making an investment in their professional development. The requirement for an evaluation that documents the Marine's performance can be useful in determining future assignments.

*Question.* What changes or reform would you recommend to the PME system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the intellectual acumen, military leadership proficiency, and emotional maturity necessary to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps meet the national defense objectives of the future?

*Answer.* As a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval War College, I understand the importance of, and I have benefited from, professional military education. PME is a necessary investment by the Department of the Navy to improve readiness across the force. PME reforms should concentrate on creating a relevant and challenging learning environment for officers and enlisted sailors and marines that is responsive to emerging threats. What is required is an information age approach that is focused on Active, student-centered learning where students work problems in groups, as they would in real situations, allowing them to learn by doing and also from each other. In the end, our marines and sailors must be able to think critically, recognize when change is needed, and possess a bias for action without waiting to be told what to do.

#### EXTREMISM

*Question.* What is your view of the prevalence and effect of extremism in the Navy and Marine Corps?

*Answer.* Extremism is incompatible with the DON's core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. I believe that the vast majority of Department of Navy personnel—sailors, marines, Active and Reserve, and civilians—serve consistently and adhere to their oaths to uphold and defend the U.S. Constitution. I agree with Secretary Austin, General Milley, Admiral Gilday and General Berger that extremism in the military undermines good order and discipline in the force and is detrimental to unit cohesion, morale, and, ultimately, mission accomplishment. I understand that, at the Secretary of Defense's direction, the Department of Navy conducted a series of stand-downs for all personnel to raise awareness, is supporting the Department of Defense Countering Extreme Activity Working Group, and is pursuing efforts internally to counter extremist behaviors. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's support of those efforts.

*Question.* In your view, what beliefs and actions should constitute "extremism?"

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of Defense is presently revising and clarifying its policy pertaining to defining "extremism" and corresponding prohibited extremist activity in order to provide clear guidance to Department personnel. I regard extremism as including activities which would constitute advocacy or use of violence or other illegal means to deprive individuals of their legally guaranteed rights or advocacy or use of violence against the government. I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter extremism while avoiding infringing on constitutionally protected liberties that our servicemembers commit to defending. If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to implement clarified policy pertaining to extremism, to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* In light of ongoing efforts to combat extremism, what are your views on the current DOD policy that states, "A Servicemember's right of expression should be preserved to the maximum extent possible?"

*Answer.* Generally, I agree with the policy because I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter extremism while avoiding infringing on the constitutionally protected liberties that our servicemembers commit to defending. If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to revise and clarify its policy pertaining to extremism, to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Navy and Marine Corps.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to eliminate extremism within the ranks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Services. I believe there has to be a balance between the need to

counter extremist activity while avoiding infringing on constitutionally protected liberties that the servicemembers commit to defending.

#### IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

*Question.* In the fallout of the Glenn Defense Marine Asia (GDMA) scandal, numerous Navy personnel, including a significant number of Navy admirals, were investigated for bribery, corruption, and violations of criminal conflict of interest laws and executive branch ethics regulations. Some were prosecuted and convicted in federal or military courts, and many more were subject to public censure and forced into early retirement from the Navy.

Are you satisfied with the actions the Navy has taken in response to the GDMA scandal to ensure that its officers and other personnel are trained—throughout their careers—on objective ethics and the Navy's core values?

*Answer.* I believe that the vast majority of Department of Navy personnel—sailors, marines, Active and Reserve, and civilians—serve honorably and ethically consistent with the DON's core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. The illegal and unethical behavior involved in the GDMA scandal was inexcusable and antithetical to the DON core values. I am not aware of all the actions the DON has taken in response to the activities discovered as a result of GDMA; however, if confirmed, I am committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards for myself and all DON personnel, particularly, military and civilian leadership.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY CIVILIAN PERSONNEL WORKFORCE

*Question.* In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Navy and Marine Corps in effectively and efficiently managing their civilian workforce?

*Answer.* I believe the impact of unprecedented global disruption in people and technology affects our Navy and Marine Corps workforce just as much as any other organization. To that end, I believe the biggest challenge facing the Department of the Navy is to attract and retain a professional, technical, and industrial trade skill civilian workforce with the right skills to meet the demands of the Department of Navy's mission. We must access and curate the best talent, develop skills for the future, ensure our workforce understands how to harness the power of data, and we must enable them to use technology. If confirmed, I will look to bring my experience from the private sector and review approaches to talent acquisition, workforce development, and compensation practices. Transforming the way the Department performs its work will demand modernization to address the shifting landscape in which our workforce continually operates and it will necessitate having an agile workforce to meet the changing global environment.

*Question.* In your view, do Navy supervisors have adequate authorities to address and remediate employee misconduct and poor duty performance, and ultimately to divest of a civilian employee who fails to meet requisite standards of conduct and performance?

*Answer.* I understand that many authorities exist to address misconduct and poor performance. At this time, I am not aware of any current authorities that are inadequate to discipline or separate employees should they fail to meet the appropriate standard of conduct or performance. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness as well as Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure civilian employees have clear standards of conduct and performance, and supervisors have the appropriate training and authorities to address misconduct and poor performance.

*Question.* If not, what additional authorities or training do Navy supervisors require?

*Answer.* At this time, I am not aware of any additional authorities or training required of Department supervisors. If confirmed, I will seek to understand where additional training may be needed to ensure civilian and military supervisors understand the scope of their authorities, and if needed, I will support the pursuit of additional authorities.

*Question.* How will the Navy and Marine Corps sustain requisite civilian workforce capacity and capability during the impending workforce "bath tub"—a descriptor often used to graphically illustrate the impending loss of civilian workforce expertise due to the retirement of large numbers of baby boomers and the lack of experienced personnel to fill the resulting vacancies?

*Answer.* I have not seen the internal data to know the specifics of these challenges. If confirmed I will listen to Department of the Navy's leaders to understand where the talent gaps may exist and may impact the DON mission. I am informed that the implementation of the Department of the Navy's 2019–2030 Civilian Human Capital Strategy will move the Department toward enhanced mission readi-

ness by ensuring the Department's civilians have the right training and are serving in the right places at the right time. The civilian workforce is a key enabler to warfighting capability—critical to lethality, toughness, and sustainability of our DON operating forces now and in the future.

*Question.* Have the Navy and Marine Corps' experiences to date with the new Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) evidenced the increased supervisor-employee engagement and meaningful "face-to-face" counseling sessions at the core of the program's objectives?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with DON leaders to focus on accountability, engagement, and feedback, key elements from what I know of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP). I understand that the Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey (FEVS) results show an increasing percentage of Department of the Navy employees indicate their supervisors have had conversations about their performance in their last six months, a positive indicator to be sure. I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure that the DPMAP is working as intended with employees clearly understanding of expectations, receiving constructive feedback, and ultimately being recognized for successful performance.

#### SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

*Question.* Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant factors in shaping a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed, what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting candidates for appointment to the Senior Executive Service?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will examine the current Senior Executive Service recruitment, selection and development programs, focusing on selecting leaders who possess technical skills as well as strong leadership and business skills to lead with competence and compassion and deliver results. I will also examine the diversity of the Senior Executive Service, to identify and mitigate any barriers to underrepresented groups attaining these important leadership positions.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that SES under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?

*Answer.* SES members are accountable for their performance and the performance of the teams they lead by delivering results aligned to the strategic goals of the Department. Strong accountability starts with the performance management system with measurable objectives for every SES. If confirmed, I will ensure SES members have clear and measurable goals and objectives to ensure this critical part of the Navy leadership is driving positive organizational performance.

*Question.* Are you satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs currently available across DOD?

*Answer.* I am not familiar with the specifics of SES professional development within the DON. If confirmed, I will fully support the development of the SES and all civilian employees. I will work to understand the array of development programs available with the hopes of enhancing the strengths of the SES corps to lead today and into the future in support of the warfighter.

*Question.* If not, what changes would you make to these programs, if confirmed?

*Answer.* It would be premature for me to identify changes without an assessment of SES development programs. If confirmed, an assessment will help me obtain information on these programs to make informed decisions.

#### CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications) and other information from the Department.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications), and other information as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

SHIPYARD MODERNIZATION

1. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, for the record, will you support the currently planned fiscal year 2023 construction start date for the new drydock at Pearl Harbor?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes. I support the planned construction start for Dry Dock 3 at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (P-209) in 2023.

2. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, even after the upgrades to the four public shipyards, the Navy will barely meet maintenance demands for the current fleet of 296 ships, let alone a future larger fleet of 355 ships or more. How do you think the Navy should go about planning to meet the demands of a future larger fleet?

Mr. DEL TORO. If confirmed, I assure you the Navy will remain focused on continued improvement in maintenance and modernization efforts. Sustaining the future fleet requires the growth of both public and private industrial capability and capacity. A clearly communicated, steady and predictable demand signal is an enabler for making the right future investments. This could include investments in additional dry docks, facilities, manpower, training, and/or material to meet the projected workload.

USS BONHOMME RICHARD FIRE

3. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, what does the loss of the *Bonhomme Richard* mean to our forces in the Pacific?

Mr. DEL TORO. The loss of the *Bonhomme Richard* represents roughly 10 percent of the Navy's Large Deck Amphibious Assault ship capacity. Given that the Navy now has fewer large deck amphibious ships to meet global demands, it will be essential to prioritize global presence requirements, with the stark choice of either reducing commitments in order to maintain current force readiness levels or continuing with planned deployments while placing more stress on the force. If confirmed, I will work with the CNO and Commandant to provide ready forces to the combatant commanders as prioritized by the National Defense Strategy and Global Force Man-

agement Allocation Plan in the near term, while working with leaders across the Department of the Navy to determine the best path to recovering the lost capacity over the FYDP.

#### FUTURE SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE FLEET

4. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) set a 355 ship Navy as policy, currently, the Navy has 296 ships. The Navy released a 30 year shipbuilding plan recently, but it did not provide any specific details about the future size and composition of the Fleet. Instead, it gave a wide range of 398 ships (low estimate) and 512 ships (high estimate) when also counting unmanned vessels. How many ships do you think we need in the Fleet?

Mr. DEL TORO. Although I am aware of recent studies within the Department, I have not had access to the studies due to their classification level. I believe the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps must be sized appropriately to support the Joint Force and to deter and, if required, defeat strategic competitors such as China and Russia. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps team is sized appropriately to carry out assigned missions in support of the National Defense Strategy.

5. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, what is your opinion on the future composition of our Fleet—are you in favor of additional small combatants and submarines as currently planned or some other combination?

Mr. DEL TORO. The strategic environment is rapidly changing due to the pace that strategic competitors are fielding technologically advanced missiles and other weapons designed to reduce the United States Navy's advantages at sea. As I understand it, smaller combatants with the right capabilities and lethality are important to the Navy's concept of Distributed Operations, and submarines give us a great advantage undersea. I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps should constantly assess all platforms, as well as practices, techniques, and procedures. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant and the CNO to ensure that our fleets remain in balance to deter or defeat a peer adversary.

6. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, how do you think unmanned surface and sub-surface vessels should play into the overall numbers?

Mr. DEL TORO. I believe unmanned systems will be important in all warfighting domains as part of the Department of the Navy's force architecture. It is important to develop a seamlessly integrated manned/unmanned force, with unmanned systems contributing the unique and disruptive elements they can provide. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps team is structured appropriately to carry out assigned missions in support of the National Defense Strategy.

7. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, as the Navy looks to expand its fleet size, what steps should the Government take to ensure the industrial base is prepared to meet this challenge?

Mr. DEL TORO. In my view, the Navy should provide stable procurement and funding profiles and deliberately reduce acquisition risk, ensuring that industry can meet the demand efficiently and effectively. The Navy should continuously collaborate with industry on capacity and risk, including issues of importance throughout the supply chain.

#### UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

8. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, China's navy has grown rapidly in recent years and they have undertaken increasingly provocative actions in the South China Sea, after decades of building artificial islands there. Should the United States ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as a step to promote a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific"?

Mr. DEL TORO. The global mobility of U.S. forces relies on the navigation and overflight provisions contained in the Law of the Sea Convention. I understand the United States has recognized that these provisions of the Law of the Sea Convention reflect customary international law applicable to all nations, whether or not a nation has ratified the Convention. However, accession would "lock in" the customary rights and freedoms reflected in the UNCLOS, and would give the U.S. a seat at the table to set the course for future law of the sea discussions on a coequal level with member states like China and Russia. China continues a more aggressive posture in the South China Sea. As widely reported, Chinese warships, law enforce-

ment vessels, and other PRC-flagged vessels have failed to respect the rights of maritime nations under the Convention. As a party to the Convention, U.S. objections to these violations would have more force and credibility, and would enhance its ability to respond to excessive maritime claims, land reclamation, and militarization efforts by China in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will look further into this matter and will work with our partners and allies in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere to address China's increasing threats to the rules based international order, and to preserve and enhance our global maritime mobility.

#### HONORING FILIPINO NAVY VETERANS

9. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Del Toro, in May I sent a letter to the Acting Secretary of the Navy requesting a warship be named after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, the only Filipino-American sailor awarded the Medal of Honor. Naming a naval warship in his honor would recognize not only his valor, but the tens of thousands of Filipinos who have served our great Nation for the past 120 years. I urge you to give this request the fullest possible consideration as you move forward with the ship naming process. What are your thoughts on naming a Navy ship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad?

Mr. DEL TORO. I fully recognize the contributions of Filipinos to our Navy have been great. I understand that the Department is currently reviewing its policies and conventions for naming ships, bases, and other assets to develop recommendations for measures to improve diverse representation. If confirmed, I will complete that review and consider all naming requests to ensure that the contributions from all of the diverse segments of the Naval service are celebrated. Further, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of the Navy remains committed to making transformative and meaningful steps that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ANGUS S. KING, JR.

##### DDG PROCUREMENT CONCERNS

10. Senator KING. Mr. Del Toro, regarding the DDG(X) program, I believe it is important that the Navy consult as early as possible with the shipbuilders and major systems providers to have as mature a design as possible and avoid the first ship in the class problems that have plagued us in recent years. I understand that some of these conversations are ongoing—what can you tell us about how this process is unfolding and how do you foresee it proceeding?

Mr. DEL TORO. Our Nation's large surface combatant shipyards build the most lethal and survivable surface combatants in the world and that is not going to change. Through each step of the DDG(X) design, the shipyards will be called upon to bring their talent, expertise, and capacity to the effort, just as I, if confirmed, will call upon the Navy to bring our strengths to the effort. If confirmed, I will ensure that during early design efforts, the Navy will craft an acquisition strategy that is informed by collaboration with industry, meets the requirements of the defense acquisition system, and sets DDG(X) on a course to successfully follow the Arleigh Burke Class.

11. Senator KING. Mr. Del Toro, if confirmed, how will you ensure that we are not repeating the mistakes of the past?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that the DDG(X) design development efforts represent a return to the deliberate process of surface combatant design evolution that delivered CG 47 and DDG 51 classes; a break with the concurrent development method used for DDG 1000 and other classes. It is my understanding that DDG(X) will initially bring the DDG 51 Flight III's combat system to a hull and a propulsion system that has been prototyped and tested to reduce acquisition risk. I assure you that if confirmed, lessons learned from acquisition and resourcing strategies that have been proven ineffective or inefficient will be applied across the spectrum of system and platform development.

12. Senator KING. Mr. Del Toro, I have been increasingly concerned with our shipbuilding industrial base and the threats that any interruptions would mean for the overall infrastructure. Specifically at Bath Iron Works, there is a potential for a significant workload cliff within 5 years under the current plan. Do you agree that this industrial base is not something that can be "turned on and off," and how are you committed to ensuring we avoid these problems?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that the Navy believes that steady acquisition profiles enable the Nation's shipyards and industrial supplier base to achieve

the capability and capacity to build and maintain the Navy's future fleet. Multi-year procurement contracts, surface combatant industrial base projects, and shipyard infrastructure projects support a healthy surface combatant industrial base. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work closely with the Administration, Congress, and our industrial base partners to ensure we maintain a healthy and viable shipbuilding industrial base to meet the national security needs of our Nation and to address your specific concerns regarding Bath Iron Works.

13. Senator KING. Mr. Del Toro, what are the benefits of multi-year contracts for destroyer production, in terms of cost savings and impacts to the industrial base?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that destroyer multi-year procurement contracts generate savings compared to annual procurement cost estimates; provide stable production of surface combatants; provide a long-term commitment to the shipbuilding industrial base that stabilizes shipyard employment levels; provide an incentive for industry capital investment for productivity improvements that benefit several Navy shipbuilding programs; and reduce disruptions in sub-tier vendor delivery schedules. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work with the Administration and Congress to maximize use authorizations such as multi-year authority, where they benefit the Navy, Industrial Base, and Nation.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GARY PETERS

##### EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

14. Senator PETERS. Mr. Del Toro, in 2019, Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Modly began implementing parts of the Education for Seapower (E4S) initiative by breaking ground on the Naval Community College (USNCC) and hiring John Kroeger to serve as the Department's first Chief Learning Officer (CLO). The CLO position was created to lead and unify all Navy and Marine Corps formal education programs. It has been vacant for a year, do you intend to fill this position?

Mr. DEL TORO. The Department of the Navy has made great progress in enhancing education opportunities and programs since the Education for Seapower (E4S) initiative began in 2019. It is my understanding that the Secretary of the Navy assigned primary responsibility for naval education to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN(M&RA)) in November 2020 including all responsibilities previously delegated to the Chief Learning Officer. If confirmed, the professional military education of our personnel will be a very high priority for me and I look forward to working closely with ASN(M&RA) to continue the Department's efforts to improve and modernize Navy and Marine Corps formal education programs.

##### RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

15. Senator PETERS. Mr. Del Toro, the Sikh turban, unshorn hair and other articles of faith are central to the Sikh identity and represent an unwavering commitment to justice and equality. These Sikh values mirror the values that the Armed Forces are meant to protect. Sikh servicemembers have enormous respect for military traditions and in the Army and Air Force have repeatedly proven to meet the same rigorous standards as their fellow servicemembers. In 2017, the Army made historic policy changes to better enable Sikhs and other religious minorities to serve with their religious articles of faith intact. In 2020, the Air Force followed suit. If confirmed, will you look to similarly protect the religious rights of all minority servicemembers under your purview by exploring more inclusive accommodation policies?

Mr. DEL TORO. I support any qualified individual serving in the armed forces and, consistent with operational needs, removing unnecessary barriers to military service. I understand that the Department of Defense recently revised its religious accommodation policy and that the Department of the Navy initiated a review of military grooming standards. If confirmed, I will support efforts to review the Department of the Navy's religious accommodation policy.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH

##### ACCOMMODATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

16. Senator DUCKWORTH. Mr. Del Toro, in 2017 the Army made historic policy changes that better enabled religious minorities to serve with their religious articles of faith intact. In 2020, the Air Force followed suit. To date, both branches have

successfully integrated these policy changes without any cause for concern. For example, West Point just graduated two male Sikh soldiers who maintained their articles of faith—such as the Sikh turban, unshorn hair, or other articles of faith—for the first time in West Point's history.

My office is aware of several pending religious accommodation requests for religious minorities already serving or looking to serve in the Navy and Marine Corps. These are servicemembers who are requesting to not make the untenable choice between practicing their faith and serving their country.

As Navy Secretary, will you look to similarly protect the religious rights of all minority servicemembers under your purview by putting in place more inclusive accommodation policies?

Mr. DEL TORO. I support any qualified individual serving in the armed forces and, consistent with operational needs, removing unnecessary barriers to military service. I understand that the Department of Defense recently revised its religious accommodation policy and that the Department of the Navy initiated a review of military grooming standards. If confirmed, I will support efforts to review the Department of the Navy's religious accommodation policy.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROGER F. WICKER

##### AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS

17. Senator WICKER. Mr. Del Toro, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General David Berger, stated in recent testimony that the requirement for traditional amphibious warships is 10 LHAs [landing helicopter assault ship] and 21 LPDs [landing platform/dock ship]. Given the Navy's plans to decommission legacy LSDs [dock landing ship] over the next few years, there is a clear need to continue building LPD Flight II replacements. The Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorized the Navy to procure three LPDs (30, 31, and 32) and LHA 9 in a block buy that will save \$720 million. General Berger also stated that the Marine Corps supports the block buy. The Navy has reached a handshake agreement with the shipbuilder to execute the buy, but leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense will not approve it, and the block buy is currently stalled. Will you support the Navy and Marine Corps by advocating to procure these ships in a responsible and timely manner?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes. If confirmed you have my strong commitment to reviewing this issue closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations, and to advocate a responsible plan with the Administration with respect to the timely procurement of these platforms.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR THOM TILLIS

##### FLEET READINESS CENTER EAST

18. Senator TILLIS. Mr. Del Toro, the Fleet Readiness Center East (FRC-East) aboard Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point provides depot level service and repair to multiple airframes across the Department of Defense. However, it has been relegated to operating out of 1950's-era hangars and buildings that lack the necessary infrastructure and space. The inadequacy of the facilities is so bad that Lockheed Martin is considering building its own private depot level maintenance facility for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. FRC-East supports 4,000+ well-paying jobs in eastern North Carolina, not to mention significant support to Marine Corps aviation. The 5-year military construction plan highlights numerous projects that are required as early as next year, but have not even been programmed. The one project that has been programmed, in fiscal year 2018, has not even been built yet. The Department of the Navy continues to invest in modern aircraft—F-35 JSF, CH-53K, MV-22B, and AH-1Z/UH-1Y—but fails to recognize the need for maintenance facilities such as this. At what point, will this facility become a priority for the Navy?

Mr. DEL TORO. I certainly recognize the importance of FRC-East to maintain the readiness of our Naval Aviation enterprise, and the role it plays in supporting the local economy. It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy remains committed to the strategic investments necessary to provide organic depots with the capability and capacity to sustain and modernize our naval aviation aircraft, engines, and components. If confirmed, I will work with leaders in the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure that FRC-East at Cherry Point has the facilities necessary to support sustainment of Naval Aviation.

19. Senator TILLIS. Mr. Del Toro, do I have your commitment that depot level maintenance will become more of a priority for the Navy?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes. If confirmed, depot level maintenance will continue to be a priority for the Department of the Navy.

20. Senator TILLIS. Mr. Del Toro, FRC-East is exploring innovative ways to boost readiness through new and updated facilities and more efficient use of assets. Would you be willing to consider and support FRC-East's partnering with the State of North Carolina to facilitate a public-private partnership to increase industrial capacity at the depot?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy has been committed to leveraging public-private partnership arrangements that are in the best interest of the government. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to maximize our depot capacity, reduce cost of ownership, and foster cooperation between the Navy and private industry in accordance with all applicable laws and Department of Defense guidance.

#### SIKH ARTICLES OF FAITH

21. Senator TILLIS. Mr. Del Toro, in 2017 the Army made historic policy changes that better enabled Sikhs and other religious minorities to serve with their religious articles of faith intact. In 2020, the Air Force followed suit. To date, both branches have successfully integrated these policy changes without any cause for concern. In fact, West Point just graduated two male Sikh soldiers who maintained their articles of faith for the first time in West Point's history. As Navy Secretary, will you look to similarly protect the religious rights of all minority servicemembers under your purview by putting in place more inclusive accommodation policies?

Mr. DEL TORO. I support any qualified individual serving in the armed forces and, consistent with operational needs, removing unnecessary barriers to military service. I understand that the Department of Defense recently revised its religious accommodation policy and that the Department of the Navy initiated a review of military grooming standards. If confirmed, I will support efforts to review the Department of the Navy's religious accommodation policy.

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

##### READINESS

22. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, Mr. Cisneros, Ms. Miller, Dr. Karlin, and Mr. Connor, over several years this Committee has worked tirelessly to restore military readiness—across each of our Services—to levels that would enable our success in a conflict. We've had some success, but there is STILL a lot of work to do. If you have not done so already, I recommend that every senior defense leader read T.R. Fehrenbach's "This Kind of War", which provides a cautionary tale of our Nation's failure to adequately fund and train our Armed Forces before the Korean War. The consequences were steep and American servicemembers paid with their lives. If confirmed, all of you—based on your positions—will invariably make decisions that directly or indirectly impact readiness. Accordingly, will you commit—if confirmed—to work with this Committee and within the Department on further bolstering military readiness to ensure the failures we endured in the Korean War never happen again?

Mr. DEL TORO. Ensuring our military is ready to carry out the tasking of our Nation is a foundational responsibility of leadership. We owe it to our Sailors and Marines to provide them the equipment, weapons, and platforms to deter and, if required, decisively defeat our adversaries. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure our Naval Force is ready to go into harm's way.

##### STRATEGY DRIVEN BUDGET

23. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, Mr. Cisneros, Ms. Miller, Dr. Karlin, and Mr. Connor, the National Defense Strategy Commission report, the two previous Senate-confirmed Secretaries of Defense, and the previous and current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have all stated the need for sustained 3–5 percent annual real growth to the defense budget to implement the NDS, increase readiness, and advance long-overdue modernization. Further emphasizing the need for consistent and increased funding, the NDS Commission report stated, "America is very near the point of strategic insolvency, where its 'means' are badly out of alignment with its 'ends'." This critical situation is negatively compounded by the Biden administra-

tion's dismal defense topline that does not keep pace with inflation. With these facts in mind, and understanding your ability to influence the budget will be limited to future year submissions, will each of you commit to advocating for a strategy-driven budget vice a budget-driven strategy?

Mr. DEL TORO. I commit to strongly advocating for a strategy-driven budget. If confirmed, I will work with the CNO and Commandant to ensure the Department of the Navy's budget aligns to and supports the President's Interim National Security Strategy, Secretary Austin's priorities, and ultimately the forthcoming updated National Defense Strategy.

#### GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE ARCTIC

24. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro and Dr. Karlin, given the National Defense Strategy's focus on great power competition and increased Russia and Chinese activity in the Arctic, would you agree that the Arctic is an emerging front-line for great power competition and rivalry? Please elaborate.

Mr. DEL TORO. I recognize the Arctic's growing strategic significance. Specifically, that the region is key terrain vital to U.S. homeland defense and is a potential strategic corridor—between the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the U.S. Homeland—for expanded competition. China and Russia are the principal challenge to U.S. security and prosperity as they increase their activity in the Arctic. Russia is enhancing its posture and capability investments, while China has declared itself a “near-Arctic state” and is attempting to normalize its Arctic presence and increase its access to lucrative resources and shipping routes. If confirmed, I will assess needed capabilities and work collaboratively with allies and partners to deter their coercive or aggressive behavior.

25. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro and Dr. Karlin, in your personal opinion, what makes Alaska an important strategic region for the United States, and why would our adversaries want to limit our presence and power projection capabilities in the Arctic region? Please elaborate.

Mr. DEL TORO. Alaska represents America's gateway to the Arctic—including its resource and trade routes—as well as our northern approaches. It also represents a region of great strategic opportunity for our adversaries and is, therefore, a potential area for strategic competition. I understand our commitment to a free and open Arctic underpins the current rules-based order in the region and that continuing peace and prosperity in the Arctic region is a compelling objective for Allied and partner cooperation. If confirmed, I will continue the Department of the Navy's commitment to protecting U.S. national security interests in the region.

26. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, what naval power capability gaps presently exist that inhibit our ability to effectively project and sustain power in the Arctic and compete with Russia and China in the northern latitudes? Please elaborate.

Mr. DEL TORO. I do not have access to material identifying specific naval capability gaps currently inhibiting our operations in the Arctic. The Department of the Navy conducts numerous joint and multi-lateral exercises to test, maintain, and strengthen our ability to conduct a variety of operations. If confirmed, I will take a careful look at both our capabilities and posture to ensure that the Navy-Marine Corps will continue operating in the Arctic—both now and in the years to come.

#### NAVY ARCTIC STRATEGY

27. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, in January 2021, the Department of the Navy published its Arctic strategy, which Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks committed to fully resource. In last month's DOD posture hearing, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley reaffirmed the need to “fully resource the Arctic strategy”. In a recent Strategic Forces Subcommittee hearing, General Glen VanHerck, the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) Commander and designated advocate for Arctic capabilities, testified that DOD resourcing for the various Service Arctic strategies, to include the Department of the Navy, was “inching along” but that the Department “didn't move the ball very far down the field” with the fiscal year 2022 budget. General VanHerck's observation is very discouraging and somewhat alarming given the increased competition in the region. If confirmed, can I get your commitment to follow through on pledges to fully resource the Department of Navy's Arctic strategy so that our Nation can successfully defend the Homeland along our northern approaches?

Mr. DEL TORO. I am aware the President's Budget for fiscal year 2022 contains funding to support Navy and Marine Corps capabilities, exercises, and operations across a broad range of warfighting domains and operating environments, to include

the Arctic. It is my understanding that this budget includes funding for the Arctic Submarine Lab, the U.S. Naval Ice Center, and other work being done by the Office of Naval Research. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to assess investments in capabilities to regain our military advantage against strategic competitors. The Arctic will continue to be an important consideration for the Department of the Navy in the development of future budgets.

28. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, since the release of the Department of the Navy's Arctic strategy this year, the Headquarters staff has moved out on developing a robust implementation plan for execution. To ensure momentum and action continue on this critical effort, can I get your commitment to review the strategy and implementation efforts within 30 days of your confirmation and then schedule a sit down with me to discuss your views, vision, and way forward for executing the Department of the Navy's Arctic strategy?

Mr. DEL TORO. If confirmed, I plan to review the Department's implementation efforts within 30 days. I fully appreciate the importance of putting strategy into action to protect our national interests in the Arctic and other critical strategic locations. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the CNO and the Commandant to identify risk, prioritize our efforts and ensure the Department has the appropriate processes and mechanisms for implementation. If confirmed, I look forward to meeting with you in person to discuss the way forward for executing the Department's Arctic Strategy.

29. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, the Navy's Arctic strategy says the Navy will achieve enduring national security interests by pursuing three objectives: maintaining enhanced presence, strengthening cooperative partnerships, and building a more capable Arctic Naval Force. Can you explain how the Navy plans to achieve these objectives without any icebreakers, any Arctic deep water ports, and no ice-hardened surface ships? Please elaborate.

Mr. DEL TORO. While I am familiar with the DON Arctic Strategic Blueprint, I have not had the opportunity to review the plan for its implementation, so I am unable to provide details on how the Department of the Navy currently plans to pursue the three lines of effort. I am confident that the expeditionary nature of our Navy-Marine Corps team will provide many opportunities to adapt existing capabilities and leverage a global network of allies and other international partners to complement our presence and capabilities.

#### NAVY FLEET SIZE AND SHIPBUILDING CAPACITY

30. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, according to the Department's Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China (PRC) report to Congress, "The PRC has the largest navy in the world with an overall battle force of approximately 350 ships and submarines including over 130 major surface combatants. In comparison, the U.S. Navy's battle force is approximately 293 ships as of early 2020. China is the top ship-producing nation in the world by tonnage and is increasing its shipbuilding capacity and capability for all naval classes." To compound this very issue, the Office of Naval Intelligence projects that China will have 400 battle force ships by 2025, and 425 by 2030. Meanwhile, the United States shipbuilding capacity continues to lag woefully behind China's, and this year's budget submission actually shrinks the size of the fleet. This is an exceptionally alarming development. What is your personal assessment of this worrying trend, and—if sustained—what impacts might it have on our ability to deter China, and other competitors, into the future?

Mr. DEL TORO. The potential erosion of our military advantage is of great concern and if confirmed, I will dedicate my efforts to rebuilding the competitive advantage of our naval forces against our strategic competitors as outlined in the President's Interim National Security Strategy and Secretary Austin's priorities. Projections regarding China's increasing ship count are concerning; however, it is my understanding that both the Navy and the Marine Corps are actively exploring innovative capabilities and developing new operating concepts to successfully deter and defeat, if necessary, China, and other competitors. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of a credible combat force, with the right capabilities in the right quantities to militarily deter China and other competitors.

31. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, if China is the pacing threat, is this Navy budget adequate?

Mr. DEL TORO. I support the President's Budget and look forward to working with the Administration and the Congress to develop the fiscal year 2023 budget and

FYDP to balance between risk and required capabilities for the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will look closely at our Department's force structure and readiness for strategic competition with China, and will ensure that our annual budget requests reflect our requirements to meet this challenge moving forward.

#### ICEBREAKERS

32. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, in Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker's prepared testimony at this year's Department of the Navy posture hearing, he described the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy, Advantage at Sea, as a "truly collaborative maritime strategic planning effort led jointly by all three of our Nation's sea services—Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard." He also stated that, "[i]n order to execute these goals, Admiral Gilday, General Berger, Admiral Schultz and I are working together in order to promote integration, communication, and collaboration as a warfighting priority," and that "[t]here can be no daylight between us as we strengthen the integrated all-domain Naval power of the United States." In the past few years, one issue has demonstrated a lot of daylight between the Navy and the Coast Guard—icebreakers. The Navy's Arctic Strategy says the "U.S. Naval forces must operate more assertively across the Arctic Region to prevail in day-to-day competition." The Russians have over 40 icebreakers, the Chinese have 3, and the United States has 1.5. How can the U.S. Navy operate more assertively in the Arctic without icebreakers?

Mr. DEL TORO. Maintaining freedom of access in the strategically contested area of the Arctic is important to protecting our national interests. I fully recognize the national need for icebreaking capability and capacity and strongly support the U.S. Coast Guard recapitalization of their polar ice-breaking fleet. If confirmed, I commit to assessing, with the Chief of Naval Operations, the means and capabilities to operate Navy vessels more assertively in the Arctic region.

33. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, do you see collaboration with the Coast Guard on icebreaker acquisition as aligned with the precepts outlined in the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that the Navy's collaboration with the Coast Guard on icebreaker acquisition is in alignment with the Tri-Service Strategy, specifically the precepts of day-to-day competition in the polar region and integrated All-Domain Naval Power. This partnership allows the Navy to leverage the Coast Guard's mission focus and unique expertise operating in the polar region, while the Coast Guard utilizes the Navy's proficiency in ship acquisition and program management.

#### SEA DENIAL

34. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, Admiral Michael Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations, has described the purpose of Marine Corps expeditionary advanced bases as supporting sea denial and sea control. An essential component of the Marine Corps' ability to conduct the sea denial mission is anti-ship missiles, including the Naval Strike Missile and Maritime Strike Tomahawk. These missiles are #1 and #3 on the Marine Corps' unfunded priority list (UPL). The Marine Corps, in General Berger's estimation, has almost no sea denial capability or capacity currently. How does inadequate Marine Corps sea denial capability and capacity impact fleet operations against the pacing threat?

Mr. DEL TORO. The Marine Corps Force Design effort builds the Marine Corps' sea denial capability in cooperation with Navy. The ability to provide precision fires from advanced bases provides maneuver space for our fleet and potentially complicates planning on the part of our adversaries. Ensuring the Navy and Marine Corps are resourced with the right mix of weapons is a key element of the Secretary of the Navy's responsibilities. If confirmed, I will be briefed on the classified analysis and wargaming supporting the Navy and Marine Corps' operating concept to gain an understanding of the operational impacts involved. I fully support the Commandant's vision for Force Design and the concept of Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations, and if confirmed, I will work with the CNO and the Commandant to ensure Navy and Marine Corps requirements are appropriately funded.

#### MARINE CORPS SYSTEMS AT SEA

35. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, General David Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps, has testified to Congress and written about the need for marines to be more than passengers on Navy ships as they transit to the fight. In the last few years, Marine Corps systems such as light armored vehicles (LAV) and Light Marine Air Defense Integrated System (LMADIS) have augmented organic defensive

capabilities on amphibious ships transiting through maritime chokepoints. Has the Marine Corps conducted any tests or experiments operating any of its land-based systems—including Ground-based Anti-ship Missile (GBASM), air defense, or counter-UAS [unmanned aerial systems]—from aboard ships?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that the Marine Corps has tested and employed offensive and defensive capabilities onboard Navy ships. For example, I understand that the Marine Corps has employed L-MADIS aboard Navy ships with both east-and west-coast Marine Expeditionary Units for the past 4 years. I am told this was highlighted in July 2019 when Marines from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit onboard the USS Boxer successfully jammed an Iranian UAS during transit through the Straits of Hormuz.

#### NAVY-MARINE CORPS INTEGRATION IN SHIP DESIGN

36. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, Admiral Gilday and General Berger have spoken at length about increased integration, coordination, and cooperation between the Navy and Marine Corps. As part of the requirements and ship design process, is the Department of the Navy considering how existing or planned Marine Corps systems can be integrated into and operated from Navy ships to augment organic offensive and defensive capabilities?

Mr. DEL TORO. If confirmed, I assure you that the Navy and Marine Corps team will continue to work together through the requirements development and the design process to ensure Marine Corps systems can be operated effectively from Navy ships. This process will include identifying cost effective opportunities to integrate existing and future capabilities on Navy ships to meet the warfighting needs of the future.

#### FORCE DESIGN 2030

37. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Del Toro, what is your vision of the Reserve component's role in Force Design 2030?

Mr. DEL TORO. It is my understanding that to effectively achieve its objectives, Force Design 2030 is reliant on the full integration of the Reserve component. The importance of this integration and the Reserve contribution cannot be overstated as a single, integrated total force, with no distinction between active and Reserve components, is fundamental to combat effectiveness.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSH HAWLEY

##### SHORT-TERM REQUIREMENTS VERSUS LONG TERM MODERNIZATION

38. Senator HAWLEY. Mr. Del Toro, the Navy's plan for deterring Chinese aggression in the future rests heavily on unmanned and other technologies that remain immature. How should the Navy do its part to deter Chinese aggression if these technologies fail to mature or mature quickly enough?

Mr. DEL TORO. The Department of the Navy must maintain the ability, as part of the Joint Force, to adapt to an evolving security environment and meet deterrence requirements in the Indo-Pacific region. It is my understanding the DON is taking a comprehensive approach to this challenge, not relying solely on any one new technology or solution. It is also my understanding the DON is not only pursuing a more capable fleet integrated with unmanned technologies, but is maturing operational concepts such as Distributed Maritime Operations and Advanced Expeditionary Base operations, investing to enable allies and partners in the region to facilitate multi-national deterrence, realigning force posture and priorities to better align to the new security environment, and leveraging prototyping, experimentation, exercises, and war games to continuously enhance our deterrence and warfighting capabilities in this region. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Services and the INDOPACOM Commander to explore all elements of our comprehensive approach to this challenge.

##### DETECTING CHINESE AGGRESSION

39. Senator HAWLEY. Mr. Del Toro, do you agree that the Navy has to be able to operate in or around the Taiwan Strait in the early period of a war in order to deny a Chinese fait accompli against Taiwan?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes, the Navy should maintain the capability and flexibility to operate throughout the entire region at all stages of competition and, if need be, of conflict in order to accomplish our security objectives.

40. Senator HAWLEY. Mr. Del Toro, how would the investments laid out in INDOPACOM's 1251 report contribute to the Navy's ability to maintain a combat-credible forward presence and, if necessary, blunt a Chinese offensive?

Mr. DEL TORO. Navy investment in the INDOPACOM Area of Operations is vital to accomplishing our security objectives and supporting the NDS. It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy has invested substantially in providing capabilities and capacity, in basing infrastructure, and in supporting and enabling allies and partners in the region, and much more has to be done moving forward. It is also my understanding that the Department will continue to develop concepts and increase its annual budget request to deliver the training, readiness, capabilities and capacity required to support all of our Combatant Commanders' warfighting requirements.

41. Senator HAWLEY. Mr. Del Toro, the relationships with our Pacific allies and partners are critical to deterring Chinese aggression. Do you believe a capable combined force of partners and allies is more likely to deter China over a unilateral American force?

Mr. DEL TORO. Yes, our robust network of partners and allies provides us the significant strategic advantage associated with combined military power as well as the information, influence, and access that increase our ability to deter Chinese aggression. As the President outlines in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, by pooling the collective strengths of allies and partners, we advance our shared interests and deter common threats. Particularly in the Indo-Pacific, our maritime partnerships help us to maintain a favorable balance of power that helps us to deter aggression and uphold a free and open system throughout the region.

[The nomination reference of Mr. Carlos Del Toro, follows:]

#### NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT

PN713

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
June 17, 2021.

*Ordered,* That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

Carlos Del Toro, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Navy, vice Kenneth J. Braithwaite.

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. Reed \_\_\_\_\_  
(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 Mr. Carlos Del Toro, which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]

**Bio**  
**Carlos Del Toro**

**Education:**

- **United States Naval Academy**
  - July 6, 1979 – May 25, 1983
  - B.S. Degree in Electrical Engineering
  - Commissioned as a U.S. Naval Officer
- **Naval Postgraduate School**
  - Dec 3, 1986 – June 22, 1989
  - M.S. Degree in Electrical Engineering
  - Qualification as a Space Systems Engineer
- **College of Naval Command and Staff, Naval War College**
  - July 14, 1995 – June 28, 1996
  - M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies
- **Columbian School of Arts & Sciences, George Washington University**
  - January 10, 1994 – May 19, 1996
  - M.A. in Legislative Affairs

**Employment Record:**

List all jobs held since college including title or description of job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment.

- **SBG Technology Solutions, Inc**
  - President & Chief Executive Officer
  - October 2004 – Present
  - Headquartered in Alexandria, VA, with satellite offices in San Diego and Washington D.C
- **Office of Programs Analysis and Evaluation (now CAPE), Office of the Secretary of Defense**
  - Senior Military Assistant to the Director and Principal Deputy Director
  - March 2003 – October 2004
  - Arlington, VA

- **USS BULKELEY DDG84 (Guided Missile Destroyer)**
  - First Commanding Officer
  - January 2000 – March 2003
  - Built in Pascagoula, MS and homeported in Norfolk, VA
- **Office of the Chief of Naval Operations**
  - Policy, Requirements, and Assessments Action Officer
  - September 1999 - January 2000
  - Alexandria, VA
- **Office of Management & Budget, Executive Office of the President**
  - White House Fellow
  - August 1998 – August 1999
  - Washington, D.C.
- **Aegis Training & Readiness Command (now Center for Surface Combat Systems)**
  - Director of Training
  - February 1998 – August 1998
  - Dahlgren, VA
- **USS VINCENNES CG49 (Guided Missile Cruiser)**
  - Executive Officer
  - July 1996 - February 1998
  - San Diego, CA & Yokosuka, Japan
- **Space & Naval Warfare Systems Command (now Naval Information Warfare Systems Command)**
  - Program Manager, Naval Space Technology Program
  - August 1993 – July 1995
  - Arlington, VA
- **USS AMERICA CV66 (Aircraft Carrier)**
  - Main Propulsion Assistant & Senior Surface Warfare Officer
  - January 1992 – August 1993
  - Norfolk, VA
- **USS PREBLE DDG46 (Guided Missile Destroyer)**
  - Chief Engineer & Tactical Action Officer
  - September 1989 – January 1992
  - Norfolk, VA
- **Navy Recruiting District New York**
  - Senior Minority Recruiter (Temporary Duty)
  - June 1989 – September 1989
  - New York, NY

- **USS KOELSCH FF1049 (Fast Frigate)**
  - Electrical, Main Propulsion Assistant, & Assistant Navigator
  - May 1983 – December 1986
  - Mayport, FL

**Honors and Awards:**

- **Military Awards**
  - Navy Achievement Medal (x2)
  - Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (x2)
  - Meritorious Service Medal (x2)
  - Defense Meritorious Service Medal
- **Academic Awards**
  - Naval War College Graduation, with distinction.
- **Other Awards**
  - Hispanic Engineer of the Year Magazine National Achievement Award – Military Category – 1994
  - White House Fellowship - 1998
  - Hispanic Business Magazine Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics in the U.S. - 2001
  - Ellis Island Medal of Honor - 2002
  - SBA Minority Small Businessperson of the Year in Region 3 (MD/VA/DC) – 2011
  - Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve "Above and Beyond" Award – 2015
  - SBA Small Business Success Story Recognition - 2020

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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 Mr. Carlos Del Toro in connection with his nomination follows:]

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2020 -- 2021  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
ROOM SR-228  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510-6050  
(202) 224-3871

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE  
INFORMATION REQUESTED OF CIVILIAN NOMINEES

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE:** Answer all questions and provide all requested information. If more space is needed, attach an additional sheet of paper to the Questionnaire and cite the part of the Questionnaire and the question number (e.g., A-9, B-4) to which the continuation of your answer applies. Unless otherwise required, an answer of "yes", "no", or "not applicable" is appropriate.

QUESTIONNAIRE, PART A

**NOTE:** Information furnished in this part of the Questionnaire will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing, if any, and will be entered in the hearing record, also available to the public.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TO BE MADE PUBLIC

1. **Name (Include any former names you have used):**
  - a. Carlos Del Toro
  - b. Carlos Raul Del Toro de Jesus and Benitez (Prior to Naturalization on December 26, 1978)
2. **Position to which nominated:** Secretary of the Navy
3. **Date of nomination:** June 17, 2021

4. **Education (List names of secondary and higher education institution 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):**
- a. **Thomas Alva Edison High School** - Vocational & Technical High School; September 1975 to June 1979; Regents Technical High School Diploma; Degree granted June, 1979.
  - b. **United States Naval Academy** - Military Academy; July 6, 1979 to May, 25, 1983; Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering; Degree granted May 25, 1983.
  - c. **U.S. Naval Postgraduate School** – Military Postgraduate Education; December 18, 1986 to June 22, 1989; Master of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering with concentration in Space Systems Engineering; Degree granted June 16, 1989.
  - d. **U.S. Naval War College** – Senior Military Command and Staff Postgraduate Education; July 14, 1995 to June 28, 1996; Master of Arts Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies; Degree granted June 14, 1996 with distinction.
  - e. **George Washington University** – Postgraduate Education; January 4, 1994 to December 30, 1995; Master of Science Degree in Legislative Affairs; Degree awarded May 19, 1996.
5. **Employment record (List all jobs held since college, or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of the job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, show each change of military duty station as a separate period of employment):**
- **SBG Technology Solutions, Inc**
    - President & Chief Executive Officer
    - October 2004 – Present
    - Headquartered in Alexandria, VA, with satellite offices in San Diego and Washington D.C

6. **Government experience (List any advisory, consultative, honorary, and other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed in response to question 5, above):**
- **Office of Programs Analysis and Evaluation (now CAPE), Office of the Secretary of Defense**
    - Senior Military Assistant to the Director and Principal Deputy Director
    - March 2003 – October 2004
    - Arlington, VA
  - **USS BULKELEY DDG84 (Guided Missile Destroyer)**
    - First Commanding Officer
    - January 2000 – March 2003
    - Built in Pascagoula, MS and homeported in Norfolk, VA
  - **Office of the Chief of Naval Operations**
    - Policy, Requirements, and Assessments Action Officer
    - September 1999 - January 2000
    - Alexandria, VA
  - **Office of Management & Budget, Executive Office of the President**
    - White House Fellow
    - August 1998 – August 1999
    - Washington, D.C.
  - **Aegis Training & Readiness Command (now Center for Surface Combat Systems)**
    - Director of Training
    - February 1998 – August 1998
    - Dahlgren, VA
  - **USS VINCENNES CG49 (Guided Missile Cruiser)**
    - Executive Officer
    - July 1996 - February 1998
    - San Diego, CA & Yokosuka, Japan
  - **Space & Naval Warfare Systems Command (now Naval Information Warfare Systems Command)**
    - Program Manager, Naval Space Technology Program
    - August 1993 – July 1995
    - Arlington, VA

- **USS AMERICA CV66 (Aircraft Carrier)**
    - Main Propulsion Assistant & Senior Surface Warfare Officer
    - January 1992 – August 1993
    - Norfolk, VA
  - **USS PREBLE DDG46 (Guided Missile Destroyer)**
    - Chief Engineer & Tactical Action Officer
    - September 1989 – January 1992
    - Norfolk, VA
  - **Navy Recruiting District New York**
    - Senior Minority Recruiter (Temporary Duty)
    - June 1989 – September 1989
    - New York, NY
  - **USS KOELSCH FF1049 (Fast Frigate)**
    - Electrical, Main Propulsion Assistant, & Assistant Navigator
    - May 1983 – December 1986
    - Mayport, FL
7. **Business relationships (List all positions currently held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, and of any educational or other institution):**
- **SBG Technology Solutions (SBG)**, Sole Owner (2004 - Present)
  - **American Veterans, LLC.** – Inactive LLC owned by SBG. (2005 - Present)
8. **Memberships (List all memberships and offices that you currently hold, as well as any memberships and offices you have previously held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations):**
- **Non-Profit Organizations Boards of Directors:**
    - George Washington's Mount Vernon - Gubernatorial Appointment to the Virginia Governor's Board of Visitors (2017 - Present)
    - The Stimson Center- Board of Directors (2018 - Present)
    - Democratic Business Council of Northern Virginia - Board of Directors (2017 - Present)
    - White House Fellows Foundation & Alumni Association - Board of Directors (2015 -2019)
    - University of Mary Washington - Board of Visitors (2014 - 2018)

- Rappahannock Goodwill Industries (RGI) - Board of Directors (2008 - 2016)
- Germanna Community College Foundation Board - Board of Directors (2011-2012)
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Washington D.C. Metro Area Chapter Board of Directors (1993 -1995)

- **Advisory Board Positions:**

- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Council, 2005 – Present
- Virginia, Commonwealth Competition Legislative Council, 2011
- Virginia, Small Business Legislative Committee, 2012 – 2014
- Virginia's Council on Higher Education Board Appointments, 2018 - Present
- Concussion Legacy Foundation Veterans Advisory Board, 2020 – Present
- U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association Ad Hoc Committee on Culture, Diversity, and Inclusion (2020 – Present)

- **Professional Memberships:**

- U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association (1983 - Present)
- Surface Navy Association (1983 - Present)
- U.S. Navy League (1984 - Present)
- Naval Postgraduate School Alumni Association (1989 - Present)
- Association of Naval Services Officers (1993 - Present)
- Council on Foreign Relations Term Member (1994 - 1999)
- U.S. Naval Order (1995 - Present)
- U.S. Submarine League (2018 - Present)
- U.S. Naval Academy Minority Officers Association (2019 - Present)

**9. 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 a candidate/elected/appointed; the year(s) during which you were a candidate, or in which the election was held or the appointment was made; and the term of office (if applicable):**

- Candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates Race in the 88<sup>th</sup> District, 2007.

**b. List all memberships and offices held in, and services rendered to, all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years:**

- 2008, 2016, and 2020 Elected Virginia Delegate to the National Democratic

Conventions.

- c. Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity during the past 5 years. List each individual contribution (not the total amount contributed to the person or entity) over this period:

Donated To:	Contribution Date:	Amount (\$):
Levar Stoney	6/26/2016	500.00
JOE GARCIA FOR CONGRESS	7/22/2016	250.00
Levar Stoney	7/26/2016	500.00
HILLARY FOR AMERICA	8/1/2016	2,239.45
HILLARY VICTORY FUND	8/1/2016	33,400.00
ACTBLUE	8/19/2016	100.00
FAIRFAX COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE	8/26/2016	100.00
HILLARY FOR AMERICA	9/8/2016	250.00
MCEACHIN FOR CONGRESS	9/12/2016	250.00
LUANN BENNETT FOR CONGRESS	9/23/2016	250.00
HILLARY VICTORY FUND	10/10/2016	500.00
HILLARY VICTORY FUND	10/18/2016	250.00
HILLARY VICTORY FUND	10/25/2016	500.00
JOE GARCIA FOR CONGRESS	10/30/2016	250.00
KAINE FOR VIRGINIA	3/31/2017	2,700.00
ACTBLUE	4/21/2017	100.00
CONNOLLY FOR CONGRESS	5/24/2017	1,000.00
NORTHAM FOR GOVERNOR	5/30/2017	2,500.00
NORTHAM FOR GOVERNOR	9/10/2017	1,000.00
NORTHAM FOR GOVERNOR	9/20/2017	250.00
NORTHAM FOR GOVERNOR	9/25/2017	2,500.00
MARK HERRING CAMPAIGN	10/17/2017	500.00
SUROVELL FOR STATE SENATOR	1/8/2018	250.00
KAINE VICTORY FUND	2/4/2018	250.00
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF VIRGINIA	2/28/2018	250.00
ANDY KIM FOR CONGRESS	3/4/2018	250.00
SHARICE FOR CONGRESS	3/13/2018	250.00
FRIENDS OF DAN FEEHAN	3/15/2018	250.00
FRIENDS OF DAN FEEHAN	4/9/2018	250.00
KAINE VICTORY FUND	4/9/2018	1,000.00

DNC SERVICES CORP./DEM. NAT'L COMMITTEE	4/19/2018	500.00
DAVE JONES FOR AG	5/1/2018	250.00
ACTBLUE	6/28/2018	100.00
SHARICE FOR CONGRESS	6/28/2018	100.00
Elaine Luria	7/5/2018	250.00
KAINE VICTORY FUND	9/10/2018	100.00
Abigail Spanberger	9/22/2018	100.00
Elaine Luria	9/22/2018	100.00
Jennifer Wexton	9/22/2018	100.00
Leslie Cockburn	9/22/2018	100.00
Elaine Luria	10/30/2018	100.00
Josh Welle	10/30/2018	100.00
ACTBLUE	11/4/2018	100.00
Adam Ebbin	11/8/2018	200.00
MARK KELLY FOR SENATE	3/4/2019	2,800.00
CONNOLLY FOR CONGRESS	3/15/2019	1,000.00
Gerry Connolly	3/15/2019	1,000.00
ACTBLUE	4/23/2019	100.00
Aracely Panameno	5/2/2019	100.00
Adam Ebbin	5/31/2019	250.00
Alfonso Lopez	6/3/2019	250.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	6/10/2019	1,000.00
Commonwealth Victory Fund	7/23/2019	1,000.00
Jessica Foster	9/22/2019	250.00
Herb Jones	9/24/2019	100.00
Cheryl Turpin	9/28/2019	100.00
Elizabeth Guzman	9/28/2019	100.00
Hala Ayala	9/28/2019	100.00
Joshua Cole	9/28/2019	100.00
Kathy Tran	9/28/2019	250.00
Michael Franken	9/28/2019	250.00
Qasim Rashid	9/28/2019	150.00
Amy Laufer	10/28/2019	250.00
Amy Laufer	11/2/2019	150.00
WARNER VICTORY FUND	11/20/2019	1,000.00
FRIENDS OF MARK WARNER	11/30/2019	1,000.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	2/1/2020	1,800.00
Michael Franken	2/1/2020	500.00
DR. CAMERON WEBB FOR CONGRESS	2/11/2020	250.00
Sutton for the City	3/13/2020	100.00

Warner Victory Fund	3/31/2020	2,800.00
DR. CAMERON WEBB FOR CONGRESS	5/9/2020	150.00
Michael Franken	5/9/2020	150.00
FRIENDS OF DON BEYER	5/12/2020	250.00
Common Good VA	6/3/2020	1,000.00
Gerry Connolly	6/8/2020	500.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	6/16/2020	2,800.00
MARK KELLY FOR SENATE	6/19/2020	2,800.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	6/23/2020	100.00
Warner Victory Fund	6/23/2020	1300.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	6/29/2020	2,800.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	7/16/2020	250.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	7/23/2020	10,000.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	7/23/2020	100.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	7/29/2020	1,000.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	8/12/2020	100.00
Ed Markey	8/13/2020	100.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	8/24/2020	5,600.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/1/2020	250.00
DNC SERVICES CORP / DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE	9/1/2020	250.00
ELECT EDUCATORS EVERYWHERE	9/6/2020	250.00
Tim Kaine	9/6/2020	100.00
Cameron Webb	9/8/2020	500.00
FAIRFAX COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE	9/11/2020	250.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/15/2020	250.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/15/2020	200.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/24/2020	200.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/24/2020	500.00
Elissa Slotkin	9/24/2020	100.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	9/25/2020	250.00
DNC SERVICES CORP / DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE	9/25/2020	250.00
Bob Menendez	9/30/2020	1,000.00
Dan Feehan	9/30/2020	500.00
Abigail Spanberger	10/12/2020	100.00
BACKPAC	10/12/2020	750.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	10/12/2020	100.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	10/12/2020	250.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	10/12/2020	2,800.00

COMMON GROUND PAC	10/12/2020	250.00
ELECT EDUCATORS EVERYWHERE	10/12/2020	200.00
Nydia Velazquez	10/12/2020	1,000.00
BIDEN VICTORY FUND	10/20/2020	250.00
Donna Shalala	11/3/2020	100.00
Georgia Senate Victory Fund	11/17/2020	108.00
Sutton for the City	12/8/2020	150.00
Terry McAuliffe	12/15/2020	2,000.00
ALEX PADILLA FOR SENATE	2/8/2021	1,000.00
FAIRFAX COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE	2/12/2021	258.32
FRIENDS OF SCHUMER	3/3/2021	2,800.00
CONNOLLY FOR CONGRESS	3/16/2021	1,000.00

**10. Honors and awards (List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition received for outstanding service or achievements):**

**a. Honors and Special Recognition:**

- Hispanic Engineer of the Year Magazine National Achievement Award – Military Category – 1994
- White House Fellowship - 1998
- Hispanic Business Magazine Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics in the U.S. - 2001
- Ellis Island Medal of Honor - 2002
- SBA Minority Small Businessperson of the Year in Region 3 (MD/VA/DC) – 2011
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve "Above and Beyond" Award – 2015
- SBA Small Business Success Story Recognition – 2020

**b. Military Awards:**

- Navy Achievement Medal (x2)
- Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (x2)
- Meritorious Service Medal (x2)
- Defense Meritorious Service Medal

11. Published writings (List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials that you have written or for which you served as co-author or editor, including articles and blogs published on the internet):
  - None
12. Speeches (Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years—of which you have copies—in which you addressed matters relevant to the position to which you have been nominated).
  - None

**COMMITMENTS IN FURTHERANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT**

**NOTE:** In order to exercise their legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress timely receive testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch. A simple “yes” or “no” response is appropriate.

13. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate Committees of Congress?
  - Yes
14. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so timely?
  - Yes
15. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic


communications, and other information requested of you?

- Yes
16. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?
- Yes
17. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?
- Yes
18. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?
- Yes
19. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?
- Yes

[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 Parts A and B of the foregoing Senate Armed Services Committee Questionnaire, and that the information provided therein and in any document appended thereto, is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete.



This 28<sup>th</sup> day of June, 20 21

[The nomination of Mr. Carlos Del Toro was reported to the Senate by Chairman Reed on July 27, 2021, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on August 7, 2021.]

[Prepared questions submitted to the Honorable Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr. by Chairman Reed prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

##### DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

*Question.* Please describe your background, experience, and expertise that qualify you for the position of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (USD(P&R)), including with respect to military and civilian personnel policy, military readiness, military health organizations and services, and reserve component matters.

*Answer.* I have spent most of my adult life in service to my country. At 18 years old, I enlisted in the United States Navy, received a Navy ROTC scholarship, and was commissioned a Naval Officer in 1994. During my time in the military, I gained valuable experience leading other men and women in uniform. I have a shared experience with our current service members, having made the same sacrifices they make in order to serve our country. I understand the issues, challenges, and hardships our service members and their families face over the course of their service, having faced those same issues. If confirmed, I am committed to making our service members and their families a top priority to alleviate any possible hardships. I have always put service and others first, and if confirmed, I will do the same as Under Secretary of Defense (P&R).

Following my election to the House of Representative in 2018, I championed policies to improve the day to day lives of our service members. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee and Vice-Chair of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, I advocated and fought for various provisions that affected our service members and their families. The bipartisan Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) included several pieces of legislation and amendments that I fought for, including a bill to end military-connected child abuse, provisions to support sexual assault survivors, language to improve diversity and inclusion in the military, and amendments fixing a GI Bill loophole to protect servicemember from predatory, for-profit colleges.

I was proud to introduce bipartisan and bicameral legislation with Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Michael Rounds (R-SD) to improve how the Department of Defense tracks and responds to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring on military installations involving military dependents. During my time in Congress, I also led efforts to secure dozens of diversity and inclusion provisions in the NDAA. This includes provisions establishing a Chief Diversity Officer reporting directly to the Secretary, directing a tracking and reporting mechanism for supremacist and extremist activity in the Armed Forces, and improving breast cancer screening under TRICARE, as well as language to require the Department of Defense to conduct and implement a new Strategic Plan on Diversity and Inclusion. I also helped introduce bipartisan legislation to create a pilot program within the Department of Defense (DOD) that ensures gainful employment for members of the National Guard, reservists, and their spouses, modeled after the California Work for Warriors program that connects with local businesses to identify job opportunities for veterans and their spouses and creates a pipeline of qualified candidates for willing employers.

I also worked to advance health care for all our servicemembers. Specifically, I was able to secure language to direct the Department of Defense to establish a comprehensive policy for mental health care for servicemembers, including treatment and care for pain management, opioid addiction, suicide prevention, and PTSD, as well as language to ensure the safety of privatized military housing units. I am especially proud of my work to improve women's health care services. I advocated for the expansion of a pilot program to educate female service members about women's health care at the VA and the unique benefits available to them. The expansion of this program will help our service women get more familiar with the health care resources they have access to when they leave military service.

Also, in honor of the late SPC Vanessa Guillén and the many survivors of military sexual violence who have bravely come forward, I was proud to join efforts to introduce provisions that would revolutionize the military's response to missing service members and reports of sexual harassment and sexual assault by making sexual harassment a crime within the Uniform Code of Military Justice and moving prosecution decisions of sexual assault and sexual harassment cases out of the chain of command. This bicameral legislation, which was also introduced by Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI), provided the necessary support and resources for survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment in our military. It also advanced coordination of support for survivors of sexual trauma. Our service members and military families deserve to be heard and treated with dignity and respect, and I know that more work needs to be done in order to improve the military's response.

Throughout my career, I have built and led teams to be more productive, and if confirmed, I look forward to leading the men and woman of P&R to do the same. We ask our service members to endure more than many of us can imagine, and we must do more to ensure that we provide them with the care and support they need. If confirmed, I would be proud to continue the work I began in Congress and ensure service members and their families receive the support and services they deserve.

#### MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

*Question.* What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as the USD(P&R), and how would you address each of those challenges?

*Answer.* The recruitment and retention of both top military and civilian personnel is of great importance to both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Department of Defense. The area of cyber security is a concern as the Department of Defense prepares for immediate threats as well as any future threats, but there are other areas where we must maintain the knowledge and expertise within the Department of Defense.

If confirmed, I will review current policies in place in regards to recruitment and retention, to identify shortfalls and successes, and work with the Senate Armed Services Committee to beef up retention efforts where possible. I will also work to ensure that we create opportunities, for both professional and educational growth for both our uniformed and civilian personnel. We must create an environment where personnel are encouraged and incentivized to grow in their career. I am committed to thinking out of the box in order to find solutions.

In order to recruit and retain the best and brightest we must also have a diverse and inclusive force that is representative of our nation's population. If confirmed as the USD (P&R), I would continue to work on the diversity issues I championed in Congress. From requirements for membership of selection boards to represent the diversity of the Armed Forces as a whole, to greater mentoring and career counseling programs, to diversity and inclusion reporting and Advisory Councils, I will push to promote and uplift the diversity that strengthens our Armed Forces. We must also work to improve reporting mechanism, and metrics not only for diversity and inclusion but for many areas.

I believe it is critical that the military do more to ensure all our service members are treated with dignity and respect and sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated. We must enact serious change in order to change the culture of this issue within our Armed Forces. If confirmed, I will work to create processes to ensure service members feel comfortable and supported to come forward. If confirmed I would work with the Senate Armed Services Committee and the experts in the Department of Defense to create real change, that will support victims and hold perpetrators accountable. Ultimately, addressing sexual harassment and sexual assault within the Armed Forces is a pressing issue, and as USD(P&R) I would diligently work to change the culture in our ranks and ensure survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment in our military have the peace of mind that they'll be heard and treated with dignity and respect.

*Question.* To the extent that the functions of the Office of the USD(P&R) overlap with those of other Department of Defense (DOD) Components, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing unnecessary duplication?

*Answer.* I believe efficiency and effectiveness are critical, particularly as we seek to focus limited resources on the Department's core mission readiness and modernization needs. If confirmed, I will look at how the Personnel & Readiness enterprise approaches its mission and responsibilities, and will work with my counterparts across OSD and with the Military Departments to ensure that we reduce redundancy or overlap, while recognizing that we must provide oversight and policy for critical programs within the Personnel & Readiness areas of responsibility.

*Question.* What is your view of the scope and importance of the USD(P&R)'s oversight duties and powers with respect to the Military Services?

*Answer.* Based on the USD(P&R)'s title 10 statutory roles and responsibilities, I believe that the USD's role is vital to ensuring the operational readiness of our military forces, the sustainment and viability of the All-Volunteer Force, and ensuring a healthy, safe environment free from discrimination for all our servicemembers, civilian employees, and families. I believe that the USD(P&R) has an important role to play in ensuring that the Military Services are appropriately prioritizing, executing, and resourcing their responsibilities. If confirmed, I will ensure we are providing the appropriate balance of strategic oversight and direction, while serving to enable successful personnel and workforce outcomes and promoting warfighting readiness.

#### CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you adhere to and further the fundamental principle of civilian control of the armed forces?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will serve as the principal staff assistant and advisor to the Secretary of Defense on all matters related to readiness, Total Force personnel, manpower, family support and health are considered in all of the Department's processes. I expect to provide, if confirmed, the Secretary my best advice and recommendations on the workforce, the impacts to near- and long-term readiness and capability of our policy decisions, and the development of operational plans, and to always provide the Secretary my candid perspective and opinions as we lead the Department into the future.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically how would you ensure your inclusion in the discussion, debate, and resolution of U.S. defense and national security issues?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would ensure that the USD(P&R) has a seat at the table and a voice on all matters related to the operational use and readiness of our forces, and as appropriate is contributor in the Department's strategic policy deliberations and processes. The workforce, both military and civilian, is the Department's most valued and important resource, and there are few decisions or policies that don't impact the workforce. As the principal staff assistant to the Secretary for all things readiness and workforce related, I would expect to be an active contributor and pledge to, if confirmed, provide candid advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

#### PERSONNEL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific personnel policies and processes would you implement or change to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources management—both military and civilian—across the Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would focus on initiatives that enhance the safety and health of servicemembers and their families. I would also look for opportunities to increase stability and predictability for our military families regarding assignments and deployments. In addition, I would seek to leverage technology to eliminate bureaucratic practices that create administrative burdens on civilian and military personnel.

*Question.* What is your understanding of your responsibility, if confirmed, to inform and consult with this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress, on the implementation of personnel policies directed by law?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would be responsible for ensuring that the Department, as appropriate, informs and consults with the Senate Armed Services Committee, and other appropriate congressional committees, on the implementation of personnel policies.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the period of time within which the Department must implement personnel or health policies directed by law?

*Answer.* As a former member of Congress and the House Armed Services Committee, I fully understand the frustration when the Department delays its timelines or implementation of the law. While there may be practical obstacles such as lack of resources, I am also aware that bureaucratic processes can lead to late implementation of policies and programs. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that we do everything we can to comply with law in a timely manner, and if there are reasons for delay or the Department requires Congress' help, I will communicate them to you as soon as I can.

## OVERALL READINESS OF THE ARMED FORCES

*Question.* How would you assess the overall readiness of the armed forces, specifically their readiness to execute the National Defense Strategy and associated operational plans?

*Answer.* I believe the armed forces of the United States have the necessary capability, capacity, and readiness to implement the priorities of the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the National Defense Strategy, and contend with today's threats, while minimizing unnecessary risk to our warfighters wherever possible. As the threat environment continues to evolve, particularly with respect to China's and Russia's emergent abilities to contest U.S. military advantages, readiness must be a persistent priority. If confirmed, I will assess and reinforce all efforts to track and report on the readiness of our military forces. This includes ensuring we can provide relevant information to decision makers, consistent with the way forces are actually employed, to optimize the structure, capability and management of the current and future force.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to improve personnel readiness, including with regard to the health of the force?

*Answer.* As Secretary of Defense Austin states in his March 4, 2021, Message to the Force, "Our most critical asset as a Department is our people and we remain the preeminent fighting force in the world because of our personnel." If confirmed, I will focus efforts on growing talent, building a resilient and ready force, and fostering an atmosphere that holds DOD leaders at every level appropriately accountable for building a safe workplace for all. Further, if confirmed, I will ensure that we proactively support the Military Departments in these areas in order to reduce any potential impacts to readiness, because our readiness to confront current and future challenges is rooted in our people.

## MEASURING READINESS

*Question.* What is your understanding of how the Department of Defense and the Military Services actually measure and track readiness? Do you believe the current metrics used to measure and track "readiness" are appropriate, particularly in light of the 2018 National Defense Strategy?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department currently uses the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS) to provide an operational-level snapshot of current readiness. It is further my understanding that there is a growing need for strategic-level analysis that would aid senior leaders in identifying possible readiness outcomes of resourcing decisions. If confirmed, I will continue to reinforce the efforts currently underway to reform how readiness is tracked and reported; and I will review and assess the requirements and feasibility of developing and fielding such a strategic predictive readiness assessment capability to anticipate, and ultimately avoid, readiness shortfalls.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes would you implement to engage the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness more directly in tracking readiness across the force? In prescribing efforts to remediate or mitigate identified deficiencies in readiness?

*Answer.* The Department must continue to explore and invest in new technologies that enhance our ability to analyze readiness data to better inform the decision-making process. If confirmed, I will work with my partners in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Military Departments and Military Services to ensure our efforts are all properly aligned with the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the National Defense Strategy, and that investments in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other advanced technologies are designed to help see ourselves more clearly.

In order to remediate or mitigate readiness deficiencies, we must first ensure that the recent progress made in building full spectrum readiness endures. This requires that, if confirmed, I be active in the development of policies for manning, training, and equipping the force. We must look to find other mitigation strategies, including building additional capacity, pursuing modernization, exploring alternative capabilities, and considering active/reserve component mix. Furthermore, if confirmed, I will work to improve the Department's ability to anticipate and address readiness challenges before they become an issue.

## NON-DEPLOYABLE SERVICEMEMBERS

*Question.* In your view, should service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months be subject either to separation from the service or referral to the Disability Evaluation System, as is current Department policy?

**Answer.** It is my understanding that the Department's longstanding policy requires evaluation for continued service, not mandated separation. Individuals who can no longer meet the requirements of service, which often includes deployments, should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if continued service is appropriate. To do otherwise would adversely impact the force readiness and place an undue burden on the remainder of the force to fulfill deployment requirements.

**Question.** Under what circumstances would the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be "in the best interest of the service"?

**Answer.** I would expect that the circumstances are highly individualized. It is my understanding that the Secretaries of the Military Departments have broad latitude to consider all aspects of a member's ability to serve when making such a determination. Considerations such as whether or not the individual specialty has a high level of deployment requirements, the level of technical expertise, and the health of the career field should all play in such a determination.

**Question.** In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?

**Answer.** I believe that all individuals should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis under this policy. As with any personnel policy, fair and equitable treatment, regardless of the medical condition involved, is paramount if the Department is to maintain the integrity and credibility with the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and guardians. If confirmed, I will work closely with all appropriate stakeholders to ensure servicemembers are treated with dignity and respect in the execution of all personnel policies and processes.

**Question.** The new transgender policy (DODI 1300.28) provides that "any determination that a transgender servicemember is non-deployable at any time will be consistent with established Military Department and Service standards, as applied to other servicemembers whose deployability is similarly affected in comparable circumstances unrelated to gender transition."

Please provide an example of a "comparable circumstance" that would be used to determine deployability of a transgender service member.

**Answer.** Given the highly individualized nature of this policy, speculation on my part would not be appropriate. I assure you that if confirmed, I will work closely with all appropriate stakeholders to ensure all servicemembers are treated with dignity and respect in the execution of all personnel policies and processes.

**Question.** In your view, should a service member's readiness to perform the required specific missions, functions, and tasks in the context of a particular deployment also be considered in determining whether that service member is deployable?

**Answer.** Yes. It is my understanding that the Combatant Commands often have specific deployment criteria and that the Military Departments consider these specialized requirements when identifying individuals to fulfill these requirements.

**Question.** What are your ideas for addressing the challenges of medical non-deployability in the reserve components?

**Answer.** I am not aware of the challenges to the Reserve Components regarding medical non-deployability. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Military Departments to address any challenges that may exist.

#### COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS OF DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Question.** In your view, how effective has DOD/VA collaboration been to date, and what would you do to enhance it?

**Answer.** It is critically important for our servicemembers that the DOD and VA work closely together to ensure we support those who have served this Nation. While DOD and VA have come a long way to better collaborate across the myriad of issues, there's always room for improvement. If I am confirmed, support for our servicemembers will always be at the top of my mind; therefore, I would continue frequent and reoccurring engagements with my counterpart at the VA, so we can address emergent topics, break through barriers, and enhance collaboration between our two departments. In addition, I would continue to use the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) as the vehicle to facilitate collaboration, establish joint strategies, and to carry out and monitor joint initiatives and programs.

**Question.** If confirmed, how would you improve the seamless transition of each service member as they move from service member to veteran status?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will fully commit to supporting our servicemembers and their families as they navigate their transition from military to civilian life. Accordingly, I will champion DOD's transition programs and collaborate with private and public supporters to build upon current successes, achieve ever-improving outcomes, and provide our transitioning servicemembers with the support they need to em-

power and enable them to become successful, visible, active Veterans equipped to reach their full potential and strengthen their communities.

*Question.* What is your view of the effectiveness of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), and how might it be improved?

Answer. From the passage of the VOW (Veterans Opportunity to Work) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 to the transition assistance related legislation included in the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA, Congress has helped the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) evolve into a highly effective and collaborative interagency effort that provides significant support and services to our servicemembers. If confirmed, I will build upon current successes and work to improve outcomes for TAP eligible servicemembers by addressing barriers that could potentially prevent successful transition to civilian life.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the efficacy of TAP services and support to members of the Reserve Components as they transition from federalized/mobilized status back to civilian life and participation in their assigned reserve and guard units or positions?

Answer. I believe TAP is an effective and collaborative interagency effort that provides the right level of support and services to our servicemembers, to include TAP eligible members of the Reserve Components. If confirmed, I will ensure efficacy, capture lessons learned, and identify improvements through regular assessments and feedback from transitioning servicemembers, the Military Service, interagency partners, and Reserve Component forums.

*Question.* In your view, how can TAP be improved to provide better support to members of the reserve components?

Answer. Given the constant changing environment and economy into which servicemembers are transitioning, TAP must remain innovative, responsive, and collaborative as we work the Military Services, interagency partners, and non-governmental organizations to continuously improve transition services and support. If confirmed, I will build upon current successes and achieve ever-improving outcomes for TAP eligible servicemembers from all Components by addressing barriers that could potentially prevent successful transition to civilian life.

*Question.* If confirmed, what goals would you establish in your role as the co-chair of the Joint Executive Committee?

Answer. First and foremost, if confirmed, I would want to support as much as possible and enhance the open lines of communication between DOD and VA. My goal would also be to support Secretary Austin's priorities within the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) framework. Defending the nation, enhancing partnerships, and taking care of our people are themes found throughout JEC initiatives and goals. As VA and DOD continue to develop the next Joint Strategic Plan, my goal is to keep the Secretary's priorities at the forefront, and to ensure those joint objectives are successfully and promptly completed.

#### EXTREMISM

*Question.* What is your view of the prevalence and effect of extremism within the armed forces?

Answer. I believe that the vast majority of servicemembers and civilian employees in DOD honor the oath each took to support and defend the U.S. Constitution. They perform their duties with integrity and the vast majority do not espouse the abhorrent views associated with extremist doctrine.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you recommend and how would you work with the Military Services to eliminate extremism within the ranks?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review the recommendations proposed by Secretary Austin's Countering Extremist Activity Working Group and support the great team of experts and professionals working to further an environment of dignity and respect within the Department.

#### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

*Question.* In general, what is your assessment of the diversity of each of the Department of Defense military and civilian workforces?

Answer. I understand that the Department leverages a variety of programs to promote diversity for both its military and civilian workforces. A diverse force means a stronger force, and I share Secretary Austin's sentiments that the Department's efforts have not yet realized the significant gains needed to ensure that our military and civilian workforce appropriately reflects the diversity of the United States. I believe that we can do more to improve diverse representation among our senior military and civilian leaders. Under Secretary Austin's leadership, I understand the De-

partment is working to build diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of its work and, if confirmed, I look forward to supporting this critical effort.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you increase diversity and inclusion in the armed forces, and work toward the goal of ensuring that the nation's military, at all levels, especially within the senior officer ranks, reflects the broad diversity of the nation?

*Answer.* We have not seen the type of progress that would better position the Department to ensure that racial and ethnic minority and female servicemembers have the same career advancement opportunities as their counterparts. If confirmed, I would start by looking at what steps have been taken thus far, identifying whether these steps have been effective, and determining where we need to adjust or expand upon the current efforts of the Military Departments and other DOD components. For example, we need to look at career cohort data to better understand whether we need a better pipeline of diverse applicants, whether minorities and women are separating at higher rates than their peers, and whether unnecessary barriers exist to career progression.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you increase diversity and inclusion within the Department's civilian workforce, especially at the senior General Schedule and Senior Executive Service levels?

*Answer.* On June 25, 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order [EO 14035, "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce,"] to cultivate a workforce that draws from the full diversity of the Nation. If confirmed, I will support the Administration's ongoing efforts to improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for the civilian workforce. Specifically, I will work to strengthen the Department's ability to recruit, hire, retain, and promote diverse talent, and remove barriers to equal opportunity.

*Question.* How would you increase geographical diversity in the armed forces, especially from areas of the country and local communities that are currently under-represented in the force?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that today's youth do not generally have a connection to the military or an understanding of what it means to serve. Broad, expansive communication efforts and strategic messaging are critical to changing this dynamic. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department and the Services proactively engage with community leaders across the nation to shift the perceptions of the military and to emphasize the significant opportunities for leadership, education, and experience available through military service.

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

*Question.* In your view, how adequate and effective are the policies, programs, and training been that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault?

*Answer.* DOD has made some progress in this area over the years, but it is not nearly enough. Our servicemembers deserve a workplace free of sexual assault and sexual harassment. This is an area I know the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military has been carefully considering. It is important for the Secretary and President to have the decision space to consider IRC recommendations, and if confirmed, I look forward to closely reviewing the recommendations and advising and supporting Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks in their decisions. If I am confirmed, enhancing sexual misconduct prevention and response policies will be one of my highest priorities.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to increase DOD-wide focus on the prevention of sexual assaults?

*Answer.* I also know Secretary Austin directed a number of actions for the Department to move out on right away, in order to enhance the DOD's prevention efforts. If I am confirmed, not only will I make this one of my highest priorities, but I will look at how we can leverage data and research about what approaches work best and how best to apply them at the local level. Command climate tools will undoubtedly be part of the solution. I would assess how we can give commanders more tools to identify climate problems that may increase risk of sexual assault while also ensuring Service leaders at all levels can quickly identify risk areas and move fast to correct them. If confirmed, I also look forward to carrying out Secretary Austin's direction and working with the Military Departments and military Services to establish a DOD-wide violence prevention workforce.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove from military commanders case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

*Answer.* I am aware that the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military has been considering this topic as it relates to sexual assault. If confirmed, I look forward to working with leaders in the Office of General Counsel of the Department of Defense and the Military Departments to carry out the Secretary of Defense and President's direction on this matter. I also believe we must strengthen the tools and information that our commanders have to better prevent sexual assault and other offenses from happening in the first place. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is critical in this aspect. If confirmed, I will closely support and work to strengthen prevention efforts, including with enhanced command climate tools.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the Department's implementation of protections against retaliation—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage—for reporting sexual assault?

*Answer.* Stopping retaliation is critical. As a former House Armed Services Committee member, I recall that many victims are deeply concerned about retaliation, including from peers and supervisors. If we can better address concerns over retaliation, I'm confident this could lead to more victims making the choice to come forward, connect with support and care services, and aid in the Department's efforts to hold alleged offenders appropriately accountable. If confirmed, I will work to evaluate and understand what those barriers have been and look to see what solutions we can implement.

*Question.* In your view, do military and civilian leaders in the Department have the training, authorities, and resources needed to hold subordinate commanders and supervisors accountable for the prevention of and response to sexual assault and retaliation? If not, what additional training, authorities, or resources do you believe are needed, and why?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will closely evaluate whether all our leaders have what they need, how the P&R enterprise can better support them, and how the P&R teams exercise oversight to ensure compliance with our efforts and requirements to stop these behaviors. I also want to ensure that the Department continues to make progress on the recent advancements on command climate tools as part of our efforts to stop sexual assault and retaliation. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our partners in Congress to help better strengthen our prevention efforts.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE ARMED FORCES

*Question.* What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the sexual harassment programs of the Department, including those of the Military Departments?

*Answer.* Although I understand the Department has published new and updated policies to counter harassment, the Department is not where it needs to be when it comes to preventing sexual harassment.

If I am confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Department's recent prevention initiatives, to include the use of command climate tools. Prevention of sexual harassment is not only critical to ensuring the unit cohesion necessary to be effective on the battlefield, it is fundamental to our values and ensuring that every servicemember is treated with dignity and respect.

*Question.* In your view, do methods for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the military force?

*Answer.* As I understand it, the Department measures the prevalence of harassing and discriminatory behaviors by leveraging scientific surveys—assessing experiential data to measure rates rather than relying solely on reports of such behaviors. These surveys provide a sense of scope and help inform the targeted efforts needed to address the areas of greatest concern. That said, I believe it is essential that leaders take appropriate action on informal reports of these behaviors and track them in order to understand the full scope of the issue.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to improve the quality of investigations into allegations of sexual harassment in the force?

*Answer.* Leaders should be held appropriately accountable to ensure thorough, effective, and timely investigations of sexual harassment complaints. If confirmed, I look forward to carefully reviewing the recommendations from the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, and supporting both Secretary Austin and the President so that the Department can effectively move forward in addressing this problem in a comprehensive way.

*Question.* Does the Department's method for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators in the military?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will examine the intersection between DOD's new anti-harassment policies and its long-standing military equal opportunity and civilian equal employment opportunity policies. I will also work to ensure that the Department develops a comprehensive plan to prevent repeat offenses.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE IN MILITARY FAMILIES

*Question.* What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the military services, and, if confirmed, what actions will you take to address these issues?

*Answer.* I recognize that domestic violence and child abuse are serious public health issues that have no place, but do exist, in our military. If confirmed, I commit to determining if these issues are receiving the attention they deserve and the necessary resources to support effective prevention and response.

*Question.* In your view, what more can the Department do to prevent child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department has made the prevention of interpersonal violence, in all its forms, a priority. If confirmed, I will ensure prevention of child abuse and domestic/intimate partner violence are included in the Department's overarching interpersonal violence prevention efforts.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Department's Family Advocacy Program strikes the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?

*Answer.* I strongly believe that prevention, support of those impacted, and appropriate accountability for those engaged in these actions are all essential components of the Department's program. If confirmed, I commit to gaining a deeper understanding of the program and how well it addresses each component.

#### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY, DOD SCHOOLS, AND DEPENDENT EDUCATION

*Question.* What is your assessment of the overall quality of DOD schools?

*Answer.* I believe DODEA schools provide a high quality education, on par with the best public school systems in the United States. Military dependents deserve no less.

*Question.* In your view, are DODEA's headquarters overhead costs, including its funding and employment of personnel above the school level, comparable to such costs in highly-ranked public school districts in the United States? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Although I do not know all the details, I am aware that DODEA, along with the rest of the Department, has gone through several rounds of Headquarters staffing reviews and reductions, the result of which is a lower overhead than that of comparable public school systems. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that DODEA is properly resourced for student success.

*Question.* Should the eligibility requirements for military dependents to attend DOD schools be modified in any way, in your opinion? If so, what modifications would you propose, if confirmed?

*Answer.* I do not have enough information at this time to offer an opinion on the eligibility requirements or whether they should be modified. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to ensure that the Department has the resources and authorities needed to assess the impact that access to DODEA schools has on recruitment, retention, and military family readiness.

*Question.* What lasting impacts, if any, do you believe the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the way DOD schools are run and how DOD dependents who attend those schools learn?

*Answer.* As I understand it, DODEA had an effective education program during the COVID-19 pandemic. They were able to switch to remote instruction in just a few short days due to previous efforts to implement education best practices for blended learning in all their schools. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing this push to incorporate technology and adaptive curriculum into daily practice which will ultimately allow for individualized and differentiated instruction to meet every student where they are with what they need to succeed.

*Question.* Do you believe DODEA should further expand its capabilities to deliver online education going forward? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* It is my understanding that DODEA is conducting a pilot program directed by the Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA to expand access to its virtual school. If con-

firmed, I will evaluate the results of that pilot and ensure DODEA is resourced to maximize education tools for its students.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the preparedness of DOD schools to respond and react appropriately to active shooter emergencies?

Answer. The Department has an obligation to ensure that all students and staff are trained and aware of procedures to follow in the event of an active shooter situation. I understand that DODEA has partnerships with each of the installations, Military Departments, and COCOMs to assist in the observation and evaluation of emergency drills and their effectiveness. If confirmed, I will ensure DODEA continues its comprehensive review of the school security assessment and develop quantifiable information to determine improvements.

*Question.* How do you assess current class sizes (student to teacher ratios) throughout DODEA schools, and do you recommend they be adjusted? If so, why?

Answer. I believe that well-resourced schools and an appropriate number of teachers in each school are essential to higher levels of student achievement. In keeping with its responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer money, the Department has an obligation to invest in its students as well as ensure the use of fiscal resources in a way that is both deliberate and responsible. If confirmed, I will review the resource requirements of DODEA to ensure the Department meets these obligations.

*Question.* In your view, how, if at all, should the quality and availability of local public education factor into Department and military service basing decisions?

Answer. Family readiness is directly linked to military readiness and facilitating access to quality education for military dependents is vital to the health of the Force. If confirmed, I would evaluate how the quality and availability of local public education are considered in the Military Services' basing processes and work with the Military Services to make any necessary improvements. I will also review any impact on the DODEA workforce, family readiness, and the Department's ability to retain high quality servicemembers and their families.

*Question.* Are you confident that DODEA has in place the policies and processes to ensure that:

Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment by a student in locations under the jurisdiction of DODEA are properly investigated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure there are policies and procedures in place to appropriately address all such allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment. It is my understanding that DODEA has a robust Civil Rights program with appropriate reporting and tracking tools and has implemented a collaborative process designed to assist the organization in taking reasonable steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination in DODEA schools, programs, activities, and workplaces, as required under Executive Order 13160, "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs."

*Question.* Information documenting such misconduct, if substantiated, is recorded in the permanent record of the offending student and that any school to which that student subsequently transfers is made aware of that information, as appropriate?

Answer. It is my understanding that DODEA policy requires the documentation of substantiated misconduct to be included in the student record which transfers upon the student's enrollment into a new school.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you direct to ensure that DODEA takes all appropriate actions to hold its teachers, other employees, and students accountable for acts of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination?

Answer. There is zero room for discrimination, harassment, or assault of any kind in DOD or DODEA. If confirmed, I will examine the adequacy of the training and resources currently available to DODEA teachers, staff, and students, and I will work with the Congress to address this or any other problem that affects the security, safety, and well-being of military families and DOD civilian employees. I will also work to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to hold accountable any teachers, employees, and students involved with substantiated allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination.

#### JUVENILE PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

*Question.* What is your assessment of Department and service programs to respond to, investigate, adjudicate, and document allegations of juvenile problematic sexual behavior?

Answer. I agree that this is a serious issue that will require Departmental focus, with the understanding that the department has no jurisdiction to adjudicate such cases. I will review existing processes to ensure they adequately address this impor-

tant issue, and commit to providing the resources and support necessary to appropriately respond to these types of behaviors.

*Question.* How can these programs be improved?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department has made significant progress in responding to these behaviors through a multi-disciplinary approach that involves many offices and programs. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring that work continues with an eye on opportunities for sustained improvement.

#### MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES

*Question.* Over the last year, each of the Military Service Academies experienced significant violations of their respective honor codes, which prohibit lying, cheating, or stealing.

In your view, how should the Military Service Academies handle honor code violations?

*Answer.* I am aware that Military Service Academies use their honor codes to uphold high standards and prepare each Cadet and Midshipmen to become commissioned officers. If confirmed, I look forward to learning about how each of the Service Academies' honor codes is applied to better understand their meaning and intent, and to ensure they have the maximum positive impact.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the diversity of cadets and midshipmen enrolled in each of the Military Service Academies? What measures can be taken to increase diversity in the Academies?

*Answer.* Ensuring diversity at the Military Service Academies is essential for the Department to obtain greater diversity in our military leadership ranks at large. Military Service Academies develop our future leaders. Strengthening those applicant pools with diverse talent will serve to increase DOD's minority and female officer accession rates, and help us ensure our force continues to maintain an advantage in the competition for talent.

If confirmed, I will work to improve DOD's marketing, recruitment, and community partnership efforts to create a more diverse applicant pool for the Military Service Academies, as well as for ROTC commissioning programs.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place across the Military Service Academies to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment, and to ensure that cadets and midshipmen who do report assault or harassment are not subject to retaliation—social ostracism and reputation damage—in particular?

*Answer.* I think it is very clear that the Department is not where it needs to be in preventing sexual assault and harassment, as well as stopping all forms of retaliation, including from peers and supervisors. If confirmed, evaluating the Department's policies and processes related to sexual assault, harassment, and retaliation will be among my highest priorities.

If confirmed, I will do as much as possible to ensure victims do not fear retaliation and the Military Service Academies properly address all forms of problematic behaviors to ensure we grow the right leaders for the future.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at each Military Service Academy?

*Answer.* I know, from my time on the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee, that our youngest are often at highest risk—so certainly our cadets and midshipmen are a population we must consider carefully in our efforts. I am deeply committed to supporting our military community, which includes the future leaders at our Military Service Academies. If confirmed, I would review suicide prevention programs and their efficacy in order to identify opportunities to enhance policies and practices.

*Question.* Do you believe the current 5-year minimum Active Duty service commitment for Military Service Academy graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?

*Answer.* I understand the 5-year minimum Active Duty service obligation for Military Service Academy graduates has been in place and remained largely unchanged for several years. If confirmed, I will assess the current service obligation policies, determining if the return on investment has been successful, and if they should be changed.

*Question.* In your view, do the Military Service Academies contribute to the pool of military officer accessions commensurate with their attendant costs? Why or why not?

*Answer.* It is my view that the Military Service Academies have historically produced high quality commissioned officers. If confirmed, I will analyze the benefits

and challenges that accompany these programs to ensure we efficiently maximize the resources provided to the Service Academies.

*Question.* Given the provisions of title 10, U.S. Code, applicable to each of the Military Service Academies, under what conditions would you deem it appropriate, if confirmed, to permit a military officer to play professional sports prior to completing at least 2 consecutive years of commissioned service following graduation from an Academy?

*Answer.* I am aware there have been a few talented athletes approved to participate in professional sports prior to serving at least 2 consecutive years of commissioned service following their Service Academy graduation. If confirmed, I will evaluate current policies regarding this issue and, in conjunction with Department leadership, determine if a change to the current policy is warranted.

#### SENIOR RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (SROTC)

*Question.* In your view, does the Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) program remain a viable source of officer accessions?

*Answer.* SROTC is an avenue where students can pursue an undergraduate education at a civilian institution, while also training to become a military commissioned officer. As I understand, SROTC is the DOD's largest source for officer accession production. If confirmed, I will review policies and procedures to ensure the Department strategically manages this program in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the diversity in our ROTC programs? What measures can be taken to increase diversity in the ROTC?

*Answer.* SROTC units are strategically located in geographical areas and at various universities to allow maximum opportunities for diverse populations to serve our nation upon commissioning. If confirmed, I will review those areas that serve diverse and underrepresented populations to take full advantage of their talents through opportunities to serve.

*Question.* In your view, should the Military Services continue to operate SROTC units at colleges and universities that fail to meet their minimum annual commissioning requirements? If not, please explain the factors you believe should be used to determine which units should be terminated.

*Answer.* I am aware there are SROTC units that struggle to meet certain commissioning requirements. If confirmed, I will review the circumstances surrounding those units challenged to meet minimum viability and look for ways, including consulting with Congress, to get the most out of current SROTC reach and resources without losing representation in certain geographical areas.

*Question.* How would you modify the SROTC scholarship program to attract the top talent that our armed forces need?

*Answer.* I believe that we have SROTC at some of the top colleges and universities in the country. If confirmed, I would encourage the Military Services to recruit and retain top talent at every college and university participating and focus efforts on some of the underutilized locations. I would also look for opportunities to leverage technology to attract those with skills needed within the Defense Department.

#### HEALTH CARE QUALITY AND ACCESS

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific actions would you take with respect to each of the following:

Eliminating performance variability throughout the Military Health System (MHS).

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to first, dive deeply into the measures and metrics that MHS leaders use to set and monitor key performance goals for medical readiness, quality, safety, access, satisfaction and other vital indicators. As part of this deep dive, I will determine what the positive and negative outliers may be in terms of performance and understand why that variability may exist—whether due to circumstances unique to geography, size of medical facility, resourcing decisions, or leadership challenges.

If confirmed, I will ask MHS leaders to put forward performance improvement plans and milestones for areas where variability is high, and performance is poor. The intended result of the deep dives is to ensure that the MHS establishes standard processes based on best practices to support readiness, outcomes, and satisfaction. I also will ensure the Defense Health Agency codifies these standard processes in official guidance and establishes accountability processes to eliminate unwarranted performance variability across the MHS. I understand that reducing variability requires continuous assessment and probing questions. If confirmed, I will

hold regular management reviews of MHS performance as part of my oversight responsibilities.

*Question.* Improving health outcomes and the experience of care for all of the Department's beneficiaries—in both the direct and purchased care components of the MHS.

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my first steps will be to meet with military families, as well as with leaders of the many military service organizations that advocate for their members. In addition to other military family quality-of-life considerations, I will be asking very specific questions about the measures that matter to them for health care services, regardless of where they receive their care. Working with MHS leaders, Combatant Commanders, and the Military Departments, I will invest in customer-facing tools that make it easier and more efficient for beneficiaries to interact with their provider and to manage their own health care. My goal is to enhance our military family's experience in both the direct care and purchased care arenas. The mentioned strategy of establishing MHS standard processes based on best practices to support readiness, outcomes and patient satisfaction is what I will use to measure success.

*Question.* Creating a value-based MHS—ensuring the delivery of accessible, high-quality health care at a reasonable cost to both the Department and its beneficiaries.

*Answer.* It is important to ensure the right outcomes are prioritized. In the long-term, high quality care leads to more efficient use of resources—both financial and personnel.

If confirmed, I will ensure the MHS continues to create value by focusing on high quality health care, eliminating waste, reducing unnecessary variation and implementing longer-term opportunities to improve health services for all DOD serves. There are certain elements of military medicine and preparedness that require resources not incurred by civilian health systems. Specifically, value must be assessed relative to our core missions. I am aware of the MHS' performance in battlefield care, as well as its impressive ability to reduce the number of disease and non-battle injury rates over the course of recent conflicts. If confirmed, I intend to review previous assumptions about what military medical treatment facilities contribute to readiness. I want to ensure we have a comprehensive view of value and readiness—that addresses the full spectrum of operations, as well as family readiness, and support to civilian authorities.

#### MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM REFORM

*Question.* Do you support the implementation of the Military Health System (MHS) reforms mandated by the NDAA's for fiscal years 2017, 2019, 2020, and 2021?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Congress to ensure effective implementation of Military Health System reforms. The MHS should be focused on its core readiness mission and providing quality health care to all beneficiaries in accordance with guidance provided by Congress. Consolidating the administration and management of the military hospitals and clinics, along with public health and research activities, under the Defense Health Agency as directed by Congress will improve overall readiness, effectiveness, and efficiency.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to change the culture within the military services, such that their leadership will fully embrace changes necessary to improve the readiness of the medical force?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to understand their readiness requirements to maintain a ready medical force and help facilitate making sure the Department institutes changes required to effectively meet those requirements. I am confident that the leadership will support efforts to meet their requirements to maintain and improve the readiness of the medical force.

*Question.* In your view, are the Military Departments' medical forces properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements set forth in operational plans implementing the 2018 NDS and in the recent Joint Medical Estimate?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make it a priority to understand the joint medical force requirements and work with the Joint Staff and the Military Departments to assure that those requirements are addressed within the context of the overall Departmental requirements and resourcing processes.

*Question.* In your view, is DOD's current education, training, and career development approach sufficient to ensure a military trauma care workforce that is ready to deliver expert health care (including combat casualty care) in support of the full range of military operations, domestically and abroad?

Answer. My understanding is that maintaining this critically important workforce is challenging, due to many factors. If confirmed, I will review the programs in place to address this critical component of the ready medical force. I will work with DOD leadership to make sure that we adequately resource military relevant research and development, education, training, and career development to maintain a medical force prepared to provide world class care across the range of military operations they will be called on to support.

#### MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to service members in theater and to service members and families at home station locations, including members and families of the reserve components?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure DOD continues to provide accessible, quality mental and behavioral health resources to our servicemembers and their families. This includes inpatient, outpatient, deployment embedded health care services, child and family behavioral health care, and tele-behavioral health, supplemented by family programs such as the Military Crisis Line, providing confidential, immediate help 24/7 at no cost to Active Duty, Guard and Reserve members, and their families. I will routinely review our measures of access to mental health care to ensure they meet our standards.

*Question.* In your view, how could the Department better integrate the provision of mental and behavioral health care services and non-medical counseling?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to promote mental health professionals that are positioned to provide the best possible care based on evidence-based best practices, and improve the whole health of patients through compliance with current standard of care clinical practice guidelines, including recommendations for non-medical counseling and social context support systems.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to improve the delivery of behavioral health services in the MHS through telehealth? How would you expand such capabilities in both the direct and purchased care components of the MHS?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the MHS to enable tele-behavioral health services that are leveraged for mental health assessments, ongoing behavioral health treatment, and surge support for pre-deployment evaluations, and work to expand services to include continued beneficiary care through consistent and stable patient/provider relationships.

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you strengthen the Department's suicide prevention programs to reduce the number of suicides among service members, including in the reserve components, and their families?

Answer. Suicide prevention has to be one of the top priorities for the Department. Every suicide is not only a loss for our Armed Forces but also forever changes the lives of families and communities. If confirmed, I would ensure suicide prevention initiatives are based on the latest research and effective. This includes focusing on reducing risk for servicemembers and their families—such as addressing relationship, financial, and mental health challenges, among others—and also enhancing protective factors—those skills, strengths, and resources that help people deal more effectively with stressful events. In addition, I would continue to collaborate with leaders across the Department of Defense, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs, and our partners in academia and elsewhere in the non-government sector to evolve our strategies and identify new, evidence-based methods to prevent suicide.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to provide additional suicide prevention programs in rural and isolated locations, such as Fort Wainwright, Alaska?

Answer. I understand the Department uses a public health model to address suicide—that is, ensuring all in the community are involved in preventing suicide. If confirmed, I would ensure the Department fully implements this type of comprehensive health approach to suicide prevention. We must ensure we are providing medical care and treatment, while emphasizing broader efforts to help individuals well before they may become at risk of harming themselves. Additionally, we must continue to investigate and learn why there may be higher concentrations of suicides in a particular area and what unique factors may be at play for remote installations. If confirmed, I will ensure we are looking at research and programs with a focus on our servicemembers and families in rural and isolated locations, and promoting

their help-seeking, access to care, and connectedness to family, friends, and fellow servicemembers.

#### OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

*Question.* In your view, what actions can be taken to improve permeability between the active and reserve components?

*Answer.* In order to increase the desirability to serve and retain servicemembers from across all components, if confirmed I intend to investigate career flexibility initiatives to improve permeability between components.

*Question.* Do you believe current DOD and Military Service procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment, especially those with adverse or reportable information, are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretaries of the Military 80. Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department and the Military Services maintain a rigorous process to properly evaluate officer qualifications, past performance, potential, and any adverse or reportable information to ensure decisions made by senior leaders are well-informed. If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff and the Service Chiefs to ensure that the procedures and practices that are in place are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Department's leadership.

*Question.* Recent NDAA's provided significant flexibility to the constraints imposed by the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA). In your judgement are any additional authorities required for the military departments to manage their officers better to implement the National Defense Strategy?

*Answer.* I appreciate the work of Congress and of this committee to improve the readiness of the Services by modernizing the law governing DOD personnel policies. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to explore ways to improve both law and policy to better meet the needs of the servicemember, while providing the flexibility desired by talented leaders in an increasingly competitive job market. Any such research and discussions will continue to be communicated to this Committee along with any future requests for legislative changes to improve our competitive edge in the ongoing competition for talent.

#### JOINT OFFICER MANAGEMENT

*Question.* In your view, do the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO), and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to General/Flag Officer rank, continue to be consistent with the operational and professional demands of military service line officers?

*Answer.* As I understand it, officer careers are tightly managed to meet Military Department specific milestones and operational demands. If confirmed, I will work with all stakeholders to ensure joint qualification requirements are sensible and enhance an officer's perspective, knowledge, and ability to lead joint, interagency, and multinational operations that support national strategic goals and objectives.

*Question.* What additional modifications, if any, would you recommend to JQO prerequisites necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Service-specific leadership experience, as well as adequate professional development?

*Answer.* The profound and rapidly changing character of war and conflict in the 21st century compels us to constantly evaluate and transform our talent management and leader development practices to maintain our competitive advantage and successfully prepare for the emerging ways of war our Nation could face. If confirmed, I commit to working with the appropriate stakeholders to ensure the development of strategically minded joint warfighters who think critically and can creatively apply military power to inform national strategy, conduct globally integrated operations, and fight under conditions of disruptive change.

*Question.* What are your ideas for improving the JQO system better to meet the needs of reserve component officers?

*Answer.* I recognize that the Reserve Components are vital members of our Total Force. As I understand it, the current Joint Qualification System (JQS) is a Total Force system providing the Department a common standard for joint qualifications. This common standard helps dispel the myth that Reserve Component officers are less qualified to work in the joint environment. Ultimately, this Total Force approach improves the Department's ability to perform its mission across the spectrum of operations.

*Question.* In your view, should the requirement to be a JQO be eliminated as a consideration in selecting officers for promotion and assignment?

Answer. I recognize that the Department needs leaders who think critically and creatively, apply military power to inform national strategy, conduct globally integrated operations, and fight under conditions of disruptive change. It is my understanding that this is the basis of the JQO requirements. If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff and the Service Chiefs to ensure our JQO requirements continue to support that goal.

#### PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

*Question.* What changes or reform would you recommend to the professional military education system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the tools necessary to ensure the Department is able to meet the national defense objectives of the future?

Answer. Military education provides the foundation for ensuring that military leaders possess the professionalism, independence of action, and intellectual agility to meet the challenges they will face, today and in the future. If confirmed, I would review and assess the state of the professional military education system and ongoing initiatives to improve the Department's ability to develop the military and civilian leaders needed across all grades to meet its national defense objectives. To ensure our leaders are getting the most from the military education system, I would ensure our processes include robust assessment and evaluation to support continuous improvement of our people and the education system itself.

#### NUCLEAR FORCES

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your role in ensuring that the military services sustain efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of service members charged to execute and support the Department's nuclear mission?

Answer. The nuclear deterrence mission is one of the Department's highest priorities, and supporting the servicemembers that carry out that mission. If confirmed, I will engage the Department of the Navy and the Air Force to understand the specific challenges their nuclear forces face, and work with them to ensure that their servicemembers are trained, ready, and supported to execute this most critical mission.

#### SPACE FORCE

*Question.* In your view, how should the reserve components be structured to support to the U.S. Space Force?

Answer. The Reserve Component is a critical part of space operations and provides unmatched strategic depth and technical expertise. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Department of the Air Force to ensure the proposed organizational design is flexible, innovative and optimized to attract, recruit, and retain the best talent.

#### MILITARY COMPENSATION

*Question.* Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet national defense objectives?

Answer. Yes. The military pay and benefits package must remain competitive with the private sector in order to successfully recruit and retain the right number of high-quality men and women the nation needs for its military.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal?

Answer. I understand the current military compensation package is robust and compares favorably with the private sector. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate the adequacy of military pay and benefits to ensure we are attracting and retaining the best of our country's talent for the nation's Armed Forces.

*Question.* What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package, if confirmed?

Answer. At this time, I do not have any specific recommended revisions to military pay and benefits package. However, I am open to considering alternatives, and if confirmed, will work with the Congress on potential changes that do not jeopardize our readiness or ability to recruit, retain, and sustain our nation's All-Volunteer Force.

*Question.* What specific recommendations do you have for controlling rising military personnel costs, including entitlement spending?

Answer. I have become aware of concerns regarding recent growth in military personnel costs, and I fully support controlling those costs. I do believe we should always seek to improve processes and look for greater efficiencies in order to control costs. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Defense Committees to ensure any future military pay and benefits changes are ones that enhance our ability to sustain the All-Volunteer Force, and are also cost-efficient.

#### END STRENGTH AND PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

*Question.* In your judgment, what role should the USD(P&R) play in ensuring responsible management of military manpower across both the active and reserve components?

Answer. If I confirmed, I believe I will have a fundamental role to play, given both the title 10 and principal staff assistant responsibilities of the USD(P&R). While the management of military manpower is clearly a Military Department responsibility, I believe the USD(P&R) has an inherent responsibility to critically assess the mix of active and reserve capabilities, ensuring that they are sufficiently balanced to meet operational mission demands, maintain a sustainable readiness posture that is responsive to the President's and Secretary's operational planning needs, and promote a flexible and adaptive structure that is cost informed and ensures the long-term viability of our All-Volunteer Force.

*Question.* Is the current military end strength sufficient to meet national defense objectives? If not, what end strength is necessary?

Answer. At this time, I do not have sufficient information on the Department's operational plans or wartime planning requirements to provide an assessment on the sufficiency of current military end-strength. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of Defense in working with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commanders, the Military Departments, and my counterparts across OSD, given my responsibilities as the primary advisor to the Secretary on personnel and readiness matters, to inform future deliberations on size and composition of our military force levels and make recommendations on end-strength levels in light of operational demands, risk mitigation, cost considerations, our near- and long-term readiness posture, and the global security environment.

#### MILITARY ACCESSIONS VITAL TO NATIONAL INTEREST PROGRAM

*Question.* In your view, did the benefits of the past Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program (MAVNI)—recruiting and utilizing those with critical skills vital to the national interest—outweigh the costs to the Department associated with conducting security, suitability, and reliability screenings of applicants?

Answer. It is my understanding that the MAVNI program principally provided the Services with medical personnel and speakers of critical languages. If confirmed, I will look into what worked and what did not with the MAVNI program. I also understand Congress passed legislation in recent years that severely restricts the establishment of such a program.

*Question.* In your view, how effective was that program in filling certain hard-to-fill specialties?

Answer. I have not had access to the information that would allow me to render an informed opinion on the effectiveness of this program when it was operational. If confirmed, I will acquaint myself with the historical records and analyses of this program, so I can be better informed.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you recommend reactivating the MAVNI program and authorize the enlistment of new applicants? Please explain your answer.

Answer. If confirmed, I work to learn the complete history of the MAVNI program and evaluate how the Department can effectively and efficiently fill critical hard-to-fill specialties, which further strengthen and diversify the Force. However, I understand it would be extremely difficult to restart the program in its previous form based on legislation enacted by Congress in recent years.

#### RECRUITING AND RETENTION

*Question.* In your view, what are the main reasons that less than 30 percent of 17–24-year-olds are eligible for military service, and how would you propose increasing the size of that pool?

Answer. It is my understanding that there are many reasons why today's youth are ineligible for military service: medical issues, obesity, drug usage and criminal incidences. I am also aware that the low qualification rates are a national concern, not just for the DOD but for all of America. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to develop means to address these issues with America's youth for the betterment of the country as a whole, as well as the DOD. I will ensure the Depart-

ment and the Military Services work to correct any misperceptions regarding service in the military and provide a consistent, positive message to today's youth that increases the desirability of joining the military. Raising propensity—or the interest in serving—among American youth will be important.

*Question.* Similarly, why do you believe that the propensity of youth to serve continues to drop and is at its lowest level (about 10 percent of all youth, according to DOD data) in years?

*Answer.* I understand the low propensity to serve is due to the ever-increasing disconnect between civilians and the military and the decreasing Veteran population. If confirmed, I will continue to work on these issues with a focus of shifting the views and esteem of serving in the military.

*Question.* Do you believe that non-native English speakers are disadvantaged in qualifying for military service by the current testing process? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* I understand that the Military Services have historically used and continue to use recruiting programs which provide service opportunities to a wide population of American youth, to include non-native English speakers. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Military Services to ensure the testing process assesses critical skills necessary for success in service and review opportunities to further expand enlistment options for all qualified applicants.

*Question.* How would you address any such disadvantages to increase the pool of eligible and interested youth?

*Answer.* I believe the qualification standards have been set to ensure our military force remains unmatched in the world and to ensure the individuals who join can meet the high standards and demands of the military. If confirmed, I am committed to continually reviewing the military accession standards to ensure they remain relevant and in the best interest of the Service and future servicemembers.

*Question.* In your view, should existing medical and other qualification standards be reconsidered to accommodate youth willing to enlist for service in certain high-demand specialties, such as remotely piloted aircraft pilots or the cyber workforce?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Military Services have the latitude to approve waivers for certain qualification standards, which enables them to increase the pool of individuals they consider for military service. That being said, I believe that the Department must set standards that maintain military readiness of the force, as we do not know what emerging requirements may occur in the future. If confirmed, I am committed to continually reviewing the military accession standards to ensure they remain relevant and in the best interest of the Service and future servicemembers.

*Question.* The recently revised DOD Instruction 6130.03 Volume 1, Medical Standards for Military Service: Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction, provides that a “history of cross-sex hormone therapy associated with gender transition is disqualifying unless the individual has been stable on such hormones for 18 months . . .,”

*Answer.* My understanding regarding the newly published policy is that an applicant is considered to be stable if a licensed mental health provider states the applicant has been without distress in their social, occupational, and other important areas of functioning in their lives for 18 months.

*Question.* What recognized independent medical authority recommends 18 months as an appropriate timeframe to assess a patient's “stability” on cross-sex hormones?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make it a priority to understand the recommendations of the different recognized medical authorities regarding the appropriate timeframe required to determine if a patient can be considered stable when treated with cross-sex hormones.

*Question.* What criteria would a licensed medical provider use to make a determination that a potential service member is “stable” on cross-sex hormones?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the military clinical communities to understand their criteria for making a determination that a potential servicemember is stable on hormone therapy. I am confident that Department health leadership will support efforts to evaluate their requirements to ensure potential servicemembers are without clinically significant distress or impairment associated with living in their self-identified gender that may adversely impact their ability to meet military service obligations.

#### RESERVE COMPONENTS

*Question.* In your judgment, what has been the effect of increased operational tempo on reserve component recruiting and retention?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Reserve Components continue to meet the nation's call supporting operations both stateside and overseas. However, I also

realize that sustained increased operational tempo does have an effect on retention. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to ensure they have the tools necessary to effectively recruit and retain personnel and meet end strength goals in support of national security objectives.

*Question.* In your view, do the reserve components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the reserve components be supported by increased training, improved equipment, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness?

*Answer.* In my view, current policy dictates managing the Reserve Components as an operational force with strategic depth. As an operational force, the Reserve Components have successfully performed across the full spectrum of conflict, providing operational capabilities while simultaneously ensuring strategic depth to meet National Defense Strategy requirements. The Reserve Components must man, equip, sustain, and train their units to successfully accomplish their wide-ranging mission set and meet the requirements of the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to ensure that they are resourced to meet their total force requirements.

#### MILITARY LENDING ACT

*Question.* What is your view of the efficacy of the Military Lending Act (MLA)? If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to ensure the act is fully implemented and enforced?

*Answer.* As a former Naval officer, I understand the impact financial struggles can have on servicemembers and their ability to focus on the mission. I believe the MLA is critical to protecting servicemembers and families from lenders that aggressively target our military. If confirmed, I will take the necessary steps to ensure the Act is implemented in a manner that most effectively protects our servicemembers and their families.

#### MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE

*Question.* If confirmed, what quality of life and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) programs would you consider to be a priority?

*Answer.* Quality of life programs, especially those that promote the well-being and resilience of servicemembers and their families, are a priority for me. If confirmed, I commit to supporting important programs such as family life counseling; spouse education and employment support; fitness opportunities; MWR and resale; and high quality child care. These programs support and enhance military family readiness, and ultimately mission readiness.

*Question.* What metric would you apply in determining which MWR and quality of life programs should be sustained or enriched and which should be eliminated or reduced in scope as ineffective or outmoded?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully evaluating metrics and measures for key MWR and quality of life programs. My understanding is that these programs foster physical and mental well-being, aid in readiness, recruitment, and retention of personnel and are a key part of maintaining Total Force fitness. If confirmed, I will review MWR programs and funding policies to ensure they meet servicemember and their family's needs are adequately funded, and provide the Services the flexibility to provide the MWR programs to meet their missions.

#### MILITARY FAMILY READINESS AND SUPPORT

*Question.* What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to learning more about the issues that most impact military family readiness. I understand child care and spouse employment are two issues that come up frequently, and are some of the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families. Spouse unemployment can impact the financial readiness of the family as well as family satisfaction with military life. Ultimately, spouse unemployment can negatively impact retention. If confirmed, I will thoroughly examine these important issues.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that military families are provided with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?

*Answer.* I believe child care is a critical mission readiness issue and an important contributor to the economic viability of military families. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring affordable, quality care is accessible to our military families and determining where the gaps and challenges are in providing this vital service, filling those gaps, and meeting those challenges.

## SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

*Question.* What is your view of the overall effectiveness of the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?

*Answer.* Although I do not have enough information at this time to adequately comment on the overall effectiveness of the program, if confirmed, I will be committed to providing support to military families who have family members with exceptional needs. I will work to better understand how the Department is meeting the needs of these important members of our military community.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you incentivize service member enrollment in EFMP?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to better understand how they currently incentivize members to enroll in EFMP and explore additional avenues to encourage enrollment.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you enhance support to a service member in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs, regardless of where that family member is located?

*Answer.* Developing an efficient process to assist families in gaining access to medical services and support is a priority. If confirmed, I will work with the necessary stakeholders to ensure the implementation of processes to assist families in accessing required medical services in a timely and effective manner.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would work with Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners and military commanders to ensure that the needs of service members with an exceptional family member are considered in the military housing assignment process?

*Answer.* Ensuring our EFMP families have access to housing that meets their needs is important. If confirmed, I will review existing procedures and policies to better understand how access to housing is addressed in the EFMP program and work with appropriate DOD officials to make any needed improvements.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you prioritize the implementation of section 582 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2021, which mandates improvements and standardization of the EFMP across the Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make providing support to our EFMP families a priority and ensure the Department complies with all applicable laws, including section 582 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2021.

## COMMISSARY AND MILITARY EXCHANGE SYSTEMS

*Question.* What is your view of proposals to consolidate the commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department is currently conducting a Business Case Analysis on the feasibility of consolidating defense resale entities as required by the section 633 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2021.

I believe it would be premature for me to form an opinion on this question without seeing the results of the study. If confirmed, I will review the report closely and ensure that an impact and risk assessment for any partial or full consolidation has been thoroughly considered before any decisions are made.

*Question.* What is your view of the value that accrues to commissary patrons by including beer and wine among the products offered on commissary shelves?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that a pilot program to assess the value of beer and wine in commissaries is ongoing. If confirmed, I will review the results of the pilot and further assess the convenience value to the Department's commissary patrons.

*Question.* What steps have been taken to prepare the commissary to transition to a non-appropriated fund personnel system?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that this issue is on hold pending further evaluation of the updated study required by section 633 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2021. If confirmed, I will review the results of the study and conduct a thorough assessment before any decision is made to transition the commissary system to a non-appropriated fund personnel system.

*Question.* Have initiatives designed to enhance the commissary's ability to operate more like a private sector grocery store been effective in reducing commissary reliance on appropriated funds?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the ability to operate like a private sector grocery store should reduce DeCA's reliance on Service allocated appropriated fund dollars. If confirmed, I will assess and support efforts to balance better delivery of the commissary benefit with funding sources in accordance with the Defense Planning Guidance and legal authorities.

*Question.* What is your view of proposals to privatize the commissary system?

Answer. I believe that commissaries are an important military non-pay compensation benefit, and should be retained within the Department of Defense to ensure that the benefit is maintained for commissary patrons. It is my understanding that the commissaries demonstrated this critical importance throughout the pandemic.

#### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE MATTERS

*Question.* How would you describe the current state of the Department's civilian workforce, including its morale and the Department's ability to successfully recruit and retain top civilian talent?

Answer. I am not completely familiar with the existing state of the morale of the Department's civilian workforce and its ability to successfully recruit top civilian talent. If confirmed, one of my priorities will be to work with senior leaders to assess these areas and implement strategies to address Departmental needs, as appropriate.

*Question.* In your judgment, what are the biggest challenges facing the DOD in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

Answer. I believe the biggest challenges may be the recruitment and retention of technical and other specialized civilian talent to meet national security needs. If confirmed, I will assess the workforce to identify the Department's greatest challenges and implement strategies to address them.

*Question.* In your view, what are the benefits and detriments to the use of borrowed military manpower?

Answer. I believe the primary benefit of borrowed military manpower is the flexibility it gives the Military Services in ensuring their missions are successfully executed. I believe it is critical the Services have the ability to meet their needs without overly rigid restrictions on their personnel. The primary detriment to borrowed military manpower is overreliance on it to fill gaps. While the Services should have the flexibility they need, it should not come at the expense of operational readiness.

*Question.* Would there be any value to the Department, in your view, in eliminating the moratorium on the use of A-76 public/private competitions that has been in effect since 2009?

Answer. While I am not yet very familiar with the A-76 process or the history behind the moratorium, I believe that inhibiting or limiting the Secretary's, or any leader's, flexibility to make well-reasoned and informed choices in meeting mission requirements results in sub-optimal outcomes for the Department. However, I understand the A-76 process is considered flawed by both the public and private sectors. If confirmed, I would work with my counterparts in the Department, and with the Congress, to ensure we have the appropriate authorities and flexibilities needed to achieve the best outcomes possible for the Department, both in terms of mission success and resource allocation.

*Question.* In your view, and particularly in the post-COVID period, how can DOD and its Components better utilize telework, while maintaining supervisory and employee accountability for high quality performance and the appropriate use of official time?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with senior leadership to ensure that telework and other workforce flexibilities are appropriately utilized and best support supervisors and managers in their management of a high performing workforce.

#### CYBER WORKFORCE

*Question.* What is your view of the appropriate mix between the uniformed cyber workforce and civilian employees?

Answer. I do not believe that there is a "one size fits all" solution for the Department's workforce, or any functional workforce. The balance and mix of personnel should be based on mission requirements, the nature of the work, labor cost considerations, and local market conditions. As noted earlier, if confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in the Department to ensure leaders have the right appropriate authorities and flexibilities needed to achieve the best outcomes possible for the Department when it comes to appropriate mix of military and civilian personnel.

*Question.* In your view, how effective is the Cyber Excepted Service Workforce authority under section 1599f of title 10, United States Code, in helping the Department meet its requirements for a highly qualified and competent cyber workforce?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the DOD Chief Information Officer to review the implementation and current execution of the Cyber Excepted Service to ensure that it meets the Department's requirements for recruiting and retaining a highly qualified and competent cyber workforce.

*Question.* What actions would you take, if confirmed, to mitigate any gaps between cyber workforce capacity and capability?

*Answer.* I have not seen accounts of gaps between the cyber workforce capacity and capability. If confirmed, I will work with the DOD Chief Information Officer to better understand and develop solutions to mitigate any existing or perceived gaps.

#### TECHNICAL WORKFORCE

*Question.* In your view, what are the pros and cons of having Active Duty military personnel—as opposed to civilian employees—trained and working as scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the DOD research, development, and acquisition enterprise?

*Answer.* As the nature of warfare changes, and we are increasingly reliant on technology, data, and innovation in maintaining our competitive edge and in our warfighting domains, I believe that having Active Duty military personnel in science and engineering positions is absolutely necessary. At the same time, we need to ensure we can attract and retain this talent in the uniformed force, and maintain constant levels of currency in very dynamic and constantly changing fields. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts across OSD and the Military Departments to assess how our servicemembers are being utilized in these technical positions, not only our Active Duty members but also considering how we can harness the talent of our Reserve Component personnel, and balance that with civilian workforce needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that the directors of national labs under the purview of DOD have the civilian workforce management tools they need to shape their science, technology, and engineering workforces?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with appropriate senior leaders to assess Departmental needs in managing the science, technology, and engineering workforces and provide policy solutions, if necessary, to ensure the Department is equipped to effectively manage these specialized workforces.

#### SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

*Question.* Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant factors in shaping a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed, what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting candidates for appointment to the Senior Executive Service?

*Answer.* Individuals selected for the Senior Executive Service must be exceptional leaders with the ability to lead large, dynamic, and complex organizations. If confirmed, I will ensure that the guiding competencies of the Department's leadership propagate a people and mission focused culture, while mentoring the next generation of dedicated public servants.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you ensure that SES under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the National Defense Strategy provides DOD with the goals, objectives, and strategies required for mission success. If confirmed, I will ensure leaders are held accountable for achieving the National Defense Strategy goals. Furthermore, I will utilize the Department's performance management system to align executive performance with the Department's strategic guidance and ensure executives under my authority are assessed on the quality of their leadership as much as the results they produce.

*Question.* Are you satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs currently available across DOD? If not, what changes would you make to these programs, if confirmed?

*Answer.* As I am not familiar with any current executive development initiatives or programs in the Department. However, if confirmed, I will work with the appropriate offices to review available programs and prescribe policy or programmatic changes, as appropriate, to ensure consistent availability across the Department.

#### CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

##### DIRECTED-ENERGY ATTACKS

1. Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Cisneros, the Department has yet to issue guidance to the workforce about the Havana Syndrome threat, including defense measures and protocols to self-report suspected exposure. If confirmed, how will you work to develop and issue workforce guidance on this threat as soon as possible?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I will work with Department leadership to make sure guidance is provided to the population at risk, including measures to protect themselves, report incidences and seek medical care as needed. It is my understanding that the Department has taken this threat seriously, to include developing an initial triage protocol in coordination with the interagency and facilitating health care within the Military Health System.

2. Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Cisneros, information sharing between Federal agencies remains a significant obstacle in developing a comprehensive interagency response to this issue. If confirmed, how do you intend to commit to working closely with other agencies and departments to improve information sharing to ensure afflicted personnel are receiving the highest standard of care?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I will work to facilitate Department engagement with appropriate Federal Agencies to ensure the U.S. has a comprehensive strategy to address this issue. I will continue and expand DOD's efforts as warranted, to leverage our collective expertise to tackle this issue and ensure our personnel experiencing an incident have access to appropriate medical care.

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## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

## SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT

3. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, earlier this month the Department of Defense's (DOD) Independent Review Commission (IRC) on Sexual Assault submitted over 80 recommendations related to countering sexual assault and harassment in the military. Secretary Lloyd Austin has stated he agrees with these recommendations and has directed the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness to oversee the implementation of these impending changes. What steps will need to be taken to ensure DOD's smooth implementation of these much-needed reforms across the four lines of effort: accountability, prevention, climate/culture, and victim care?

Mr. CISNEROS. Implementation is a critical issue and one that the Department must get right. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD(P&R)) will play an essential role. It is my understanding that the Department has begun this process of evaluation and is on track to deliver the implementation roadmap to the Secretary of Defense by the end of August. If confirmed, I will ensure the entire OUSD(P&R) enterprise fully supports not only the implementation roadmap but also the long-term changes in policy, programs, planning, and more to ensure the success of the IRC efforts. Simply put, we must stop sexual assault and harassment from occurring in the first place, do everything we can to support victims, and hold offenders appropriately accountable—all while working to improve the command climates and cultures that cannot only contribute to eradicating these behaviors, but also help improve the experience of military service for all those who volunteer to serve our Nation.

4. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, in regards to statutory changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), what are your thoughts on increasing the scope of removal from the chain of command's authority, beyond just sex-related crimes, to all crimes with a maximum punishment of greater than 1 year, including murder, arson, and others (save some very specific military crimes like absence without leave (AWOL), desertion, and orders violations)?

Mr. CISNEROS. This is a very important matter for the Department of Defense and, if confirmed, I expect to work with the other civilian and military senior leadership of the Department to fully support the President and Secretary Austin in their decision.

5. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, what are your thoughts on the creation of a punitive article that criminalizes sexual harassment?

Mr. CISNEROS. I support this effort. Although commanders have always had the ability to hold individuals appropriately accountable for poor behaviors, including sexual harassment, through policy and general provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, creating a standalone criminal offense for sexual harassment is also a clear message to leaders and all Service members: These behaviors are criminal and cannot be tolerated.

## EXTREMISM IN THE RANKS

6. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, in April, Secretary Austin directed several immediate actions to counter extremism in the ranks—one tasks the job you have been nominated for, in conjunction with DOD's General Counsel office, to review and update the definition of "prohibited extremist activities" among uniformed personnel. If confirmed, how would you plan to approach this issue given the sensitive first amendment freedom of association issues involved and the need to maintain good order and discipline in the ranks?

Mr. CISNEROS. It is my understanding that the Department of Defense is presently reviewing its policy pertaining to defining "extremism" and corresponding prohibited extremist activity in order to provide clear guidance to Department personnel. I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter violent extremism activities while avoiding infringing on constitutionally protected liberties that our Service members commit to defending. If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to review policy pertaining to extremism, to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

7. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, it is imperative that the Active Duty force is providing a level playing field to ensure women and minorities have the same oppor-

tunities to assume senior positions within the officer and enlisted ranks. Will addressing this issue be one of your top priorities?

Mr. CISNEROS. Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues its work to advance equity and serve as a model for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and will work closely with Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks and her Defense Workforce Council, and the newly established DOD Equity Team to ensure that we sustain leadership engagement on these issues and appropriately meet our strategic DEI goals, particularly relating to military leadership. I will take appropriate action ensure that women and racial/ethnic minorities are able to succeed and thrive in their military careers, including by identifying and eliminating any potential barriers that stand in the way. It is essential that all Service members have equal opportunity to advance their careers in an inclusive environment, free from harassment, prohibited discrimination, and bias.

8. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Cisneros, creating opportunities for minorities in positions traditionally held by men in our civil servant force is important to me. How will DOD increase diversity in areas like STEM [science, technology, engineering, and math], intelligence, and national security?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I am committed to working with senior leaders and experts from across the Department to review existing personnel policies and programs to remove any barriers to achieving a civilian workforce that mirrors the demographics of the American people. I will work with senior leaders to increase collaborative opportunities and outreach efforts with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions to optimize their effectiveness in increasing diversity in the Department's pipeline of STEM, intelligence, and national security professionals. Furthermore, I will ensure that the Department's recruitment strategies reach the broadest populations as well as underserved communities, increasing awareness of the Department's unique and exciting civilian employment opportunities, specifically in these highly technical skillsets which are critical to mission success.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GARY PETERS

##### EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

9. Senator PETERS. Mr. Cisneros, if confirmed, will you assess the feasibility and advisability of increasing enlisted eligibility for broadening programs (fellowships, legislative fellowships, internships, scholarships, and training-with-industry) covered by Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1322.06?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I will consult with the Secretaries of the Military Departments regarding the feasibility of increased enlisted eligibility to participate in education, training, and professional development opportunities as outlined in DODI 1322.06.

10. Senator PETERS. Mr. Cisneros, special operations personnel seeking professional development via programs covered by DODI 1322.06 must apply through their respective Services. If confirmed, will you explore the feasibility and supportability of allocating specific slots for potential applicants to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC) for s/he to establish Service-like authority to manage eligibility criteria, selection processes, and utilization requirements for special operations personnel?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I will consult with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict regarding the feasibility and supportability of allocating specific slots for qualified special operations personnel in programs under DODI 1322.06.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH

##### NATURALIZATION FOR NONCITIZEN SERVICEMEMBERS

11. Senator DUCKWORTH. Mr. Cisneros, on July 2, 2021, the U.S. Departments of Veteran Affairs (VA) and Homeland Security (DHS) announced an inter-agency initiative to support or Nation's noncitizen servicemembers, veterans, and the immediate family members of servicemembers. As part of this initiative, DHS and VA will be conducting a review of policies and practices related to current and former noncitizen servicemembers. DHS and VA have stated that they will remain in close partnership with the Department of Defense (DOD) throughout this process.

DOD plays a critical role in supporting noncitizen servicemembers who seek to naturalize while serving. While these servicemembers are eligible for expedited naturalization after 1 day of Active Duty service, many eligible servicemembers have been discharged without the citizenship they have earned through their service—leaving them vulnerable to removal.

The best measure to prevent the deportation of veterans is to make sure they can access the expedited naturalization they earned through their honorable service. How can DOD better support noncitizen servicemembers who want to naturalize while serving?

Mr. CISNEROS. It is my understanding that that the Department has a long history of supporting non-citizens in naturalizing. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the military services partnership with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to streamline the citizenship application process for Service members. I will also work to improve the means with which we communicate to eligible Service members their ability to use their expedited naturalization earned through honorable military service.

12. Senator DUCKWORTH. Mr. Cisneros, how can DOD work with the VA and DHS to make sure that former noncitizen servicemember do not fall through the cracks and are unable to access the naturalization services they have earned?

Mr. CISNEROS. The ability of those who have honorably served in the military to naturalize is a lifelong benefit, and if someone chooses to not do so while serving, I understand that they may do so at any time without cost. If confirmed, I will support the President's interagency effort to promote naturalization as outlined in the recently released strategy developed under Executive Order 14012.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

##### READINESS

13. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Cisneros, over several years this Committee has worked tirelessly to restore military readiness—across each of our Services—to levels that would enable our success in a conflict. We've had some success, but there is STILL a lot of work to do. If you have not done so already, I recommend that every senior defense leader read T.R. Fehrenbach's "This Kind of War", which provides a cautionary tale of our Nation's failure to adequately fund and train our Armed Forces before the Korean War. The consequences were steep and American servicemembers paid with their lives. If confirmed, all of you—based on your positions—will invariably make decisions that directly or indirectly impact readiness. Accordingly, will you commit—if confirmed—to work with this Committee and within the Department on further bolstering military readiness to ensure the failures we endured in the Korean War never happen again?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I commit completely to ensuring our forces are ready and available to fight and win. I also commit to ensuring the Department uses the best measures of readiness to inform senior leaders. The 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, known as Task Force Smith, was ready on paper, receiving high marks on tactical tests in 1950. That measurement of readiness proved incomplete, failing to translate onto the battlefield. As a Department, we must measure the right things, continuously refining the definition of "right," as our enemies change their equipment and tactics. If confirmed, I pledge to continuously monitor how we measure readiness, ensuring processes across the Department come together to yield results.

14. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Cisneros, in response to a question for the record concerning the interdependence of range modernization and readiness, the INDOPACOM Commander, Admiral Aquilino, stated, "Modernizing our ranges ... will allow the joint force to train against an evolving threat and technologically advanced opponent with our allies and partners." In her advance policy questions, Ms. Shawn Skelly, stated, "It is critical to ensure the Department's training range capabilities are able to support training for next generation platforms and technology." I could not agree more. In March 2020, the Department of the Air Force submitted a report to the congressional defense committees to achieve that endState by modernizing the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) to Threat Matrix Level 4—or near peer—capability by fiscal year 2026. Given the critical importance of providing realistic, advanced training opportunities to maintain readiness for a high-end fight, will you commit to prioritizing and accelerating investments so that JPARC achieves Threat Matrix Level 4 capability by 2026?

Mr. CISNEROS. I completely agree with your statement and the thoughts expressed by Admiral Aquilino and Ms. Skelly. The Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) is a critical component of future advanced training capabilities. The Joint Force must be able to train to the full capability of our advanced weapon systems against the most advanced threats. If confirmed, I will continue advancing military training capabilities for the warfighter and look forward to visiting the JPARC to better understand its capabilities first hand.

#### STRATEGY DRIVEN BUDGET

15. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Cisneros, the National Defense Strategy Commission report, the two previous Senate-confirmed Secretaries of Defense, and the previous and current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have all stated the need for sustained 3–5 percent annual real growth to the defense budget to implement the NDS, increase readiness, and advance long-overdue modernization. Further emphasizing the need for consistent and increased funding, the NDS Commission report stated, “America is very near the point of strategic insolvency, where its ‘means’ are badly out of alignment with its ‘ends’.” This critical situation is negatively compounded by the Biden administration’s dismal defense topline that does not keep pace with inflation. With these facts in mind, and understanding your ability to influence the budget will be limited to future year submissions, will each of you commit to advocating for a strategy-driven budget vice a budget-driven strategy?

Mr. CISNEROS. If confirmed, I commit to supporting a budget that aligns to the National Defense Strategy. The Department must balance readiness, force structure, and modernization to ensure the Joint Force is positioned to compete and win on both current and future battlefields. The Department must be strategic with its investments, and pursue savings through critical reviews of ongoing missions and activities, and the phasing out of systems and approaches developed for an earlier era to protect the critical capability investments that will determine our military and national security advantage in the future.

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[The nomination reference of the Honorable Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr., follows:]

**NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT**

**PN426**

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
April 27, 2021.

*Ordered*, That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr., of California, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, vice Matthew P. Donovan.

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. Reed \_\_\_\_\_  
(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 Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr., which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]

**Bio**  
**Gilbert Ray Cisneros Jr.**

**Education:**

- *The George Washington University, Washington D.C. B.A. 1990 – 1994*
- *Regis University, Denver, CO. M.B.A., 1999 – 2002*
- *Brown University, Providence, RI. A.M., 2014 – 2015*

**Employment Record:**

- U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.
  - Representative
  - January 2019 – January 2021
- The Gilbert & Jacki Cisneros Foundation, Los Angeles, CA
  - President
  - December 2010 – December 2018
- Frito-Lay, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
  - Resource
  - December 2004 – April 2010
- United States Navy
  - Student, Navy Supply Corps School, Athens, GA, June 1994 – December 1994
  - Disbursing Officer, USS ROANOKE (AOR-7), Bremerton, WA, December 1994 – October 1995
  - Disbursing Officer, USS OGDEN (LPD-5), San Diego, CA, November 1995 – December 1997
  - Supply Officer, MPS -1, Rota, Spain, February 1998 – May 1999
  - Supply Officer, Naval Air Reserve San Diego, San Diego, CA, May 1999 – April 2002
  - Supply Officer, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion – 3, Alameda, CA, April 2002 – December 2004

**Honors and Awards:**

- Military Awards
  - Navy Commendation Medal

- Navy Achievement Medal (2)
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
- National Defense Medal
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (2)
- Academic Awards
  - Navy R.O.T.C. Scholarship
- Other Awards
  - *Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Hall of Fame*
  - *Navy Supply Corps Foundation Distinguished Alumni*
  - *U.S. Chamber of Commerce Abraham Lincoln Leadership for America Award*
  - *U.S. Navy Memorial Medallion Award*
  - *The George Washington University Monumental Alumni Award*

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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 Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr. in connection with his nomination follows:]

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2020 -- 2021  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
ROOM SR-228  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510-6050  
(202) 224-3871

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE  
INFORMATION REQUESTED OF CIVILIAN NOMINEES

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE:** Answer all questions and provide all requested information. If more space is needed, attach an additional sheet of paper to the Questionnaire and cite the part of the Questionnaire and the question number (e.g., A-9, B-4) to which the continuation of your answer applies. Unless otherwise required, an answer of "yes", "no", or "not applicable" is appropriate.

QUESTIONNAIRE, PART A

**NOTE:** Information furnished in this part of the Questionnaire will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing, if any, and will be entered in the hearing record, also available to the public.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TO BE MADE PUBLIC

1. **Name (Include any former names you have used):**
  - *Gilbert Ray Cisneros Jr.*
  - *Gil Cisneros*
2. **Position to which nominated:**
  - *Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness*
3. **Date of nomination:**
  - *27 April, 2021*

4. **Education (List names of secondary and higher education institution 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):**
  - *Torrance High School, Torrance, CA. September 1995 – June 1989 High School Diploma, June 1989*
  - *The George Washington University, Washington D.C. August 1990 – May 1994 B.A. May 1994*
  - *Regis University, Denver, CO. October 1999 – June 2002 M.B.A. June 2002*
  - *Brown University, Providence, RI. June 2014 – May 2015 M.A. May 2015*
  
5. **Employment record (List all jobs held since college, or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of the job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, show each change of military duty station as a separate period of employment):**
  - *U.S. Representative, CA-39, Washington, D.C. 2019 – 2021*
  - *The Gilbert & Jacki Cisneros Foundation, Los Angeles, President, 2010 – 2018*
  
6. **Government experience (List any advisory, consultative, honorary, and other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed in response to question 5, above):**
  - *President's Advisory Council for the Arts, Kennedy Center, 2014 – 2016*
  
7. **Business relationships (List all positions currently held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, and of any educational or other institution):**
  - *The George Washington University, Athletics Advisory Council*
  - *Brown University, Diversity and Inclusion Council*
  
8. **Memberships (List all memberships and offices that you currently hold, as well as any memberships and offices you have previously held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations):**
  - *American Legion, Lifetime Member*
  - *Veterans of Foreign Wars, Lifetime Member*

- *Knights of Columbus, Member*
- *Rotary International, Member*
- *National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, Lifetime Member*
- *United States Navy League, Member*
- *Latino Donor Collaborative, Former Board Member, Secretary*

**9. Political affiliations and activities:**

- 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 a candidate/elected/appointed; the year(s) during which you were a candidate, or in which the election was held or the appointment was made; and the term of office (if applicable):
  - *U.S. House of Representatives. Candidate in 2018, 2020. Elected in 2018.*
- List all memberships and offices held in, and services rendered to, all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years:
  - *California State Democratic Party Delegate, 2019 – Present*
  - *Democratic Party of Orange County, Member, 2019 – Present*
- Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity during the past 5 years. List each individual contribution (not the total amount contributed to the person or entity) over this period:

*Transaction*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Account Title</i>	<i>Amount</i>
7/7/16	HILLARY ACTION FUND	\$ 100,000.00
7/25/16	LORETTA SANCHEZ	\$ 2,700.00
7/25/16	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 2,000.00
8/24/16	PETE AGUILAR	\$ 2,700.00
8/24/16	DNCC CONVENTION	\$ 157.00
8/24/16	Donate to Dems	\$ 1,000.00
9/15/16	HILLARY VICTORY FUND	\$ 100,000.00
9/22/16	RUIZ VICTORY FUND	\$ 5,000.00
9/22/16	ACT BLUE - TONY CARDENA	\$ 1,000.00
10/26/16	NANETTE BARRAGAN	\$ 2,600.00
	ACT BLUE - CATHERINE CORTEZ	
11/22/16	MASTO	\$ 1,000.00

11/22/16	LEADING ORANGE COUNTY PAC	\$ 10,000.00
2/23/17	ACT BLUE - IMELDA PADILLA	\$ 1,100.00
2/23/17	MONICA RODRIGUEZ	\$ 700.00
2/23/17	ACT BLUE - IMELDA PADILLA	\$ 1,100.00
2/23/17	GARCETTI FOR MAYOR	\$ 1,400.00
2/23/17	MONICA RODRIGUEZ	\$ 700.00
3/28/17	FRIENDS OF NELLIE GORBEA	\$ 1,000.00
4/24/17	ACT BLUE - GRACE NAPOLITANO	\$ 1,000.00
4/24/17	DR. RAUL RUIZ FOR CONGRESS	\$ 5,400.00
4/25/17	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 2,700.00
4/25/17	ACT BLUE- JOHN OSSOFF FOR CONGRESS	\$ 1,000.00
4/25/17	ACT BLUE- JOHN OSSOFF FOR CONGRESS	\$ 1,000.00
4/25/17	ACT BLUE- JOHN OSSOFF FOR CONGRESS	\$ 1,000.00
5/3/17	AMERICANS FOR RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS	\$ 30,000.00
5/22/17	LINDA SANCHEZ	\$ 1,000.00
5/22/17	ACT BLUE- JOHN OSSOFF FOR CONGRESS	\$ 2,000.00
5/22/17	AMERICANS FOR RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS	\$ 30,000.00
5/23/17	VIBE PAC	\$ 5,000.00
5/23/17	JOHN CHIANG FOR GOVERNOR	\$ 1,000.00
6/23/17	DR. RAUL RUIZ FOR CONGRESS	\$ 5,400.00
7/26/17	PETE AGUILAR	\$ 2,700.00
7/26/17	ACT BLUE - LOU CORREA	\$ 2,700.00
7/26/17	JOHN CHIANG FOR GOVERNOR	\$ 5,000.00
8/21/17	DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ORANGE COUNTY	\$ 10,000.00
8/22/17	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 1,000.00
8/22/17	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 1,000.00
8/24/17	PETE AGUILAR	\$ 2,700.00
9/20/17	TRI COUNTIES DEMOCRATIC CLUB	\$ 1,000.00
9/25/17	DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE	\$ 5,000.00
10/23/17	Latino Majority Pac	\$ 100.00

10/23/17	ACT BLUE - GABRIEL OSMI	\$	1,000.00
10/23/17	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$	1,000.00
11/21/17	LATINO VICTORY PROJECT	\$	2,500.00
11/21/17	SHARON QUIRK-SILVA FOR ASSEMBLY	\$	2,000.00
11/21/17	VILLARAIGOSA FOR GOVERNOR	\$	2,500.00
11/21/17	PODER PAC	\$	3,000.00
11/28/17	ACT BLUE - WENDY CARILLO	\$	500.00
12/26/17	JESUS DE SILVA 2026	\$	1,000.00
12/26/17	ANDY KERR 2018	\$	500.00
1/23/18	BRETT MURDOCK FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY '18	\$	500.00
2/22/18	Orange County Young Democrats	\$	500.00
3/2/18	PRIDE FUND	\$	5,000.00
3/27/18	AMERICANS FOR RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS	\$	1,000.00
3/27/18	CONTRIBUTIONS-POLITICAL/NON-DEDUCTIBLE	\$	900.00
4/18/18	PPOSBC CAF PAC	\$	6,000.00
4/24/18	ACT BLUE - AMY MCGRATH	\$	1,000.00
4/24/18	ACT BLUE - KEN HARBAUGH	\$	1,000.00
4/24/18	ACT BLUE - LUJAN GRISHAM	\$	1,000.00
4/25/18	FRIENDS OF NELLIE GORBEA	\$	1,000.00
4/25/18	ACT BLUE - VIRGINIA MADUENO	\$	1,000.00
4/25/18	ACT BLUE - JANA L. SANCHEZ	\$	1,000.00
4/25/18	ACT BLUE - JANA L. SANCHEZ	\$	1,000.00
4/25/18	ACT BLUE - PODER PAC	\$	2,500.00
5/21/18	STONEWALL DEMOCRATIC CLUB	\$	2,000.00
5/21/18	VILLARAIGOSA FOR GOVERNOR	\$	1,000.00
6/25/18	CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS INSTITUTE	\$	500.00
6/25/18	ACT BLUE - LUJAN GRISHAM	\$	1,000.00
8/28/18	DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ORANGE COUNTY	\$	5,000.00
9/27/18	We Lead OC Pac	\$	1,000.00
10/25/18	ACT BLUE - JOSH LOWENTHAL	\$	1,000.00
10/25/18	AITKEN FOR MAYOR	\$	1,000.00

11/29/18	ACT BLUE-MJ HEGAR	\$ 500.00
6/11/18	ZAHRA FOR CITY COUNCIL 2018	\$ 1,000.00
1/5/19	Orange County Young Democrats	\$ 500.00
1/23/19	LORETTA SANCHEZ	\$ 2,000.00
1/23/19	Bold Pac	\$ 680.00
	PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF SAN	
2/21/19	BERNARDINO	\$ 1,250.00
2/21/19	ACT BLUE - MARK KELLY	\$ 2,800.00
2/21/19	LINDA SANCHEZ	\$ 2,000.00
	DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ORANGE	
3/21/19	COUNTY	\$ 1,000.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
4/24/19	HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN	\$ 100.00
5/22/19	BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	\$ 2,800.00
5/29/19	ACTBLUE*LATINX.YOUNG.DEMS	\$ 250.00
5/29/19	ACTBLUE*LATINX.YOUNG.DEMS	\$ 250.00
7/24/19	ACT BLUE-GIL CISNEROS	\$ 5,600.00
8/22/19	LINDA SANCHEZ	\$ 1,000.00
8/22/19	ACT BLUE-GINA ORTIZ JONES	\$ 500.00
9/26/19	FRIENDS OF NELLIE GORBEA	\$ 1,000.00
12/20/19	ACT BLUE-GIL CISNEROS	\$ 10,000.00
	SHARON QUIRK-SILVA FOR	
1/24/20	ASSEMBLY	\$ 500.00
	PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF SAN	
1/24/20	BERNARDINO	\$ 5,000.00
1/24/20	AITKEN FOR MAYOR	\$ 1,000.00
3/25/20	SALUD CARBAJAL FOR CONGRESS	\$ 5,400.00
	PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF SAN	
3/25/20	BERNARDINO	\$ 1,000.00

4/23/20	FRIENDS OF NELLIE GORBEA	\$	1,000.00
5/29/20	ACTBLUE*BEN.RAY.LUJAN	\$	2,800.00
8/25/20	Joe Kennedy	\$	2,800.00
8/25/20	PODER PAC	\$	2,000.00
8/25/20	ACTBLUE*LATINX.YOUNG.DEMS	\$	500.00
8/25/20	CISNEROS FOR CONGRESS	\$	105.30
8/25/20	BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	\$	50,000.00
8/27/20	CISNEROS VICTORY FUND	\$	10,000.00
8/27/20	CISNEROS VICTORY FUND	\$	10,000.00
9/24/20	ACT BLUE - DEBBIE MUCARSEL	\$	1,000.00
9/24/20	ACT BLUE - XOCHITL TORRES	\$	2,800.00
10/22/20	ACT BLUE - JAIME HARRISON	\$	1,500.00
10/22/20	LINDA SANCHEZ	\$	2,800.00
11/23/20	ACT BLUE - MJ.HEGAR	\$	2,000.00
11/23/20	ACT BLUE - THERESA GREEN	\$	2,000.00
12/21/20	PARTNERSHIP FOR TRANSPARENCY FUND	\$	5,000.00
12/23/20	Stop the Recall	\$	10,000.00
2/22/21	ACT BLUE - ALEX PADILLA	\$	5,600.00
2/22/21	ACT BLUE - NELLIE GORBEA	\$	1,000.00
2/23/21	SALUD CARBAJAL FOR CONGRESS	\$	2,800.00
2/23/21	SALUD CARBAJAL FOR CONGRESS	\$	2,800.00
2/23/21	ACT BLUE - JANA L. SANCHEZ	\$	5,800.00
3/23/21	Kenatta for Senate	\$	2,900.00
3/23/21	ACT BLUE - ALEX PADILLA	\$	200.00
3/23/21	ACT BLUE - NELLIE GORBEA	\$	1,000.00
3/23/21	Stop the Recall	\$	1,000.00
3/23/21	ACT BLUE - ALEX PADILLA	\$	5,800.00

10. **Honors and awards (List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition received for outstanding service or achievements):**
  - *Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps Scholarship*
  - *Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Hall of Fame*
  - *Navy Supply Corps Foundation Distinguished Alumni*
  - *U.S. Chamber of Commerce Abraham Lincoln Leadership for America Award*
  - *U.S. Navy Memorial Medallion Award*
  - *The George Washington University Monumental Alumni Award*
  - *Navy Commendation Medal*
  - *Navy Achievement Medal (2)*
  - *Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal*
  - *National Defense Medal*
  - *Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (2)*
  
11. **Published writings (List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials that you have written or for which you served as co-author or editor, including articles and blogs published on the internet):**
  - <https://voiceofoc.org/2020/07/gil-cisneros-i-have-two-six-year-old-sons-im-disappointed-in-the-oc-board-of-education/>
  - <https://www.oregister.com/2020/06/09/the-presidents-lack-of-leadership-and-empathy-is-failing-our-country-gilbert-cisneros/>
  - <https://www.oregister.com/2020/05/04/we-cant-let-cities-and-states-go-under-gil-cisneros-and-harley-rouda/>
  - <https://www.oregister.com/2019/11/11/protecting-parks-and-public-lands-is-important-for-our-veterans-gil-cisneros/>
  - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/09/24/seven-freshman-democrats-these-allegations-are-threat-all-we-have-sworn-protect/>
  
12. **Speeches (Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years—of which you have copies—in which you addressed matters relevant to the position to which you have been nominated).**
  - *None*

**COMMITMENTS IN FURTHERANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT**

**NOTE:** In order to exercise their legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress timely receive testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch. A simple “yes” or “no” response is appropriate.

13. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate Committees of Congress?
  - Yes
14. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so timely?
  - Yes
15. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?
  - Yes
16. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?
  - Yes
17. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?
  - Yes
18. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?
  - Yes
19. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?
  - 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 Parts A and B of the foregoing Senate Armed Services Committee Questionnaire, and that the information provided therein and, in any document, appended thereto, is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete.



This 30 day of JUNE, 2021

[The nomination of the Honorable Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr. was reported to the Senate by Chairman Reed on July 27, 2021, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on August 11, 2021.]

[Prepared questions submitted to Ms. Kathleen S. Miller by Chairman Reed prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

**DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

*Question.* In your view, what are the duties and functions of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (DUSD(C)) most critical to the national defense at this time?

*Answer.* The duties and functions of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller are to support the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) as directed, and be prepared to assume the duties of that office as described in Section 135 of Title 10 and in Section 902 of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Act, should that ever be necessary.

The most critical duties to national defense at this time are preparing and executing budgets that support the Department's mission and using the financial statement audits to drive improvements in the Department's financial management activities, systems and reports.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific additional duties might you expect the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) to prescribe for you?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would partner with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) to ensure the duties of our office are met. I would work with him to understand the specific duties and areas he would like to assign to me. Specifically, I would expect responsibility for aspects of the financial audit, performance improvement, financial systems oversight, and support of the financial management workforce. I would also expect to be assigned emerging projects and focus areas as mission needs and skill sets dictate.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as DUSD(C) fulfills the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?

*Answer.* Civilian control of the military is a foundational principle of our American democracy and part of the reason our military is so capable and so widely respected, both at home and abroad. If confirmed, I will ensure this principle is adhered to both in departmental and in interagency decisions, and in engagements

with the U.S. Congress. This includes ensuring all key budget decisions are made with the full knowledge and agreement of the responsible appointed official.

*Question.* If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) to enhance the efficiency and performance of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (OUSD(C))?

Answer. I am a team builder with long experience in financial systems and process improvements. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller and the broader comptroller community to identify additional areas for modernization and improvement. Data analytics, artificial intelligence and robotic process automation are areas that could potentially increase productivity and reduce workforce stress.

*Question.* What significant experience and education do you possess in the domains of budget, financial management, and/or the audit of complex organizations?

Answer. I have deep roots in the financial management community with over 25 years of experience in the field – 8 of those at the career senior executive level. I have been the Associate CFO for Internal Finance and Acting Deputy CFO at the IRS focused on implementing a new accounting system. That system passed audit in its first year of operation. I have held executive positions in the US Army overseeing budget formulation and execution of working capital, military pay, and operations and maintenance appropriations. I've served as the Acting Director of the Army Budget.

I have excellent and enduring professional relationships with the financial management community and I believe my time as an SES in operational and support assignments provides me with added perspective and managerial experience.

I hold a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University, an MBA from the Defense Comptrollership (then Army Comptrollership) Program at Syracuse University, and a Masters in Strategic Studies from the US Army War College. I have been the President of the American Society of Military Comptrollers and have held certifications in government financial management.

*Question.* Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and execute the powers of the DUSD(C)?

Answer. I believe my previous experience and accomplishments will enable me to execute the duties and powers of this position. My career up to this point has been mostly with the Army. If confirmed, I will take steps to familiarize myself with the broader DOD and other Services financial practices, issues and challenges.

#### MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

*Question.* What are the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)?

Answer. The DUSD(Comptroller) organization faces several challenges, most of which are ongoing in nature. The primary challenge as the DUSD is to assist in developing budgets that are consistent with and support the Department's mission of defending the nation.

The second challenge is the financial audit and using the investment in the audit to drive meaningful change to the department's financial management practices – both increasing transparency and using audit information to drive better business decisions.

The third challenge is identifying and implementing process changes that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the department and its workforce.

The fourth challenge is developing that workforce. The Department's success with budget, budget execution, financial audit, and process improvements all depend on a dedicated, professional workforce.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what management actions would you take, and in what order of priority, to address each of these challenges?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and other defense leaders to take action on these challenges. Regarding the budget challenges, I would work to understand if any PPBE reform initiatives hold promise to increase the speed, agility or accuracy of our current budget processes.

Regarding the audit challenges, if confirmed, I would assess the current status of the audit and audit plans, and make recommendations, if necessary, to the audit process.

Regarding process improvements, if confirmed, I would work to understand how systems, like Advana, could help drive faster data-informed decision processes. I would also work with other offices in Department of Defense (DOD) to identify and implement process improvements.

Regarding the DOD financial management workforce, if confirmed, I would ask for an assessment of the current workforce and review any existing succession plan-

ning documents. I would work to determine, in concert with the Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller, and the Assistant Secretaries for Financial Management and Comptroller, the best path forward to support this critical capability.

#### RELATIONSHIPS

*Question.* Describe the relationships you would foster, if confirmed as the DUSD(C), with the Military Department Assistant Secretaries for Financial Management and the Military Department and Fourth Estate Budget Directors.

*Answer.* I am a collaborative leader and problem solver. If confirmed, I will work very closely with the Assistant Secretaries for Financial Management of the military departments and the Fourth Estate Budget Directors to solve issues around the development and execution of budgetary matters, fiscal policy, and initiatives of the President and the Secretary of Defense.

*Question.* On what projects would you expect to collaborate with these officials?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Assistant Secretaries and Fourth Estate Budget Directors successfully developing and implementing effective DOD policies and programs. Specifically, I would expect to collaborate on the defense budget, budget execution reviews, reprogramming requests, internal controls, financial audit, and programs developing the financial management workforce.

*Question.* Describe the relationship you would foster, if confirmed as the DUSD(C), with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to establish a collaborative and transparent relationship with the staff of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to include the Director, the Deputy Directors for budget and management, and the Program Associate Director for National Security. Where appropriate, I will work in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/CFO) to foster teamwork and cooperation with OMB.

*Question.* If confirmed, on what projects would you expect to collaborate with the Director?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/CFO) to identify key projects between DOD and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. These projects can include the preparation and execution of the Department's budget, reprogramming requests, the financial audit, federal financial management issues, or legislative requests.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to develop and sustain an open, transparent, and productive relationship between Congress—the Senate Armed Services and Senate Appropriations Committees, in particular—and the OUSD(C) and the Defense Agencies subject to your authority, direction, and control?

*Answer.* I have a deep respect for the prerogatives of the Department's oversight committees. In my past positions I have worked closely and productively with the professional staff of these committees. If confirmed, I will continue to build those relationships, working with the Armed Services and Appropriations committees to resolve matters relating to the authorization or appropriation of the Department's activities through open and honest communication.

#### 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY (NDS)

*Question.* The 2018 NDS outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism.

Are the programs and resources required to generate the capabilities necessary to implement the NDS properly prioritized in the Department of Defense (DOD) budget?

*Answer.* As the Secretary of Defense has consistently stated, the President's budget request represents his commitment to matching resources to strategy, strategy to policy and policy to the will of the American people. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and the Comptroller to ensure all programs and resources are properly prioritized to support the President's strategy and manage advanced and persistent threats.

*Question.* Are there areas in which the budget is not aligned with the NDS?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the FY 2022 budget is aligned with the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the alignment of the budget with the President's strategy and any new strategic guidance documents produced by the Administration.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you realign or refocus DOD programs and funding, if at all?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department has initiated a National Defense Strategy review to ensure DOD's strategic priorities are properly aligned to the President's interim National Security Strategic Guidance. If confirmed, I intend to play an active role in the review and implementation of any necessary realignment of DOD resources.

*Question.* Are we properly resourcing those capabilities that have been established since the release of the 2018 NDS (e.g., the U.S. Space Force)?

Answer. It is my understanding that the FY 2022 budget is aligned with the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, which speaks to investments in emerging technologies, ensuring the security of space activities, and other capabilities to counter the pacing threat of China and other nation states. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Comptroller to ensure proper resourcing of the capabilities that will determine our military and national security advantage in the future.

*Question.* If confirmed, what revisions or adjustments would you recommend to the USD(C) regarding DOD's resourcing and implementation of the 2018 NDS?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Comptroller in reviewing and recommending any necessary resource revisions or adjustments required to implement the President's strategy.

In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).

*Question.* Do you believe that 3–5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP is required to implement the 2018 NDS effectively? Please explain your answer.

Answer. As the commission stated, that resource level was illustrative of what was needed for the 2018 NDS. Secretary Austin is required by law to update that strategy in the coming months. Under any resourcing level, the Department must balance readiness, force structure, and modernization while pursuing savings through critical reviews of ongoing missions and activities, and the phasing out of systems and approaches developed for an earlier era. If confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller to prioritize the Department's resources to both realize the strategic aims of the Department as identified in Secretary Austin's review, and ensure the nation has the military technologies and capabilities to compete and win.

*Question.* Under the funding levels specified in the President's budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, does DOD have adequate resources to implement the 2018 NDS and other national defense priorities? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I understand the budget request for FY 2022 matches resources to the key enabling strategies in the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance. Given this strategic focus and based on the Secretary and the Chairman's testimony and my initial review of the President's Budget materials, I believe the Department can carry out its missions with a properly balanced program at the announced funding levels absent any unforeseen new missions.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Comptroller to ensure future budgets clearly align with the President's National Security priorities and provide the resources our fighting men and women need to deter conflict and strengthen our competitive military edge.

*Question.* Looking forward, what types of resource shortfalls are likely to hamper DOD's execution of the 2018 NDS and other national defense priorities, in your view? How would you address or mitigate these shortfalls, if confirmed?

Answer. Balancing investments to achieve a ready joint force requires trade-offs between modernization, readiness, and structure and often it is difficult to get those trade-offs exactly right in the face of a changing threat environment. Fortunately, the reprogramming process, worked collaboratively with the congressional defense committees, allows adjustments to the budget for unforeseen events in the year of execution. This flexibility is a very important part of fine-tuning resource prioritization since fiscal constraints will always be in play. If confirmed, I pledge to stay abreast of the changing operational environment and suggest ways to fiscally re-balance as conditions change.

*Question.* In your opinion, in what areas of the implementation of the 2018 NDS is the Department taking the most risk in terms of resources allocated?

Answer. I have not participated in a risk review of the current budget against the 2018 NDS. If confirmed, I will work with other senior DOD leaders to review the allocation of resources to help the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and the Comptroller ensure that resources are matched to strategic national priorities and will work with Congress to identify and mitigate risk.

*Question.* If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of DOD funding going forward?

Answer. If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the Department's funding by our ability to defend this nation – to execute our chosen strategy, maintain the nation's technological edge, preserve the health of the joint force, and provide options to the President that support his foreign policy and national defense goals.

POST-BUDGET CONTROL ACT AND THE OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (OCO) ACCOUNT

*Question.* The FY 2022 budget request is the first to be unconstrained by the statutory caps of the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011. The use of the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account has been debated for several years, primarily because OCO dollars were exempt from the caps of the BCA and some charged that DOD was using OCO as a “slush fund” for base budget requirements. The FY 2022 budget request does not include OCO, but rather includes such funds in the base budget as Direct War and Enduring Costs.

What are your views about the use of the OCO account in the Department of Defense's annual budgeting?

Answer. It is imperative that adequate resources are available to support U.S. troops deployed to combat or combat support locations around the world. The Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) budget has been a useful tool for the Department of Defense, and the Congress, to provide this critical funding in a transparent manner.

*Question.* Should DOD continue to use the OCO account?

Answer. As announced in the President's Budget, the FY 2022 request discontinues requests for OCO as a separate funding category and funds direct war and enduring operations costs in the DOD base budget. I believe that this is appropriate, assuming an appropriate transfer of funding for enduring programs into the base budget. With the drawdown in troops from Afghanistan, the vast majority of remaining efforts will be enduring requirements and should fold into the base budget for better long-term planning.

*Question.* How should the Department seek to account for its supplemental or emergency budgetary needs and how should the Department identify and account for conflict-related funding?

Answer. It is important that the DOD retain budget flexibility to deal with unforeseen or emergent needs, especially given the uncertainty of world events. If confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller, the Office of Management and Budget, and the congressional oversight committees to ensure that we have adequate funding tools to support U.S. troops and DOD missions worldwide.

*Question.* In addition to passing spending bills on time, what more can Congress do, in your view, to afford DOD the resource stability and flexibility it needs?

Answer. Beyond the significant budgetary challenges that repeated and lengthy continuing resolutions create for the Department, timely congressional review and approval of reprogramming requests and funding notifications is critical to the Department's operations. In addition, it is important that the Congress provides an adequate level of general transfer authority, especially with the elimination of the OCO account and the likely elimination of the special transfer authority. This transfer authority provides critical budget flexibility to deal with emergent needs without requiring additional resources.

ANTI-DEFICIENCY ACT

*Question.* Each year, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) submits to Congress a compilation of Anti-deficiency Act (ADA) reports submitted by federal agencies for the previous fiscal year. The ADA prohibits federal agencies from obligating or expending federal funds in advance or in excess of an appropriation, and from accepting voluntary services.

What is your level of confidence that DOD has in place the policies and procedures necessary to ensure the identification of all potential ADA violations?

Answer. I am aware that ADA violations are discussed in the Department's Independent Auditors' Report on the Department of Defense FY 2020 and FY 2019 Basic Financial Statements. I am confident that DOD has adequate policies and procedures to ensure the defense agencies and military departments prevent and detect potential ADA violations. If confirmed, I will review these policies and procedures and, if necessary, suggest corrective actions.

*Question.* What are your ideas for better preventing ADA violations from occurring in DOD and for identifying and correcting them sooner?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review the Department's existing ADA training, reporting process, and history with an eye to improving our compliance. I will ensure Comptroller training in the Department includes a full understanding of the ADA

and that this be a focus area during annual reviews and financial manager training, with an emphasis on promptly and accurately recording obligations.

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

*Question.* Earlier this year, GAO again designated DOD's business systems modernization program and DOD Financial Management operations as "high risk."

In your view, what are the main challenges and most significant opportunities for improving the usage of financial data in decision-making?

*Answer.* While there are some challenges, there are many opportunities to improve the use of business data for decision-making. If confirmed, I will continue to leverage the financial statement audit to improve the quality, timeliness, reliability, and completeness of DOD's authoritative transactional business data. In addition, I will be a champion of Advana, the DOD's enterprise data management and analytics platform, which uses audited transactional data to answer senior-leader questions and improve performance. I believe it is the responsibility of all DOD leaders to treat data as a strategic asset and manage, secure, and use data to improve DOD operations.

#### ACQUISITION REFORM

*Question.* Congress has enacted significant reform of the defense acquisition enterprise, to include establishing and expanding authorities related to special acquisition pathways and the use of streamlined acquisition methodologies.

If confirmed, what changes would you make to financial management regulations to afford financial management, comptroller, and acquisition personnel the flexibility required to support novel acquisition approaches and to take advantage of emerging technologies and responding to emerging threats in a timely fashion?

*Answer.* In many cases, the budget process is neutral with respect to what type of contracting vehicle or process is used given the current appropriation structures. If confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller and the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment and other key stakeholders to ensure the financial management regulations are updated to enable any specific permissions or flexibilities afforded the Department and to look for opportunities for additional innovations or improvements to take advantage of emerging technologies and to address emerging threats.

#### AUDIT

*Question.* 2020 was the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Chief Financial Officer's Act, which mandated that federal agencies complete financial audits. DOD is the only federal agency unable to complete a financial audit in accordance with the law, despite having invested billions of dollars over the past decades to do so. In FY 2020, DOD completed a comprehensive audit and received a Disclaimer of Opinion.

In your view, how, if at all, do the audit and its remediation activities support the 2018 NDS?

*Answer.* The audit and its remediation activities highlight and validate areas for improvement in DOD's internal controls and processes. As the DOD remediates audit findings and improves its overall financial management processes and information, decision makers will have better access to reliable and timely information. If confirmed, I will work with senior leaders in the DOD to use one source of financial data for both financial statement preparation and investment decision making. This will emphasize the importance of reliable financial information and will directly link performance and financial management.

*Question.* What challenges are unique to conducting an audit of DOD?

*Answer.* The size and complexity of DOD affects the timeliness in which we are able to get to a clean audit opinion. DOD is larger, in terms of assets and resources, than any organization which has gotten a clean audit opinion. The Department's mix of classified and unclassified transactions and multiplicity of "feeder" systems that contain information auditors need to verify add to the complexity.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to overcome those challenges to ensure that the Department continues to make demonstrable progress towards a clean audit opinion?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review and assess the results of the past audits and the audit roadmaps with the Comptroller and the Assistant Secretaries of the Services. I will use the notices of findings and recommendations (NFRs) to collaborate and prioritize improvements and track timely implementation of corrective action plans across the Department.

*Question.* In what year do you expect the Department to receive a modified audit opinion?

Answer. I am not yet familiar with the Department's roadmap to a modified opinion. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding the roadmap and building on the hard work and progress achieved to date.

*Question.* What metrics should the Congress be tracking to monitor the continuous progress of the Department towards achieving an unmodified audit opinion?

Answer. Congress can track the following metrics to monitor progress toward DOD achieving an unmodified opinion:

- Resolution or downgrade of prior year material weaknesses.
- Closure of notices of findings and recommendations (NFRs) identified as contributing to material weaknesses.
- Composition of NFRs by Component in regards to new versus reissued.
- Status of Component audit opinion progression on a year-over-year basis

*Question.* If confirmed, would you recommend to the Under Secretary that he direct the Military Services, Defense Agencies, and Field Activities to develop their own individual schedules for achieving a clean audit for their own organizations and metrics to track their progress towards that goal? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I understand that each reporting entity under standalone audit with a disclaimer audit opinion is maintaining an audit roadmap. Each audit roadmap details corrective action completion dates by fiscal year and financial statement line item or audit focus area. If confirmed, I will continue to utilize these roadmaps to track progress by Component toward significant milestones and hold the appropriate individuals accountable for the achievement of these milestones in a timely manner.

*Question.* If confirmed, what role would you play in reviewing, analyzing, and acting on the data collected through the application of such metrics?

Answer. If confirmed, I expect to play an active role in assessing the data structures and metrics, both directly related to the audit, and throughout the Comptroller's area of responsibility. I will collaborate with Department leaders to identify metrics that are most vital to supporting warfighters and place a premium on translating data collected into actionable insights for both financial management and military leaders.

*Question.* In your view, what incentives need to be in place to ensure senior leaders—not only the financial management community—are fully invested and engaged in the process of achieving a clean audit opinion?

Answer. I am aware of recently released departmental guidance on audit remediation incentives and of the audit performance elements used in Senior Executive performance plans. I am not aware of other tools currently in use in the Department or how effective they are. Should I be confirmed, I would make it a priority to examine these options and provide my recommendations.

*Question.* Are those incentives currently in place?

Answer. Yes, Senior Executive Performance plans require an element on the audit. USD Comptroller recently established an audit incentive framework as required by Section 1004(a) of the 2021 NDAA. Those incentives are in place. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to assess their effectiveness.

*Question.* What disincentives or structural impediments, if any, preclude or hamper such senior leader engagement, in your view, and what can be done to eliminate such impediments?

Answer. The complexity of the Department creates many challenges for implementing change. GAO continues to cite Weapons System Acquisition, Financial Management, Business Systems, and Business Transformation in their high risk report. Each of these areas are integral to the audit. The risk inherent now in these activities could be a source of structural impediment. If confirmed, I will work with other leaders to review the high risk areas in concert with the audit material weaknesses for impediments to senior leader engagement.

*Question.* Specifically, what measures should be used to hold senior leaders accountable if they do not meet statutory deadlines for DOD auditability?

Answer. Audit metrics tracking audit opinion progression are well understood in the financial community, but not well understood outside that community. If confirmed, I will look into measures, such as reductions in prior year unobligated balances that both show progress toward our audit goals and give actionable information to our operational leaders.

Some commentators have asserted that efforts to achieve a clean audit opinion on DOD financial statements may not be the best use of limited resources in a time of constrained budgets.

*Question.* Do you agree with this assertion? Please explain your answer.

Answer. The value of the audit is not so much in DOD being able to say it has a clean audit opinion, but in the audit recommendations that bring insight into how the Department can improve its operations. The audit can improve the Department's operations on many levels – in the form of more reliable information for decision-making, improved inventory management, and cybersecurity. With time, I expect that the value and contributions that flow from the audit will grow.

#### THE PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING, AND EXECUTION (PPBE) PROCESS

*Question.* In 1961, then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara created the framework of the current PPBE process. As the core decision making process by which DOD decides how and on what it spends its money, the PPBE process—still in effect today—is intended to connect strategic objectives with resources.

Do you believe the current PPBE process is adequately connected to implementation of the 2018 NDS?

Answer. PPBE, if implemented as envisioned, allows for a strategy driven and structured approach to ultimately building a budget that aligns with the Department's strategy. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Comptroller to ensure the OUSD(C) continually emphasizes and assesses alignment with the President's NDS throughout the PPBE interactions.

*Question.* In your view, do the DOD Components (particularly OSD) have the human and automated analytic decision support capability and capacity to facilitate informed strategic decision making in a relevant timeframe?

Answer. DOD has a very experienced, dedicated workforce capable of facilitating informed strategic decision making. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to ensure we are leveraging both the skills and missions to promote the use of data and analytics to improve and accelerate the decision making process across the Department.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes would you recommend, if any, to the PPBE process to improve both resourcing decisions within DOD and information flow about those decisions to the Congress?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work in partnership with the Deputy Secretary, the Comptroller, and other Department leaders to ensure that the PPBE process aligns resources to the defense strategy. This includes identifying analytically-informed strategic choices about the size and shape of the future force. Communication with Congress is critical to ensuring our nation's defense needs are met. If confirmed, I will review the Department's communication process on budgetary decisions with the intent to ensure information flow to the Congress is both timely and effective.

*Question.* In your view, is there value in the Department, the Congress, or an independent commission conducting a holistic review and reform of the PPBE process? Please explain your answer.

Answer. The PPBE process provides an effective, neutral, and open framework to allow the leadership of the Department to make well-informed choices about resource allocation in support of the Department's strategic priorities. I am committed to ensuring this process works effectively and, if confirmed, will seek to make any necessary adjustments to meet the nation's defense needs. I would look forward, if confirmed, to working with the congressional defense committees or others to review the PPBE process for potential improvements.

Some commentators have observed that in matters related to the realignment of strategic objectives with resources via the PPBE process, DOD's size, structure, and culture favor the "status quo."

*Question.* Do you agree with this assessment? Please explain your answer.

Answer. The PPBE process requires rigorous analysis and review in support of major program decisions, which may require time to accomplish. However, over time the Department can shift resources toward strategic ends. Just as important as change management is within DOD, the Department must also closely work with Congress to gain support for the proposed strategic shifts in resources. The appearance of favoring the status quo is a general reaction to change not specific to or a direct result of the PPBE process.

*Question.* Can the PPBE cycle iterate fast enough to respond to changes in strategic or programmatic direction, in your view? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I believe the PPBE process is flexible enough to react to changing strategic or programmatic direction. Leadership priorities and attention are essential to full implementation of strategic direction. I also believe it is important to have a rigorous assessment of options and analytic underpinning for strategic shifts. The PPBE process is only the internal portion of the larger federal budget process and any analysis of the speed or efficacy of our budget process should, in my view, look at all parts of the budget process.

*Question.* In your view, is the PPBE process flexible enough to enable DOD to make programmatic changes within the annual budget cycle?

*Answer.* Yes, the PPBE process is flexible enough to react to urgent programmatic changes within the budget cycle. However, the greater the change being contemplated, the more of a challenge implementing that change will be, in both the internal (PPBE) and congressional review phases of the budget process.

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE

*Question.* Is the DOD financial management workforce properly sized, in your view?

*Answer.* I cannot say at this point, however, if confirmed, I will be uniquely positioned to assess the size of the DOD financial management workforce and determine if there are any efficiencies to be gained through automation and process improvements.

*Question.* Does the DOD financial management workforce have the appropriate capabilities, and are those capabilities properly distributed, in your view?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess whether the financial management workforce has the appropriate capabilities, and work with the Assistant Secretaries for Financial Management of the military departments to ensure that those capabilities are distributed properly in order to meet mission requirements. I believe ongoing evaluation will be necessary to identify emergent trends and deficiencies.

*Question.* What else would you do, if confirmed, to improve the capacity and capability of the financial management workforce?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess the capacity and capability of the DOD financial management workforce and of its workforce development programs. I will look for any lessons learned during the pandemic and review current processes and available technology to identify efficiencies to be gained through automation.

*Question.* How do compensation packages for the DOD financial management workforce compare to private sector counterparts? Should financial management workforce compensation be adjusted to match private sector compensation levels, in your view?

*Answer.* I cannot say at this point, however, I expect it varies greatly by occupation code. If confirmed, I will be uniquely positioned to assess the compensation packages compared to private sector counterparts and evaluate the tools available and necessary to effectively compete for financial management talent.

*Question.* Is DOD prepared to sustain requisite capacity and capability during the impending financial management workforce “bath tub”—a descriptor often used to graphically illustrate the impending potential loss of financial management workforce expertise due to the retirement of large numbers of baby boomers and the lack of experienced people to fill the vacancies?

*Answer.* Based on my experience, there are many factors, not only age, that influence a retirement-eligible employee’s decision to retire. For example, during COVID-19, many organizations experienced employees delaying their decision to retire because of the new flexibilities inherent in telework schedules. If confirmed, I would evaluate the financial management workforce to identify and track emergent trends, and place focus on succession planning to help us prepare, recruit, develop and sustain a proficient workforce.

#### DEFENSE AGENCIES

##### *Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA).*

*Question.* What have been some of the successes (especially in terms of savings to DOD and the taxpayer) from the work of DCAA?

*Answer.* DCAA’s role in the financial oversight of government contracts is critical to ensure the Department and the Nation get the best value for every dollar spent on defense contracting. Its work benefits our men and women in uniform, as well as the American taxpayer. I believe DCAA provides examples of the savings to the taxpayers and other achievements in their annual report.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve DCAA’s ability to execute its designated missions?

*Answer.* DCAA’s primary function is to conduct contract audits and related financial services. If confirmed, I will support DCAA’s efforts to execute its designated missions, including increasing collaboration with customers and industry, as well as efforts to provide value-added information through comprehensive analysis of their individual audits. The timeliness of DCAA’s contract audits would also be an area I would review if confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, what new investments in technology, training, and workforce would you recommend to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DCAA?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage and support any on-going DCAA technology, training and workforce initiatives that will help improve auditor efficiency and effectiveness.

#### DFAS

*Question.* The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) was established to consolidate finance and accounting functions previously performed by the Military Services.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve DFAS's ability to execute its designated missions?

Answer. If confirmed, I would enable an environment in which DFAS could continue to drive standardization across the Department. I will review DFAS's ongoing work with the components to address the issues that drive the need for manual input and error correction at the functional source. Standardization in the data delivered to DFAS is recognized as a critical component of the Department's ability to automate its financial reporting and improve its audit position.

*Question.* If confirmed, what new investments in technology, training, and workforce would you recommend to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DFAS?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with DFAS leadership, and consult with DFAS customers across the Department, in order to review what opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DFAS are in line with the NDS and possible within fiscal constraints and competing priorities. Amplified use of data analytics and technology tools such as robotics and artificial intelligence to increase automation of transaction processing and the delivery of business insights are some potential areas to consider to effectively manage the Department's resources.

#### WORKING CAPITAL FUNDS

*Question.* More than two decades ago, DOD created several working capital funds as part of an effort to streamline defense business processes.

What do you perceive to be the value of working capital funds?

Answer. Working capital funds (WCFs), especially when used in concert with policies that provide DOD customers with the full cost of goods or services provided by WCF activities, help facilitate a cost-conscious culture, imparting a corporate view across the department, enabling a more efficient optimization of limited resources. They act as a "shock absorber" to minimize the impact of demand and cost variations to the customers, allowing for price stability in the year of execution. WCFs allow for purchase of supply items in advance of customer need, enabling supply activities to have the right parts on the shelf in the right quantities when the customers need them. They are easily scalable to changes in the DOD's operating requirements. They allow for economies of scale, spreading overhead costs over the entire customer base.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you consider any reforms to, or expansion of, existing working capital funds?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller, DOD leadership, OMB, and Congress to determine if any reforms to or expansion of working capital funds would benefit the Secretary's and the Administration's priorities.

*Question.* Are there other defense business operations that would benefit from the creation of a new working capital fund to promote operational efficiency or cost savings?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller, DOD leadership, OMB, and Congress to determine if any business areas not already in the WCF regime would benefit from the value proposition stated previously.

#### REPROGRAMMING

*Question.* Do you commit that, if confirmed, you would follow the well-established precedent of waiting for "4-way" congressional approval before transferring funds between appropriations accounts or reprogramming funding above the threshold established in enacted appropriations bills?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* What is your view of the efficacy of the current transfer and reprogramming process?

Answer. In my time as Acting Director of the Army Budget Office, the Department used reprogramming actions to address the highest priority emerging requirements, and no prior approval reprogramming action was implemented unless and until all of the congressional defense committees approved the Department's request. In my view, this well-established process, although sometimes lengthy in certain cases, met the needs of the Department and the Congress. If confirmed, I will

work with the Comptroller and the Office of Management and Budget to ensure that the Department abides by its longstanding agreements with the congressional defense committees, which are designed to preserve Congress' oversight of the appropriations process and the Department's financial management.

*Question.* Do the dollar thresholds associated with the reprogramming process remain appropriate in the current day? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Over the years, Congress has reduced the Below Threshold Reprogramming (BTR) amounts for some appropriation accounts and inflation has diminished the relative value of some of the fixed dollar thresholds. This has restricted the Department's flexibility and has increased the volume of Above Threshold Reprogramming (ATR) actions that are submitted to the Congress for their prior approval. If confirmed, I will review this topic with the Comptroller and OUSD(C) staff and then come back to the Congress if I believe any changes are warranted. I believe some changes are probably warranted.

*Question.* In your view, how might the reprogramming process be improved to meet DOD's need for flexibility, while maintaining trust and transparency with Congress?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller and OUSD(C) staff to review the current process and provide any recommendations.

#### PERSONNEL COSTS

*Question.* Military personnel costs continue to grow and comprise an increasing share of the DOD budget. A large portion of the military compensation package consists of in-kind benefits—health care, housing, tax-free shopping in military exchanges, taxpayer subsidized commissaries—that complement competitive salaries and a generous military retirement benefit.

In your view, how can DOD manage and better plan for this growth?

*Answer.* The Department must continually strive to assess personnel costs in all forms and determine the most efficient ways to deliver a competitive compensation package that enables DOD to attract and retain the All-Volunteer Force.

*Question.* Should the DOD's personnel costs grow at the rate of inflation?

*Answer.* The topline for the defense budget, and personnel budgets within the topline, should depend, not on an arbitrary inflation factor, but on the Department's mission, the appropriate force structure to achieve that mission and the competitive compensation package required to recruit and retain the force size and quality needed.

*Question.* Do you believe the Employment Cost Index is the most appropriate metric to assess inflation for the purpose of determining military pay increases?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe ECI is the right metric to ensure military basic pay remains competitive and keeps pace with private sector wage growth. However, compensation levels (of which basic pay is only one component) must be continually reviewed and adjustments to an annual basic pay raise at percentages other than the ECI metric could sometimes be warranted.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

*Question.* In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, approximately 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by "someone at work" in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or otherwise become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the OUSD(C)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, upon receiving or becoming aware of a sexual harassment or discrimination complaint, I would immediately conduct an independent inquiry into the matter, in coordination with the Washington Headquarters Services Human Resources Directorate, Labor Management and Employee Relations office. I would take these matters seriously, enforce accountability, leverage opportunities to train and educate leaders and the staff, and reiterate my stance against inappropriate behavior that has no place in the workplace or anywhere else. I would also ensure OUSD(C) has workplace policies and practices that promote respect, civility, and inclusion for all.

#### CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of

Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

##### BUDGET REFORM

1. Senator HIRONO. Ms. Miller, the budgeting process has not seen any substantive reform since it was developed in the 1960s. The inflexibility inherent in the current Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process at times does not yield optimal results, particularly when long-term predictions are overcome by the need for emerging technologies. Do you think reforms in the PPBE process would provide the Department the ability to budget for and execute funds more expeditiously? If so, please provide examples of recommended reforms.

Ms. MILLER. PPBE has served the Department well as a tool to match long range strategies to resourcing requests. Adjustments should be done thoughtfully with measurable outcomes. One suggestion, would be for Congress to provide DoD the same fiscal authority it provides in annual appropriations acts to some other departments, notably the Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation. Each year, those are among the Departments provided additional periods of availability for unobligated operating appropriations. Provision in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) providing other agencies such authority division E, section 609, division F, section 505, and division L, section 406. For example, if Congress were to provide the Department such flexibility to carry forward some

percentage of unobligated O&M funds to the next fiscal period and allow them to be available for obligation in that future fiscal period, the Department would be better able to address some of the turbulence of continuing resolutions and, importantly to your question, would reduce dependence on general transfer authority to reprogram funds into operating accounts to address emergent operating requirements during the year-of-execution. This change would also reduce the pressure to obligate before the end of the fiscal year, which can result in inefficient spending. If confirmed, I would work with the USD(C) and Congress to determine and implement appropriate adjustments to the PPBE process.

2. Senator HIRONO. Ms. Miller, what will your priorities be related to ensuring the budget process is responsive to the speed of technological advances?

Ms. MILLER. I believe the PPBE process is flexible enough to react to changing strategic or programmatic direction, as well as technological advances, but more can be done. The PPBE process produced the Software and Digital Technology Pilot programs established under section 8131 of the FY21 Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2021 and requested as section 8066 in the President's budget for FY22. This pilot program provides the agility for certain software programs to go from research, to procurement, to operation and maintenance under one budget line, to keep up with the speed of technological advances. If confirmed, I will work with the USD(C) and the Congress to identify similar mechanisms to keep the Department at the forefront of technology.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

##### READINESS

3. Senator SULLIVAN. Ms. Miller, over several years this Committee has worked tirelessly to restore military readiness—across each of our Services—to levels that would enable our success in a conflict. We've had some success, but there is STILL a lot of work to do. If you have not done so already, I recommend that every senior defense leader read T.R. Fehrenbach's "This Kind of War", which provides a cautionary tale of our Nation's failure to adequately fund and train our Armed Forces before the Korean War. The consequences were steep and American servicemembers paid with their lives. If confirmed, all of you—based on your positions—will invariably make decisions that directly or indirectly impact readiness. Accordingly, will you commit—if confirmed—to work with this Committee and within the Department on further bolstering military readiness to ensure the failures we endured in the Korean War never happen again?

Ms. MILLER. I am familiar with T.R. Fehrenbach's, "This Kind of War" and another book by Thomas Hanson titled "Combat Ready". Both offer invaluable insights into the readiness of the Army heading into the Korean conflict and the implications that come when we don't adapt our strategies to the environment on the ground. Based on my previous positions as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for G4 (logistics) and as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff G3/5/7 (operations, plans and training) I know first-hand how critical training and support are to the readiness of those we send into harm's way. If confirmed, I will commit to working with the Department and with the Committee to resource forces ready for the challenges that face the nation.

##### STRATEGY DRIVEN BUDGET

4. Senator SULLIVAN. Ms. Miller, the National Defense Strategy Commission report, the two previous Senate-confirmed Secretaries of Defense, and the previous and current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have all stated the need for sustained 3–5 percent annual real growth to the defense budget to implement the NDS, increase readiness, and advance long-overdue modernization.

Further emphasizing the need for consistent and increased funding, the NDS Commission report stated, "America is very near the point of strategic insolvency, where its 'means' are badly out of alignment with its 'ends'." This critical situation is negatively compounded by the Biden administration's dismal defense topline that does not keep pace with inflation. With these facts in mind, and understanding your ability to influence the budget will be limited to future year submissions, will each of you commit to advocating for a strategy-driven budget vice a budget-driven strategy?

Ms. MILLER. The Secretary of Defense has stated that our resources must match our strategy, our strategy must match our policy and our policy must match the will of the American people. Matching all these things will require, at times, difficult

changes in the status quo and hard decisions on which capabilities to fund within the strategy. If confirmed, I will commit to supporting the USD(C) with options to resource the national defense strategies formulated by the Department and to holding open and transparent conversations with the Congress about these resourcing decisions.

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[The nomination reference of Ms. Kathleen S. Miller, follows:]

#### NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT

**PN729**

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
June 23, 2021.

*Ordered,* That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

Kathleen S. Miller, of Virginia, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. (New Position)

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. Reed \_\_\_\_\_  
(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.

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[The biographical sketch of Ms. Kathleen S. Miller, which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]

**Biography**  
***Kathleen S. Miller***

**Education:**

***Cornell University***

August 1978 to May 1982  
Bachelor of Science

***Syracuse University***

June 1993 to August 1994  
Master of Business Administration

***US Army War College***

July 2001 to June 2002  
Master of Strategic Studies

**Employment Record:**

Cornell University

- Student at Cornell University. Various Work/Study Positions with responsibilities to support research work of my advisor (Prof David Allee) and graduate students.
- July 1981- May 1982

NYS Potato Growers Cooperative

- Public Relations Director..
- June 1982 - September 1983

Retail Store

- Part-time retail clerk for a women's clothing store in the local mall.
- Worked part-time at a local florist in Marcy, NY.
- Summer 1982 - September 1983

Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES)

- Retail clerk. Sembach AFB, Germany.

1984 Department of the Army, US Army Europe

- GS-525-5, Accounting Technician at the 45th Finance Support Center, Kaiserslautern, GE.
  - July 1984 - August 1985
- GS-525-6, Accounting Technician at the 2nd General Hospital, Landstuhl, GE  
Reassigned to Lead Accounting Technician at same grade in March 1986.
  - August 1985 - March 1986
- GS-525-6, Lead Accounting Technician. Reassigned at same grade back to 45th Finance Support Center, Accounting Division, Kaiserslautern, GE.
  - March 1986 - June 1987
- Promoted to GS-510-7 Accountant in the Stock Fund Division, 45th Finance, Kaiserslautern, GE.
  - June 1987 - July 1988
- Promoted to GS-510-9 operating accountant in the same Stock Fund Division.
  - July 1988 - November 1989
- Promoted to GS-510-11, Supervisory Operating Accountant and transferred to 266th Theater Finance Command in Heidelberg, GE.
  - November 1989 - September 1992
- Promoted to GS-510-12, Supervisory Operating Accountant, Managerial Accounting Branch, 266th Theater Finance Command, Heidelberg, GE.
  - September 1992 - April 1993
- Student at Army Comptrollership Program, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY. Earned MBA.
  - April 1993 - September 1994

Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command

- Laterally Transferred as a GS-510-12 (technically assigned here while I was in school). Assigned to Director, Financial Management, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, VA.
  - September 1994 - May 1995

Department of the Army, HQDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Financial Management and Comptroller.

- Promoted to GS-510-13 in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Operations. I was subsequently promoted within this organization to Supervisory Accountant GS-510-14 (1996) and GS-510-15 (1998).
  - May 1995 - August 2001
- Student, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA. Class Vice President for the civilian component.
  - August 2001- July 2002

Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service

- Associate Chief Financial Officer for Internal Finance. Initial Senior Executive Service position. Held successively more responsible positions culminating with Acting Deputy Chief Financial Officer. Departed to return to DOD in an SES capacity.
  - July 2002 - May 2005

Department of the Army, HQDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Financial Management and Comptroller.

- Director, Army Working Capital Funds. Director, Operations and Support.
- Senior Advisor and Acting Director of the Army Budget office.
  - May 2005 - June 2010

Department of the Army, HQDA, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics (G4)

- Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics (G4).
  - June 2010 - May 2016

Department of the Army, HQDA, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans and Training (G3/5/7)

- Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7.
  - May 2016 - October 2018

Department of the Army, HQDA, Office of the Secretary of the Army

- Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army.
  - October 2018 - Present

**Honors and Awards:**

Federal Civilian Awards:

*Presidential Distinguished Rank 2017*

*Presidential Meritorious Rank 2011*

*Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service 2017, 2010*

*Decoration for Meritorious Civilian Service 2009, 2016*

Academic Awards:

*Syracuse University Distinguished Alumni Award, 2012*

*Leonard F. Keenan Award for Distinguished Service, 2006*

Other Awards:

*Fellow, National Academy of Public Administration*

*Francis E. Willard Award for Alumnae Achievement, Alpha Phi Fraternity,  
2014*

*David E. Packard Award, 1998*

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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 Ms. Kathleen S. Miller in connection with her nomination follows:

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2020 -- 2021  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
ROOM SR228  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 205106050  
(202) 2243871

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE  
INFORMATION REQUESTED OF CIVILIAN NOMINEES

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE:** Answer all questions and provide all requested information. If more space is needed, attach an additional sheet of paper to the Questionnaire and cite the part of the Questionnaire and the question number (e.g., A-9, B-4) to which the continuation of your answer applies. Unless otherwise required, an answer of "yes", "no", or "not applicable" is appropriate.

QUESTIONNAIRE, PART A

**NOTE:** Information furnished in this part of the Questionnaire will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing, if any, and will be entered in the hearing record, also available to the public.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TO BE MADE PUBLIC

1. **Name (Include any former names you have used):**  
*Kathleen S. Miller*  
*Kathleen Sue Miller*  
*Kathleen S. Miller-Brown*
2. **Position to which nominated:**  
*Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)*
3. **Date of nomination:**  
*23 June 2021*
4. **Education (List names of secondary and higher education institution 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):**

Name	Type	Date Start	Date Finish	Degree	Date of Degree
<b>Tioga Central</b>	High School	Sept 1974	June 1978	NYS Regents Diploma	June 1978
<b>Cornell University</b>	College	Aug 1978	May 1982	Bachelor of Science	May 1982
<b>Syracuse University</b>	College	June 1993	August 1994	Master of Business Administration	August 1994
<b>US Army War College</b>	Senior Service College	July 2001	June 2002	Master of Strategic Studies	June 2002

5. **Employment record** (List all jobs held since college, or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of the job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, show each change of military duty station as a separate period of employment):

*Employment Record June 2010 to Present:*

Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G4. HQ Department of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics (G4). Pentagon. June 2010 - May 2016.

Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7. HQ Department of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans and Training (G3/5/7). Pentagon. May 2016 - October 2018.

Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. HQ Department of the Army, Pentagon. This is the most senior SES position in the Department, is a Principle Official of the Department, and runs the support mechanisms (HR, budgets, facilities, etc.) that support the Army's Headquarters. October 2018 - Present.

6. **Government experience** (List any advisory, consultative, honorary, and other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed in response to question 5, above):

*I am a career civil servant*

- a. Accounting Technician GS-525-5 at the 45th Finance Support Center, Kaiserslautern, GE. July 1984 - August 1985
- b. Accounting Technician, GS-525-6, at the 2nd General Hospital, Landstuhl, GE. August 1985 - March 1986.
- c. Lead Accounting Technician, GS-525-6, 45th Finance Support Center, Accounting Division, Kaiserslautern, GE. March 1986 - June 1987.
- d. Accountant, GS-510-7, in the Stock Fund Division, 45th Finance Support Center, Kaiserslautern, GE. July 1987 - July 1988.
- e. Operating Accountant, GS-510-9, Stock Fund Division, 45th Finance Support Center, Kaiserslautern, GE. July 1988 - November 1989.
- f. Supervisory Operating Accountant GS-510-11, at the 266th Theater Finance Command in Heidelberg, GE. November 1989 - September 1992
- g. Supervisory Operating Accountant, GS-510-12, Managerial Accounting Branch, 266th Theater Finance Command, Heidelberg, GE. Sept 1992 - April 1993.
- h. Student at Army Comptrollership Program, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY. Earned MBA. April 1993 - September 1994.
- i. Managerial Accountant, GS-510-12, Director, Financial Management, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, VA. September 1994 - May 1995.
- j. Systems Accountant, GS-510-13, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Operations. I was subsequently promoted within this organization to GS-510-14 (1996) and GS-510-15 (1998), Supervisory Accountant. Pentagon. May 1995 - August 2001.
- k. Student, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA. Class Vice President for the civilian component. August 2001- July 2002.
- l. SES Associate CFO for Internal Finance, Office of the CFO, Internal Revenue Service, Department of Treasury. Held successively more responsible positions culminating with Acting Deputy Chief Financial Officer. Washington, DC. July 2002 - May 2005.
- m. SES Director, HQ Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Financial Management and Comptroller. Held 3 distinct positions at the SES level, two concurrently. Those positions were Director, Business Resources (working capital funds) and Director, Operations and Support. I spent the last year there as the Deputy Director and Acting Director of the Army Budget Office. Pentagon. May 2005 - June 2010.

**7. Business relationships (List all positions currently held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any**

corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, and of any educational or other institution):

*Not Applicable*

**8. Memberships (List all memberships and offices that you currently hold, as well as any memberships and offices you have previously held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations):**

- a. Association of the US Army - Lifetime Member
- b. American Society of Military Comptrollers - Member and past National President.
- c. National Academy of Public Administration - Fellow
- d. Senior Executives Association - Lifetime Member
- e. Alumni, US Army War College
- f. President's Council on Cornell Women, Sustaining Member
- g. Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassador Network
- h. Cornell Club of Washington - Lifetime member
- i. Cornell Class of 1982
- j. Alpha Phi Fraternity - Lifetime Member
- k. Delta Chapter, Alpha Phi Fraternity House Corporation. Member. I served as a board member from approximately 2016 - 2019.
- l. Association of Syracuse Defense Comptrollers. Lifetime member and Past President.
- m. National Geographic Society - member 2020 to present (this is really a subscription)
- n. Smithsonian - Associate Member 2020 (this is really a subscription)
- o. Arena Stage - Season Pass Holder 2020

**9. Political affiliations and activities:**

- b. 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 a candidate/elected/appointed; the year(s) during which you were a candidate, or in which the election was held or the appointment was made; and the term of office (if applicable):

*None*

- c. List all memberships and offices held in, and services rendered to, all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years:**

*None*

- d. Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity during the past 5 years. List each individual contribution (not the total amount contributed to the person or entity) over this period:**

- 13 September 2020: ActBlue Joe Biden \$275
- 26 September 2020: ActBlue Joe Biden \$250

- 10. Honors and awards (List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition received for outstanding service or achievements):**

- a. *Presidential Distinguished Rank 2017*
- b. *Presidential Meritorious Rank 2011*
- c. *Fellow, National Academy of Public Administration*
- d. *Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service 2017, 2010*
- e. *Decoration for Meritorious Civilian Service 2009, 2016*
- f. *Francis E. Willard Award for Alumnae Achievement, Alpha Phi Fraternity, 2014*
- g. *Syracuse University Distinguished Alumni Award, 2012*
- h. *Leonard F. Keenan Award for Distinguished Service, 2006*
- i. *David E. Packard Award, 1998*

- 11. Published writings (List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials that you have written or for which you served as co-author or editor, including articles and blogs published on the internet):**

US Army War College Strategic Research Project. "Strategic Bean-Counting: Potential Unrealized in DOD". US Army War College Class of 2002. [student paper in the public domain]

- 12. Speeches (Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years—of which you have copies—in**

which you addressed matters relevant to the position to which you have been nominated).

*None*

**COMMITMENTS IN FURTHERANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT**

**NOTE:** In order to exercise their legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress timely receive testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch. A simple “yes” or “no” response is appropriate.

13. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate Committees of Congress?

*Yes*

14. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so timely?

*Yes*

15. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?

*Yes*

16. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?

*Yes*

17. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?

Yes

18. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?

Yes

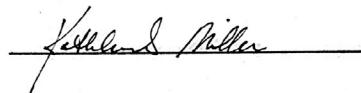
19. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?

Yes

[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 Parts A and B of the foregoing Senate Armed Services Committee Questionnaire, and that the information provided therein and in any document appended thereto, is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete.



This 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2021

[The nomination of Ms. Kathleen S. Miller was reported to the Senate by Chairman Reed on July 27, 2021, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on August 6, 2021.]

[Prepared questions submitted to Dr. Mara E. Karlin by Chairman Reed prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

##### DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

*Question.* What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities (ASD(SPC))?

Answer. My understanding is that the ASD/SPC is primarily responsible for advising and supporting the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Defense on the formulation, coordination, implementation, and assessment of national security and national defense strategy; the forces and contingency plans necessary to implement national defense strategy; U.S. nuclear weapons and missile defense policy; and security cooperation plans and policies.

*Question.* If confirmed, what additional duties and responsibilities do you expect that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) would prescribe for you, particularly in light of the lines of effort comprising the National Defense Strategy (NDS)?

Answer. If confirmed, I would focus on the actions and relationships necessary to perform the duties of the ASD/SPC effectively. Formulating, implementing, and assessing the National Defense Strategy will need particular attention and I will focus on this critical area while also ensuring the Department is appropriately focused on it as well.

*Question.* What background, experience, and expertise do you possess that qualify you to serve as the ASD(SPC), including in the following areas:

Defense Strategy, Force Planning, Force Development;

Answer. I have substantial expertise working on defense strategy, force planning, and force development both in and outside of the U.S. Government. Having worked for six secretaries of defense across three administrations, I have a deep understanding of and experience with the shifting security environment over the past two decades and how the Department of Defense can best address changing threats and opportunities for both today and in the future. I previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development and Principal Director for Strategy. In these roles, I was deeply involved in numerous national, defense, and regional strategy efforts in addition to overseeing a wide range of Secretary-level planning guidance. This included the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, the President's 2015 National Security Strategy, the counter-ISIS strategy, two classified and ground-breaking secretary of defense-signed strategies, and three Defense Planning Guidance, including the earliest one in Defense Department history. I oversaw the first formal efforts to actively assess the national defense strategy with key offices from across the Defense Department and with close U.S. allies. Moreover, I represented the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the 3\* programmers for years, which required leading strategy implementation and resourcing to build the future military on behalf of OSD Policy. In earlier government service, I was responsible for U.S. policy toward the Levant and toward South Asia—key regions that required deep expertise in challenges like terrorism, governability, and security sector reform. Outside of government, I served as a staff member of the National Defense Strategy Commission. I taught Strategic Studies for years at the graduate level, have a PhD in Strategic Studies, and wrote two books on military history and defense policy.

*Question.* Development and review of campaign and contingency plans, major force deployments, and military operational plans;

Answer. I have substantial experience in the development and review of plans, and deployments. In my current role as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, I am deeply involved in formulating and assessing the Department's political-military approach to Europe (including NATO), Russia, Eurasia, the Middle East, the Western Hemisphere, and Africa. Given the threats, alliances, and partnerships in these key regions, I am regularly advising the senior Departmental leadership in these areas. My previous experience in the Department of Defense, including as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, also required regular engagement with and assessment of plans and deployments.

*Question.* Joint capabilities requirements and Joint Warfighting Concept Development

Answer. I have substantial experience with the development of joint capabilities requirements and concept development. As the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, I worked closely with colleagues from the Joint Staff J8 and CAPE to oversee the analytic agenda on the size and shape of the future U.S. military. In this role, we worked to revise the criteria for building and evaluating the military in alignment with the changing character of war. In this vein, I led a number of strategic portfolio reviews on power projection, which guided tens of billions in investments. More broadly, I represented the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the 3\* programmers for years, which required regular efforts to assess how and in what ways the Department was building the future force for a shifting security environment.

*Question.* What leadership and management experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as ASD(SPC), if confirmed?

*Answer.* As a leader and manager, I prioritize being an inclusive decision-maker who listens, over-communicates, collaborates, and demonstrates action and integrity at all times to build a shared vision of success. I have led and managed organizations both in and outside of government. Currently, I am serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, which includes leading and managing a broad portfolio that covers more than 145 countries with approximately as many staff. Previously, I served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, which required leading and managing a key office inside Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities. Outside of government, I most recently was the Director of Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). In this role, I led and managed the largest department in the graduate school, which included approximately 165 students and nearly 20 faculty and staff.

#### MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

*Question.* In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next ASD(SPC)?

*Answer.* The major challenges that will confront the next ASD(SPC) will be ensuring the Department appropriately prioritizes the challenges posed by strategic competition while addressing persistent threats in an effective manner that accounts for both strategic and fiscal uncertainty. Modernizing U.S. nuclear forces to meet policy and strategy requirements in a cost-effective manner will be a particular challenge.

*Question.* If confirmed, what plans would you implement to address each of these challenges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would prioritize issuing clear guidance that appropriately outlines priorities and risk tradeoffs in line with the strategy. I would regularly monitor the implementation of the strategy and assess when, how, and under what circumstances it needs to be re-looked. I would also prioritize ensuring our nuclear forces remain safe, secure, and effective.

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

*Answer.* If confirmed, my priorities for ASD(SPC) would be to ensure the ASD component integrates across its key areas to ensure the strategy is appropriately formulated, implemented, and assessed and to enable rigorous support to the USD(P), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Defense.

#### CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY

*Question.* In its 2018 report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission observed, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues . . . Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.” Do you agree with this assessment?

*Answer.* Civilian control of the military is a foundational principle to our democracy. I am aware of the serious concerns regarding this imbalance at that time, and its impact on the Department and our Nation. If confirmed, it will be one of my priorities to ensure an appropriate balance.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as ASD(SPC) epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would provide proper and adequate direction and meaningful civilian oversight in the course of my duties. Trust in the military’s strong nonpartisan ethic enables our civilian leaders to exhibit appropriate civilian control in collaboration with the President and Congress.

*Question.* If confirmed, what concrete steps would you take to correct this imbalance in civil-military relations?

*Answer.* Correcting imbalances in civil-military relations requires leadership, a healthy and capable workforce, and strong initiative in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will fully carry out the responsibilities of the ASD(SPC). I will also work hard to build effective, collaborative, and meaningful relationships with my military counterparts, and to advocate for the appropriate staffing levels for the office of the ASD(SPC) to perform the required civilian oversight of the military.

*Question.* If confirmed, how, would you use your position to contribute to the discussion, debate, and resolution of core U.S. defense and national security issues?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will fully carry out the responsibilities of the ASD(SPC), including advising the Secretary of Defense and other senior defense leaders on: na-

tional security and defense strategy; the forces, contingency plans, and associated posture necessary to implement the defense strategy; nuclear deterrence and missile defense policy; and security cooperation plans and policies. I will also represent the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) and the Secretary of Defense in interagency policy discussions and participate in planning, budgeting, and execution activities. I will also play an active role in major Department of Defense reviews and in working with interagency partners to develop whole-of-government solutions to national security challenges.

*Question.* If confirmed, what relationship would you establish with the Joint Staff, and how would you allocate the execution of functions for the development of strategy, plans, and capabilities between your office and the Joint Staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to work hand-in-hand across the Joint Staff, particularly with the Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy; the Director for Operations; the Director for Joint Force Development; and the Director for Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment. With these counterparts, I would seek to foster an effective and collaborative relationship to address both emergent issues and policy challenges that require the integration of civilian and military expertise and perspective. My team and I benefited from strong, productive relations with the Joint Staff during my experience as the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Strategy and Force Development.

*Question.* The National Defense Strategy Commission report notes, “allocating priority—and allocating forces—across theaters of warfare is not solely a military matter. It is an inherently political-military task, decision authority for which is the proper competency and responsibility of America’s civilian leaders.” What is your view of the role of DOD civilian leadership, as compared to the role of the military, in the formulation of strategy and contingency planning?

Answer. The ASD(SPC) is charged with developing, coordinating, and overseeing the implementation of national and regional security and defense strategies and policies. This includes providing policy guidance, objectives, and end states for strategy and contingency plans. The Department’s military leadership also plays a critical role in strategy development and contingency planning, providing military operational expertise and advice. With these together, a balanced civil-military relationship enables complete and robust analysis and the consideration of meaningful options for the Secretary of Defense.

*Question.* In your view, how important is it to have robust civilian oversight of the development and implementation of defense strategy as well as reviewing campaign and contingency plans? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I believe that civilian control of the military is a foundational principle to our democracy, and as such, it is key to have robust and meaningful civilian oversight of the development and implementation of defense strategies and the review of campaign and contingency plans. My views are consistent with those of the President, the Secretary, and other senior leaders of the Department. If confirmed, I would remain committed to this view and to fulfill the critical role of providing civilian policymaking responsibilities.

*Question.* In your view, would an increase in the number of personnel assigned to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P)) enhance civilian control of the military? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I understand that the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy’s (OUSD(P)) civilian workforce has decreased over time as a result of mandatory cuts over the past decade, although I have not had the opportunity to assess the personnel requirements in the Office of the ASD(SPC). If confirmed, I will make it a priority to review the current staffing levels and, if necessary, seek additional personnel in order to ensure the Office of the ASD(SPC) can perform its civilian policymaking and oversight responsibilities effectively to ensure meaningful civilian control.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

*Question.* The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism. If confirmed, you will lead the Department’s effort in developing an updated NDS.

Do you believe that the 2018 NDS accurately assesses the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies?

Answer. The 2018 National Defense Strategy helped generate bipartisan consensus around the troubling issues associated with the Russia threat and the growth of China’s military capabilities and implications for the United States, and

the Joint Force specifically. If confirmed, I would expect to help the Department's senior leaders update the strategy in accordance with the Biden Administration's priorities and in line with Congressional direction to submit a 2022 National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* What revisions or adjustments, if any, would you recommend that the Secretary of Defense make to the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with senior leaders throughout the Department to follow Congress's established direction on the necessary elements of the NDS review and to ensure it reflects the Administration's priorities. This includes evaluating changes in the security environment; identifying priority defense objectives and missions; and identifying priorities for designing, modernizing, employing, and ensuring readiness of the Joint Force. Areas for further exploration during the strategy review process might include identifying innovative approaches and concepts for future warfighting and modernizing our global network of alliances and partnerships. An examination of these and other issues would be nested in the broader context of national security priorities. Insights from this review would inform how I would counsel DOD leaders to update the defense strategy and its implementation.

*Question.* In accordance with section 113(g)(1)(E) the Secretary of Defense is required to present the national defense strategy "as soon as possible after appointment". In your opinion, what timeframe would be reasonable for presenting the NDS to the congressional defense committees?

*Answer.* I am familiar with section 113, which details the requirements for the National Defense Strategy, including the direction to present the strategy as soon as possible following the appointment of the Secretary of Defense. I understand that the Department is actively conducting a thorough National Defense Strategy review process, and plans to finish work in January or February of 2022 – which is consistent with past practice.

*Question.* If confirmed, what revisions or adjustments would you make to the Department's implementation of the 2018 NDS?

*Answer.* Given the direction contained within the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, I would recommend identifying how DOD efforts can be better integrated with those of other elements of national power and with our allies and partners. I understand that the last annual, statutorily-required NDS assessment, conducted by the prior Administration, identified that strategy implementation efforts warrant greater planning, organization, and prioritization. If confirmed, I would also want the Department to consider lessons learned from implementing prior strategies and to account for the importance of implementation in the 2022 National Defense Strategy review process.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific indicators would you use to holistically evaluate how well implementation of the NDS is progressing?

*Answer.* I believe that a robust assessment of the strategy needs to consider a range of factors, including the strategy's continued validity in light of changes in the global security environment, our effectiveness in advancing priority defense objectives, and the Department's overall performance in implementation. If confirmed, I will continue our transparent reporting to Congress on the findings of DOD's annual assessment.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Department of Defense's processes for strategic assessment, analysis, decision making, and reporting for the development and implementation of the NDS?

*Answer.* National defense strategies and the assessment of their validity and implementation provide valuable opportunities to assess alignment of DOD planning and investment against the security environment, including evolving threats, gaps and deficiencies, generating imperatives for reprioritization. Past strategies, and their associated methodologies, sought to balance Joint Force preparedness against a broad range of threats. The 2018 NDS's focus on the threats from China and Russia has stimulated necessary Departmental attention to the unique challenges, associated analyses, and specific implementation efforts particular to those threat actors. Secretary Austin's call for China to be the Department's pacing challenge has given additional, necessary impetus to this relative shift in DOD's focus across a broad variety of assessment and decision processes.

*Question.* If confirmed, what recommendations would you make, if any, to improve the Department's processes for strategic assessment, analysis, policy formulation, and decision making?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to ensure that DOD strategic assessment and analytic support processes, tools, and methodologies are appropriate

to provide civilian leadership with the variety of decision support they need to address the scope and scale of the challenges now confronting the Department.

*Question.* In your opinion, should the NDS be budget-driven or budget-informed and what key indicators reflect that one or the other of those approaches is being pursued?

*Answer.* In my view, the National Defense Strategy should be strategy-driven and budget-informed. A strategy that is budget-informed is based upon a comprehensive assessment of the security environment across multiple timeframes. It should delineate priority defense objectives and missions, and then seek to align the Department's tools and resources accordingly. If confirmed, I would advocate for this approach within the Department.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the role of the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) and Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF) in the implementation of the NDS?

*Answer.* The Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) is the Secretary's primary force development mechanism for shaping the future capability, capacity, and readiness of the Joint Force in accordance with National Defense Strategy (NDS) priorities, as well as guiding key strategy implementation activities of the Department (e.g., Departmental reforms and guidance to the force planning and analysis community). The DPG provides the Secretary's planning priorities at the start of the DOD budget cycle, giving guidance to the Military Services and other DOD components as they build their Program Objective Memorandums (POMs) for the next fiscal year (FY) (e.g., the 2021 DPG informs the FY 2023–2027 POMs and Program Review). The GEF provides direction regarding how limited, existing forces and resources shall be prioritized to achieve NDS priorities.

*Question.* If confirmed, what recommendations would you make, if any, to update, improve, or make the DPG and GEF more transparent and useful to the Department and to Congress, including this Committee?

*Answer.* The DPG is an annual, internal, and pre-decisional DOD planning document, and, if confirmed, I will strive to ensure it has the most impact by preparing it for the Secretary's issuance as early as possible each calendar year. This would allow the leadership of the Military Services' and DOD Components' to integrate the DPG's direction before their POMs have been finalized. Regarding transparency with Congress, if confirmed, I will ensure the Department offers detailed briefings to committee staff on the priorities of the DPG that informed the President's Budget submission. I will ensure that the GEF provides updated military planning guidance that prioritizes attention and resources on the most serious and urgent national security threats in support of National Defense Strategy implementation. I am fully committed to examining ways to make appropriate portions of the GEF more transparent within the Department of Defense and to brief committee staff on the GEF's content.

*Question.* Will you commit that, if confirmed, you would undertake all necessary action to ensure that each of these strategic guidance documents is timely generated and issued, and updated, as necessary to reflect changes in assumptions, policy, or other factors?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure that these and other key strategic guidance documents are issued in a timely manner (e.g., in time to inform the budget process or other processes) and reflect the latest information in terms of the defense strategy, the Secretary's priorities, Departmental analysis, and policy guidance.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to effectuate this commitment, and on what timeline?

*Answer.* In the case of the DPG, if confirmed, I will direct that development of the guidance begin as soon as possible in the fall timeframe each year, as the major Program Review and budget decisions of the current cycle are solidified. I would also strive to ensure the DPG helps link one budget year to the next, including by gaining senior leader direction on the desired focus areas to inform the next budget cycle. This approach should support a tight linkage with the Secretary's priorities, as well as an early issuance in the next calendar year. Regarding the GEF, under the direction of the Secretary of Defense, I would intend to oversee drafting of the Guidance for Employment of the Force in parallel with the NDS and complete it within months of the NDS.

The NDS states that a Global Operating Model concept of "combat-credible, flexible theater postures will enhance our ability to compete and provide freedom of maneuver during conflict, providing national decision-makers with better military options."

*Question.* In your assessment, has this concept been effective?

*Answer.* The Global Operating Model and Dynamic Force Employment have been useful concepts for increasing the flexibility and capabilities of our systems and per-

sonnel while demonstrating our ability to operate with allies and partners. Managing the benefits and costs of forward presence is critical to ensuring the military presents a combat-credible deterrent against China and Russia while also maintaining DOD's ability to respond flexibly to emergent threats or crises.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend be made to this concept and the manner in which it has been implemented to date?

*Answer.* The Department is in the early stages of the National Defense Strategy review, which will be followed by the development of the Guidance for Employment of the Force. If confirmed, I will work across DOD components throughout the development of these strategic documents to identify opportunities for improving guidance and concepts for how DOD uses our forces globally.

#### CONTINGENCY PLANNING

*Question.* One of the purposes of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to increase military and civilian attention on the formulation of strategy and contingency planning. The ASD(SPC) supports the USD(P), who is required to assist the Secretary of Defense in preparing written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans and in reviewing such plans.

What is your view of the civilian role, as compared to the military role, in the formulation of strategy and contingency planning?

*Answer.* Civilian control of the military is a vital cornerstone of our democracy. DOD civilian leadership lead the Department in formulating national security and defense strategy. The Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense have a statutory role in overseeing military plans formulation through timely policy guidance, clearly defined objectives, and requirements and guidelines for contingency planning. The result is a balanced civil-military relationship and national defense activities that are in concert with American values.

*Question.* In your opinion, does the civilian leadership currently have an appropriate level of oversight of strategy formulation and contingency planning? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Civilian leadership currently has an appropriate level of oversight over strategy and contingency planning. U.S. law clearly assigns the responsibilities to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy for formulating strategy and for reviewing contingency plans. If confirmed, I intend to fully support the Secretary and the Under Secretary in executing those responsibilities. Doing so effectively will require working closely with military leaders to produce effective and implementable strategies. It will also require providing guidance to shape the development of contingency plans to advance U.S. policy priorities and ensure the national defense. Each strategy and contingency plan goes through a rigorous civilian review before approval by the Secretary.

*Question.* What specific steps, if any, do you believe are necessary to ensure effective civilian control and oversight of strategy, contingency, and force planning?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will fully carry out the responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities to prepare guidance for and review of strategy, contingency plans, and force planning. A professional civilian staff and active dialogue between civilian and military leadership ensures effective and meaningful civilian oversight of these key areas. To that end, I will deepen and expand the interactions between military and civilian leadership through an extensive contingency plans review process to invigorate the civilian oversight role, integrate new capabilities more effectively, and ensure robust civil-military dialogue. This is clearly outlined in DOD Instruction 3000.15 on the Plan Review and Approval Process.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the capability and capacity of both the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff to provide comprehensive, objective, and realistic joint analysis in support of formulating and evaluating strategy and operational plans and related force planning?

*Answer.* The Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff have the ability to sufficiently support the development and evaluation of strategies, contingency plans, and force planning. However, there is always room for improvement, particularly given the critical role played by analysis. If confirmed, I will review the process to identify ways to improve the joint analytic enterprise and planning tools.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you determine whether modifications of a combatant commander's contingency or operational plan are warranted, considering geostrategic change, risk assessments, potential adversary and our own capability enhancements, and fiscal realities?

*Answer.* The Secretary of Defense is the civilian official responsible for determining whether modification of a Combatant Commander's contingency or operation

plans is required. If confirmed, I will advise senior Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) leadership on whether modifications to military plans are warranted based upon whether military plans conform to policy guidance, account for changes in the security environment, and represent an acceptable level of risk.

#### JOINT OPERATIONAL CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

*Question.* The Department is working to finalize a Joint Warfighting Concept. In your view, what is the role of the Joint Warfighting Concept as it relates to the NDS?

*Answer.* I understand that the Joint Staff is iteratively developing a Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC), with a focus on providing joint solutions to key warfighting functions such as command and control, fires, logistics, and information advantage. The Department is also developing a new National Defense Strategy that will set its strategic direction and defense priorities for the coming years. If confirmed, I will review the JWC to ensure the Department has a strategy-driven approach to future joint warfighting and that it is appropriately nested in the ongoing work of NDS development.

*Question.* In your opinion, can a single Joint Warfighting Concept adequately address adversaries as diverse as China and Russia, or should DOD have separate Joint Operational Concepts, including separate theories of victory, for China and Russia?

*Answer.* Joint concepts should be aligned with our strategy and theories of victory (hypotheses about how to use military instruments most effectively to achieve strategic objectives in war), while highlighting future opportunities for improvement. Our most capable adversaries present similar operational problems, but in very different theaters and with a different range of capabilities, potentially requiring different emphasis in force development and design. In my opinion, joint concept development, which could include different levels of concepts for distinct purposes, should help link the Departments' strategic theories of victory for potential armed conflict with key adversaries to future operational and force structure tradeoffs the Department must face in how we resolve the nation's most stressing military challenges.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your role in reviewing the Joint Warfighting Concept?

*Answer.* Operational concepts constitute an essential link between strategic objectives, policy, and the capability and budgetary priorities needed to advance them. As such, if confirmed, I would first and foremost ensure that the JWC is aligned with the Secretary's strategy and guidance. Additionally, I would focus on ensuring that the analytic foundation for the concept is robust and able to usefully inform future Joint and Military Department capability investments to maintain the nation's military edge and to provide a strategy-driven and joint approach to future warfighting.

*Question.* In your view, what are the respective roles and functions of the ASD(SPC) and the Joint Staff in the development of a Joint Warfighting Concept?

*Answer.* The role of civilian leadership in the development of a Joint Warfighting Concept is to ensure appropriate civilian oversight of its development and the requirements within it. This includes providing strategic guidance on how to employ the force and how military success may be judged from a policy perspective. The role of military leadership is to provide sound military advice and informed options to employ the force to meet the stated strategic objectives. If confirmed, I will ensure the appropriate balance between civilian oversight and military options are provided within joint concept development.

*Question.* How are these roles and functions integrated?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Joint Staff and OSD meet regularly, through various fora at all levels, to ensure that joint concept development is strategically aligned and provides appropriate options to senior leaders.

*Question.* Where do these roles differ and where do they overlap?

*Answer.* Joint concept development is an iterative process that requires tight linkages between civilian and military leadership. OSD and the Joint Staff should work together to ensure future warfighting concepts are aligned with strategy and policy objectives, providing sound military options to senior leaders, underpinned by analysis, and detailed at a level that is sufficient to inform capability development.

*Question.* Do you believe it is also important for the Department to develop a Joint Concept for Competition? If so, why?

*Answer.* The Department should continue to frame military competition as one of many elements of competition undertaken as part of a whole-of-government approach, and focus its efforts in this realm on ensuring the Joint Force is capable and ready to defeat, if necessary, major competitor aggression in a potential conflict.

Any DOD concept development related to competition should be scoped appropriately for DOD's roles and responsibilities. Recognizing the need for the Department to have capabilities and concepts to counter adversary hybrid warfare and gray zone competition as part of whole-of-government efforts, DOD should ensure the Department preserves the ability to focus investments on key defense capabilities, such as nuclear modernization, a modernized surface and undersea fleet, space and cyber capabilities, and long-range conventional strike.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work to ensure that Military Service Warfighting Concepts are properly nested under the Joint Warfighting Concept, and that the Military Departments and Services focus on generating capabilities that support the Joint Warfighting Concept?

*Answer.* Appropriate civilian oversight of the development of future warfighting concepts and the requirements they inform is critical. It is my understanding that the Military Departments are directly involved in the development of the Joint Warfighting Concept and its supporting concepts, and are included in identifying capabilities aligned with the JWC through the Joint Staff's Joint Requirements Oversight Council. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that a strategically-aligned and analytically informed JWC and supporting concepts present meaningful options to senior leaders through the exploration of alternatives in an effort to help them understand tradespace in joint capability development.

*Question.* In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges to reorienting force development to more effectively support the 2018 NDS?

*Answer.* The Department continues to face challenges in the effectiveness and rigor of the warfighting analysis and concept development process, both of which are critical to the development and implementation of meaningful strategic guidance. Additionally, the Department will continue to require congressional support for difficult decisions to divest of increasingly costly systems that are decreasingly relevant to the demands of deterrence and warfighting in the face of evolving, advanced threats and denied environments.

*Question.* Do you consider the Department's war gaming capabilities to be adequate to develop a new Joint Warfighting Concept and implement the 2018 NDS?

*Answer.* War gaming, among other analytic tools, is critical for concept development. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be ensuring the Department's decisions to shape, size, and posture the force are supported by rigorous analysis, to include war gaming, as appropriate. I understand that the Department's analytic oversight forums, of which Policy is a core member, are examining the scope of analytic tools and methodologies necessary to advance the Department's capabilities in this regard.

*Question.* If confirmed, what, if anything, needs to be done to improve the Department's war gaming capabilities, in your view?

*Answer.* War gaming is an important tool within the Department's broader analytic ecosystem. If confirmed, I will examine the Department's war gaming capability and how and in what ways war gaming results are paired with other tools of analysis, including modeling, simulations, and experiments, among others. Capable analytic tools are critical for assessing the effectiveness of proposed concepts and capabilities against Departmental needs and U.S. strategic objectives.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the progress DOD has made in developing, modeling, and validating the joint operational concepts required to address the challenges identified by the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department uses many different analytic tools, including campaign-level, mission-level, and system-level modeling and simulation, military exercises, experiments, and war games, to assess the effectiveness of operational concepts and alternative approaches to the operational challenges facing the Joint Force, as identified in the 2018 NDS. I understand that Department leadership is currently assessing the strength and capabilities of these analytic tools and processes. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that concepts are supported by the appropriate range of analytic tools to identify gaps or shortfalls in force design and posture, a crucial step in addressing key operational challenges posed by our most capable competitors.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Department of Defense's current organizational structure, capability, and capacity concerning joint operational concept development?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that OSD provides appropriate guidance and oversight to ensure strategic alignment of joint operational concept development, and that the Joint Staff is leading the development of joint concepts, in collaboration with the Military Services and OSD. If confirmed, I will ensure a collaborative and iterative approach to concept development across the Department to provide a range of analytically informed options for senior leaders.

*Question.* If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you make to improve joint concept development?

*Answer.* Given limited resources, the Department's concept development must account for future fiscal realities and must balance among sustaining current systems capable of countering threats at lower costs, divesting systems that are not fit for purpose, and recapitalizing and modernizing forces able to contend with threats posed by increasingly advanced competitors in the long-term. To ensure the proper balance, concept development should be aligned with strategic priorities and be resource-informed, and provide options for future investments in force structure and modernization – all of which must be underpinned by rigorous analysis.

*Question.* In your opinion, how can the Department successfully produce short- and mid-term joint operational concepts that drive change in the Joint Force in response to identified shortfalls?

*Answer.* In my opinion, the best way to mitigate near- and mid-term shortfalls is through innovative approaches to solve specific problems underpinned by analysis. It is my understanding that Department leadership is currently assessing its analytic tools and processes, including a new experimentation mechanism. If I am confirmed, I will work with the senior leadership to ensure the Department's effort is aligned with current strategy, and solutions are obtainable in the near- and mid-term.

*Question.* In your view, how can DOD best contribute to a “whole-of-government” effort to develop more holistic strategies and operational concepts—integrating all tools of national power—for prevailing in competitions short of war?

*Answer.* The United States is facing a range of challenges which the Department of Defense cannot, and should not, address alone. The military should seek to integrate with other instruments of national power – including diplomatic, economic, and intelligence activities – to advance priority objectives. If confirmed, I will direct the Strategy, Plans & Capabilities (SPC) team to work closely with U.S. interagency partners, and incorporate U.S. interagency considerations into the work SPC undertakes, to help ensure close cooperation.

#### JOINT FORCE REQUIREMENTS

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Department of Defense's current process for establishing a prioritized list of Joint Force requirements derived from the NDS?

*Answer.* The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, via the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), oversees the process for establishing Joint Force requirements, which are then assigned to the Military Services to fulfill. This process then informs the Military Services' budgets, which are reviewed by the OSD-led Program and Budget Review process.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you make to this process?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff to enable the appropriate level of civilian involvement in this process, particularly to ensure it aligns with broader DOD strategic priorities and ongoing concept development and innovation efforts, and that it is underpinned by robust analysis.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Department's current process for assessing both U.S. and adversary capabilities?

*Answer.* Regarding adversary capabilities, the Department works closely with the intelligence community, the Combatant Commands, the Military Services, and others to monitor adversary posture, capability, and other military developments to ensure both civilian and military leaders, as well as those serving in harm's way, are prepared for potential threats.

Regarding U.S. capabilities, OSD and the Joint Staff work with the Military Services to monitor the capability, capacity, and readiness of the Joint Force in relation to potential future challenges and threats, informed by scenario-based analysis and other assessment means. The insights from these assessments inform a variety of budgetary and force planning processes.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your recommendations, if any, for improving these processes?

*Answer.* Given Secretary Austin's direction that China is the Department's pacing challenge, I will work, if confirmed, with my colleagues in OSD, the Joint Staff, and the Services to ensure the Department is appropriately focused in its force planning efforts. This includes exploring alternatives, providing civilian leadership on a range of meaningful options, and understanding the sensitivity of our assumptions.

*Question.* In your opinion, is this process adequate in identifying potential solutions (through procurement and concept development), assigning responsibility for

implementing those solutions to the appropriate organization, and aligning the defense program to strategic priorities?

Answer. My understanding is that the Department has the necessary, established force development processes, but that there is certainly room to improve how they are applied to ensure alignment between analysis, strategic priorities, and specific responsibilities with efforts to develop necessary solutions. The Department develops and promulgates strategic and planning guidance effectively, but its analytic enterprise must be reformed to be more rigorous, responsive, and transparent. If confirmed, I would explore how reforms could improve how this process informs both strategy as well as force development processes.

*Question.* If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you make to improve the Department's processes for establishing Joint Force requirements?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff to enable the appropriate level of civilian involvement in an effort to ensure the requirements process is aligned with DOD strategic priorities and ongoing concept development and innovation efforts. I will also work with the Joint Staff to ensure that the requirements process is underpinned by robust analysis.

*Question.* In your view, are there specific capabilities the Joint Force needs to support U.S. interagency approaches to compete below the threshold of armed conflict?

Answer. The Department's review of its National Defense Strategy (NDS) should appropriately examine competition below the threshold of armed conflict, and where defense roles and capabilities are appropriate and relevant to addressing the unique challenges presented in this area. If confirmed, I will ensure that NDS priorities in this regard are reflected fully via the key strategy implementation tools available, including planning guidance, program decisions, posture, and security cooperation.

#### JOINT FORCE CAPABILITIES

*Question.* The NDS emphasizes long-term strategic competition with China and Russia. In your assessment, what are the capabilities the Joint Force needs to prevail in competition with China and Russia?

Answer. The NDS review should result in necessary guidance to the Department regarding long-term strategic competition. In general, my view is that the foundation of competition and deterrence must be a modernized, combat-credible, and resilient Joint Force that leverages new concepts and innovative approaches. Longer-term research and development, as well as modernization efforts, must remain a priority in order to sustain this edge. This approach provides the foundations of military advantage that enable and support a broad range of U.S. Government long-term strategic competition efforts.

*Question.* In your assessment, what are the key areas each Military Service must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia?

Answer. Each Military Service must engage in and support a robust, responsive, and transparent analytic process to ensure necessary, strategy-driven Joint Force proficiencies and capabilities for long-term strategic competition. This includes the ability of the Military Services to explore the development of new concepts and innovative capabilities tailored to these evolving challenges.

*Question.* In your assessment, what capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the current Joint Force present the most significant challenge to addressing threats posed by China and Russia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will avail myself of the best analytic products available in order to make a detailed determination as to key capability and capacity shortfalls in the current and future Joint Force. If confirmed, I would oversee Policy's role in shaping the Joint Force, including through oversight of the NDS review. As such, if confirmed, my goal in addressing such critical shortfalls will be to provide thoughtful and rigorous advice to the Secretary and other DOD leadership regarding how to achieve a strong linkage among strategy, analysis, concept development, innovation, and program investments, ensuring the Joint Force is prepared to meet the challenges posed by China and Russia.

*Question.* In your assessment, which programs are the highest priorities for mitigating current and emerging warfighting capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the Joint Force?

Answer. My assessment would be informed by the emerging findings of the NDS review and key analytic products. Additionally, new warfighting concepts, when fully developed, may call for new capability investments. My general understanding is that the Joint Force must develop enhanced capability in areas such as long range fires, resilient joint command and control, improved cyber capabilities, en-

hanced space capabilities, and the ability to operate in heavily contested electromagnetic environments.

*Question.* In your view, are there additional capabilities that DOD requires to successfully execute operational concepts in support of the NDS? Please explain your answer.

Answer. As the NDS review and joint concept development work are still underway, I can share general thoughts about what I personally see as critical areas of emerging technology and capability. Artificial intelligence and advanced computing will likely serve as key enablers for a wide range of DOD capabilities, including command and control; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and autonomous systems. In order to implement the next NDS effectively in a sustainable manner for the coming years, the Department must resource and integrate areas of technology such as these to ensure critical military advantages in the face of advanced adversaries and contested environments.

*Question.* Does DOD have the requisite decision support—analytic expertise, processes, and tools—to support the Secretary of Defense and you, if confirmed as the ASD(SPC), in evaluating warfighting return on investments?

Answer. I believe the Secretary and Deputy Secretary have made clear that institutional reform and change is required to out-innovate, out-compete, and, if necessary, out-fight potential threats. If confirmed, I will review whether the Secretary and other key leaders are receiving appropriate decision support to inform and shape these larger efforts, and will determine where improvements may be required.

#### GLOBAL FORCE POSTURE

*Question.* In February, President Biden tasked Secretary Austin to conduct a global force posture review of the Department's military footprint, resources, strategy, and missions.

If confirmed, what would be your role in this Global Force Posture Review?

Answer. If confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities, I would lead the implementation of the 120-day Global Posture Review (GPR), which I understand will conclude later this summer. I would provide oversight of follow-on actions resulting from the GPR, including adjustments to rotational and permanently stationed forces overseas, and the incorporation of longer-term strategic considerations into the NDS review.

*Question.* What changes, if any, in the strategic and operational environment do you think have consequences for how U.S. forces are postured around the world, particularly in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East?

Answer. As directed by the President and Secretary Austin, the Global Posture Review is intended to evaluate the tradeoffs required to implement our national security priorities. DOD has taken the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, along with analysis of the operational environment in which our forces are positioned around the globe, to assess the alignment of our overseas posture. As the Secretary has made clear publicly, and as articulated in the China Task Force's findings, China is DOD's pacing threat and DOD posture and capability development should prioritize maintaining DOD's deterrent and warfighting advantage in the Indo-Pacific region. At the same time, the Department must account for the threat from Russia and a dynamic threat environment. Any adjustments to overseas posture would occur through standing global force management processes after engagement with allies and partners and consultations with Congress.

*Question.* In your assessment, will changes to U.S. global force posture be required to implement the Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) concept and Global Operating Model concept in the NDS?

Answer. Changes to global force posture are not required to implement these concepts. However, these concepts will continue to inform the posture adjustments DOD makes in the future and how DOD conducts adversary-oriented dynamic deployments.

*Question.* In your view, does the DFE concept need to be clarified in order to implement force posture changes?

Answer. DOD has clarified, refined, and implemented the Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) concept over the past two years. The DFE construct and execution of numerous DFE events, both joint and with allies and partners, demonstrate the flexibility and capabilities of DOD force employment around the world. DOD is in the early stages of National Defense Strategy review, which will be followed by development of the Guidance for Employment of the Force. If confirmed, I will work across DOD Components throughout the development of these strategic documents to identify opportunities for improving guidance and concepts for how DOD uses our forces globally.

*Question.* If so, what sort of clarifications are required, in your opinion?

*Answer.* DOD has had success in refining and implementing the DFE concept over the past two years. If confirmed, I will work to identify opportunities for improving guidance and concepts for global force employment.

*Question.* Both Admiral Davidson, the previous commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and the newly confirmed INDOPACOM commander, Admiral Aquilino, indicate that the balance of military power in the Indo-Pacific has eroded in a way that is more favorable for China. Do you agree, and if so what elements of U.S. force posture must be modified to restore a more favorable balance of power for the United States and its allies and partners?

*Answer.* I agree that the rapid and ongoing growth of China's military capabilities poses a serious challenge to the United States. I believe that solutions to this challenge will require a posture aligned with credible, analytically supported operational concepts – that is, forces, capabilities, and infrastructure that effectively address key operational challenges posed by our most capable adversaries. If confirmed, I will support the development, assessment, and implementation of such concepts and posture.

*Question.* What is your understanding and assessment of the relative cost and benefits of the permanent versus rotational forces forward stationed overseas, particularly in Europe and the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* The appropriate balance among forward-stationed, rotationally deployed, and surge forces, including the costs and benefits of each, varies from region to region based upon several factors such as the capabilities required to deter particular threats and the availability of access and basing in allied and partner countries. However, each of the three components is vital to our overall global defense posture. If confirmed, I will review our global force posture in light of the outcomes from the Global Posture Review and other strategic guidance to ensure we are striking the proper balance in enhancing our deterrence against our priority threats, in close partnership with allies and partners.

*Question.* What is your understanding and assessment of the Department of Defense's methodology and assumptions used to evaluate the relative cost of overseas posture compared to stationing forces in the United States?

*Answer.* I have not had an opportunity to review the Department's methodology and assumptions to evaluate the relative costs of maintaining U.S. forces overseas, either rotationally or permanently stationed, compared to maintaining them in the United States. If confirmed, I will take a close look at the overall global force posture processes to ensure they are appropriately designed and scoped to provide recommendations consistent with both strategic and budgetary guidance.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take, or what changes would you recommend, if any, to the Department's methodology and assumptions in determining the cost of overseas force posture compared to forces stationed in the United States?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take a close look at the overall global force posture processes to ensure they are appropriately designed and scoped to provide recommendations consistent with both strategic and budgetary guidance. I will also work closely with colleagues from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer and the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation to ensure we develop resource-informed assessments of overseas posture.

*Question.* Are there any gaps or shortfalls in force size, or deficiencies in force posture that must be remedied to implement new operational concepts, in your view?

*Answer.* I believe that joint concepts are critical to identifying gaps and shortfalls in force design and posture. Joint concepts that credibly and effectively address key operational challenges posed by our most capable adversaries should inform the range of options that we provide to senior leaders. If confirmed, I will support rigorous analysis, experimentation, and wargaming to assess our joint concepts, in order to determine where changes in the capability, capacity, readiness, and posture of the future joint force may be necessary.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your role in addressing any gaps, shortfalls, and deficiencies?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support rigorous analysis, experimentation, and wargaming to assess the Department's concepts for future warfighting. I will seek to ensure that our operational concepts are strategy-driven, operationally effective, and informed by joint requirements. Analytically credible concepts are crucial to identifying gaps, shortfalls, and deficiencies in our current force, and to informing combat-credible and cost-effective solutions.

*Question.* Does DOD have the requisite modeling, simulation, experimentation, and wargaming processes and tools—to support the Secretary of Defense and you,

if confirmed as ASD(SPC)—in rigorously testing and validating DOD’s force size and posture constructs? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I am strongly committed to ensuring that the Department’s investment decisions – including on force sizing, capabilities, and posture – are informed by rigorous analysis across a wide range of tools. If confirmed, I will take a close look at the Department’s analytical capabilities to ensure they are appropriate to support senior leaders’ decisions on these critical issues.

#### APPROACHES TO STRATEGIC COMPETITION

*Question.* The NDS references “expanding the competitive space.” Using different approaches, both China and Russia have been successful competing with the United States below the threshold of armed conflict.

What does “expanding the competitive space” mean for competition with China and Russia?

Answer. My understanding of this concept, which was introduced in the 2018 NDS, suggests that it sought to focus DOD on identifying and then leveraging favorable asymmetries that exist between the United States and our competitors. It also highlighted the need to think broadly about the approaches and tools the Department should apply as it seeks to advance defense objectives. Finally, the 2018 NDS also states that “effectively expanding the competitive space requires combined actions with the U.S. interagency to employ all dimensions of national power.”

*Question.* What are the capabilities the Joint Force needs to compete below the threshold of armed conflict?

Answer. Competition with China and Russia is global in scope and has both military and non-military dimensions. Prioritization of DOD resources must be bound by DOD’s mission and authorities. DOD must focus on activities and operations, in concert with allies and partners, that meaningfully enhance military advantage (e.g., multilateral exercises, security cooperation, information operations, special operations, posture enhancements). Enhancing ally and partner capabilities, interoperability, and resilience is also critical in order to bolster their resistance to coercion and to enable increased reliance on them as additions to U.S. capabilities in the event of aggression.

The NDS also states that “effectively expanding the competitive space requires combined actions with the U.S. interagency to employ all dimensions of national power. We will assist the efforts of the Departments of State, Treasury, Justice, Energy, Homeland Security, Commerce, USAID, as well as the Intelligence Community, law enforcement, and others to identify and build partnerships to address areas of economic, technological, and informational vulnerabilities.”

*Question.* In your view, has the interagency been effective in planning and executing whole-of-government efforts to expand the competitive space? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I believe that U.S. departments and agencies have made notable progress in advancing national objectives by pitting U.S. strengths against competitor weaknesses. For example, diplomatic initiatives such as work in the Quad format (Australia, India, Japan, and the United States) provide a powerful example of how multilateral cooperation can be used to address common security challenges. Another example is the Russian Influence Group, co-chaired by U.S. European Command and the Department of State, which identifies whole-of-government solutions to counter Russian threat networks.

*Question.* If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you have to better employ all dimensions of national power in competing with and countering Chinese and Russian hybrid and malign influence operations?

Answer. I believe further prioritization of key challenges and opportunities, increased clarity and shared understanding of responsibilities and authorities across the U.S. interagency, and better information sharing and integration of efforts can help to further strengthen our collective ability to advance key national objectives.

#### NUCLEAR AND MISSILE DEFENSE POLICY AND POSTURE

*Question.* The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed long-held American doctrine that includes limiting the use of nuclear weapons to “extreme circumstances” and the need to maintain the nation’s nuclear triad of land-, sea-, and air-based capabilities. The NPR also recommended the development of a low-yield nuclear weapon to deter threats from Russia, and potentially, the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the Navy fleet.

*Question.* Do you agree with the 2010 and 2018 NPRs that nuclear weapons should only be used under extreme circumstances to protect vital interests?

Answer. Yes.

Over the past eight years, China, Russia, and North Korea all have expanded and modernized their nuclear arsenals, and all are continuing to do so.

*Question.* Given these actions and the increasing nuclear threat to the United States and its Allies, do you believe it is prudent to significantly alter U.S. policies that have helped deter nuclear aggression for more than 70 years?

Answer. If confirmed, I would be responsible for completing the National Defense Strategy and associated strategic reviews, including a nuclear posture review. This review provides an opportunity to ensure our nuclear policy and posture is appropriately aligned with the current and future security environment.

In November 2020, NATO's Secretary General stated that, "Simply giving up our deterrent without any guarantees that others will do the same is a dangerous option because a world where Russia, China, North Korea and others have nuclear weapons, but NATO does not, is not a safer world."

*Question.* Do you agree with the Secretary General that the world is a safer place due to the existence of an effective U.S. nuclear deterrent and the extended deterrence assurances we provide to our allies? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I agree with the Secretary General's statement that the world is a safer place due to the existence of an effective U.S. nuclear deterrent and the extended deterrence assurance we provide to our Allies. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capabilities is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression.

As Secretary Austin has repeatedly said, our Allies are a force multiplier and a strategic advantage that none of our competitors can match. With this, the United States has long committed to extending nuclear deterrence to a number of treaty Allies. U.S. nuclear weapons should remain in NATO countries and have contributed to deterrence efforts for the past 50 years.

U.S. nuclear forces are nearing the end of their useful lives. These capabilities must be updated over the next 20 years if we are to maintain a viable nuclear deterrent. This update, largely a one-for-one replacement of our existing force, stands in sharp contrast to Russia's and China's efforts to update their nuclear arsenals, which efforts the current Commander of United States Strategic Command has characterized as a "... breath-taking expansion of military capabilities." This expansion has also coincided with an increasing role for nuclear weapons in their defense strategies.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the state of Russia's and China's nuclear forces?

Answer. I understand that Russia has completed a majority of its planned modernization of its strategic forces and is pursuing new strategic range nuclear systems. I am aware that Russia is poised to increase the size of its theater and tactical nuclear weapons arsenal, and that China is rapidly increasing the quality and quantity of its nuclear forces.

If confirmed, I will ensure these nuclear programs receive appropriate analysis and attention in our strategic reviews. Our policy, posture, and strategy must be informed by the strategic rationale behind Russian and Chinese programs, and must appropriately address these improved capabilities to ensure our deterrence posture remains strong and credible.

*Question.* Do you believe that Russia's and China's ongoing nuclear modernization and expansion efforts pose an increasing threat to the United States and its Allies? Please explain your answer.

Answer. Yes. I believe that the United States faces an increasingly complex global security environment where both China and Russia have demonstrated their capability and intent to advance their interests at the expense of the United States and our allies and partners. Secretary Austin has described China as the pacing threat as they have rapidly become more capable and assertive. China's nuclear modernization presents an increasing challenge for the United States. Russia's conventional and nuclear modernization programs are also adding new systems that undermine strategic stability and threaten the United States and its allies and partners.

*Question.* Do you agree with the assessment of the past four Secretaries of Defense that nuclear deterrence is DOD's highest priority mission and that modernizing our Nation's nuclear forces is a critical national security priority? Please explain your answer.

Answer. As both Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks testified, I believe that nuclear deterrence is DOD's highest priority mission, and that nuclear modernization of the triad is critical to U.S. national security. If confirmed, I fully support modernizing the triad.

*Question.* Our Allies have been historically concerned that the adoption of a "no first use policy" for U.S. nuclear weapons would signal a weakening of extended deterrence assurances. What are your views on the propriety of a "no first use" policy?

Answer. It is my view that the United States' declaratory policy should advance our nuclear policy objectives, support our deterrence strategy, and credibly assure allies and partners as to our continued extended deterrence commitments to them. Declaratory policy plays an important part in demonstrating our commitment to our allies and providing assurances and our commitment to extended deterrence should remain strong. If confirmed, I am committed to robust consultation with our allies and ensuring that our commitment to our allies remains rock-solid, and is perceived as such.

*Question.* What are your views on a sole purpose doctrine for nuclear weapons?

Answer. It is my view that the United States' declaratory policy should support our policy objectives, support our deterrence strategy, and credibly assure allies and partners as to our continued extended deterrence commitments to them.

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, the Department will review U.S. nuclear posture and I expect this will include declaratory policy. This type of review will afford the Department an opportunity to consider the views of allies and to assess whether the conditions exist today for the United States to adopt an alternative declaratory policy safely.

Ultimately, I understand that any change to U.S. declaratory policy would be made by the President.

*Question.* Do you agree with Secretary Austin that modernizing each leg of the nuclear triad and the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex is a critical national security priority? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I agree with Secretary Austin that we must modernize each leg of the nuclear triad while doing so in a cost-effective and judicious manner. I also agree that the DOE nuclear weapons complex is at the very heart of our nuclear deterrent. Maintaining a credible, reliable, safe, and effective nuclear capability is of the utmost importance and remains vital to U.S. national security, and the security of our allies. It is my understanding that this is why the fiscal year 2022 budget invests in nuclear modernization efforts.

*Question.* Do you believe the current program of record is sufficient to support the full modernization of the nuclear triad, including delivery systems, warheads, and infrastructure? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I believe that the triad remains critical to our Nation's defense. If confirmed, I will request immediate briefings on the current program of record, including requirements and modernization plans, costs, and schedules. I am committed to ensuring we have a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent and I anticipate that the current modernization programs will be a part of the Administration's upcoming nuclear posture review.

*Question.* Do you support the continuation of the W93 program and the parallel efforts to collaborate with the United Kingdom in the maintenance of its independent nuclear deterrent? Please explain your answer.

Answer. In my view, the United States has a special relationship with the United Kingdom, and the UK's sea-based deterrent contributes to NATO's collective defense. The UK's nuclear forces remain a key contributor to NATO's nuclear deterrent posture.

Although I anticipate further briefings on the topic, if confirmed, I expect to work closely with all of our allies, including the United Kingdom, to ensure both their continued security and the continued security of the United States.

*Question.* What is your view of the assertion that if the ICBM leg of the triad is allowed to age out and fails to meet U.S. STRATCOM requirements, the United States would have a monad comprising our submarine force, but not a dyad, given that our bombers are not on alert day-to-day?

Answer. I personally support maintaining an effective and credible nuclear triad of land, air, and sea-based platforms; I am committed to modernizing the nuclear triad. As Secretary Austin has stated, updating and overhauling our nation's nuclear forces in a cost-effective and judicious manner is a critical national security priority.

*Question.* ADM Richard has testified that if the ICBM leg of the triad is allowed to age out and not meet STRATCOM requirements he would recommend re-alerting our bombers to be more responsive and improve the survivability of the force. What are your views of this recommendation?

Answer. I am aware that Admiral Richard testified on this recommendation. It is my understanding that the fiscal year 2022 budget request invests in nuclear modernization efforts, including the inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM)-leg of the triad, and that modernization programs will be reviewed in the context of our strategic reviews. If confirmed, I will request immediate briefings on the current program of record to understand more fully any performance and schedule risks related to the land-based leg of the triad.

## MISSILE DEFENSE

*Question.* The United States enjoys a measure of protection against ballistic missile threats from rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, but the threat from Russian and Chinese ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles against U.S. forces, allies, and the U.S. homeland continues to grow. The 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) codified existing policy on missile defense and endorsed follow-on actions to improve U.S. capability.

What are your views on the relationship between missile defense and nuclear deterrence?

*Answer.* The relationship between U.S. missile defense and the U.S. nuclear arsenal is complementary—both capabilities are essential to deterring an attack against the United States. U.S. nuclear weapons present a credible threat of response to a nuclear attack, or threat of attack, against any adversary. U.S. missile defenses provide deterrence and, if necessary, damage limitation against a limited nuclear attack by a rogue country, such as North Korea, and serve as a means of strengthening extended deterrence and assurance for allies threatened by North Korea.

*Question.* In your view, are U.S. capabilities, in both quantity and quality, adequate to ensure the protection of U.S. and allied forces deployed in the European AOR from Russian ballistic and cruise missiles?

*Answer.* Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) plays an important role in deterring and mitigating adversary anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. Russia is investing in an A2/AD strategy to impede our freedom of movement in Europe. If confirmed, I will work with our European Allies and partners to ensure we have the right capacity, capabilities, and posture needed to address Russia's capabilities and ensure our freedom of movement in theater.

*Question.* In your view, are U.S. capabilities, in both quantity and quality, adequate to ensure the protection of U.S. and allied forces deployed in the Indo-Pacific AOR from Chinese ballistic and cruise missiles?

*Answer.* The regional missile threat posed by China is growing. The Department is actively working with allies and partners to enhance regional missile defense efforts. Our cooperation strengthens deterrence and provides assurance essential to the unity of our alliances which are threatened by missile coercion and attacks. If confirmed, I will seek to work with relevant combatant commands, as well as allies and partners, to ensure we are postured to address threats to our interest in this key region.

*Question.* How do you view the role of missile defense in implementation of the NDS?

*Answer.* Missile defense is an important component of our national defense strategy. Homeland ballistic missile defense protects the United States from nuclear coercion or attack from rogue states, thereby strengthening our respective alliance security architecture. Regional missile defenses strengthen our deterrence and defense postures, and help ensure freedom of maneuver and effective combat operations by offering a measure of protection for deployed forces, allies and partners, and critical infrastructure abroad.

*Question.* Do you believe missile defense policy should be limited to countering only rogue nations, such as North Korea and Iran?

*Answer.* I support longstanding U.S. policy to rely on nuclear deterrence to safeguard the United States against large-scale strategic missile threats from Russia and China, and to pursue missile defense against a more limited threat, such as from North Korea.

*Question.* The recent FTM-44 test, in which an AEGIS system was able to destroy an ICBM in flight raises the possibility of a layered missile defense of Ground Based Interceptors, Aegis and THAAD. What are your views on a layered missile defense?

*Answer.* Any decision to bolster homeland defense with new or existing capabilities will require weighing its cost, feasibility, and potential impacts on strategic stability against the potential added benefit to security. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department will use congressionally-directed layered homeland defense analysis to help determine the proper mix of capabilities to defend the homeland against the rogue state threat.

*Question.* What are your views on the requirement for a missile defense system to protect Guam—a system other than, or in addition to THAAD?

*Answer.* I understand the Department is nearing completion of in-depth analysis regarding missile defense options for the defense of Guam. If confirmed, I will work with DOD components to evaluate these options in an effort to ensure the best solution is formulated given operational requirements, costs, and relevant policy considerations.

*Question.* What are your views on the necessity and propriety of maintaining a Homeland Defense Radar for Hawaii?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that Hawaii is currently protected by our missile defense system but that the Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii (HDR-H) could improve our defense capabilities for Hawaii against advancing rogue state missile threats. The defense of Hawaii is important, and, if confirmed, I will work with the Department's civilian and military leadership to develop effective and affordable systems to enhance our capabilities against these evolving threats.

*Question.* What are your views regarding the Next Generation Interceptor program?

*Answer.* Defense of the homeland is a DOD priority. The Department must provide reliable and cost-effective missile defenses and continue to develop more reliable defenses as early as possible, and the Next Generation Interceptor (NGI) is a key element of this. If confirmed, I will monitor the NGI acquisition plan closely and ensure that it adequately addresses the threat, and aligns with the Administration's policies.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

*Question.* President Biden has declared that climate change is an essential element of national security and foreign policy. Secretary Austin has stated that DOD will include the security implications of climate change in risk analyses, strategy development and planning guidance. If confirmed, you would have a major role in implementing this guidance.

*What is your understanding of the ways that climate change poses a risk to national security and the Department's responsibility to prepare for its impacts?*

*Answer.* Climate and environmental security risks pose unique challenges to the U.S. homeland and DOD initiatives overseas. Many of our allies and partners face similar challenges. As the President directed, climate-related factors will be incorporated into our strategic planning efforts. If confirmed, I will seek to bring increased focus on the effects of climate change, including through the NDS review. The Department should work closely with the Intelligence Community, other U.S. departments and agencies, and our allies and partners to identify and address acute risks that a changing climate poses to the Department's ability to advance priority defense objectives. If confirmed, I will also support the Department's efforts to lead on climate change, including by addressing our carbon footprint and incentivizing the development of climate-friendly technologies.

*Question.* If confirmed, what are your views on incorporating the security implications of climate change into the Department's risk analyses, strategy development, and planning guidance?

*Answer.* Addressing climate change is among the Biden Administration's top priorities. If confirmed, I would work to implement the President and Secretary Austin's direction to integrate climate change considerations into risk analyses, strategy development, and planning guidance. The Department can also be a platform for positive change, developing climate-friendly technologies at scale.

#### STABILITY OPERATIONS

*Question.* In your view, what are the key lessons learned from the stability operations conducted in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan?

*Answer.* I believe U.S. military efforts should, in the first instance, complement a broad national approach. It is also in our interests to ensure the Department embarks upon major initiatives with clear priorities, effective planning (cognizant of underlying political, economic, and social issues), and regular built-in assessment processes.

*Question.* What do you believe is the proper role for the Department of Defense in the planning and conduct of stability operations in future contingencies?

*Answer.* President Biden's Interim National Security Strategy Guidance makes clear the need to make smart, disciplined choices about the responsible use of our military, and to ensure that diplomacy, development, and economic statecraft are the leading instruments of American foreign policy. From a roles and responsibilities perspective, the Department of State leads U.S. interagency stabilization efforts, with U.S. Agency for International Development being the lead implementing agent, and DOD in support.

#### DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION

*Question.* DOD's contribution to strengthening alliances and partnerships comprises a wide range of programs and activities designed to improve security cooperation and foster interoperability and preparedness. These programs include foreign

military sales, foreign military funding, exercises and training events, military-to-military exchanges, and partnering to develop key technological capabilities.

What is the appropriate role of the Department of Defense in the conduct of security sector assistance?

Answer. Aligned with whole-of-government security sector assistance efforts, Department of Defense security cooperation tools bolster ally and partner capabilities for defense, advance shared national security interests through addressing regional security challenges, and strengthen relationships with key allies and partners. DOD security cooperation, developed and executed in coordination with the State Department, serves to reinvigorate and modernize U.S. alliances and partnerships, reinforcing a critical American asymmetric advantage in strategic competition.

*Question.* What should be the Department of Defense's relationship with the Department of State in the conduct of these activities?

Answer. Effective DOD security cooperation aligns with and advances broader U.S. foreign policy objectives driven by the Department of State. Ensuring this alignment requires thorough collaboration with the Department of State through interagency processes and regular engagement between the two departments at all levels.

*Question.* What should be the strategic objectives of the Defense Department's efforts to build the capabilities of a partner nation's security forces?

Answer. DOD building partner capacity efforts should focus on enhancing ally and partner capabilities to effectively operate alongside and in lieu of U.S. forces to address shared national security challenges. Security cooperation investments should be targeted to advance broader goals in strategic competition.

*Question.* What steps, if any, would you recommend for ensuring that the Defense Department's strategy for security cooperation in each of the geographic combatant commands is fully aligned with the NDS?

Answer. I understand the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD Policy), as delegated by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Section 382, has made meaningful progress in advancing the strategic oversight of security cooperation activities since the reforms codified by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017. If confirmed, I will review existing processes and assess whether additional guidance may be necessary to ensure DOD security cooperation activities are developed, executed, and assessed in alignment with the forthcoming National Defense Strategy.

*Question.* In your view, is the Defense Department appropriately organized and resourced to effectively conduct such activities?

Answer. DOD security cooperation investments are essential to the national security strategic goal of reinvigorating and modernizing U.S. alliances and partnerships. If confirmed, I will support the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's responsibility for oversight of strategic policy, guidance, and resource allocation for security cooperation programs and assess whether organizational or resource adjustments may be necessary in support of DOD strategic priorities.

*Question.* If not, what changes would you recommend, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will assess whether there are any additional organizational, legislative, or resource adjustments that are necessary for the effective implementation and strategic oversight of Department of Defense security cooperation activities.

#### COMMAND CLIMATE SURVEY

*Question.* If confirmed, would you plan to administer a command climate survey to the workforce under your leadership and management?

Answer. Yes. I believe conducting a survey into the command climate of the workforce will provide insight to the organization and serve as a touchpoint for how a safe, respectful, and productive environment can be sustained and improved.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

*Question.* In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by "someone at work" in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

What is your assessment of the current climate regarding sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the OUSD(P)?

Answer. I have not had the opportunity to conduct an assessment of the current climate regarding sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the OUSD(P). If confirmed, as one of the senior leaders in the OUSD(P), I would view it as my responsibility to ensure a safe and respectful workplace is afforded to all employees.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the Office of the ASD(SPC)?

*Answer.* The safety and security of the employees of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities, and the Department of Defense as a whole, are of the greatest importance. If confirmed, and if I were to receive a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination, I would first ensure that the complainant was given respect and received in a safe, private place. Additionally, I would work with all of the resources available, including legal staff, the human resources office, and the employee's supervisory chain to support the employee concerned and to resolve the complaint appropriately. Each member of the SPC workforce deserves a safe, and respectful workplace free from abuse of any kind. If confirmed, I will communicate my expectations of this standard of respect and professionalism and that any allegations be addressed properly.

#### CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

## DEFENSE STRATEGY, PLANS AND CAPABILITIES

1. Senator HIRONO. Dr. Karlin, if confirmed, you will develop the next National Defense Strategy (NDS) and conduct DOD's Global Force Posture (GFP) Review. Keeping the Pacific Deterrence Initiative in mind, how will you assess the top line number of Navy ships needed in order to align with the next NDS or GFP?

Dr. KARLIN. If confirmed, I will ensure the next National Defense Strategy and any future Global Posture Review consider and assess the future capacity of the Navy's fleet, as it is a critical aspect of the ability of the Joint Force to implement strategic goals and deter conflict. The primary factor I would use in assessing the future fleet, in the context of strategy formulation, would be overall fleet capability in key potential scenarios, and how the Navy operates as part of the overall Joint Force, in the future threat environment. This approach must also account for the impact of new operational concepts and emerging technology.

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATORS JEANNE SHAHEEN AND ROGER F. WICKER

## AFGHANISTAN

2. Senators SHAHEEN and WICKER. Dr. Karlin, interpreters and other Afghan citizens who assisted U.S. and coalition forces are in danger as we complete our withdrawal from Afghanistan. Although the Administration and the Department of Defense have stated that they are taking robust measures to evacuate these individuals and their families in a timely manner, we have yet to see a detailed plan or any real action in country. If confirmed, what specific steps do you want to see the Department and the Administration as a whole take to ensure the safe, timely evacuation of our Afghan partners whose lives are now at risk?

Dr. KARLIN. I agree that it is critically important that the U.S. Government respond appropriately to expedite the processing of Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applications, including by relocating applicants and their immediate family members to the United States in a timely manner, once they have passed certain thresholds. If confirmed, I will advocate for the Department of Defense to provide all appropriate support to the establishment of temporary waypoints for SIV applicants to complete their visa processing. I also agree that it is important to work with our allies and partners to identify these temporary locations so we can assist those Afghans who helped us to counter terrorism over the past 20 years.

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

## READINESS

3. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, over several years this Committee has worked tirelessly to restore military readiness—across each of our Services—to levels that would enable our success in a conflict. We've had some success, but there is STILL a lot of work to do. If you have not done so already, I recommend that every senior defense leader read T.R. Fehrenbach's "This Kind of War", which provides a cautionary tale of our Nation's failure to adequately fund and train our Armed Forces before the Korean War. The consequences were steep and American servicemembers paid with their lives. If confirmed, all of you—based on your positions—will invariably make decisions that directly or indirectly impact readiness. Accordingly, will you commit—if confirmed—to work with this Committee and within the Department on further bolstering military readiness to ensure the failures we endured in the Korean War never happen again?

Dr. KARLIN. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working closely with the Committee, and within the Department, in order to ensure the Joint Force has the enhanced readiness it needs for near-term contingencies, as well as for retaining a decisive edge for future conflicts.

## STRATEGY DRIVEN BUDGET

4. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, the National Defense Strategy Commission report, the two previous Senate-confirmed Secretaries of Defense, and the previous and current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have all stated the need for sustained 3–5 percent annual real growth to the defense budget to implement the NDS, increase readiness, and advance long-overdue modernization. Further emphasizing the need for consistent and increased funding, the NDS Commission report stated,

“America is very near the point of strategic insolvency, where its ‘means’ are badly out of alignment with its ‘ends’.” This critical situation is negatively compounded by the Biden administration’s dismal defense topline that does not keep pace with inflation. With these facts in mind, and understanding your ability to influence the budget will be limited to future year submissions, will each of you commit to advocating for a strategy-driven budget vice a budget-driven strategy?

Dr. KARLIN. Yes, if confirmed, I will strongly advocate for both an approach and a set of program review decisions that will result in a strategy-driven budget. The Department must achieve a strong linkage among strategy, analysis, concept development, innovation, and program investments.

#### GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE ARCTIC

5. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, given the National Defense Strategy’s focus on great power competition and increased Russia and Chinese activity in the Arctic, would you agree that the Arctic is an emerging front-line for great power competition and rivalry? Please elaborate.

Dr. KARLIN. The Arctic is a region of geopolitical competition. I have serious concerns about the Russian military buildup and aggressive behavior in the Arctic—and around the world. New military infrastructure and capabilities in the Arctic include early warning sensors, air defense systems, and airfields. Likewise, I am deeply concerned about Chinese intentions in the region, which primarily relate to developing Arctic resources, including energy, minerals, and living marine resources. If confirmed, I will assess the situation and consult with allies and partners on the strategy, posture, and capabilities required to enable a stable and open Arctic region, as well as to protect the homeland and our economic interests to deter aggression.

6. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, in your personal opinion, what makes Alaska an important strategic region for the United States, and why would our adversaries want to limit our presence and power projection capabilities in the Arctic region? Please elaborate.

Dr. KARLIN. Alaska’s proximity to the Arctic, Russia, East Asia, and the Bering Strait makes it a strategically important state. I believe this importance will continue to increase given that melting sea ice is allowing increased Chinese and Russian presence in the Arctic region—particularly passage through the Arctic between the narrow Bering Strait and Atlantic Ocean—access that could alter the strategic balance of the region. Moreover, I have seen firsthand the critical role that Alaska plays for both US military training and exercises, and for allies and partners as well. If confirmed, I will assess Chinese and Russian plans and capabilities further, and consult with allies and partners on the strategy, posture, and capabilities required to ensure a stable and open Arctic, as well as to protect the homeland, support efforts to protect our economic interests, and deter any aggression.

#### MISSILE DEFENSE

7. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, if confirmed, you will be responsible for the Missile Defense Review. During Secretary Austin’s confirmation process he affirmed, “Defense of the Homeland is a key priority for DOD and missile defense is a CENTRAL component of this mission.” Deputy Secretary Hicks provided a similar statement prior to confirmation, and you seem to align with this position in your advance policy questions. Would you agree with the statements made by Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks, and do you support robust funding for its modernization? Please elaborate on your views of missile defense and its contributions to our national security.

Dr. KARLIN. I agree that defense of the Homeland is a key priority for DoD and that missile defense is a central component of that mission. If confirmed, I will support modernizing the force with capabilities such as the Next Generation Interceptor. I understand that the Missile Defense Review is underway and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the policies set forth in the MDR enable effective defense of the nation as well as align with the Administration’s principles and priorities.

8. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, in Admiral Davidson’s statement for the record—presented to this committee during the INDOPACOM posture hearing—he highlighted that: “... North Korea will remain our most immediate threat.” Admiral Davidson went on to state, “Pyongyang maintains a diverse and growing missile inventory, and North Korea unveiled several new ballistic systems ... including two SLBMs [submarine launched ballistic missiles] and an ICBM [intercontinental ballistic missile].” Finally, Admiral Davidson concluded that, “Pyongyang’s missile re-

search and development efforts ... are consistent with the regime's stated objective of being able to strike the U.S. Homeland." Provided this characterization, and the very real and growing missile threat posed by North Korea, will you commit to prioritizing and accelerating modernization and fielding of our Homeland missile defense systems to include the Next Generation Interceptor?

Dr. KARLIN. Defense of the homeland is a DoD priority. The Department must provide reliable and cost-effective missile defenses and continue to develop more reliable defenses as early as possible and NGI is a key element of this. DoD is committed to defending the U.S. against missile threats from North Korea and Iran, and initiated the development of the NGI to improve reliability and capability of our missile defenses.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

9. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, if confirmed, you will have primary responsibility for revising the 2018 National Defense Strategy. This bipartisan strategy has been a guiding document both for the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Department over the past few years. I request that you regularly consult the members of this committee as you revise the current NDS to ensure we maintain that bipartisanship upon publication of the next version. Also—you will note—in the 2018 NDS, there is no mention of the Arctic while many other regions, to include the Indo-Pacific and Europe, are discussed at length. Can I get your personal commitment—if confirmed—to sufficiently account for the Arctic, its geostrategic location, and combat-credible forces, in the next iteration of the NDS?

Dr. KARLIN. If confirmed, I commit to consulting regularly with the members of this committee as I help to revise the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I would also help ensure the National Defense Strategy review process carefully assesses the changing geostrategic significance of the Arctic region and properly deals with the issues related to the combat-credible forces that operate in, from, and through the Arctic region.

#### ALASKA-BASED FORCES

10. Senator SULLIVAN. Dr. Karlin, Alaska is closer in proximity to the Indo-Pacific than it is to Washington, DC. In fact, Alaska is closer to Korea AND Japan than Hawaii or Australia. Alaska-based forces—under the operational control of INDOPACOM, which includes the 4–25 Airborne Brigade Combat team (BCT0, 1–25 Stryker BCT, and the soon-to-be 100 5th-generation combat-coded fighters—are strategic forces that will be needed in any competition, crisis, or conflict with China. With this in mind, what role do you see Alaska-based forces playing in the Indo-Pacific?

Dr. KARLIN. Alaska's proximity to the Indo-Pacific makes the state a strategically important region for our country. Alaska-based forces provide strategic advantages across the entire national defense spectrum, providing deterrence to potential aggressors and security to our allies. These air and ground assets, and their support systems, must be located where they can most efficiently meet COCOM requirements, and provide the flexibility for contingency operations.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSH HAWLEY

##### STRATEGY OF DENIAL

11. Senator HAWLEY. Dr. Karlin, Secretary Lloyd Austin wrote earlier this year that "combat-credible, forward deterrent posture is instrumental to the U.S. military's ability to deter, and if necessary, deny a fait accompli scenario." Deputy Secretary Kathleen Hicks, Under Secretary Colin Kahl, U.S. Indo-Pacific (INDOPACOM) Commander Admiral John Aquilino, and former INDOPACOM Commander Admiral Philip Davidson have since reaffirmed Secretary Austin's emphasis on denial and testified that a strategy of denial is essential for deterring Chinese aggression. Do you agree that a strategy of denial is essential for deterring Chinese aggression? Please explain your response.

Dr. KARLIN. I agree that deterrence by denial is among the most effective ways to deter "fait accompli" scenarios. Based on a careful assessment of the security environment and the various challenges that China poses, such as its coercive behavior, the Department will need to continue to consider a range of complementary deterrence approaches, including denial, cost imposition, and entanglement and apply them appropriately in concert with allies and partners and as part of a whole-of-government approach to address threats to our interests.

[The nomination reference of Dr. Mara E. Karlin, follows:]

**NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT**

**PN402**

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
April 22, 2021.

*Ordered*, That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

Mara Elizabeth Karlin, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Victor G. Mercado.

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. Reed \_\_\_\_\_  
(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 Dr. Mara E. Karlin, which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]

**Bio**  
**Mara Elizabeth Karlin, PhD**

**Education:**

- School Name (Undergraduate and higher institutions)
  - Dates Attended
  - Degree / Qualifications earned

**Johns Hopkins University-Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)**

2009-2012 (dissertation defended September 2012; degree conferred May 2013)  
*Ph.D.*, Strategic Studies

**Johns Hopkins University-Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)**

2003-2005 (degree conferred May 2005)

*M.A.*, Strategic Studies, Middle East Studies, and International Economics *with distinction*

**Catholic University**

summer course 2003

**Newcomb College, Tulane University**

1997-2001 (degree conferred May 2001)

*B.A.*, Political Science and Jewish Studies, *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa

**The Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Study abroad semester Spring 2000

**Semester at Sea via The University of Pittsburgh**

Study abroad semester Fall 1999

**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

summer courses 1998

**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

summer courses 1997; 1999

**Employment Record:**

List all jobs held since college including title or description of job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment.

- Company / Agency
  - Position
  - Month Year – Month Year

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)** (February 2021-present)

*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.*

**Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies (JHU-SAIS)**

**Washington, D.C.**

*Director of Strategic Studies (Jan 2019-Jan 2021. Associate Director 2017-18 and Acting Director 2018)*

*Associate Professor of Practice (June 2017-Jan 2021)*

*Executive Director of The Phillip Merrill Center for Strategic Studies (June 2017-Jan 2021)*

**The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.**

*Nonresident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy (August 2017-Jan 2021)*

**Biden-Harris Transition Team, Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**

August 2020-Jan 2021

- *Defense Policy Lead*

**Biden for President Campaign, Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**

April 2020-August 2020

- *Defense Policy Team, Strategy and Force Development sub-group lead, Diversity and Inclusion sub-group participant*

**National Security Action, Washington, D.C.**

June 2019-July 2020

**U.S. Congress via U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington D.C. (uncompensated)**

**Syria Study Group Congressional Commission** (January 2019-October 2019)

**U.S. Congress via U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington D.C.**

**National Defense Strategy Congressional Commission** (January 2018-December 2018)

**SAIC/LEIDOS (2017-2021), Washington D.C.**

Intelligence Community Associate ("IC Associate") and Near East Mission Center Board Member

**U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, VA (uncompensated)**

**Marine Corps University Board of Visitors**

2019-2020

**Semester at Sea (Colorado State University), global**

January-May 2017

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense-Strategy and Force Development* (October 2014-December 2016)

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*Principal Director-Strategy and Force Development/Strategy* (October 2012-October 2014)

**Obama for President Campaign Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**

2012

- *Middle East Team*

**Johns Hopkins University and JHU-SAIS (2007-2016) Washington, D.C.**

- *Adjunct Professor*

**The RAND Corporation** (February 2010-August 2012) **Washington, D.C.**

- *Nonresident fellow*

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy*

Summer 2007-Feb 2009

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*Levant Director*

February 2006-June 2007

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*South Asia Desk Officer*

July 2005-February 2006

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**

*Levant Desk Officer*

May 2004-August 2004

**American Israel Public Affairs Committee**

*Foreign Policy Research Analyst*

June 2001-June 2003

**Honors and Awards:**

- Federal Civilian Awards

Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Secretary of Defense Outstanding Public Service Award, Secretary of Defense Group Award for Russia Strategy Work, Special Under Secretary Award for Strategic Choices & Management Review, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Award for Excellence, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Group Award for Defense Planning Guidance, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Group Award for Quadrennial Defense Review

- Academic Awards

BA: Phi Beta Kappa and graduated *summa cum laude*

MA: graduated with *distinction*

Recipient of Smith Richardson Foundation, Johns Hopkins University, International Studies Association, David M. Kagan, William and Marie-Daniele Zartman, Bradley Foundation, and Merrill Foundation fellowships. Recipient of 2001 Tulane University Ephraim Lisitzky Memorial Award and Kanter award for undergraduate thesis.

- Other Awards

Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies Faculty Merit Award, Semester at Sea "Most Inspirational Professor" Award, Selected by Semester at Sea students as Convocation speaker, Newcomb College Young Alumni Award, Newcomb College Outstanding Alumni Award, Center for a New American Security Next Generation National Security Leader, *Diplomatic Courier's* Top 99 Foreign Policy Leaders Under 33.

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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 Dr. Mara E. Karlin in connection with her nomination follows:]

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2020 -- 2021  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
ROOM SR-228  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510-6050  
(202) 224-3871

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE  
INFORMATION REQUESTED OF CIVILIAN NOMINEES

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE: Answer all questions and provide all requested information. If more space is needed, attach an additional sheet of paper to the Questionnaire and cite the part of the Questionnaire and the question number (e.g., A-9, B-4) to which the continuation of your answer applies. Unless otherwise required, an answer of "yes", "no", or "not applicable" is appropriate.

QUESTIONNAIRE, PART A

NOTE: Information furnished in this part of the Questionnaire will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing, if any, and will be entered in the hearing record, also available to the public.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TO BE MADE PUBLIC

1. Name (Include any former names you have used):

Mara Elizabeth Karlin

2. Position to which nominated:

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities

3. Date of nomination:

23 Apr 2021

4. Education (List names of secondary and higher education institution 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):

**Johns Hopkins University-Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)**

2009-2012 (dissertation defended September 2012; degree conferred May 2013)  
*Ph.D.*, Strategic Studies

**Johns Hopkins University-Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)**

2003-2005 (degree conferred May 2005)  
*M.A.*, Strategic Studies, Middle East Studies, and International Economics *with distinction*

**Catholic University**

summer course 2003

**Newcomb College, Tulane University**

1997-2001 (degree conferred May 2001)  
*B.A.*, Political Science and Jewish Studies, *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa

**The Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Study abroad semester Spring 2000

**Semester at Sea via The University of Pittsburgh**

Study abroad semester Fall 1999

**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

summer courses 1998

**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

summer courses 1997; 1999

5. **Employment record (List all jobs held since college, or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of the job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, show each change of military duty station as a separate period of employment):**

\*Note: the list below includes all paid full-time and part-time employment.

\*Note: from 2017-2021, my full-time employer was Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies (JHU-SAIS). My part-time employer was the Brookings Institution. I also was involved in some part-time work, as you'll see below, including Transition, campaign, some commissions, etc.

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**  
**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)** (February 2021-present)  
*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.*

**Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies (JHU-SAIS) Washington, D.C.**  
*Director of Strategic Studies (Jan 2019-Jan 2021. Associate Director 2017-18 and Acting Director 2018)*  
*Associate Professor of Practice (June 2017-Jan 2021)*  
*Executive Director of The Phillip Merrill Center for Strategic Studies (June 2017-Jan 2021)*  
*I am on a dissertation committee for a PhD student at Johns Hopkins University*

**The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.**  
*Nonresident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy (August 2017-Jan 2021)*

**Biden-Harris Transition Team, Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**  
*Defense Policy Lead (August 2020-Jan 2021)*

**Biden for President Campaign, Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**  
*Defense Policy Team, Strategy and Force Development sub-group lead, Diversity and Inclusion sub-group participant (April 2020-August 2020)*

**National Security Action, Washington, D.C.**  
*Defense Policy co-lead*  
*June 2019-July 2020*

**U.S. Congress via U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington D.C. (uncompensated)**  
**Syria Study Group Congressional Commission** (January 2019-October 2019)  
*Commission Member*

**U.S. Congress via U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington D.C.**  
**National Defense Strategy Congressional Commission** (January 2018-December 2018) *Commission Staff*

**SAIC/LEIDOS (2017-2021), Washington D.C.**  
*Intelligence Community Associate ("IC Associate") and Near East Mission Center Board Member*

**U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, VA (uncompensated)**  
**Marine Corps University Board of Visitors**  
*2019-2020*

**Semester at Sea (Colorado State University), global**  
January-May 2017

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**  
**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense-Strategy and Force Development* (October 2014-December 2016)

**Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington D.C.**  
**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*Principal Director-Strategy and Force Development/Strategy* (October 2012-October 2014)

**Obama for President Campaign Washington, D.C. (volunteer/uncompensated)**  
2012  
• *Middle East Team*

**Johns Hopkins University and JHU-SAIS (2007-2016) Washington, D.C.**  
*Adjunct professor*

**The RAND Corporation (February 2010-August 2012) Washington, D.C.**  
*Nonresident fellow*

6. **Government experience (List any advisory, consultative, honorary, and other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed in response to question 5, above):**

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy*  
Summer 2007-Feb 2009

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*Levant Director*  
February 2006-June 2007

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*South Asia Desk Officer*  
July 2005-February 2006

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP)**  
*Levant Desk Officer*  
May 2004-August 2004

7. **Business relationships (List all positions currently held as an officer,**

**director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, and of any educational or other institution):**

None

**8. Memberships (List all memberships and offices that you currently hold, as well as any memberships and offices you have previously held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations):**

Note: none of these are/were paid positions.

- Council on Foreign Relations: was term member (2014-2019) and am currently life member (since 2020). Role involves participating in conferences and events on national security and foreign policy issues.
- Camp Interlaken JCC: Committee member for overnight camp in Milwaukee, WI (2018-present). Role involves participating in quarterly discussions on the camp's plans and programming. Note: DoD SOCO has said it would be fine for me to continue in this role since there is no fiduciary responsibility.
- FP4America: was on Board of Advisors (2019-2021). Role involved participating in conferences and events on Democratic national security and foreign policy issues, though in practice I ultimately did not end up doing any events or conferences for the organization due to schedule issues.
- Leadership Council for Women in National Security: was on Board of Advisors (2019-2021). Offered advice on how to engage and provide opportunities for women in national security.
- Center for a New American Security Commissions: From 2017-2020, the Center for a New American Security (think tank) organized a variety of commissions in which I participated as a member. That role involved participating in discussions on the relevant topics. These commissions were: Digital Freedom Forum; Force of the Future; Future of U.S. Coercive Economic Statecraft, and, Securing America's Military Advantage.

**9. 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 a candidate/elected/appointed; the year(s) during which you were a candidate, or in which the election was held or the appointment was made; and the term of office (if applicable):**

None

**b. List all memberships and offices held in, and services rendered to, all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years:**

None

**c. Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity during the past 5 years. List each individual contribution (not the total amount contributed to the person or entity) over this period:**

Biden for President, 10/10/2020, \$250  
 ActBlue (Slotkin for Congress), 10/10/2020, \$100  
 Biden for President, 7/15/2020, \$250  
 Biden for President, 5/28/2020, \$500  
 Scott Cooper for Congress, 4/1/2019, \$250  
 ActBlue (Slotkin for Congress), 11/2/2018, \$100  
 Friends of Dan Feehan, 10/26/2018, \$150  
 ActBlue, 10/26/2018 (Friends of Dan Feehan), \$150  
 ActBlue, 9/24/2017 (Friends of Dan Feehan), \$100

**10. Honors and awards (List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition received for outstanding service or achievements):**

BA: Phi Beta Kappa and graduated *summa cum laude*  
 MA: graduated with *distinction*

Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies Faculty Merit Award, Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Semester at Sea "Most Inspirational Professor" Award, Selected by Semester at Sea students as Convocation speaker, Newcomb College Young Alumni Award, Newcomb College Outstanding Alumni Award, Secretary of Defense Outstanding Public Service Award, Secretary of Defense Group Award for Russia Strategy Work, Special Under Secretary Award for Strategic Choices & Management Review, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Award for Excellence, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Group Award for Defense Planning Guidance, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Group Award for Quadrennial Defense Review, Center for a New American Security Next Generation National Security Leader, *Diplomatic Courier's* Top 99 Foreign Policy Leaders Under 33. Recipient of Smith Richardson Foundation, Johns Hopkins University, International Studies Association, David M. Kagan, William and Marie-Daniele Zartman, Bradley Foundation, and Merrill Foundation fellowships. Recipient of 2001 Tulane University Ephraim Lisitzky Memorial Award and Kanter

award for undergraduate thesis.

11. **Published writings (List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials that you have written or for which you served as co-author or editor, including articles and blogs published on the internet):**

**Congressional Testimony as of March 2020**

- January 28, 2020: House Foreign Affairs Committee on Middle East
- February 6, 2019: House Foreign Affairs Committee on Middle East
- February 6, 2018: House Foreign Affairs Committee on Middle East
- November 30, 2017: Senate Armed Services Committee on Defense
- June 8, 2017: House Foreign Affairs Committee on Middle East
- April 25, 2012: House Foreign Affairs Committee on Middle East
- July 11, 2011: Tom Lantos Commission on Middle East

**Publications as of March 2020**

- Mara Karlin, *The Inheritance: America's Military After Two Decades of War*, (The Brookings Institution Press, 2021).
- Mara Karlin and Tamara Cofman Wittes, "How to Do More with Less in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs*, September 15, 2020.
- Mara E. Karlin and Melissa Dalton, "U.S. Posture in the Middle East," edited volume (The Brookings Institution, 2020).
- Mara E. Karlin and Jim Mitre, "Three Urgent Questions for the Air Force's New Chief of Staff," *Defense One*, July 28, 2020.
- Mara E. Karlin and Leah Dreyfuss, "Military Posture: China and the United States," chapter in edited volume (The Brookings Institution, 2021).
- Mara Karlin and James Golby, "The Case for Rethinking the Politicization of the Military," *Task and Purpose*, June 12, 2020.
- Mara E. Karlin and Alice Friend "Toward a Concept of Good Civilian Guidance" *War on the Rocks*, May 29, 2020.
- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "If the U.S. Navy Sinks Iranian Gunboats in the Persian Gulf, What Might the Outcome Be?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace-Middle East Center*, April 30, 2020.
- Mara Karlin, Alice Friend, and Loren DeJonge Schulman, "Why Did the Pentagon Ever Give Trump the Option of Killing Soleimani?", *The Washington Post*, January 10, 2020.
- Mara Karlin, "Three Key Insights for U.S. Policy in Light of Recent Escalation with Iran," *The Brookings Institution*, January 29, 2020.
- Mara Karlin, "Civilian Oversight Inside the Pentagon: Who Does It and How?", edited volume (Oxford University Press, 2020).

- Mara Karlin, "On Syria, Washington Cannot Simply Throw Up Its Hands," The Brookings Institution, September 24, 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin and Leah Dreyfuss, "All that Xi Wants: China Attempts to Ace Bases Overseas," The Brookings Institution, September 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin, Loren DeJonge Schulman, and Alice Hunt Friend, "Two Cheers for Esper's Plan to Reassert Civilian Control of the Pentagon," *Defense One*, September 9, 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin and John E. McLaughlin, "How to Name This Era in US Foreign Policy?," Global Brief, Summer/Fall 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "By Accepting Russian S-400s, Has Turkey Taken a Strategic Decision to Distance Itself From the NATO Alliance?" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace-Middle East Center, June 25, 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin and Tamara Cofman Wittes, "Commitment Issues: Where Should the U.S. Withdrawal from the Middle East Stop," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin and Tamara Cofman Wittes, "America's Middle East Purgatory: The Case for Doing Less," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "Empowered Decentralization: A City-based Strategy For Rebuilding Libya," The Brookings Institution, February 11, 2019.
- Mara E. Karlin, *Building Militaries in Fragile States: Challenges for the United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press: 2018).
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Implications Of Artificial Intelligence For National Security Strategy," The Brookings Institution, November 1, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Christopher Skaluba, "What Has Become Clear To You? Reflections On Assessing The National Defense Strategy," *War on the Rocks*, October 16, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Art of Creating Power: Freedman on Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Alice Hunt Friend, "Military Worship Hurts U.S. Democracy," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, September 21, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Military Superiority: More Than Meets The Eye," *War on the Rocks*, June 28, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Melissa G. Dalton, "Toward A Smaller, Smarter Force Posture in the Middle East," *Defense One*, August 26, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Michael S. Chase, "Navigating Asia's Stormy Seas: Regional Perspectives on US-China Competition," *The Diplomat*, August 7, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "Policy Roundtable: The Pursuit of Military Superiority," *Texas National Security Review*, June 26, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Before You Help a Fragile State's Military, Ask These Uncomfortable Questions," *Defense One*, June 21, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "Roundtable 10-14 on The Future of War: A History," International Security Studies Forum (ISSF), May 18, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Frances Z. Brown, "Friends With Benefits: What the Reliance on Local Partners Means for U.S. Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, May 8, 2018.

- Mara E. Karlin, et al, "Around the Halls: Brookings experts discuss the implications of President Trump's Iran nuclear deal announcement," The Brookings Institution, May 8, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Syria's Civil War Is Far From Over," The Brookings Institution, March 23, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Israel's Coming War With Hezbollah: A New Conflict May Be Inevitable," *Foreign Affairs*, February 21, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "After 7 Years Of War, Assad Has Won In Syria. What's Next For Washington?" The Brookings Institution, February 13, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "How to Read the 2018 National Defense Strategy," The Brookings Institution, January 21, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Melissa G. Dalton, "How Should the Pentagon Reshape Its Mideast Posture? Four Indicators to Watch," *Defense One*, January 20, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and James Golby, "Why 'Best Military Advice' is Bad for the Military—and Worse for Civilians," *Orbis*, January 8, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin and Paula Thornhill, "The Chairman The Pentagon Needs," *War on the Rocks*, January 5, 2018.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Why Military Assistance Programs Disappoint: Minor Tools Can't Solve Major Problems," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Recommendations For Future National Defense Strategy," The Brookings Institution, December 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Bridging America's Civil-Military Gap — At Sea," *Defense One*, November 11, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin and Ilan Goldenberg, "Ending the Iran Deal Is an Invitation to War," *The Atlantic*, October 10, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin and Jon B. Alterman, "As Independence Vote Nears, Iraqi Kurds Play a Risky Game of Chicken," *Defense One*, August 29, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin and Melissa G. Dalton, "It's Long Past Time to Rethink US Military Posture in the Gulf," *Defense One*, August 2, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin and Christopher Skaluba, "Strategic Guidance For Countering The Proliferation Of Strategic Guidance," *War on the Rocks*, July 20, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin, "You Get Deterrence, And You Get Deterrence, Everybody Gets Deterrence!" *War on the Rocks*, May 5, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin and Loren DeJonge Schulman, "Keeping Up Civ-Mil Relations," *War on the Rocks*, April 19, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin, Loren DeJonge Shulman, and Shawn Brimley, "For An Audience of One: Re-booting Agenda SecDef," *War on the Rocks*, March 21, 2017.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Chapter 5: Tunisia," in *Understanding the Implications of the 'Arab Uprisings' and U.S. Military Cooperation*, ed. Jennifer Moroney and Ali Nader (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, July 2014).
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Lebanese Army: A National Institution in a Divided Society (Review)," *The Review of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (Summer 2012).

- Mara E. Karlin and Christopher Clary, "The Pak-Saudi Nuke, and How to Stop It," *The American Interest*, VII, no. 6 (July/August 2012): 24-31.
- Mara E. Karlin and Christopher Clary, "Saudi Arabia's Reform Gamble," *Survival* 53, no. 5 (October-November 2011): 15-20.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Role of Armed Forces in Post-Conflict Sri Lanka: Lessons Learned from a Global Perspective," in *Challenges of Post-Conflict Sri Lanka* (Ratmalana, Sri Lanka: General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University Press, 2011), 62-73.
- Mara E. Karlin and Andrew J. Tabler, "Washington Should Plan for a Post-Assad Syria," *CNN.com*, May 26, 2011. (Reprint)
- Mara E. Karlin and Andrew J. Tabler, "Obama's Push-Pull Strategy: How Washington Should Plan for a Post-Assad Syria," *Foreign Affairs*, May 25, 2011.
- Mara E. Karlin and Eric S. Edelman, "Fool Me Twice: How the United States Lost Lebanon—Again," *World Affairs*, May/June 2011.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Druze Factor," *Foreign Affairs*, February 16, 2011.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Why the U.S. Needs an Envoy in Syria," *The Daily Star* (Lebanon), January 26, 2011. (Reprint)
- Mara E. Karlin, "Why the US Needs an Ambassador in Damascus," *Bitterlemons-International*, January 20, 2011.
- Mara E. Karlin and Caitlin Talmadge, "Under the Radar Rapprochement: Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, June 24, 2010.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Lebanon's Scud Row: Why Hezbollah Will Stay Armed and Dangerous," *Foreign Affairs*, May 13, 2010.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Where is Beirut's cogent defense plan?" *The Daily Star* (Lebanon), March 30, 2010.
- Mara E. Karlin and Tony Badran, "The Pretense of Reform," *The Washington Times*, October 23, 2009.
- Mara E. Karlin, "Will Syria Fold?" *Foreign Policy Magazine*, August 13, 2009.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Day After—Don't Give Up on Lebanon," *Middle East Times*, June 6, 2009.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Syrian and Lebanese tracks should be a priority," *The Daily Star* (Lebanon), May 20, 2009. (Reprint)
- Mara E. Karlin, "Syria-Lebanon First," *Bitterlemons-International*, May 14, 2009.
- Christopher Clary and Mara E. Karlin, "A Fine Balance: India and Middle East Diplomacy," *Indian Express* (India), May 9, 2009.
- Mara E. Karlin, "A Strong Lebanese Army is Good for Israel," *Haaretz* (Israel), March 22, 2009.
- Mara E. Karlin, "The Terrorist Rolodex: How Islamists Join Terrorist Organizations and Coalesce (Review)," *SAIS Review* 24, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2004): 201-2.
- As a college student, I studied overseas and wrote about my experiences in the local Jewish community newspaper (the Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle), but I don't have copies anymore nor are there any links available online.

#### Podcasts as of March 2020

- Mara Karlin and BG Scott Jackson, "The Practice and Politics of Irregular Warfare," The Irregular Warfare Podcast, November 2020.
- Mara Karlin, "What is a Legacy?," Center for Strategic and International Studies Thank You For Your Service Podcast, July 10, 2020.
- Mara Karlin, Nora Bensahel, Loren DeJonge Schulman, and Paula Thornhill, "A Military Straining Against Civilian Control?," War on the Rocks Podcast, February 24, 2020.
- Mara Karlin, Dana Stroul, and Kim Kagan, "Bombshell Live at NatSecGirlSquad," War on the Rocks Bombshell Podcast, December 17, 2019.
- Mara Karlin, Mark Cancian, and Chris Preble, "Military Implications of Great Power Competition," Center for Strategic and International Studies Defense 360 Podcast, December 3, 2019.
- Mara Karlin and Leah Dreyfuss, "Global China's Plan for Overseas Bases," The Brookings Institution Cafeteria Podcast, October 4, 2019.
- Mara Karlin, Michael Wahid Hanna, and Thanassis Cambanis "Downgrading America's Commitments in the Middle East?," The Century Foundation Podcast, August 13, 2019.
- Mara Karlin, "Building Militaries in Fragile States," Modern War Institute Podcast, February 21, 2019.
- Mara Karlin, Dan Byman, and Tamara Cofman Wittes, "Exiting Syria and the Rest of the Iceberg," The Brookings Institution Lawfare Podcast, December 22, 2018.
- Mara Karlin and Melissa Dalton, "Middle East Force Posture," Defense One Podcast, September 21, 2018.
- Mara Karlin, "National Defense Strategy Report," Council on Foreign Relations President's Inbox Podcast, March 22, 2018.
- Mara Karlin, "America's Track Record in Building Foreign Militaries," The Brookings Institution Cafeteria Podcast, February 23, 2018.
- Mara Karlin, "Women in National Security," Center for a New American Security Podcast on National Security Women, Nov 23, 2017.
- Mara Karlin, "Gutter? Catahr? Let's Call the Whole Thing Off," War on the Rocks Bombshell Podcast, June 21, 2017.

12. **Speeches (Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years—of which you have copies—in which you addressed matters relevant to the position to which you have been nominated).**

To the best of my recollection, included below:

Note: I didn't include any television or radio appearances. These are generally panels that I was on. I only included events with public videos available online since I do

not have the notes from any panels I was on. There were a number of panels for places like Council on Foreign Relations, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, among others (e.g., in 2019 I did a panel at Stanford that was open to the public but do not have my notes: <https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/events/americas-middle-east-purgatory-case-doing-less>)

Note: I delivered a number of book talks 2018-2020. A brief list follows:

Book talks at American University of Beirut, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace-Beirut Center, Lebanese Armed Forces Command and General Staff College, La Maison du Futur (Beirut), Lebanese Armed Forces Strategic Studies Institute, Tulane University, Brookings Institution, MIT, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, the RAND Corporation, Council on Foreign Relations, Boston University, Joint Special Operations University, West Point, OSD Historian's Office. (Only the last three are online—listed below—but it was largely the same talk)

To the best of my recollection, included below are public events Spring 2016-Spring 2021:

**The Brookings Institution:**

EU Defense Washington Forum

July 9, 2021

<https://www.brookings.edu/events/webinar-eu-defense-washington-forum/>

The Future of High-Tech Warfare

May 26, 2020

<https://www.brookings.edu/events/webinar-the-future-of-high-tech-warfare/>

Assessing the Readiness of the U.S. Military

Nov 2, 2018

<https://www.brookings.edu/events/assessing-the-readiness-of-the-u-s-military/>

Thinking the Unthinkable: War on the Korean Peninsula

Mar 13, 2018

<https://www.brookings.edu/events/thinking-the-unthinkable-war-on-the-korean-peninsula/>

The Changing Role of America's Military: A Debate

Dec 11, 2017

<https://www.brookings.edu/events/the-changing-role-of-americas-military-a-debate/>

Middle East Challenges

October 5, 2017

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/10/13/experts-discuss-the-challenges-and-potential-solutions-ahead-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa/>

**Johns Hopkins University-SAIS:**

Conference on Civil-Military Relations  
February 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrXCJbMs83A>

**Book talks:**

Building Militaries in Fragile States  
Modern War Institute at West Point  
December 2, 2019

<https://mwi.usma.edu/mwi-video-building-militaries-fragile-states-dr-mara-karlin/>

Building Militaries in Fragile States  
Joint Special Operations University  
July 27, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoHRZB3cLak>

Building Militaries in Fragile States  
OSD Historical Office Speakers Series  
May 22, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHYjsgKld8U>

**Center for a New American Security**

Beyond ISIS: What's Next for the U.S. in Syria and the Middle East  
April 29, 2019

<https://www.cnas.org/events/beyond-isis-whats-next-for-the-u-s-in-syria-and-the-middle-east>

Evolving the Future Force  
Mar 29, 2018

<https://www.cnas.org/events/evolving-the-future-force>

**Center for Strategic and International Studies**

Future Strategy Forum: COVID-19 and the Military  
June 4, 2020

<https://www.csis.org/events/online-event-future-strategy-forum-covid-19-and-military>

Future Strategy Forum: Solutions: Integrating the Toolkit  
May 18, 2018

<https://www.csis.org/events/future-force>

Oversight and Accountability in U.S. Security Sector Assistance: Seeking Return on

**Investment**

February 12, 2018

<https://www.csis.org/events/oversight-and-accountability-us-security-sector-assistance-seeking-return-investment>

**Integrating Strike and Defense**

June 27, 2017

<https://www.csis.org/events/integrating-strike-and-defense>

**Atlantic Council**

Counting the Cost: Avoiding the Next War Between Israel and Hizballah

May 13, 2020

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/event/report-launch-counting-the-cost-the-next-war-between-israel-and-hezbollah/>

**International Institute for Strategic Studies**

The Future of US Policy in the Middle East

Oct 24, 2018

<https://www.iiss.org/events/2018/10/future-us-policy-middle-east>

**Middle East Institute**

Reevaluating U.S. Security Assistance to the Middle East

Nov 6, 2019

<https://www.mei.edu/multimedia/video/reevaluating-us-security-assistance-middle-east>

**Defense One**

What's Next? The Future of Syria, ISIS, and Kurds

Nov 7, 2019

<https://www.defenseone.com/feature/outlook-2020/>

**Defense Issues**

October 4, 2018

[https://fr-fr.facebook.com/DefenseOne/videos/live-now-defense-one-celebrates-its-fifth-anniversary-with-a-discussion-features/2194317984160096/?so=\\_permalink&rv=\\_related\\_videos](https://fr-fr.facebook.com/DefenseOne/videos/live-now-defense-one-celebrates-its-fifth-anniversary-with-a-discussion-features/2194317984160096/?so=_permalink&rv=_related_videos)

**Modern War Institute at West Point**

May 30, 2018

Civilian Oversight and the Military

<https://mwi.usma.edu/mwi-video-little-civilian-oversight-military/>

**Aspen Security Forum**

The Case for American Alliances?

July 20, 2019

<https://www.aspensecurityforum.org/asf-video-library>

**COMMITMENTS IN FURTHERANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT**

**NOTE:** In order to exercise their legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress timely receive testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch. A simple “yes” or “no” response is appropriate.

13. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate Committees of Congress?

Yes

14. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so timely?

Yes

15. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?

Yes

16. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?

Yes

17. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their

oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?

Yes

18. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?

Yes

19. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?

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 Parts A and B of the foregoing Senate Armed Services Committee Questionnaire, and that the information provided therein and in any document appended thereto, is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete.



This 3rd day of June, 2021

[The nomination of Dr. Mara E. Karlin was reported to the Senate by Chairman Reed on July 27, 2021, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on August 9, 2021.]

[Prepared questions submitted to Mr. Michael L. Connor by Chairman Reed prior to the hearing with answers supplied follow:]

## QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

## DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

*Question.* What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the (ASA(CW))?

*Answer.* The Army Civil Works program is extremely complex and diverse; and includes activities involving navigable waterways, flood risk management, ecosystem restoration, and hydropower. If confirmed, I understand that I will be the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army for the Civil Works program. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) establishes the strategic direction for the program and has primary responsibility for the oversight of the Army Civil Works program functions. I understand that the ASA(CW) provides policy direction and budgetary oversight to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the execution of the Civil Works program and coordinates with senior leadership of other federal agencies with related missions.

*Question.* What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform these duties?

*Answer.* I was formerly the Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation (2009–2017). In those roles, I gained extensive experience in directing strategy and managing a large federal water resources agency responsible for significant infrastructure assets associated with water resource and energy development. As Deputy Secretary, I was the Chief Operating Officer at Interior, responsible for approximately 70,000 employees and an annual budget in excess of \$13 billion. At Reclamation, I managed approximately 6,000 employees and an annual budget in excess of \$1 billion. These positions also provided extensive experience in working directly with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). At Reclamation, I worked closely with USACE in developing climate resilience strategies, coordinating flood control and water management operations in numerous river basins, engaging in river restoration projects, and collaborating on

dam safety risk management efforts. As Deputy Secretary, I worked with USACE in its regulatory role pursuant to the Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act. As Counsel to the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I worked on a number of legislative initiatives related to USACE authorities that were enacted into law in annual appropriations bills and biennial Water Resources Development Acts. Finally, I am a recognized national expert in water resources and Federal Indian law with significant experience in all major federal environmental laws that affect USACE operations and facilities. In sum, my extensive Federal experience coupled with other work and my educational background as both an engineer and lawyer, provide a unique set of qualifications to perform the duties of the ASA(CW).

*Question.* Do you believe that there are actions you need to take, if confirmed, to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the ASA(CW)?

*Answer.* I believe my background and experience have prepared me well for the position of ASA(CW). To effectively perform these duties, I will need to immerse myself in the details associated with the Corps projects, programs, and budgets, as well as engage closely with headquarters and field leadership to better understand the details and issues associated with those projects, programs, and budgets. I will also have to make myself available to the constituencies outside government who rely on, and consistently interact with USACE in its various roles.

*Question.* If confirmed, what additional duties and functions would you recommend the do Secretary of the Army prescribe for you?

*Answer.* At this time, I do not have enough information to identify specific additional duties or functions that I would recommend that Secretary Wormuth prescribe for me, if confirmed. However, I will provide unwavering support to the Secretary for the priorities she sets for the Army, including those that apply to the Civil Works program.

#### MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

*Question.* In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next ASA(CW)?

*Answer.* In my view, the major challenges that will confront the next ASA(CW) involve: greater demands on our Nation's water supply, an aging water resources infrastructure, adequacy of flood and coastal storm protection against extreme weather events, resource constraints, and ensuring appropriate environmental protections as part of addressing those challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to addressing these challenges with the Administration, the Congress, and the Army's cost-sharing partners.

*Question.* If confirmed, what plans, management actions, and timelines would you have for addressing these challenges?

*Answer.* The additional demands on our nation's water resources are exacerbated by the challenges of an aging water resources infrastructure. The Corps must consider the impacts of climate change so that improvements to this infrastructure will not only meet the needs of today, but also be ready for tomorrow. This will require a collaborative approach with key partners, continued investments in science and technology, and an efficient use of available funding. In working to address these issues, we must also address continued resource constraints through opportunities that allow the Corps to leverage non-traditional funding mechanisms, like public-private partnerships. If confirmed, I will immediately engage with Congress and Federal, state, tribal, and non-governmental partners to understand what the challenges and potential solutions look like at all levels and from all perspectives. Success will be highly dependent on a collaborative approach and, if confirmed, I will make such an approach a priority.

*Question.* If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish in terms of issues that must be addressed by the ASA(CW)?

*Answer.* In order to address the challenges in the Army's Civil Works Program, I believe it is very important to: (1) assess the most significant risks to Corps mission areas; (2) invest in research and development and related actions to better understand and address those risks; (3) maintain a strong and talented workforce; (4) strengthen relationships and improve collaboration both inside and outside of government; and (5) support and build on the trust between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, the Administration, and Congress. If confirmed, building and strengthening those relationships will be an early priority for me. Additionally, I will work closely with the Corps to strengthen the performance and improve the delivery of the Nation's Civil Works program while making schedule and cost commitments.

## RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS

*Question.* What are your views on the state of the relationship between the ASA(CW) and the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?

*Answer.* I currently do not have enough information to offer my view of the current state of the relationship between the ASA(CW) and Congress. However, having worked for an extended time as committee staff in the U.S. Senate, if confirmed, I intend that this relationship will be strong, collaborative, and productive. The Army's Civil Works mission has a broad scope and congressional oversight is shared among multiple House and Senate committees, to include the Senate Armed Services Committee. If confirmed, I commit to providing the oversight committees with the information they need to conduct proper oversight of this important mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and the ASA(CW)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the Army engages in a transparent and cooperative relationship with Congress concerning all Civil Works efforts. I will be proactive in providing information to Congress regarding Civil Works policy matters of interest. I will be responsive to congressional inquiries and will make myself, senior leaders on my staff, and entities within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, available to answer questions quickly and thoroughly. If confirmed, establishing and maintaining a strong relationship with Congress will be one of my top priorities.

*Question.* What is your view of the role of both the civilian and military leadership of the Corps in developing goals for Corps' programs and presenting these goals to Congress?

*Answer.* The interwoven roles of the civilian and military leadership of the Corps are longstanding and invaluable to the Corps' mission and to the Nation. The leadership of the Corps provides strategic direction for the Army's numerous critical military and civil works missions. The Army's civilian appointees advance the policy direction of the Executive Branch's elected leadership, in cooperation with trained senior military leaders and civilian career executives who provide expert advice and skilled execution to accomplish the established goals. I understand the importance of a constructive and supportive relationship between civilian appointees, military leadership, and career executives and employees. If confirmed, I commit to providing the civilian leadership necessary to execute the Administration's strategic policy goals and to advance the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project execution to provide greater contributions and value to the Nation.

*Question.* If confirmed, what procedures would you follow regarding consultation with Congress prior to issuing any decision or announcement that could affect the Corps execution of its civil works or environmental functions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will follow the established regulations and procedures, and look to improve upon the procedures as appropriate, to ensure efficient and effective consultation with Congress on decisions that may affect the Corps' execution of its civil works or environmental functions. This process will include understanding and being attentive to significant issues and/or projects that are of a priority concern to Congress.

## CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT OF THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

*Question.* What is your view of the relative authority of the U.S. Army Chief of Engineers, the ASA(CW), the Secretary of the Army, the Army Chief of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense with regard to the civil works function of the Army Corps of Engineers?

*Answer.* I view the relative authority of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, and the Chief of Engineers, as it relates to the Civil Works functions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as follows:

*Question.* Secretary of Defense.

*Answer.* Under 10 U.S.C. §113, the Secretary of Defense is the Cabinet-level assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense. Subject to the direction of the President, Title 10 of the U.S. Code, and Section 2 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. §3002), the Secretary of Defense has full authority, direction and control over all elements of the Defense Department. He exercises power over the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through the Secretary of the Army, whose responsibility for and authority over all affairs of the Army is subject to the Secretary of Defense's authority, direction, and control.

*Question.* The Secretary of the Army.

*Answer.* Under 10 U.S.C. §7013, the Secretary of the Army is the head of the Department of the Army. Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Sec-

retary of Defense and, subject to the provisions of Chapter 6 of Title 10, the Secretary of the Army is responsible for, and has the authority necessary to conduct, all affairs of the Department of the Army. As further authorized by 10 U.S.C. §7013, the Secretary of the Army may assign such of her functions, powers and duties as she considers appropriate to the Under Secretary of the Army, as well as the Assistant Secretaries of the Army, and require officers of the Army to report to these officials on any matter.

*Question.* The Chief of Staff of the Army

Answer. As provided by 10 U.S.C. §7033, the Chief of Staff of the Army is the senior military advisor to the Secretary of the Army and is the Army's senior military officer. The Chief of Staff of the Army is directly responsible to, and performs his duties under the authority, direction, and control of, the Secretary of the Army. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of Staff of the Army also performs duties prescribed by law under 10 U.S.C. §151.

*Question.* The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

Answer. As provided by 10 U.S.C. §7016, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works is principally responsible for the overall supervision of the functions of the Army relating to programs for conservation and development of the national water resources (commonly known as the Army Civil Works program), including flood damage reduction, river and harbor navigation, environmental restoration and protection, water supply, shore protection, hydroelectric power, recreation, and related purposes. The critical national interests served by the Civil Works program require that the Assistant Secretary and Chief of Engineers develop a close, professional relationship built on open and frequent communication, active cooperation, and mutual trust and respect.

*Question.* The Chief of Engineers.

Answer. The Chief of Engineers advises the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works on Civil Works functions of the Army, including those relating to the conservation and development of water resources and the support for others program and, as Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, executes the Civil Works program under the supervision of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. The Chief of Engineers is a member of the Army staff (10 U.S.C. §7031) and is one of four statutory Army chiefs of branches under 10 U.S.C. §7036. The Chief of Engineers is the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army and other principal Army Headquarters officials for the formulation of policy related to engineering, construction, and real property activities for the Department. As a member of the Army Staff, the Chief of Engineers reports on military matters to the Chief of Staff, through the Vice Chief of Staff. In the area of installation activities, the Chief of Engineers advises the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Installations & Environment), who has principal responsibility for all Army matters related to installations and the environment.

*Question.* If confirmed, what fundamental changes would you make in the Corps' execution of both its operational and institutional functions? Please explain your answer.

Answer. I have no immediate plans to make fundamental changes to the Corps operational and institutional functions. I believe the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is one of the Nation's best public design, planning, and construction agencies. If confirmed, I intend to evaluate the mission delivery timelines, policies and procedures, delegations of authority, internal and external relationships, and talent management processes to see what, if any, changes would improve the operational and institutional functions. I also intend to seek opportunities for innovation that will enhance the execution of planning, design, construction, and operation and maintenance efforts to meet today's challenges and those on the horizon. I believe innovation can be found using enhanced research and development methods and improved approval processes that will ultimately reduce the time required to deliver quality projects to the Nation safely, on schedule, and within budget.

#### INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

*Question.* In November 2000, the Army Inspector General found that three Army Corps of Engineers The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a long history cost overruns and schedule delays on its major projects.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to ensure that projects are appropriately justified by meaningful and accurate cost-benefit analysis?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take the steps necessary to ensure that any U.S. Army Corps of Engineers analysis is fundamentally sound, unbiased, and transparent. To ensure that projects are fully justified, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers must complete a defensible technical and environmental analysis in a timely and

cost-effective manner. Additionally, I will consult with the experts within the agency to identify other ways to ensure all Corps projects are appropriately and lawfully justified.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to enhance the likelihood that Corps-managed projects will be completed on time and on budget?

*Answer.* I believe that it is important to deliver on commitments, including both schedule and cost commitments. If confirmed, I will work to maintain and enhance the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' ability to deliver quality projects safely, on time and within budget, a matter of growing importance given the backlog of needed projects and growing reliance on the Corps in many areas. I plan to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other Federal agencies who participate in program and project delivery to strengthen performance in this area. I am committed to developing programming policies and supporting the use of innovative tools/methods that will enhance the efficient use of program funding in order to deliver quality projects on time and within budget.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to hold accountable officers and employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who fail to properly manage the projects entrusted to them?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Chief of Engineers to ensure that appropriate management controls are in place to promote accountability in the execution of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works missions. My expectation is that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will faithfully execute the missions entrusted to it and to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. I will expect that any shortfalls be promptly reported and corrective actions implemented at appropriate levels. In so doing, I would expect the Corps document lessons learned and continuously develop and update best practices to further improve future mission delivery. In the event that issues are identified that warrant personnel administrative action, I will work with the Chief of Engineers to ensure that those responsible are held appropriately accountable.

#### NAVIGATION

*Question.* The Army Corps of Engineers has built and maintains an intra-coastal and inland network of commercial navigation channels, and locks and dams for navigation, which comprise integral parts of the nation's critical infrastructure. The Corps also maintains 300 commercial harbors, through which pass 2 billion tons of cargo a year, and more than 600 smaller harbors. Significant amounts of heavy equipment and supplies bound for potential overseas military operations move by ship through ports maintained by the civil works program.

In your view, what are the greatest challenges facing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with respect to the execution of its navigation mission?

*Answer.* I am aware that one of the greatest challenges with the execution of the Army's Civil Works navigation mission is the maintenance and modernization of this infrastructure. Providing a safe, reliable, efficient, and effective waterborne transportation system is critical to the Nation's economic well-being and global competitiveness. Further, I am aware also that the dredging mission for inland waterways and coastal channels faces the continual challenges of optimizing dredge schedules to execute the growing requirements and ensuring proper management of dredged material to maximize follow-on beneficial use.

*Question.* If confirmed, are there aspects of this mission that you would recommend be transferred from the Department of the Army? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* At this time, I am not aware of any specific aspects of the navigation mission that should be transferred from Department of Army. Navigation is an integral part of the water resources mission and it was one of the earliest missions of the Corps. The waterborne transportation system maintained by the Corps continues to be vital to the Nation generally and to our national defense more specifically. If confirmed, however, I will closely review all aspects of the Army's Civil Works program and look for ways to improve the execution of the navigation mission.

*Question.* In your view, how can the Corps best respond to environmental concerns in carrying out its navigation mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with industry stakeholders as well as federal, state, local and tribal authorities to fully understand the environmental concerns related to the navigation mission. I believe that opportunities exist for non-federal sponsors and the Corps to partner with tribal, state, and federal resource agencies to examine ways to address specific concerns. I intend to coordinate with other agency stakeholders to reduce hurdles to efficient execution of the navigation mission.

sion, while providing an environmentally sustainable waterborne transportation system.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL MISSION

*Question.* The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for environmental restoration projects at Department of Defense Formerly Used Defense Sites and also at Department of Energy Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program. Under the Department of Energy program, the Corps cleans up former Manhattan Project and Atomic Energy Commission sites, making use of expertise gained in cleaning up former military sites and civilian hazardous waste sites under the Environmental Protection Agency "Superfund" program.

What do you view as the greatest challenges facing both the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with respect to environmental concerns and the execution of its environmental restoration mission?

*Answer.* I assess that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers faces the challenge of balancing available funding, increased technological standards for restoration, emerging issues related to chemicals of environmental concern, as well as stakeholder expectations. Of course, the effects of climate change and the need to consider resiliency issues related to many communities are also factors adding to the challenges. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue applying sound science and management practices that will increase remediation efficiency and meet the commitments made to stakeholders. I also intend to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide sustainable solutions to mitigate climate change impacts and address emerging chemicals of environmental concern as they relate to on-going Civil Works or Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) projects.

*Question.* If confirmed, are there aspects of this mission that you would recommend be transferred from the Department of the Army? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* At this time, I believe that the Army is the most appropriate agency to perform the environmental remediation mission in support of the Civil Works responsibilities. I am aware that the President's FY 2022 Budget Request includes a proposal to restructure this program such that the Department of Energy's Office of Legacy Management would assume responsibility for the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) budget and would fund the Corps to continue on-the-ground execution of the program. While significant progress has been made in FUSRAP, the remaining sites are more complex, requiring larger and more consistent budgets and this would streamline the process of transferring sites from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers after cleanup activities are complete, back to the Department of Energy's Office of Legacy Management for long-term surveillance and maintenance.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your vision for improving this aspect of the Corps mission?

*Answer.* I would like to see the Corps continue its strong performance in the Army's environmental remediation mission and continue to deliver results with the same technical competency and integrity as it supports the Civil Works program. I would also like to see a continued focus on applying science, technical innovation, and employing transparency and collaboration with its stakeholders in all environmental restoration and remediation operations. The Corps must increase transparency and its reliance on science and technology in its sustainability activities, particularly those that focus on facility energy efficiency, renewable energy, water efficiency, sustainable acquisition and procurement, and greenhouse gas reductions in support of reducing climate change impacts.

*Question.* If confirmed, what changes might you recommend to address the Corps' environmental funding requirements?

*Answer.* At this time, I am not aware of specific changes that I would recommend regarding the Corps' environmental funding in support of the Civil Works program. However, the Army has an important environmental remediation mission and, if confirmed, I would make it a priority to focus on the key priorities, including to seek additional funding where necessary to ensure the effective execution of the Corps' environmental mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, specifically what steps would you take to preserve the integrity of the Corps environmental and civil works mission?

*Answer.* I believe that the Corps' environmental and civil works missions are essential to the Nation. Preserving their integrity requires maintaining the Corps' technical expertise, a continuing evaluation of the processes by which it carries out those missions, and a commitment to integrate science and technology to under-

stand, account for, and build resilience to the factors affecting the missions. I am committed to taking the necessary appropriate steps to preserve the integrity of the environmental and civil works missions.

*Question.* In your view, could the regulatory functions presently executed by the Corps be performed more effectively or efficiently by other government departments or agencies, including non-defense entities?

*Answer.* Based on the information I currently have, I believe that the Army is the most appropriate agency to perform its current regulatory functions. I understand that the Corps' execution of the Regulatory Program has evolved over the years to appropriately implement requirements under environmental laws. Most important, I understand that the Corps maintains a solid base of experience and expertise to best execute these regulatory functions. Corps permit decisions must properly integrate environmental reviews, appropriately balance conservation and the use of the Nation's important resources, and must come from a process rooted in sound science. I believe that the Corps must continue to refine its processes to ensure that decisions are transparent, equitable, supported by sound science, made in a timely manner, and ultimately, defensible under the law.

The Corps is also responsible for Environmental and Ecosystem Restoration as part of its civil works mission. There are many large ecosystem restoration projects around the nation, including the Everglades, Western river systems, Coastal Louisiana, and the Great Lakes.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you balance the Corps' work between ecosystem restoration and traditional navigation?

*Answer.* I recognize the importance of the Corps' work in ecosystem restoration and traditional navigation. If confirmed, I will look for ways to balance this work in a manner ensuring that both programs maintain their primary roles in the Corps' mission. In particular, there may be opportunities where the two missions complement each other, for example, when dredged material from navigation channels can be used for ecosystem restoration projects.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the effectiveness and propriety of the Corps' approach and prioritization of river restoration projects?

*Answer.* I assess that the Corps is uniquely suited to implement large-scale restoration of the nation's river systems and that it has successfully carried out many creative restoration projects, including fish passage at large dams and floodplain restoration. If confirmed, I will be committed to working with the Corps to further develop strategies to ensure an effective and appropriate approach to restoration projects that support ecosystem health, economic development, and resilient communities along our rivers. As part of that strategy, it will also be important to effectively prioritize this mission and continue to evaluate and integrate native-based solutions and engineering into the Corps restoration and flood protection strategies.

#### STATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

*Question.* In the past, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has not always been required to meet state water quality standards in constructing and operating its water resources projects.

Do you believe that the Corps should be required to meet state water quality standards in constructing and operating Corps projects? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should meet state water quality standards (or tribal, as appropriate) as required by law and under the Corps authorities. However, I am aware that there may be, in rare cases, projects where meeting the water quality requirements of one state or jurisdiction may impede the Corps' ability to carry out a Congressionally-authorized project, particularly if more than one state jurisdiction is involved. These rare situations require good-faith negotiations with the state(s) involved. If confirmed, I will ensure the Corps follows state water quality standards as required.

#### FUNDING

*Question.* The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a significant backlog of operation and maintenance work and construction work throughout the country. This backlog has very real economic, environmental, and safety implications.

If confirmed, how would you plan to address the significant backlog of work?

*Answer.* I understand that current requirements significantly outpace available resources. Working with Congress, with the Administration, and within the Army, I commit, if confirmed, to explore opportunities to leverage non-traditional funding mechanisms where they make sense to reduce the backlog, including the use of public-private partnerships. For the operations and maintenance backlog, I will proactively manage and communicate risk as we sustain the portfolio of federally

managed projects. As many projects in the Civil Works portfolio are well into their life-cycle and require increased levels of repair and renewal, I will ensure priorities are set to buy-down risk in a way which can be articulated to stakeholders and Congress. Finally, I will work with the Chief of Engineers to continue to innovate and improve the manner in which the Corps evaluates, designs, and conducts environmental reviews for projects.

*Question.* What factors would you consider in determining which backlogged projects should be prioritized? Please explain your answer.

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that we make the best use of every dollar invested and that funding is applied to the highest-performing projects. For the portfolio of federal managed projects, risk tools are available for each individual business line or benefit stream. These risk tools allow managers to make explicit trade-offs in the planned work that makes up the backlog. While I will need to continue to assess how best to prioritize backlogged projects, I commit to pursuing work based on a “first-things-first” approach that can be articulated to stakeholders in terms of risk management and Administration priorities.

*Question.* What are your views on the potential for using the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, to address the Corps’ project backlog?

Answer. I believe that the effective employment of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund can help us address the backlog in operations & maintenance and in construction, and is therefore an important tool. I understand that the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund reimburses 100% of eligible Civil Works Operation & Maintenance (O&M) expenditures for coastal harbors and channels and inland harbors (does not include inland and intra-coastal fuel-taxed waterways) and 100% of the Federal share of construction costs for coastal harbor and channel and inland harbor dredged material placement facilities, beneficial use projects, and sand mitigation projects. With continued appropriations for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, there is great potential to further reduce project backlogs.

*Question.* What are your views on the potential for using the Inland Waterways Trust fund to address the Corps’ backlog?

Answer. I understand that the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 changed the cost sharing for inland waterway navigation projects receiving a construction appropriation during any of the fiscal years 2021 through 2031 so that 65% of the cost of the project shall be paid from the General Treasury and 35% of the cost of the project shall be paid from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. I believe that this change to the Inland Waterways Trust Fund cost sharing formula will allow the Corps to address the construction backlog by leveraging a greater number of inland waterways modernization and major rehabilitation activities.

#### U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS WORKFORCE

*Question.* There has been much publicity about the reduction in engineers graduating from our nation’s colleges universities over the last 20 years.

How would you assess the overall health of national engineering expertise and the engineering maintained within the Army Corps of Engineers workforce—both military and civilian? Please explain your answer.

Answer. It is my understanding that the Corps has a sufficient level of engineering expertise within the organization to meet its current mission. It is imperative, however, that the Corps’ leaders continue to attract the engineering workforce of the future. Corps leadership must focus on building outreach programs to a diverse group of students and recent graduates. The Corps must also partner with colleges and universities; including minority-serving institutions, to maintain the current level of expertise. If confirmed, it will be a high priority to ensure that America’s youth continue to see the Corps as an exceptional career opportunity for engineers and scientists.

*Question.* In your opinion, does the Corps have in place adequate workforce education and development to ensure its engineering workforce maintains capability and proficiency in the latest technologies and innovations?

Answer. I believe the Corps has the necessary programs available to ensure that the workforce is educated and optimally trained to perform its technical functions. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Engineers to ensure that the Corps’ training, development, and education opportunities grow and continue to align with a rapidly evolving mission implemented with the very latest technologies and innovations.

*Question.* Do you believe there to be any additional authorities or resources you would need, if confirmed, to incentivize talented engineers from our nation’s top colleges and universities to affiliate with the Corps? Do you believe there to be any

additional authorities or resources you would need to improve the current workforce development program?

Answer. The Corps has a very complex and robust world-wide engineering mission. The Corps competes with the private sector and other Federal agencies to recruit and retain top, diverse talent in an increasingly competitive environment. I understand that the Corps' Direct Hire authority has been instrumental in rapidly sourcing and onboarding exceptional candidates.

One challenge the Corps faces is contending with private-sector salaries, which continue to rise for talented engineers. If confirmed, I will strongly support the efforts of the Chief of Engineers to ensure the continuation of Direct Hire authorities, while also exploring the use of Special Salary Rates, and other compensation structures for Engineering and Scientific positions.

I also will support efforts to adopt automated recruitment tools to optimize candidate quality and decrease hiring time. Based on my experience, efficient hiring is an imperative to support the mission. In addition, I believe that additional resources that will allow the Corps to develop its workforce through leadership and technical training at all levels, including continuing education programs to sustain cutting-edge knowledge and best practices, will allow the Corps to attract and retain top talent. All of these tools are vital to acquire and maintain the Corps' talented workforce.

*Question.* What do you perceive to be the most significant challenges to and opportunities for improvement to the Corps' workforce—both military and civilian?

Answer. I believe the three most significant challenges with the Corps civilian workforce are: recruiting, sustaining employee engagement, and retaining talented employees. In an increasingly competitive talent market, it is imperative that the Corps is viewed by prospective civilian applicants as an "Employer of Choice," by showcasing its diverse mission and contributions to both the Nation and the world, as well as its commitment to diversity and equity. In addition, for current civilian employees, the Corps must focus on work/life programs (including telework, remote work, and flexible work schedules), which play a significant role in ensuring employees remain with the agency. If confirmed, I will give my strongest possible support to the Chief of Engineers in his efforts to recruit, engage, and retain a premier workforce.

For the Corps' military workforce, the most significant challenge is competing with other branches of service and against the Army's other career fields (e.g., infantry, armor, and aviation) for those ROTC undergraduates with STEM degrees. To address this issue, I understand the Corps, in conjunction with the Engineer Regiment, is standing up a University Outreach Program to educate and recruit cadets with undergraduate STEM degrees.

#### ACQUISITION PROCESSES FOR THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

In the last five years, the Corps has continued to rely upon a contract process known as "design-build," which requires a design agent to partner with a construction agent to compete for a contract. This differs from the traditional design-bid-build process, in which the Corps contracts first for a design product and subsequently issues a separate solicitation for the construction. Although there are many benefits to a collaborative process between a designer and the construction agent, there are also drawbacks. These include reduced oversight of the design/construction process by Corps' engineers, as well the systematic elimination of small- to medium-size engineering/architecture firms and construction contractors who do not have the resources to compete for design-build contracts.

*Question.* In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in the "design-build" contracting structure? In the "design-bid-build" structure?

Answer. In my view, the benefits of using the Design-Build (D-B) acquisition vehicle include shorter contract durations, a single source of design and construction quality accountability, introduction of industry innovations, the ability to set goals with performance criteria, reduction in design liability / ambiguity owned by the Government, lower design costs, and the ability to transfer design risk to a contractor. I believe that the key benefit of the Design-Bid-Build (DBB) acquisition vehicle is that the Government can be very prescriptive in all the details of a design / construction product. Projects that require historical context and broad technical knowledge tend to be successful using the DBB.

One drawback of using the D-B acquisition vehicle is that the Government must effectively communicate design requirements via a "Request for Proposal," rather than directing a design contractor to make changes. As a result, the Government loses some control over the technical details of the final product. The key drawback of the DBB acquisition vehicle is that the Government owns all liability over the

design product and, as such, all errors and omissions noted in the plans and specifications become the responsibility of the Government to resolve. These issues, in my assessment, can lead to unexpected time and cost growth.

I assess that the Corps must choose the best acquisition strategy for each project to ensure the best value to the government. Regardless of the acquisition strategy chosen, if confirmed, I will provide the oversight necessary so that the Corps has rigorous processes to ensure appropriate quality management of the design and construction deliverables.

*Question.* In your view, what factors should the Corps consider in determining which contracting process to use?

*Answer.* I believe that the objective is to select the contract type that is most appropriate for the respective acquisition, that places a reasonable degree of risk on the contractor, and that gives the contractor the greatest incentive to perform efficiently and economically. The Corps' acquisition team should review the overall objectives for mission execution when determining the best acquisition strategy. Goals for cost, schedule, and quality should be evaluated to determine the suitability of any acquisition strategy. In making these decisions on acquisition strategy, the Corps must also evaluate the appropriate suitability for the Corps' stakeholders, the Corps' ability in construction and design, the Corps' industry partners, and the technical aspects of the project.

*Question.* In your view, does the preponderant use of "design-build" contracting process have any effect on the proficiency of the Corps engineering and contract management workforces? Please explain your answer?

*Answer.* There is a balance to maintaining a highly skilled workforce with the ability to both execute project delivery and provide oversight of project delivery by others. Evaluation of a project typically requires an understanding of the steps it takes to achieve the delivery of a successful project. In order to achieve this balance, there must be enough "hands on" engineering and construction contract management by internal engineers. In my assessment, the Corps appears to excel as a design and construction agent because of its ability to manage a large portfolio of public projects, as well as execute in-house designs. Design-Build contracts may be an effective strategy for executing certain types of projects, but the Corps must maintain its own technical competence developed through executing designs in-house in order to effectively manage these projects. The use of performance criteria and openness to industry innovation will enhance the Corps' engineering and contract management workforces.

*Question.* How can the Corps properly incorporate the use of small- to medium-size engineering/architecture firms and construction contractors, particularly those with innovative ideas and methods, in Corps' projects?

*Answer.* The Corps can pursue small- to medium-size architecture/engineering firms and construction contractors through a variety of means, including market research and transparent opportunity announcements. Additionally, I understand that the Corps dedicates a cadre of Small Business Analysts who work with the project delivery teams to identify qualified small business firms for engineering/architecture and construction projects. These analysts collaborate with the Small Business Administration to continuously identify new firms who are encouraged to highlight innovative capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Corps is completely committed to taking full advantage of the expertise and innovation offered by small business private sector partners.

*Question.* What long-term issues do you perceive could emerge from the Corps preponderant use of design-build contracts?

*Answer.* I understand that the use of design-build contracts for the Corps Civil Works mission is minimal and typically driven by aggressive goals for schedule. I do not perceive long term issues using this acquisition vehicle particularly due to the commitment to maintain technical competence within the Corps. In instances where design-build contracts are used, the Corps Quality Management processes must ensure that the technical standards are upheld even when the integrity of the design is the responsibility of a design-build contractor.

#### NATION-WIDE LEVEE SYSTEMS AND FLOOD CONTROL

*Question.* The fragility of the United States' levee systems continues to be a safety hazard.

How would you assess the health of these levee systems?

*Answer.* Levee systems are extremely important to the nation's economic health, but they are aging, like much of the Nation's infrastructure, with many systems over 50 years old. With the increasing demand for levee systems to withstand more frequent and extreme weather events, while continuing to protect the continued ag-

riculture and urban development behind the levees, the systems require continued, diligent examination and management to ensure they can continue to perform as designed. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review the Corps work on the Nation's levee systems to assess and understand their overall health.

*Question.* In your opinion, is the process used by the Corps of Engineers to prioritize national levee requirements adequate?

*Answer.* Based on my current understanding, I assess that the process the Corps uses to prioritize levee requirements nationwide is adequate. If confirmed, however, I will conduct a thorough review of the specifics for how the Nation's levees are assessed and prioritized to best inform decisions to protect life, property, cultural resources, navigation, and the environment.

*Question.* In your view, are the resources provided to address levee systems sufficient?

*Answer.* I understand the Corps has effectively utilized available funding and authorities to assess and manage the risk associated with levee systems across the Nation. If confirmed, I will conduct a review of the requirements and funding levels to ensure it is adequate for the continued viability of these systems to protect the economic health of our nation.

*Question.* If not, what additional resources—in funding, capability, and capacity—are needed to address the requirements of the levee systems properly, in your opinion?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Corps' leadership to understand the levee system resource requirements. I will then work with the Administration and with Congress to address shortfalls and prioritize available funding to the highest needs.

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 required the Corps and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to take the lead on certain national levee-safety-related activities.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approach to implementing these activities going forward?

*Answer.* I will work closely with the Corps interagency partners and stakeholders to ensure that risks are properly managed across levee-safety-related programs utilizing the appropriate authorities. In addition, I believe it is important that the Corps conducts public engagement, state engagement, and tribal engagement to help develop a comprehensive program regarding levee safety that will support the needs of the nation and ensure long-term resiliency.

#### PRIORITIZATION PROCESS IN THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

*Question.* The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is regularly subject to pressures from various levels of government to carry out certain projects of special interest.

Do you believe the prioritization process used by the Corps for civil works projects is appropriate?

*Answer.* A prioritization process must be realistic, regularly monitored, and able to be updated or modified as needed. Prioritization is essential for executing near-term responsibilities and is also key to achieving long-term goals regarding the needs of the Nation. I believe this is an important issue and, if confirmed, I plan to evaluate the current prioritization process in detail.

*Question.* If confirmed, what prioritization processes would you follow, barring any unforeseen circumstances?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will follow the established prioritization process. However, I would make it a priority to look into the process in greater detail to identify opportunities for improvement, including using economic, environmental, and social criteria for decision-making and prioritization consistent with legal requirements and the Water Resources Principles, Requirements, and Guidelines, and Administration priorities. I am committed to ensuring that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' prioritization process addresses the critical needs of the nation.

*Question.* In your opinion, would using peer reviews of Corps projects to obtain an outside opinion on the need, urgency, effects caused by Corps projects, be "value added"? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* I understand the Corps currently integrates peer review into its project development process during feasibility studies and in the design phase for authorized projects. If confirmed, I will work with the Corps to determine the benefits of leveraging peer reviews throughout the lifecycle of a project. Both internal and external peer reviews of Corps projects, including the need, urgency, and assessment of effects, increase the transparency of these projects and strengthen the overall product by incorporating additional technical expertise.

## EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

*Question.* Extreme weather events have put a strain on our nation's aging water resources and critical infrastructure. Efforts to rehabilitate projects following an extreme weather event and to mitigate against the effects of future such event have pushed existing resources to their limits.

What are your views of the Department's responsibility to prepare in advance to mitigate the consequences of extreme weather events?

*Answer.* I understand that most Army Civil Works projects are specifically designed to safely perform and reduce risk under the extremes of the hydrologic cycle. I believe it is critical that we look at climate information, hydrologic data, analyze hydrologic trends, and understand what is happening in specific Army Civil Works projects. This understanding is crucial to assuring those projects continue to perform as designed and that they are sufficiently resilient to whatever future climatic events may occur.

I also am aware that the Corps works to integrate climate change preparedness and resilience planning and actions in all activities within its authorities. This is a critical component of the Corps' mission and will enhance community resilience with the Corps water-resource projects, ensure the effectiveness of the Corps military support mission, and reduce the potential vulnerabilities of those communities and those missions to the effects of climate change and variability. The Corps' policy is that adaptation, mitigation investments, and responses to climate change must be considered together, and include both near and long term considerations.

If confirmed, I will continue this work using the best available and actionable science and continued collaboration with our federal agency, state, and tribal partners. I am fully committed to ensuring the President's priority action of adapting to, and mitigation for, climate change is incorporated into Corps actions and policies.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the ways that extreme weather events pose risks to national security?

*Answer.* Extreme weather risks can impact a range of DoD military mission areas. Specific to Civil Works, extreme weather and climate change contributes to regional instability resulting in, for example, increased risk from flooding and drought. These risks have been identified by Secretary Austin who elevated climate as a national security priority and has stated that the Department of Defense faces a growing climate crisis that is impacting DoD missions, plans, and capabilities and must be met by ambitious and immediate action.

*Question.* In your view, how should the Department incorporate resilience against extreme weather events into the planning, design, and oversight of its civil works projects?

*Answer.* As the Federal government's largest and oldest manager of water resources, the Corps has long been adapting its policies, programs, projects, planning, and operations to impacts from important drivers of global change and variability. Resilient Corps projects not only contribute to resilient communities, but also reduce disruption and decrease recovery time after an event occurs. The greater the resilience of a system or element, the greater its ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions. Planning and preparedness are the most effective components of disaster response.

I understand that the Corps is considering climate change adaptation at every step in the project life cycle for all Corps projects to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance the resilience of the water-resource infrastructure. I also believe that strong partnerships with other federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies, and program and project stakeholders, are critical to ensuring we meet our shared responsibility to address the issues posed by a changing climate. If confirmed, I will ensure the Corps is committed to integrating the best available climate information into its missions, programs, and management functions, as allowed within relevant authorities.

## FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN

*Question.* The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a primary role in support of the Federal Response Plan, which identifies the basic structures by which the Federal government will mobilize resources and conduct activities to assist states in coping with the consequences of significant disasters. The Corps is the primary agency for planning, preparedness, and response under the Emergency Support Function (ESF #3), Public Works and Engineering.

In your view, how well prepared is the Corps of Engineers, including individual Corps districts and offices, to execute its ESF #3 functions? Please explain your answer.

Answer. In my assessment, the Corps is prepared to execute the ESF #3 in direct support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the established National Response Framework. In this role, the Corps serves as the Nation's public works and engineering agent responsible for supporting the prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from, both natural and man-made disasters.

If confirmed, it will be a priority to fully and continuously evaluate the Emergency Management preparedness program to ensure the Corps remains fully prepared for activities related to ESF-3 (planning and response teams, training and exercises, and advance contract capability).

#### DEPLOYMENTS

*Question.* Since 2001, many civilian employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have answered the call and deployed in support of contingency operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

What is your understanding of the types of missions performed by Corps civilian employees—in support of Corps deployments, and as members of the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce?

Answer. The Corps' civilian employees deploy around the world in support of overseas contingency operations, performing many of the same functions as Corps employees within the United States. Many of the Corps' forward deployed civilian volunteers serve in many different areas of expertise such as structural engineers, electrical engineers, and mechanical engineers. These employees provide design, construction, and construction management expertise, and support civil works operations for all the forward-deployed DoD entities, as well as providing host nation infrastructure support. These employees not only serve overseas, but are called upon during domestic response operations under both the Corps' emergency response authorities and support to other agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency and their authorities under the National Response Framework.

*Question.* Looking forward, how might the Corps better ensure that an adequate number of civilian employees, with the requisite capabilities, are available and ready to deploy in short order in support of contingency operations?

Answer. If confirmed, I would emphasize the expeditionary mindset within the Corps. I understand that the Corps' civilian employees have consistently volunteered to support both overseas contingency operations and domestic disaster support missions. It is important that the Corps continue to focus on having a flexible, agile, and expeditionary workforce that maintains a desire to provide selfless service to the Nation for both day-to-day requirements, as well as emergency, quick response missions.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

*Question.* In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by "someone at work" in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

What is your assessment of the current climate regarding sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and other harassment in the Office of the ASA(CW) and in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?

Answer. I understand the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works conducted an Organizational Climate Survey in April. The results indicated the OASA(CW) had an overwhelmingly supportive leadership with no indications of behavior that was unwelcomed, offensive, or involved mistreatment. It appears the office is in complete compliance with the published laws and regulations and that there is a culture of dignity and respect among the entire workforce. If confirmed, I will lead by example and ensure that the OASA(CW) maintains a climate free from sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and other forms of harassment. Such behaviors have no place in our society and I would seek to use any and all authorities available to ensure that the OASA(CW) remains free from all forms of harassment and discrimination.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination, or other harassment from an employee of the Office of the ASA(CW), the Corps, or an employee of any other organization over which the ASA(CW) exercises authority, direction, and control?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to providing a workplace that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination and where individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Upon receiving or learning of a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination, or other harassment from an employee, I will ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with federal laws, EEOC, DOD, and Army policy. I will coordinate with my legal counsel, EEO Official, Civilian Personnel Official and support any inquiry or response necessary to promptly address and resolve the matter(s) at issue, and take corrective or disciplinary action as warranted.

## CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

*Question.* In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications) and other information from the Department.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications), and other information as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

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[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

## CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

1. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Connor, the United States Army Corps of Engineers is unique in that it has the ability to take on civil projects with local sponsors. Building relationships with the community is important to build trust and support from the local community. How do you view this issue?

Mr. CONNOR, Building trust and support with partners and the community is of utmost importance to project success. Partnering, sharing information and being

transparent in decisionmaking builds trust. I am aware that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) district offices conduct “Civil Works 101” workshops for partners, ranging from State legislators, Indian tribes, various agencies and key non-profit stakeholder groups. This collaboration not only deepens the general understanding of the USACE capabilities in support of the community, but it bolsters relationships. If confirmed, I commit to furthering these touchpoints through consistent collaboration, transparent communication, and a willingness to hear and respond to concerns from both the public and stakeholders. Finally, if confirmed, I will work to extend my sphere of influence beyond USACE in order to build trust and support with our Federal partners so that our local partners have confidence regardless of the agency name.

2. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Connor, what steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure the Corps is building strong relationships with the local community in Hawaii specifically?

Mr. CONNOR, Building strong relationships, trust, and support are all related, especially in Hawaii. Such an endeavor takes time, but when carefully cultivated can yield community resilience and successful projects that stand the test of time. If confirmed, I commit to continuing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) best practices and efforts in Hawaii, such as outreach events, industry days and briefings with businesses specifically identified as socio-economically disadvantaged, to improve communication and public involvement.

3. Senator HIRONO. Mr. Connor, in Hawaii, I have supported the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management project—currently the project is conducting a general re-evaluation study. Is this a project the Corps of Engineers can assist the Honolulu District with?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. The entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers enterprise can assist the Honolulu District with the Ala Wai general reevaluation study.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

NORFOLK HARBOR WIDENING AND DEEPENING

4. Senator KAINE. Mr. Connor, the Norfolk Harbor and Channels deepening and widening is an important project for Virginia and the Nation with a benefit-cost ratio of 5.3 to 1 and annual benefits exceeding \$78 million. In addition to the commercial benefits, this project also benefits military readiness, as Naval Station Norfolk, the world’s largest naval base, shares the harbor with the Port of Virginia. Widening the channel will eliminate existing one-way navigation restrictions on both commercial and military vessels, which are currently necessary when an ultra large container vessel transits the channel. The widening will also provide additional clearance around Naval Vessel Protection Zones when military vessels are in the channel. I was pleased to see Norfolk Harbor included in the President’s fiscal year 2022 Budget Request for a new start and \$83.7 million in construction funding. While the Port of Virginia has been able to advance this project to construction using non-Federal funds, it will soon reach its cost share limit, and the unnecessary delay in Federal funding has compressed the Federal investment into larger needs over fewer years rather than spread more equally across the project. Federal investment in fiscal year 2022 is essential prevent any gap in construction and delays to the project. Will you commit to supporting a new start and at least \$83.7 million in Federal construction funding for the Norfolk Harbor and Channels deepening and widening project in any suitable funding vehicle Congress passes, whether that be annual appropriations, an infrastructure package, or other opportunities?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. If confirmed, I support a new start and the necessary construction funding for the Norfolk Harbor and Channels deepening and widening project.

5. Senator KAINE. Mr. Connor, will you ensure that the Norfolk District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can expeditiously sign a Project Partnership Agreement as soon as funding is received and move to construction of the inner harbor deepening and subsequent constructible elements?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure the Corps is prepared to execute a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) with the Virginia Port Authority as soon as funds are received, and I will ensure the Corps is ready to move to construction expeditiously once the PPA is signed.

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## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ELIZABETH WARREN

## PIPELINES

6. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, I was very encouraged that at your hearing, you said that ensuring that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) respects tribal nations and the Federal Government's obligations to them "will be one of [your] highest priorities." If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that USACE engages in robust, meaningful tribal consultation regarding the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline?

Mr. CONNOR, Respect for Tribal sovereignty, commitment to fulfilling Federal trust and treaty responsibilities to Tribal Nations, and conducting regular, meaningful, and robust consultation with Tribal Nations are cornerstones of Federal Indian Policy and Corps Tribal Policy Principles. I commit to ensuring that policy continues and is fully implemented if confirmed. I will closely monitor the status of the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline, including the status of ongoing consultations, and provide policy resolution as needed.

## LEVEES

7. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, USACE is responsible for 14,100 miles of levees. In light of the challenges and dangers posed by climate change, what steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure USACE is proactive in its maintenance of levee systems?

Mr. CONNOR, If confirmed, I will ensure USACE continues to make progress in determining how to utilize the best available and actionable climate science in long-term planning and setting priorities for levee systems, including maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation activities implemented by USACE and our partners. In addition, I will support both national and international climate change research. With the best possible information, USACE will be better positioned to improve the resiliency of the infrastructure for which it is responsible.

8. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, if confirmed, will you ensure that USACE's steps to maintain the levee system includes robust, meaningful tribal consultation?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring robust and meaningful tribal consultation regarding the USACE maintenance of levee systems.

9. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, if confirmed, will you ensure that USACE's steps to maintain the levee system take into account the impacts on nearby communities, wildlife, and the natural environment?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that impacts to communities, wildlife, and the natural environment are evaluated and considered in levee maintenance and other infrastructure projects.

## CLEAN WATER ACT

10. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, if confirmed, will you work to ensure that the USACE enforces the Clean Water Act in a robust and appropriate manner?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure the robust and appropriate enforcement of the Clean Water Act.

## PRIVATE-SECTOR WORK

11. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, what steps will you take to avoid or address conflicts of interest that arise from your previous private-sector work?

Mr. CONNOR, I will adhere to the terms of my Ethics Agreement with the Department of Defense Standards of Conduct Office, and to the Administration's Ethics Pledge. In accordance with the applicable ethical standards, for a period of 2 years from the date of my appointment, I will not participate in any particular matters, including regulations and contracts, involving specific parties, that are directly and substantially related to my former employers or former clients within the past 2 years. I will ensure that these matters are referred to my principal deputy for action without my knowledge or participation.

12. Senator WARREN. Mr. Connor, WilmerHale's website says that the firm's Environmental Enforcement and Litigation practice, of which you are a member, is "[d]efending a client in a Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) criminal investigation resulting from an oil spill in Louisiana." Please describe your involvement in this case, if any.

Mr. CONNOR, I have had no involvement at all in this case.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

READINESS

13. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Connor, over several years this Committee has worked tirelessly to restore military readiness—across each of our Services—to levels that would enable our success in a conflict. We’ve had some success, but there is STILL a lot of work to do. If you have not done so already, I recommend that every senior defense leader read T.R. Fehrenbach’s “This Kind of War”, which provides a cautionary tale of our Nation’s failure to adequately fund and train our Armed Forces before the Korean War. The consequences were steep and American servicemembers paid with their lives. If confirmed, all of you—based on your positions—will invariably make decisions that directly or indirectly impact readiness. Accordingly, will you commit—if confirmed—to work with this Committee and within the Department on further bolstering military readiness to ensure the failures we endured in the Korean War never happen again?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. If confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), I commit to working with this Committee, within the Department of Defense, and within the Department of the Army, to ensure the Army is ready for the next crisis or conflict, and that the right lessons are learned from the Korean War and other conflicts our Nation has faced.

STRATEGY DRIVEN BUDGET

14. Senator SULLIVAN. Mr. Connor, the National Defense Strategy Commission report, the two previous Senate-confirmed Secretaries of Defense, and the previous and current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have all stated the need for sustained 3–5 percent annual real growth to the defense budget to implement the NDS, increase readiness, and advance long-overdue modernization. Further emphasizing the need for consistent and increased funding, the NDS Commission report stated, “America is very near the point of strategic insolvency, where its ‘means’ are badly out of alignment with its ‘ends’.” This critical situation is negatively compounded by the Biden administration’s dismal defense topline that does not keep pace with inflation. With these facts in mind, and understanding your ability to influence the budget will be limited to future year submissions, will each of you commit to advocating for a strategy-driven budget vice a budget-driven strategy?

Mr. CONNOR, Yes. While recognizing that there will always be some form of resource constraints that will exist in the defense budget, I agree that the Department of Defense budget should be driven by the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I fully commit to advocating for the resources the Department of the Army, and in particular, the Corps of Engineers and the Army’s Civil Works program, need to carry out its responsibilities.

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[The nomination reference of Mr. Michael L. Connor, follows:]

**NOMINATION REFERENCE AND REPORT**

**PN486**

AS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION,  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
April 28, 2021.

*Ordered,* That the following nomination be referred to the Committee on Armed Services; that when the Committee on Armed Services reports the nomination it then be referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works for 20 days of session; that if not reported within 20 days it be discharged and placed on the Calendar, under authority of the order of the Senate of 03/10/2005:

Michael Lee Connor, of Colorado, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, vice R. D. James.

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021.  
(Date)

Reported by Mr. Reed \_\_\_\_\_  
(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 Mr. Michael L. Connor, which was transmitted to the Committee at the time the nomination was referred, follows:]

**Michael L. Connor**

**Education:**

- University of Colorado, School of Law
  - August 1990 to May 1993
  - Juris Doctor (J.D.)
- New Mexico State University, College of Engineering
  - August 1981 to May 1986
  - Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Chemical Engineering

**Employment Record:**

- Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr, LLP, Washington DC and Denver, CO
  - Partner/Attorney
  - September 2017 – Present
- Georgetown University School of Law, Washington, DC
  - Adjunct Law Professor, Water Law
  - August 2018 – January 2019
- Walton Family Foundation, Washington DC
  - Environmental Program Fellow
  - February 2017 – August 2017
- Private Consultant, Washington DC
  - Water Law Consultant to Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP
  - April 2017 to July 2017
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC
  - Deputy Secretary
  - February 2014 to January 2017
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington DC
  - Commissioner
  - May 2009 to February 2014
- U.S. Senate, Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Washington DC
  - Counsel
  - May 2001 to May 2009
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington DC
  - Director, Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office
  - 1998 to 2001

- U.S. Department of the Interior, Solicitor's Office, Washington DC and Albuquerque, NM
  - Attorney-Advisor
  - 1994 to 1998
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Solicitor's Office, Washington DC
  - Attorney – Solicitor's Honors Program
  - 1993 to 1994
- University of Colorado, Natural Resources Law Center, Boulder, CO
  - Research Assistant
  - 1991 to 1993
- Rodey Dickason Sloan Akin & Robb, P.A., Albuquerque, NM
  - Summer Associate
  - Summer 1992
- GE Power Generation Services, Denver, CO
  - Manager – Power Services Liquid Insulation Laboratory
  - 1988 to 1990
- GE Manufacturing Management Program, Louisville, KY and Denver, CO
  - Manufacturing Engineer
  - 1986 to 1988

**Honors and Awards:**

- University of Colorado Law School Alumni Award for Distinguished Achievement in the Public Sector (2015);
- New Mexico State University College of Engineering Ingeniero Eminente (2010)

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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 Mr. Michael L. Connor in connection with his nomination follows:]

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2020 -- 2021  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
ROOM SR-228  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510-6050  
(202) 224-3871

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE  
INFORMATION REQUESTED OF CIVILIAN NOMINEES

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE NOMINEE: Answer all questions and provide all requested information. If more space is needed, attach an additional sheet of paper to the Questionnaire and cite the part of the Questionnaire and the question number (e.g., A-9, B-4) to which the continuation of your answer applies. Unless otherwise required, an answer of "yes", "no", or "not applicable" is appropriate.

QUESTIONNAIRE, PART A

NOTE: Information furnished in this part of the Questionnaire will be made available in Committee offices for public inspection prior to the hearing, if any, and will be entered in the hearing record, also available to the public.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TO BE MADE PUBLIC

1. Name (Include any former names you have used): Michael Lee Connor;  
Mike Connor
2. Position to which nominated: Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works;
3. Date of nomination: April 28, 2021.
4. Education (List names of secondary and higher education institution 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):
  - a. *New Mexico State University* (University); Aug. 1981 to May 1986, B.S.

Chemical Engineering; May 1986.

b. University of Colorado School of Law (University); Aug. 1990 to May 1993, Juris Doctor; May 1993.

5. **Employment record (List all jobs held since college, or in the last 10 years, whichever is less, including the title or description of the job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. If the employment activity was military duty, show each change of military duty station as a separate period of employment):**

1. Attorney and Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr, LLP, September 2017 to Present (Washington DC and Denver, CO)

2. Adjunct Law Professor, Georgetown University School of Law, Aug. 2018 to Jan. 2019 (Washington DC)

3. Environment Program Fellow, Walton Family Foundation, February 2017 to August 2017 (Washington DC).

4. Private Consultant, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP, April 2017 to July 2017 (Washington DC)

5. Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), February 2014 to January 2017 (Washington DC)

6. Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of the Interior, May 2009 to February 2014 (Washington DC)

6. **Government experience (List any advisory, consultative, honorary, and other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed in response to question 5, above):**

1. Counsel, U.S. Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, May 2001 to May 2009 (Washington DC)

2. Director, Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office 1998-2001; U.S. DOI (Washington DC)

3. Attorney-Advisor, SW Regional Solicitor's Office 1997 to 1998; U.S. DOI, (Albuquerque, NM)

4. Attorney-Advisor, Division of Indian Affairs 1994 to 1997; U.S. DOI (Washington,

DC)

5. Attorney, DOI Solicitor's Honors Program 1993 to 1994; U.S. DOI (Washington DC)

**7. Business relationships (List all positions currently held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, and of any educational or other institution):**

1. Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr, LLP;
2. Director, National Audubon Society Board of Directors;
3. Director, Audubon Action Fund Board of Directors;
4. Advisor, Nicholas Institute, Duke University, Board of Advisors;
5. Advisor, Getches-Wilkinson Center, University of Colorado School of Law, Board of Advisors.

**8. Memberships (List all memberships and offices that you currently hold, as well as any memberships and offices you have previously held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, business, charitable and other organizations):**

1. State Bar Memberships – New Mexico; Colorado; and Washington DC;
2. New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association;
3. New Mexico Indian Bar Association;

**9. 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 a candidate/elected/appointed; the year(s) during which you were a candidate, or in which the election was held or the appointment was made; and the term of office (if applicable): Not Applicable
- b. List all memberships and offices held in, and services rendered to, all political parties or election committees during the last 5 years: Not Applicable
- c. Itemize all individual political contributions of \$100 or more to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity during the past 5 years. List each individual contribution (not the total amount contributed to the person or entity) over this period:

1.	10/31/16	Hillary Clinton	\$ 250
2.	5/1/17	Jon Ossoff	\$ 100
3.	5/4/17	Martin Heinrich	\$ 100
4.	7/20/17	Martin Heinrich	\$1000
5.	2/23/18	Maura Healy	\$ 125
6.	3/7/18	Tim Kaine	\$ 250
7.	3/7/18	Melanie Stansbury	\$ 100
8.	5/22/18	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 200
9.	6/28/18	Maria Cantwell	\$ 250
10.	8/25/18	Michelle Lujan Grisham	\$ 200
11.	9/11/18	DCCC	\$ 200
12.	9/11/18	Jon Tester	\$ 250
13.	9/11/18	Xochitl Torres Small	\$ 200
14.	10/5/18	Dianne Feinstein	\$ 200
15.	10/5/18	Elissa Slotkin	\$ 100
16.	10/5/18	Melanie Stansbury	\$ 100
17.	10/5/18	Stacey Abrams	\$ 200
18.	10/5/18	Beto O'Rourke	\$ 200
19.	10/20/18	Jennifer Wexton	\$ 100
20.	10/25/18	DCCC	\$ 150
21.	10/27/18	Heidi Heitkamp	\$ 100
22.	10/30/18	DCCC	\$ 100
23.	10/30/18	DSCC	\$ 100
24.	10/30/18	Jon Tester	\$ 150
25.	11/4/18	Phil Weiser	\$ 200
26.	5/31/19	John Walsh	\$ 100
27.	5/31/19	Alice Madden	\$ 100
28.	9/30/19	Alice Madden	\$ 100
29.	3/1/20	Joe Biden	\$ 100
30.	3/1/20	Joe Biden	\$ 100
31.	3/10/20	Joe Biden	\$ 500
32.	4/26/20	Xochitl Torres Small	\$ 150
33.	4/26/20	John Hickenlooper	\$ 100
34.	5/18/20	Xochitl Torres Small	\$ 150
35.	7/9/20	Joe Biden	\$ 250
36.	7/29/20	Biden Victory Fund	\$ 250
37.	9/2/20	Joe Biden	\$1000
38.	9/15/20	Joe Biden	\$ 250
39.	9/26/20	DCCC	\$ 100
40.	9/26/20	John Hickenlooper	\$ 100

41. 9/26/20	Jaime Harrison	\$ 100
42. 9/29/20	Joe Biden	\$1000
43. 10/14/20	Joe Biden	\$ 298
44. 10/20/20	Ben Ray Lujan	\$ 100
45. 10/20/20	Theresa Greenfield	\$ 100
46. 10/23/20	DNC	\$ 250
47. 10/27/20	DCCC	\$ 100
48. 11/1/20	Joe Biden	\$ 350
49. 11/1/20	DNC	\$ 350
50. 11/22/20	Fair Fight	\$100
51. 11/22/20	Raphael Warnock	\$ 100
52. 11/22/20	Jon Ossoff	\$ 100
53. 3/10/21	Michael Bennet	\$ 200
54. 3/31/21	Michael Bennet	\$ 100
55. 3/31/21	Jon Tester	\$ 100
56. 3/31/21	Mark Kelly	\$ 100
57. 4/3/21	Melanie Stansbury	\$ 100
58. 5/14/21	Phil Weiser	\$ 625

**10. Honors and awards (List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, and any other special recognition received for outstanding service or achievements):**

1. New Mexico State University College of Engineering Ingeniero Eminente (2010);
2. University of Colorado Law School Alumni Award for Distinguished Achievement in the Public Sector (2015).

**11. Published writings (List the titles, publishers, and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials that you have written or for which you served as co-author or editor, including articles and blogs published on the internet):**

WilmerHale Client Alerts (available at: <https://www.wilmerhale.com/en/people/michael-connor> )

APRIL 7, 2021

What's in Biden's Infrastructure Plan?

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Environmental Justice in the Biden Administration

OCTOBER 26, 2020

**Trump Seeks to Create Coordinated Federal Water Policy via Executive Order**

JULY 6, 2020

**FCPA Risks for Renewable Energy in Latin America**

JUNE 18, 2020

**From a Gush to a Trickle: EPA Stems the Flow of State and Tribal Clean Water Act Authority**

JUNE 2, 2020

**EPA Limits State and Tribal Authority Under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act**

APRIL 24, 2020

**Supreme Court Establishes Permitting Standard for Discharges to Groundwater**

APRIL 17, 2020

**What the CARES Act Means for Tribes**

APRIL 9, 2020

**COVID-19: CARES Act Implementation—Economic Aid and Relief for Indian Tribes**

MARCH 6, 2019

**The Growing Threat of Wildfire to the Energy Sector: Recent State and Federal Activity**

JULY 2, 2018

**Opportunities for Indian Tribes to Bridge the Digital Divide**

APRIL 26, 2018

**Infrastructure Series: Tribes and Infrastructure**

MARCH 15, 2018

**Infrastructure Series: Paying for and Permitting Water Infrastructure**

**Other Publications**

- "Progress, Change and Opportunity: Managing Wild Horses on the Public Lands" *The Hill, Op-Ed*, March 12, 2021 (available at: [Progress, change and opportunity: Managing wild horses on the public lands | TheHill](#))
- "Now is the Time for Offshore Wind" *The Hill, Op-Ed*, Aug. 15, 2019 (available at: <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/457510-now-is-the-time-for-offshore-wind>)

- "Multiple-Use Management in a Landscape of Multiplying Demand—The Rise of Outdoor Recreation and Renewable Energy in Public Lands Management, 64 Rocky Mt. Min L. Inst. 22-1 (2018)
- "Reducing Wildfire Risk and Protecting Our Drinking Water in a Changing Climate" July 19, 2013 (available at: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2013/07/19/reducing-wildfire-risk-and-protecting-our-drinking-water-changing-climate>)
- "Consider Cost of Klamath Deal Bust" *Eureka Times Standard*, May 3, 2012 (available at <https://www.times-standard.com/2012/05/03/consider-cost-of-klamath-deal-bust/>)
- "Making Progress for Indian Country" Sept. 12, 2011 (available at: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2011/09/12/making-progress-indian-country>)
- "Conservation Principles at Work in Colorado" Aug. 17, 2017 (available at: <https://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org/stories/environment/conservation-principles-at-work-in-colorado>)
- "Infrastructure investments must prioritize the Colorado River, one of the hardest-working rivers in the world" *Washington Examiner*, June 7 2017 (available at: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/infrastructure-investments-must-prioritize-the-colorado-river-one-of-the-hardest-working-rivers-in-the-world>)
- "On the Brink: A Colorado River Q&A with Michael Connor, Feb. 16, 2017 (available at: <https://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org/stories/environment/on-the-brink-a-colorado-river-q-a-with-michael-connor>)
- "Expanding the Watershed: Certainty and Sustainability in the Twenty-First Century," 26 Colo. Nat. Res. Energy & Envtl. L. Rev. (2015).
- "Commentary on 'History of the Minnow Litigation and Its Implications for the Future of Reservoir Operations on the Rio Grande'," 47 Nat. Res. J. 693 (2007).
- "Extracting the Monkey Wrench From Glen Canyon Dam: The Grand Canyon Protection Act - An Attempt at Balance," 15 Pub. Land L. Rev. 135 (May 1994).
- Comment, "Maquiladoras and the Border Environment: Prospects for Moving from Agreements to Solutions," 3 Colo. J. Int'l Envtl. L. & Pol'y 683 (1992).

**12. Speeches (Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years—of which you have copies—in which you addressed matters relevant to the position to which you have been nominated).**

I have spoken on many panels over the past 5 years but have not delivered many formal speeches. I have not delivered any formal speeches directly related to the work of the Army Corps of Engineers. I did, however, deliver a formal speech in 2020 addressing climate change and water resources. That speech may be accessed through the following link:

10/29/20: New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute Annual Conference, Albert E. Utton Memorial Water Lecture Michael L. Connor, WilmerHale LLP, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Interior – video to be posted at <https://nmwaterconference.nmwri.nmsu.edu/2020/>

#### COMMITMENTS IN FURTHERANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

NOTE: In order to exercise their legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress timely receive testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch. A simple “yes” or “no” response is appropriate.

13. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate Committees of Congress? Yes
14. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so timely? Yes
15. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Yes
16. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Yes
17. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Yes
18. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators

who are members of this Committee? Yes

19. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? 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 Parts A and B of the foregoing Senate Armed Services Committee Questionnaire, and that the information provided therein and in any document appended thereto, is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete.



This 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2021

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[The nomination of Mr. Michael L. Connor was reported to the Senate by Chairman Reed on July 27, 2021, with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed. The nomination was confirmed by the Senate on November 4, 2021.]

