

those years, so this is a reversal of that trend.

What do the American people think about it? Here is some Paragon Poll data that says by a more than 2-to-1 margin Americans strongly oppose rather than strongly support the President's Executive actions. Blue collar and middle class workers strongly oppose the President's action by more than a 3-to-1 majority. By a 50-point margin, voters want Congress to pass legislation making it harder for companies to hire workers now illegally in the country—71 to 21.

The American people want to make it harder. Their children, their husbands, their wives are looking for work and not finding any. They want to have a decent wage, a rising wage, and a chance to get a job. So this is a 50-point margin. Remember, the President's action—far from making it harder for people to get a job—is going to provide a photo ID, work authorizations, and Social Security numbers to 5 million people unlawfully here. Almost all of those are adults, frankly.

Just to show how people feel about this and how strongly they feel about it, Kellyanne Conway's polling data shows that by a 75-to-8 margin Americans say companies should raise wages instead of allowing more immigrant workers to fill jobs.

People would like to see a pay raise around here for a change. Salaries dropped 5 cents in December. We are not doing nearly as well as some would like to say. That is a Department of Labor statistic—a government statistic—that says that.

How about this? What about people who have the hardest time finding work right now. African Americans, according to the Conway poll, by an 86-to-3 margin say companies should raise wages instead of allowing more immigrant workers to take jobs. For Hispanics that is true by a margin of 71 to 11. So by a 71-to-11 margin, Hispanics in America say companies should raise wages instead of bringing in more workers to take jobs, pulling wages down. That is what the market says.

So let's go back to the morality of all of this, which is fundamental. We as members of Congress represent the people of the United States. That includes immigrants, recent immigrants—naturalized citizens—living here today. It includes native-born citizens. That is who our obligation is to. So we need to ask ourselves, how are we helping them at a time of difficult wage conditions, difficult job conditions, while allowing a surge of workers to come to compete for the few jobs there are? Is that fulfilling our duty to the voters, to the electors who sent us here? I think not.

I think it is time for somebody to focus on the needs of people who go to work every day, who have had their hours reduced, who have had their wages decline, who have had their spouses and children having a hard time finding work. That is what is happening.

To repeat for my good friend Senator DURBIN, who says he has been trying to understand what is holding up the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, let me answer that question. The House has passed a bill. They have sent it to the Senate. More than a majority of the Senators have voted to pass a bill and fund the Department of Homeland Security. And you, as the Democratic whip, are leading the filibuster to block it from even coming up on the floor so amendments can be offered.

That is the answer to your question. So I don't think you should continue blaming Republicans for not attempting to fund Homeland Security. The whole world knows who is blocking the bill that funds Homeland Security: You and your team of filibusterers.

That is what it is. There is no doubt about that, and we need to get this straight. I don't believe the American people are going to be misled by that argument. I believe they are going to know what is happening in this Senate and why we have this difficulty.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate will vote later today on the confirmation of Dr. Ashton Carter to fill a critically important Cabinet position, that of Secretary of Defense. I think we all know Dr. Carter is a dedicated and distinguished public servant. He has actually been confirmed twice, unanimously, to two senior positions at the Pentagon. He has been recognized as a four-time recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal, and he has been awarded the Defense Intelligence Medal. I have no doubt the vote today in support of Dr. Carter will be overwhelmingly favorable.

The Defense Department faces important, timely, and difficult decisions in the coming months and years. They have to learn how best to balance what we know are our fiscal constraints with not only existing but emerging international challenges. Dr. Carter served as the day-to-day financial officer of the Pentagon, so he is one of the few people who understand the complexities of the Pentagon's budget. I believe that Dr. Carter will build upon the fine work of Secretary Hagel to chart a path toward fiscal accountability while maintaining the kind of military capabilities we need to face current global threats.

Dr. Carter is receiving his confirmation vote just over a week after he testified before the Armed Services Committee and two days after his nomina-

tion was reported to the full Senate, and that swift action is commendable. But I want to contrast how his nomination was handled as compared to Loretta Lynch's for Attorney General.

LYNCH NOMINATION

It is a disappointment that contrary to what was done for Dr. Carter, Republicans on the Judiciary Committee chose to hold over for another two weeks another critical nomination, that of Loretta Lynch to be the Attorney General of the United States, the Nation's chief law enforcement officer.

Loretta Lynch is a renowned prosecutor, twice unanimously confirmed by the Senate. She has worked to put criminals behind bars for such crimes as terrorism and fraud. Some Members of this body said these terrorists should be held in Guantanamo because we, the most powerful nation on earth, should be afraid to try them in our Federal courts—the best court system in the world. She showed a lot more courage. She said, we will try these terrorists in our Federal courts, and we will show the rest of the world America is not afraid—and it worked. She got convictions. Now, the President announced the nomination of Ms. Lynch nearly one hundred days ago. It has been more than two weeks since she testified before the Judiciary Committee. In addition to nearly eight hours of live testimony, she has responded to more than 600 written questions. Her nomination has been pending for longer than any modern Attorney General nominee.

I contrast this to another nominee. In 2007, Democrats, who had been in the minority, took back over control of the Senate. President Bush had had an Attorney General, a man who, by just about any objective standard, had been a disaster. He was removed, and President Bush nominated Michael Mukasey to serve as Attorney General. It took only 53 days from the time his nomination was announced to his confirmation. That included doing all of the background checks and having the hearings. And then, after Mr. Mukasey's hearing, of course under our rules we could have held his nomination over in Committee, but I asked the Committee not to and we did not. While I ultimately voted against Mr. Mukasey because of his responses relating to questions on torture, as Chairman I made sure to have the Committee act quickly on him. In fact, I held a special markup session in order for the Committee to be able to report his nomination as soon as possible, because the President should have an Attorney General—and he was confirmed by the Senate two days later. Now, Republicans should extend the same courtesy with respect to Ms. Lynch's nomination to serve as the Nation's top law enforcement officer.

I look forward to working with Dr. Carter. I am not suggesting we should hold him up because they are holding her up. Of course not. He should be confirmed, as she should be confirmed, and

I look forward to working with Dr. Carter on issues of great importance to Vermonters and to the Nation, particularly concerning our continued diplomatic efforts to end Iran's nuclear program, in halting and reversing the proliferation of landmines around the world, in responsibly managing the Pentagon, and in supporting our servicemembers at home and abroad.

And I look forward to working with Loretta Lynch when the Senate ultimately confirms her nomination, as it will. I urge the Republican Leader to serve the national interest by scheduling a confirmation vote on her nomination as soon as she is reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 26. She has already waited far longer for a confirmation vote than any Attorney General in modern history, and she should be confirmed just as Dr. Carter is going to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to join my friend and colleague from Rhode Island, Senator REED, in supporting the nomination of Dr. Ashton Carter to be Secretary of Defense. I am confident Senator REED and I feel we have had a very good nomination hearing and that Dr. Carter is qualified to be the Secretary of Defense.

I have known Dr. Carter for many years during his lengthy service in Washington. He is one of America's most experienced defense professionals, respected by Republicans and Democrats alike.

He has served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, and most recently as Deputy Secretary of Defense. In these positions, I have known him to be an honest, hard-working, and committed public servant. I have had the opportunity to work together with Dr. Carter on several issues of shared concern, especially trying to reform the Defense Acquisition System, improving financial management of the Department, and repealing and rolling back sequestration.

I was also pleased to hear Dr. Carter explain his views on a number of critical national security issues at his confirmation hearing earlier this month.

On Afghanistan Dr. Carter told the committee he would consider revisions to the size and pace of the President's drawdown plan if security conditions warranted. To achieve the success that is possible there, he urged the United States to "continue its campaign and finish the job."

Dr. Carter indicated he is very much inclined in the direction of providing defensive lethal arms to help Ukraine resist Russian aggression.

He pledged to do more to streamline and improve the Defense Acquisition System that takes too long and costs too much, and Dr. Carter agreed it is time to roll back sequestration because, in his words, "it introduces tur-

bulence and uncertainty that are wasteful, and it conveys a misleadingly diminished picture of our power in the eyes of friends and foes alike."

America is confronted with a diverse and complex range of national security challenges. A revisionist Russia, a rising China, and radical Islamist groups each seeking in their own way to fundamentally challenge the international order as we have known it since the end of World War II, a system that cherishes the rule of law, maintains free markets and free trade, and rejects wars of aggression to their rightful place in the bloody past.

We need a coherent national security strategy incorporating all elements of America's national power to sustain and defend the international order that has produced and extended security, prosperity, and liberty across the globe.

We need to stop holding our military hostage to domestic political disputes and send an unmistakable message to friend and foe alike that America intends to lead in the 21st century by repealing sequestration immediately.

We need to reform our Defense Acquisition System to restore confidence that every defense dollar is spent well and to ensure that the men and women in uniform are getting the training and equipment they need on time and at a cost acceptable to the taxpayer.

That is why America needs a strong Secretary of Defense now more than ever. I think Dr. Carter will be a good Secretary of Defense, who will always keep faith with our men and women in uniform and work tirelessly on their behalf and that of our national security. I am hopeful about the prospects of working together with Dr. Carter, along with my colleagues in the Senate Committee on Armed Services on both sides of the aisle, to achieve our shared priorities, especially the reform of our Defense Acquisition System, the modernization of our military compensation system, and the repeal of sequestration.

But when it comes to much of our national security policy, I must candidly express concern about the task that awaits Dr. Carter and the limited influence he may have.

Two of his predecessors, Secretary Gates and Secretary Panetta, have severely criticized White House micro-management of the Defense Department and overcentralization of foreign and defense policies. According to numerous news reports, Secretary Hagel experienced similar frustrations with the insular and indecisive White House national security team over issues ranging from ISIL to Ukraine, detention policy to sequestration.

Dr. Carter is a worthy choice for Secretary of Defense. He has the experience, knowledge, and skill to succeed. The Armed Services Committee voted unanimously to approve his nomination last week, and I will gladly vote to confirm him today. I do so with sincere hope, and sadly, little confidence that

the President who nominated Dr. Carter will empower him to lead and contribute to the fullest extent of his abilities. At a time of global upheaval and multiplying threats to our security, the American people need and deserve nothing less.

I thank my colleague from Rhode Island for his cooperation and coordination with the hearing and for his input and influence which led to a unanimous vote from the committee.

I yield the floor for my friend and colleague from Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I commend the chairman for his very clear and thoughtful conduct of these hearings with respect to Dr. Carter. The reason we are here today on the verge of a very strong vote for Dr. Carter to be the next Secretary of Defense is due to the contribution that Chairman MCCAIN has made to this process, which was extremely thoughtful and bipartisan. I thank him again for that.

Mr. President, I join Senator MCCAIN, and I not only commend him for his leadership but I also wish to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Ashton Carter to be the 25th Secretary of Defense. Dr. Carter is uniquely qualified to lead the Department of Defense at a time when—as Henry Kissinger recently said in a hearing before the Armed Services Committee—"the United States has not faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of the Second World War."

Dr. Carter was born and raised in Philadelphia. He received a bachelor's degree in physics and medieval history from Yale and a doctorate in theoretical physics from Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

During his career, Dr. Carter has already held three critical positions in the Department of Defense: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global and Strategic Affairs in the Clinton administration; Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics from 2009 to 2011; and most recently, Deputy Secretary of Defense from 2011 to 2013. He is well aware of, and has already been deeply immersed in, many of the significant challenges facing this Nation and the Defense Department.

As Deputy Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter was a critical player in the discussions and decision making on a myriad of international issues—issues that will continue to need the close attention in his tenure as Secretary of Defense.

I wish to name just a few. While the Secretary of Defense is not a party to the negotiations relating to Iran's nuclear program, the Secretary will undoubtedly be responsible for any number of potential contingencies. In the event of a breakdown in the negotiations, the consequences could alter the face of the region for generations and generations to come, and the Secretary

of Defense will be intimately involved in shaping the reaction.

Another area of deep concern is ISIL. Their violent campaign in Iraq and Syria to establish an extremist caliphate threatens to erase borders, destabilize the region, and create a breeding ground for foreign fighters willing to return to the West to carry out attacks against the United States and our allies. The Department must provide critical leadership in a coalition effort that includes Arab and Muslim States to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL while being careful to ensure that the United States does not end up, as Brent Scowcroft and Dr. Brzezinski indicated to us in a hearing before the committee, “owning” some of these conflicts in Syria and elsewhere.

In Afghanistan the hard-won gains of the past decade are significant but remain fragile. As the Afghan National Security Forces continue taking over responsibilities to secure Afghanistan, the United States and coalition forces have transitioned to a more limited mission of training and assisting the Afghan forces and conducting counter-terrorism operations. Yet it remains to be seen whether conditions on the ground in Afghanistan will improve sufficiently by the end of 2016 to warrant the pace of further reductions under the current plan. Dr. Carter’s participation in evaluating that plan will be absolutely critical.

Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has raised tensions in Europe to a level not seen in decades. Recently separatists in eastern Ukraine, with substantial Russian equipment, training, and leadership, have abandoned any pretext of a cease-fire, although there were discussions that were held overnight that perhaps might indicate a cease-fire. But in any case, the United States must determine the best way to support the Ukrainian people and their forces in defending their country.

Political instability in Yemen has caused the United States to evacuate its Embassy and created a vacuum, allowing the free reign of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which is intent on striking the United States and its interests. Again, the Defense Department plays a key role in supporting our partners in Yemen and navigating the complex political situation and continuing to have a presence there—which they do—which can effectively help to preempt any attempt to use that as a launching pad for operations in the region or across the globe.

The same brand of violent extremism in the Middle East can also be found in parts of Africa—al-Shabaab in Somalia, Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb, and Boko Haram in Nigeria. Countering the threat posed by these groups will require building partner capacity and enabling support to foreign security forces at a time when resources are scarce and those capabilities are in high demand.

In North Korea, Kim Jong Un’s regime has increased tensions on the pen-

insula with his provocative and belligerent behavior. The recent cyber attack on Sony is just the latest in a string of destabilizing actions. The regime is playing a dangerous game that could have disastrous consequences—especially for its own civilian population which has already suffered untold hardships and deprivation under his leadership. The North Korean regime is painting itself into a corner where it will be left with few friends and few options, and again, the United States, and particularly the Department of Defense, must be ever vigilant.

While the United States and China have many areas of coordination and cooperation, our future relationship remains uncertain. We welcome the rise of a peaceful and prosperous China. Especially in this new century of global commerce and economies, a prosperous China is not only in the region’s best interests but also in the world’s best interest. China’s increasingly controversial claims of sovereignty in the South China Sea and dangerous alterations with its neighbors raise serious concerns. While legal and peaceful avenues for dispute resolution are available, China has instead chosen to pursue, in too many cases, adversarial and unilateral actions that raise questions about its intentions.

On the cyber front, China is engaged in massive theft of U.S. intellectual property from American industry and government, which threatens our technological edge and sows distrust and profound misgivings. China will remain one of the Department’s most persistent and complicated challenges. With the focus on so many crises overseas, it is easy to overlook the challenges on our own continent. We have a violent threat of transnational organized crime in our own hemisphere. When the United States faced a threat stemming from violence and the drug trade in Colombia in the 1990s, it dedicated significant resources and entered into a decade-long commitment to provide training and other enabling assistance.

Colombia is a success story, but the problem has simply moved, in many cases, to other nations in the region. General Kelly, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, leads the Department’s efforts in the hemisphere, but he operates with scarce resources, a situation that may have serious consequences.

In addition to these traditional challenges that nation-states have faced for many, many years, the United States now faces new 21st century threats. For years we have devoted significant attention to the complex challenge of cyber warfare. The attack on the Sony Corporation was a watershed event in many respects, and it should and must stimulate fresh critical thinking. This attack demonstrated that a relatively small and weak rogue nation can reach across the oceans to cause extensive destruction to a U.S.-based economic target and very nearly succeed in sup-

pressing freedom of expression through cyber space.

The real and manifest advantages of the offense over the defense in cyber warfare that enable militarily inferior nations to strike successfully against the homeland are a new and worrisome factor for our national security and that requires not only the attention of the Department of Defense but the attention of the Congress.

All of the issues I have talked about are external, but there are local issues that the Secretary of Defense has to deal with. Senator McCAIN pointed out probably the most significant one, and that is the budgetary and programmatic challenges that have been forced upon us by sequestration.

The most immediate threat facing the Defense Department is, indeed, sequestration because without resources, the programs, the policies, and the initiatives which must be undertaken to confront these national threats cannot be done.

General Mattis, former Commander of Central Command, recently testified before our committee. He said: “No foe in the field can wreak such havoc on our security that mindless sequestration is achieving today.”

Only one-third of Army brigades are ready to fight. Less than 50 percent of our combat squadrons are fully combat ready. Sequestration threatens not only our national security, but it risks damaging our public safety, our health, our transportation, our education, and our environment. In the world we face, there is not a neat distinction between what the Department of Defense does, what the Department of Homeland Security does, and what other civil agencies such as FEMA must do. It is something that we have to consider, not just in the context of the Department of Defense but in so many other agencies of the Federal Government—in fact, in every agency of the Federal Government.

When the Budget Control Act was passed, Dr. Carter organized the Strategic Choices and Management Review to find options for implementing the required defense cuts. The results of this review have helped the Defense Department navigate through difficult fiscal constraints, but Congress must find a balanced and bipartisan solution and a repeal of sequestration across the entire government.

Even without sequestration, the Defense Department has to tackle the rising personnel costs which could crowd out other items in the budget. Currently, military personnel benefits, including health care and retirement, consume approximately one-third of the Defense Department’s budget.

If we are to adequately train and equip the force we have, to ensure they are capable of performing the arduous task we ask of them, and to modernize weapon systems, we must slow the growth of these costs within the Department in line with the slowdown of the overall top line. The congressionally mandated Military Compensation

and Retirement Modernization Commission recently released their recommendations. They are far-reaching and would fundamentally change military personnel benefits. They did so with the idea of improving the benefits available to many of our forces. They did it with the idea of insisting that our recruitment and retention efforts continue to be successful because we are a volunteer force. Their focus was really on the troops, but one of the effects of the recommendations was to make these costs sustainable over time.

As Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter will have to work with Congress to carefully consider these recommendations to ensure that the Department has the resources to properly train and equip its fighting men and women.

The other major cost driver in the Defense Department is acquisition. To put it succinctly, defense acquisition takes too long and costs too much, but the Defense Department has undertaken significant reforms in recent years and many of these were personally led by Dr. Carter.

As Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Dr. Carter oversaw implementation of the Weapons System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009, and again, I must commend Senator McCAIN and Senator Levin for their leadership in this effort. The largest restructuring of DOD acquisition policies in more than two decades resulted from this initiative.

He also oversaw and contributed to improvements in a number of major acquisition programs, including the major restructuring on the Joint Strike Fighter program, the largest DOD acquisition program; efforts to reduce the cost of the Virginia-class submarine program and to improve contract performance, which has allowed the Navy to begin a two-per-year procurement program for these submarines, which are under budget and ahead of schedule—a remarkable achievement; improvements to the littoral combat ship program, which was experiencing major costs increases and delays, with Dr. Carter's participation DOD shifted to competitive fixed-price contracts in 2011; restructured procurement for the Air Force's KC-46A strategic tanker program, which led to a competitive procurement, incorporating a firm fixed-price development production contract for buying up to 120 tanker aircraft; and canceling of the VH-71 program, an out-of-control program to replace the current Presidential helicopter fleet.

Clearly not all acquisition problems have been fixed and the Defense Department can and should do more to streamline and improve the system. I believe, from what I have just indicated, that Dr. Carter as Secretary of Defense will do just that. He has already demonstrated he can do it and he will do it.

Finally, and most importantly, as Senator McCAIN indicated, if confirmed

as Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter will be leading 1.3 million Active-Duty military, 820,000 Reserve and Guard, and 773,000 civilians. They are under strain after over a decade of war and years of fiscal uncertainty. They are wrestling with many of the same issues as civilian society—issues such as sexual assault and suicide. Yet they are committed to protecting this Nation and remain the finest force in the world.

Every decision Dr. Carter makes, I know he will make it thinking ultimately about what is in the best interests of the men and women in uniform and the DOD civilian workforce who give so much to this country every day, and that, I think, is one of the factors that compels all of us to support this nomination.

Dr. Carter has proven time and time again his commitment to the men and women who serve this Nation. I believe he is the right leader at the right time for the Department of Defense, and I urge my colleagues to support his confirmation.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL

Mr. President, I would urge them also at this time to command and thank Secretary Chuck Hagel for his service. It began decades ago as a young sergeant in Vietnam where he was wounded twice, where he fought in close combat against the enemies of the United States. He took this ethic from his own experience of understanding that ultimately the decisions made here in Washington are carried out by young men and women across this globe. In his tenure, he brought principled leadership, he brought a dedication to the men and women of the Armed Forces, and he also looked ahead in many different ways. One notable approach was his complete review of the nuclear establishment, the triad, not only in terms of its effectiveness but its security and its ability to respond to the threats not just of the Cold War but of the new world we face.

So for many reasons, he has done a remarkable job, and at this juncture, it is an opportunity to salute his efforts.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. President, I have concluded my remarks with respect to the nomination of Dr. Carter, but I wish to speak for a moment on a different topic.

We are in the midst of trying to provide appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security. It is an action we must take and we should take and we should do it without extraneous policy provisions.

Over the past few weeks, the State of Rhode Island has been beset by a series of snowstorms. In fact, the State could face another foot of snow this weekend. In coordinating a response to a disaster such as this, my State depends upon the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency as well as local emergency managers. Those agencies, in turn, depend on Federal funding through the Department of Homeland Security, particularly the Emergency

Management Performance grant and Homeland Security grant programs, to build the capacity they need to respond to snowstorms, to hurricanes, and to natural disasters of all forms.

However, uncertainty about Federal funding makes it harder on my State to plan and prepare. It is harder for every State to plan and prepare. It is one of the many reasons we ought to pass the bipartisan bill that was negotiated by Democrats and Republicans on the Committee on Appropriations without the provisions added by the House regarding immigration.

A clean Department of Homeland Security bill would probably pass in this Chamber by an overwhelming majority in a matter of minutes. We all understand the security of the United States—not just with respect to natural disasters but with respect to many of the issues that are handed off, if you will, from the Department of Defense to the Department of Homeland Security. When we are worried, as we all are, about the lone wolves who may be in combat zones but coming to the United States, that is quickly a Department of Homeland Security responsibility. I don't think we want to confuse the issue of defending the homeland and protecting communities from natural disasters with other issues.

This is commonsense legislation. We have done it before. We have to move I think with alacrity to get this done. It is about protecting the American people from natural disasters as well as, unfortunately, in this world we live in, the potential for terrorist activities that emanate elsewhere but are directed against the United States.

Issues that are unrelated to funding the Department of Homeland Security I think should be put aside. We can deal with them. We can deal with them through the authorization process, but let's get this Department fully appropriated so it can continue.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I support Dr. Ashton B. Carter to be our next Secretary of Defense.

I have known Dr. Carter for many years, both inside government and out, and especially as members of the Aspen Strategy Group. I have found Dr. Carter to be deeply thoughtful and extraordinarily competent. I am confident he will serve with distinction as our next Secretary of Defense, and I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

It is vital to swiftly confirm Dr. Carter because we face countless threats around the world, many of which know no simple resolution. On all these national security issues, I strongly believe we need someone in charge who brings leadership, experience, intellect and a strategic lens. Dr. Carter possesses all of these things, and I fully expect he will put his expertise and counsel to good use in tackling our Nation's pressing challenges.