

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE
POSTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE IN
REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2020 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE
PROGRAM

Thursday, April 4, 2019

Washington, D.C.

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U.S. Senate

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Committee on Armed Services

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Washington, D.C.

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12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in
13 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.
14 Inhofe, chairman of the committee, presiding.

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Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe

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[presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis,

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Sullivan, Perdue, Cramer, Scott, Blackburn, Hawley, Reed,

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Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King,

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Heinrich, Warren, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, and Jones.

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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S.
2 SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

3 Chairman Inhofe: The committee meets today to receive
4 testimonies on the posture of the U.S. Air Force and its
5 fiscal year 2020 budget request.

6 We welcome Dr. Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air
7 Force, and General David Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air
8 Force, and thank both of you for your service and all that.

9 And we're really -- we're all saddened by the decision
10 that's been made by Secretary Wilson. Your work has just
11 been great, and maybe there's still -- it's still time to
12 change your mind. All right?

13 [Laughter.]

14 Chairman Inhofe: The national defense directs our
15 Nation's military to prepare for the return to great-power
16 competition. This means that we must be prepared to deter
17 and, if necessary, defeat potential near-peer adversaries.
18 Obviously, China and Russia. In order for the Air Force to
19 achieve that goal, it must properly be manned and trained
20 and equipped. Unfortunately, as pointed out by the National
21 Defense Strategy Commission, we are still in a readiness and
22 modernization crisis. At the end of the Obama
23 administration, the Air Force was at a historic low in
24 readiness. Less than 10 percent of combat squadrons were
25 ready and -- to deploy, and even less were prepared for the

1 peer fight. We have made progress in rebuilding the
2 readiness, but more needs to be done. A high state of
3 readiness is crucial for our Nation to demonstrate peace
4 through strength.

5 While our forces suffered being ill-prepared, our
6 adversaries moved out and recapitalized both their
7 conventional and nuclear forces. So, all the time that we
8 were resting and we were coasting, China and Russia were
9 not. And, in spite of the previous neglect of our military,
10 our men and women have done outstanding work for our Nation,
11 but it's past time for action. You have testified that,
12 quote, "Our Air Force is too small and too old to do what
13 the Nation asks," unquote, and that the Air Force needs to
14 grow to the 386 squadrons. And I agree that it needs to
15 grow and modernize. The future of our Air Force readiness
16 and relevance requires both growth and modernization now.

17 Any successful modernization strategy must focus on
18 results and meeting the needs of tomorrow's fight. Fielding
19 relevant technology fast requires discipline in acquisition
20 strategies. It also requires rapid prototyping and
21 experimentation in order to get modern, reliable, and lethal
22 systems into the hands of our warfighters, and doing so on
23 time and within allotted budget. So, executing the strategy
24 will require an open and transparent dialogue with Congress
25 all the way. We look forward to working with you to make

1 our shared modernization visions a reality and to ensure the
2 Air Force is a fighting force prepared for the more lethal
3 and dynamic battlefields of the future.

4 Senator Reed.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE
2 ISLAND

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

4 I want to join you in welcoming Secretary Wilson and
5 General Goldfein to the committee this morning to testify on
6 the plans and programs of the Department of the Air Force in
7 review of the fiscal year 2020 presidential budget. We are
8 grateful to all the men and women of the Air Force for their
9 professional service, and to their families for their
10 continued support.

11 In preparing this budget request, the Air Force faced
12 difficult decisions in balancing the need to modernizing and
13 keep the technological advantage over near-peer competitors
14 and the need to support ongoing operations and sustain
15 today's readiness. This budget request proposes funding
16 increases to address readiness concerns, munitions
17 shortfalls, preparing for the future fight, and modernizing
18 our strategic deterrent capability. While each of these
19 issues is important, I'm concerned that the Air Force may
20 not have taken as thorough a review of what programs could
21 be cut, delayed, or made more efficient in order to pay for
22 the proposed increases, so I am interested in the witnesses'
23 view on what efforts could be taken to offset current and
24 future costs.

25 In the near term, the Air Force has money in the

1 disaster emergency relief supplemental they need by May 1st.
2 If the Air Force has not received the \$1.2 billion funds by
3 this date, they will be forced to stop all work at Tyndall
4 Air Force Base, which will, in turn, delay the return of
5 full base operations. If these funds are delayed past that
6 date, other dire consequences may result, such as halting
7 recovery operations at Offutt Air Force Base, stopping
8 maintenance on some aircraft, and grounding others. I hope
9 we can focus on the potential consequences and move the
10 disaster emergency relief supplemental forward very, very
11 quickly.

12 In addition, because significant levels of funding are
13 being transferred to build a wall on the southern border,
14 the amount of reprogramming authority will be limited. Our
15 main concern is that the Air Force and other services may
16 run short of head room and reprogram authority, which could
17 lead to delays in other shortage areas as we approach the
18 end of the fiscal year.

19 One of the major issues that will be considered in this
20 year's NDAA is the Air Force proposal to buy more F-15
21 aircraft. For years, the Air Force has adamantly opposed
22 buying any more fourth-generation aircraft. I believe the
23 committee needs to understand this reversal. Any Air Force
24 proposal deserves our careful consideration, but we must
25 consider it against the recent history of abrupt Air Force

1 changes of direction on such programs as A-10, U-2, Global
2 Hawk, Compass Call, C-27 airlift aircraft, and JSTARS.
3 Another area of change is light attack experimentation
4 program -- light attack aircraft experimentation program.
5 For the past several years, the Air Force has been
6 conducting experiments with small trainer aircraft that have
7 been modified to include a modest ground attack capability.
8 Some expected these experiments would result in a program
9 that would produce one or two wings of aircraft for the Air
10 Force. In the FY20 budget request, the Air Force has
11 changed the nature and timing of that effort. The budget
12 request would defer funding for any light attack aircraft
13 until FY22, at which point the Air Force would buy roughly
14 24 aircraft. The aim of this revised program would be to
15 encourage coalition partners to contribute to the air
16 campaign effort with such aircraft, and to provide training
17 support for our partners who wanted to participate in such a
18 program. I ask that the witnesses explain this change in
19 focus and clarify the role of proposed light attack
20 aircraft.

21 In last year's budget request, the Air Force proposed
22 to truncate the program to modernize the Joint Surveillance
23 and Target Attack Radar System, or JSTARS, and to replace it
24 with a combination of other systems, including unmanned
25 systems and overhead sensors. The committee supported the

1 Air Force proposal, and the plan was ultimately adopted in
2 the fiscal year 2019 NDAA. I understand that the Air Force
3 has continued this program in the FY20 budget, and I look
4 forward to receiving an update on the progress.

5 I'm also interested in hearing updates of your
6 continuing efforts to improve the state of Air Force
7 personnel, including progress on improving the shortfalls
8 within the remotely-piloted aircraft operator community, and
9 how the Air Force has addressed shortfalls within the larger
10 pilot community and maintenance personnel.

11 The one major issue I have not mentioned is the
12 proposal for Space Force. I -- discussion of Space Force
13 this morning because Chairman Inhofe intends, and I heartily
14 concur, to convene a hearing next Thursday dedicated solely
15 to this issue with Acting Secretary Shanahan, Chairman
16 Dunford, Secretary Wilson, and General Hyten as witnesses.
17 With that in man -- with that in mind, rather, I plan to use
18 the hearing to focus on the issues I've already discussed.

19 Once again, Secretary Wilson, General Goldfein, thank
20 you very much.

21 And, Secretary Wilson, thank you for your distinguished
22 service to the Nation. You did an extraordinary job. I
23 wish you well at University of Texas - El Paso, Madam
24 President.

25 Thank you.

1 Chairman Inhofe: It does get pretty hot down there.

2 [Laughter.]

3 Chairman Inhofe: Well, it's -- anyway, you two have
4 been here before. You know the drill. And look forward to
5 hearing your opening statement. And we will -- your entire
6 statement will be made a part of the record.

7 And we'll start with Secretary Wilson.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. HEATHER A. WILSON, SECRETARY OF THE
2 AIR FORCE

3 Dr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With my full
4 statement in the record, I'll just summarize a few points,
5 and then ask the Chief to add in.

6 The budget proposal that we've put forward in -- for
7 fiscal year '20 is driven by the National Defense Strategy
8 and the five priority missions in that strategy. There are
9 three things that I think I'd like to highlight from our
10 testimony in what we're trying to do.

11 The first is, we're building a more lethal and ready
12 Air Force. The Air Force is more ready for major combat
13 operations today than we were 2 years ago because of the
14 support and the consistent budgets that have been approved
15 by the United States Congress. For the -- in the first
16 place, that means more people, and getting the right people,
17 and getting them trained. Two years ago, we were 4,000
18 maintainers short in the United States Air Force. As of
19 December, we are no maintainers short in the Active Force.
20 Now, that means that our maintainers are young, and now we
21 have to season them and make sure that they are fully
22 capable to do the jobs we're asking them to do. Last year,
23 we stopped the decline in pilots, and we are increasing
24 pilot training in order to close that gap, as well.

25 We are building that more lethal and ready force, but

1 we are also building tomorrow's Air Force faster and
2 smarter. The United States Congress gave us new authorities
3 and -- in order to buy equipment in new ways to meet a
4 rapidly innovating adversary. We cannot win this contest
5 with an acquisition system from the Cold War. And we are
6 taking advantage of the authorities that the Congress has
7 given us. Delegation works when you do it to competent
8 people and then monitor results. We are using the
9 authorities for prototyping and experimentation that you
10 have given us to start bending metal earlier, finding out
11 what really works, and then setting requirements. We are
12 also doing so in a way that is as transparent, or more
13 transparent, than the traditional acquisition system, by
14 giving reports to the Congress on our prototyping and
15 experimentation programs three times a year and setting
16 clear guardrails for when we need to report to you even more
17 frequently.

18 The third thing I would say is that we are changing the
19 way in which we engage small business. Many of you were
20 involved and helped us get the word out on our first Pitch
21 Day, where we took in proposals on some of our hardest
22 problems from over 400 companies, narrowed that down to
23 about 60, whom we invited to a 1-day Pitch Day with our
24 program managers in New York City. Fifty-one companies
25 earned awards on that day. The average time to complete a

1 contract was 15 minutes, and the contract is one page long.
2 We have to change the way we engage America's most
3 innovative businesses in order to have them work with us,
4 the United States Government. And we're showing the way --
5 or leading the way on how we can do that.

6 The third thing I would say is that the Air Force we
7 need is larger and different from the Air Force that we
8 have. This committee asked General Goldfein and I, last
9 year at this time-- we have a new National Defense Strategy,
10 and one of you asked us, "Well, you know, you always come up
11 here and defend the budget amount that you've proposed, but
12 what is the Air Force you need to execute the National
13 Defense Strategy?" And we didn't know the answer. And we
14 should know the answer. So, you directed us to do a study,
15 which we turned in to you, in classified form, on the 1st of
16 March, that sets out, after almost 8 months of study, what
17 is the Air Force we need to execute the National Defense
18 Strategy. We have 321 squadrons today. And, as the Chairman
19 pointed out, our analysis shows that, for the 2025-2030
20 timeframe, we need 386 operational squadrons to accomplish
21 the missions of the National Defense Strategy at a moderate
22 level of risk.

23 Finally, I would say this. On-time budgets and
24 certainty matters a lot. This Congress gave us that
25 certainty this year. And, in the first quarter of this year,

1 when we looked at our first-quarter results, we were able to
2 execute about the first quarter of our program. We were
3 able to do new-starts and set priorities and manage
4 appropriately. So, thank you for that certainty and that
5 on-time budget.

6 I would also say that one of the most difficult things
7 that we are facing as a service right now is the results of
8 two catastrophic storms that hit two of our Air Force bases:
9 Tyndall Air Force Base, in October; and, most recently,
10 Offutt Air Force Base, in Nebraska, with flooding. We need
11 the supplemental to recover from those terrible storms at
12 Tyndall and Offutt. And I look forward to working with you
13 all to achieve that end.

14 Thank you, sir.

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

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1 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

2 General Goldfein.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL DAVID L. GOLDFEIN, USAF, CHIEF OF
2 STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE

3 General Goldfein: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking
4 Member Reed, distinguished members of the committee. It's
5 really an honor once again to represent your Air Force,
6 Active, Guard, Reserve, civilian airmen who stand the watch
7 and provide top cover for the Nation and our joint and
8 allied teammates.

9 This hearing is among the first official forums since
10 Secretary Wilson announced her pending departure from the
11 Air Force. And I want to say publicly, on behalf of all
12 airmen and their families, what an honor it's been to work
13 with her every day to make our Air Force more ready and more
14 lethal. And this budget represents the culmination of our
15 work together to build the Air Force we need to compete,
16 deter, and, if deterrence fails, to fight and win. And I
17 want to state for the record that we're a better Air Force
18 because of the leadership and the vision of our Secretary,
19 Dr. Heather Wilson.

20 Thank you, ma'am.

21 Chairman, I went to the war -- I went to war for the
22 first time as a young captain, flying F-16s out of Shaw Air
23 Force Base in South Carolina just days after Saddam Hussein
24 invaded his neighbor in Kuwait. At the time, we had 401
25 operational squadrons consisting of 945,000 Active, Guard,

1 Reserve, and civilian airmen, and 8,629 aircraft, with an
2 average age of 17 years, in an Air Force that landed our
3 Nation's initial punch, 401 operational squadrons to defeat
4 a middleweight, non-nuclear power who threatened his
5 neighbor and the region, but posed little threat to our
6 homeland and our way of life. Today, we have just 312
7 operational squadrons, down from 401. We have 685,000
8 airmen, down from 945,000. We have 5,314 aircraft, down
9 from over 8600. And the average age of our aircraft is 28
10 years.

11 Chairman, we are not the Air Force of Desert Storm.
12 When General McPeak was the Chief of Staff in 1991, he and
13 his fellow Joint Chiefs were focused on supporting a single
14 combatant commander, General Norm Schwarzkopf, the Commander
15 of U.S. Central Command. Today, should deterrence fail and
16 we find ourselves defending a Nation -- our Nation against a
17 major nuclear power, I expect to get three phone calls
18 simultaneously on my Red Switch phone. First the geographic
19 combatant commander will request forces to support his
20 operational plan, which will include backfill for any
21 fighters, tankers, and command-and-control forces he must
22 place on nuclear alert. The next call will be from the U.S.
23 Strategic Command Commander, who will tell me how many
24 bombers, tankers, and command-and-control forces he needs to
25 execute his nuclear deterrence mission, protecting not only

1 our homeland, but also our allies and partners. The third
2 call will come from the Commander of U.S. Northern Command
3 and NORAD, who will tell me how many fighters, tankers, ISR,
4 and C2 aircraft he will need to execute his operational plan
5 to defend the U.S. and Canada. And the Air Force will be
6 required to support these missions simultaneously, not
7 sequentially, while at the same time, shoulder-to-shoulder
8 with our joint teammates, maintaining a global presence to
9 deter any rogue nation while simultaneously maintaining
10 campaign pressure against violent extremism.

11 This is the stark difference between fighting a
12 middleweight rogue nation without nuclear weapons versus
13 competing, deterring, and, if deterrence fails, fighting and
14 winning a peer fight. It's why Secretary Wilson and I
15 continue to articulate in every forum, "The Air Force is too
16 small for what the Nation is asking it to do." And it's why
17 we reported to this committee, as the Secretary said in
18 March, that the Air Force we need to execute the National
19 Defense Strategy requires 386 operational squadrons. And
20 it's why the National Defense Strategy Commission, after
21 their research, stated, "Regardless of where the next
22 conflict occurs or which adversary it features, the Air
23 Force will be at the foresight -- at the forefront." With
24 your support of this budget request, we'll continue to
25 rebuild the readiness and lethality of this force, which you

1 supported last year with an on-time appropriation following
2 a damaging sequester and years of budget uncertainty. And,
3 for that, we thank you.

4 Chairman, history doesn't always repeat, but it does
5 rhyme now and then. My father fought as a young F-4 pilot
6 in Vietnam, and he and many of his peers stayed in and
7 rebuilt the Air Force his son needed to fight and win in
8 Desert Storm, which was followed by 28 years of continual
9 combat operations, including 10 years of operations Northern
10 and Southern Watch, air campaigns in Bosnia, Kosovo, and
11 Serbia, and continuing through the past 17 years fighting
12 violent extremism in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and North
13 Africa. Today, my daughter and my nephews are young airmen.
14 And, with your continued support, with on-time
15 appropriations, we'll build the Air Force they're going to
16 need to fight and win in this era of great-power
17 competition.

18 So, on behalf of every airmen serving today, and their
19 families, I want to thank this committee for your unwavering
20 support. And Secretary Wilson and I look forward to your
21 questions.

22 Thank you.

23 Chairman Inhofe: Well, thank both of you.

24 We'll have a round of -- a 5-minute round.

25 I -- that was a great historic perspective. I

1 appreciate that very much. And it's one that a lot of
2 people have forgotten.

3 Now, I know that we're all locked into the NDS and the
4 Commission. They've done a great job. We had two good
5 hearings here. Everyone believes that we should be
6 following that blueprint that we've established. And while,
7 yeah, we -- this is -- we're on the way to recovery right
8 now, we still have problems out there. I mean, if we were
9 to follow the NDS, that would be an increase for this 5-
10 year-- for the FYDP of between 3 and 5 percent increase over
11 inflation. And this 750 doesn't do that. It's -- we're not
12 quite there. So, I think, when-- your discussion, starting
13 with that as something we kind of agreed on, you had to give
14 in some areas that probably could have very well produced
15 some risk.

16 General, what would -- during that process, what things
17 did you kind of either slight or change from what we had
18 thought was going to be a good model and a blueprint to
19 follow?

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And I -- I'm aligned with
21 the Chairman, who's testified, as well, to say that 3
22 percent allows us to keep -- stay even; 5 percent allows us
23 to improve and modernize in both capability, capacity,
24 readiness. And the trades that we made --

25 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah, but we didn't do the 3 percent,

1 even.

2 General Goldfein: That's right. So, the challenges
3 that we had -- one of the places we didn't take risk was
4 readiness recovery. And so, what the Secretary talked
5 about, in terms of getting our maintainer shortage to zero
6 and ensuring that we're investing in people, we did not take
7 risk. Where we had to take risk was in areas of -- some
8 areas of modernization, some areas of procurement, and some
9 areas where we'd like to have bought more to get at that
10 shortfall we have of the aircraft we need --

11 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah.

12 General Goldfein: -- to go forward.

13 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah.

14 And, Secretary Wilson, I'm -- someone's got to say
15 this. We're right in the middle of the -- of a budget thing.
16 And if something should happen that we're not able to do
17 this, and we had to go back -- keeping in mind that we went
18 through fiscal year '18 and fiscal year '19 as recovery
19 years, and -- but if fiscal year '20 comes up and we don't
20 do the -- if we have to fall back to BCA and to the -- or a
21 CR, describe to us what the result of that would be and how
22 this would have impacted what we've already done in fiscal
23 year '18 and '19.

24 Dr. Wilson: Well, let me give you -- with respect to
25 the Budget Control Act and sequester, for the Air Force that

1 would be about a \$29 billion cut. To put that in context,
2 that would be four times as large as what happened in
3 sequester the last time. So, let me give you what that
4 would look like.

5 Now, a sequester is kind of across the board, but what
6 would the -- what would the magnitude of those choices look
7 like under the Budget Control Act? \$29 billion. That would
8 be no F-35s. Cut all of the KC-46s, all -- stop the B-21
9 program. No ground-based strategic deterrent. No research,
10 development, test, and evaluation for any space system, most
11 of the fourth- and fifth-generation modifications and all of
12 science and technology. Or \$29 billion means all of weapon
13 system sustainment, all flying hours, all base operations
14 and airfield support, and all munitions, together to make
15 \$29 billion. I think you can see that that would be
16 absolutely devastating in scope and scale.

17 With respect to a continuing resolution, what that
18 would mean is, we've got 16 new military construction
19 projects that wouldn't start, and 18, for current missions,
20 military construction that wouldn't start, and we would
21 also-- we've got 89 research, development, test, and
22 evaluation new-starts in this budget that wouldn't start.

23 So, either of those would set us back significantly.
24 Sequester, at this point, would be four times as bad as it
25 was in the previous time that the Air Force went through it,

1 and we are still recovering from a sequester that would be
2 just one-quarter of the impact if we had to go through it
3 again.

4 Chairman Inhofe: That's a frightening scenario. But,
5 I would agree with that. I -- and you think about the
6 progress that we made during that period of time, the two
7 fiscal years. You had mentioned the Tyndall and the Offutt.
8 And we do know that there are some problems. And I -- one
9 thing has -- that has been discussed is cutting the 18,000
10 flight hours. You know, we went through that once before,
11 and that was a -- that turned out to be a disaster, and we
12 changed our situation there. Does that look like one of the
13 things that you think we might have to do in order to come
14 up with the results that we're looking for?

15 Dr. Wilson: Mr. Chairman, with respect to Tyndall,
16 last week I had to hold back money for 61 facility
17 modernization projects in 18 States because we still don't -
18 - we're cash-flowing the damage to Tyndall. And just this
19 year, the impact will be about \$750 million. As the -- as
20 we get further into this year, my options narrow further and
21 further. If we get into May, we're probably going to have
22 to stop the recovery at Tyndall, and that means an impact to
23 flight operations there, as well as to people who are going
24 to continue to live in -- and work in degraded facilities.
25 We're going to have to, in May sometime, stop a lot of

1 aircraft repairs. We're going to have to ground some of our
2 bombers if we don't get the supplemental to recover --

3 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah.

4 Dr. Wilson: -- from Tyndall. If we get towards the
5 end of the year and we've only got a month or so left,
6 there's very few options that we have. So, I'm trying to
7 minimize the impact and give the Congress enough time to
8 pass a supplemental. But, if I get into that last month and
9 I still haven't balanced, because of the impact of the
10 storm, and we don't have a supplemental, yes, it will impact
11 flying hours.

12 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah. Well, my time's expired, but
13 I'm-- for the record, I'm going to ask you a question as to
14 where we are right now when we're talking about 48 F-35s and
15 eight F-15s. I mean, it seems to me we're getting in --
16 back into the fourth generation that we're hoping to be out
17 of. And then, we remember so much. And sometimes in
18 history, we forget about the fact that -- what happened to
19 our F-22s. You know, it started out that was going to be
20 750, ended up being, what, 187, and we've paid dearly for
21 that ever since then. That was a huge mistake, should not
22 have happened. So, I'll be asking those questions for the
23 record.

24 [The information referred to follows:]

25 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

2 So, I'm interested in those topics, too, Mr. Chairman,
3 since I raised it in my opening statement.

4 Chairman Inhofe: You did.

5 Senator Reed: So, General Goldfein, for years the Air
6 Force has declined to request funding for F-15s or F-16s,
7 and it was a pretty strong declination. This year, there
8 are eight F-15s in the budget, 1.1 billion over the FYDP,
9 7.9 billion for about 80 F-15s. Can you just give us an
10 idea -- and I think it touches upon the Chairman's
11 question, too -- based on your personal and professional
12 judgment, is this a wise acquisition?

13 General Goldfein: Sir, this is what went into the
14 decision. And it starts with, Chairman Inhofe, your point.
15 If you go back to the decision when we cut the F-22, a part
16 of that decision was the program of record. We should have
17 1100 F-35s today. We have less than 300. The F-15Cs were
18 supposed to be long gone. So, first and foremost, as we
19 went into looking at the capacity challenges we're facing
20 right now, we're absolutely adamant that the F-35 program,
21 the program of record that we have, stays absolutely on
22 track, and that we don't take a dime out of the F-35,
23 because it's not only a game changer for us, it's the
24 quarterback of the penetrating joint team. So, what you'll
25 see in our budget is not only maintaining the F-35 program,

1 but we're actually adding \$1.8 billion to the F-35 program
2 to make sure we stayed on track.

3 Here's the challenge we faced. We have the capacity --
4 those missions -- those phone calls that I'm going to get,
5 that I laid out in my opening statement, that are
6 simultaneous -- our mission assessments of the Air Force we
7 need says that we need all of the capacity of both fifth-
8 and fourth-gen. We've got four fourth-gen aircraft that
9 have got to fly into the 2030, the F-15C, the F-15E, the F-
10 16, and the A-10. One of them's not going to make it, and
11 that's the F-15C. So, knowing that, we had to find a way to
12 refresh the F-15C line only by keeping the F-35 program on
13 track. And we only looked at one option, which was a F-15
14 variant to replace an F-15. Because what that does was, it
15 allows you to use the same hangars, same construction, same
16 base, same operating equipment, which is 90-percent common,
17 same maintainers, same operators, and no time and minimal
18 costs to make a transition. The Saudis and the Qataris have
19 kept that line open and have invested in making it a much
20 better airplane. So, we can capture all that, the business
21 case for being able to refresh that F-15C line only, on top
22 of the F-15, with the other fourth-gen airplanes, make--
23 made the most sense to us, and using the CAPE estimates.

24 We are now an Air Force of about 20 percent fifth-gen,
25 80 percent fourth-gen. By 2040, our target is to reverse

1 those numbers: 80 percent fifth-gen, 20 percent fourth-gen.
2 That target has not changed, and we have not changed our
3 position on the F-35. We've just got a capacity near-term
4 issue we've got to solve.

5 Senator Reed: Thank you.

6 Just a quick, almost, footnote on the F-35. One of the
7 issues you're still dealing with is sustainment costs, which
8 are much higher than you can manage, frankly, going forward.
9 And I presume both you and the Secretary are committed to
10 getting those sustainment costs down dramatically. That
11 fair?

12 General Goldfein: Sir, we are committed to that. And
13 we've made that very clear to the contractor, as the largest
14 customer, I believe we speak not only on our behalf of the
15 Air Force, but also behalf of our Navy and Marine Corps
16 teammates and all of the international air chiefs and the
17 international partners who are in the F-35. And so, the
18 target that we've put out is to get a procurement cost below
19 80 million and an average cost per flying hour of less than
20 30,000 per flying hour, which puts it comparable to the high
21 end of a fourth-gen.

22 Senator Reed: Right.

23 General Goldfein: If we can hit those targets, then
24 we've got an affordable airplane that is already a game
25 changer.

1 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

2 And, Secretary Wilson and General Goldfein, last year's
3 NDAA, Section 335, asked for the list of 10 most vulnerable
4 installations to weather challenges. And we have not yet
5 received that list from the Air Force. We had the Army here
6 last week. They committed their leadership to send us this
7 list. Would you do that? Because, you know, looking at
8 Tyndall, looking at some of these other bases, it's not a
9 one-off experience. I -- you know, we're going to have more
10 storm damages. And if we don't know where to start putting
11 our mitigation funding and our sustainability funding, we'll
12 misspend resources. Can you send us those lists?

13 Dr. Wilson: Yes, sir, we will.

14 [The information referred to follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, ma'am. Thank you,
2 Madam Secretary.

3 One of the other issues that came up last week when we
4 were speaking to the Army is, they did a deep dive. They
5 looked at where they could save money to pay for -- which we
6 understand are significant challenges. We're trying to
7 help, but, as the Chairman and the dialogue here is
8 presented, you know, we're not up at that 5-percent level.
9 We're probably hovering close to the 3. So, some of these
10 savings have to be found internally. Can you give us just a
11 quick sense of what you've done and what you propose to do?

12 Dr. Wilson: Thank you, Senator. We -- the Air Force
13 also conducted what we call the "zero base review" of our
14 1,072 programs in the Air Force. And we will do that again
15 for fiscal year '21. Our approach was to come up with a
16 balanced budget that made us as lethal as we possibly could
17 be. We restructured our next-generation air-dominance
18 program. Of course, last year, we had proposed, and you all
19 approved, the restructuring, cancellation of JSTARS and
20 moving to advanced battle management. We terminated the B-2
21 high-frequency program. We put money into readiness and
22 tried to focus that on the squadrons where it made the most
23 different -- difference, what we call our "pacing units."
24 So, we also -- and when we try to do acquisition faster and
25 smarter, we're trying to bring more competition into our

1 procurements, because that drives down cost. In fact, with
2 the four major procurements that we've announced in the last
3 7 months, we came in \$15 billion below the independent cost
4 estimate, and were able to take that \$15 billion and roll it
5 back into greater readiness and lethality.

6 So, our approaches have been slightly different than
7 the way the Army has approached the problem set, but the
8 intent is the same, to get the most value we can out of
9 every dollar that we spend.

10 Senator Reed: Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

13 Senator Fischer.

14 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Madam Secretary and General, I'd like to thank you both
16 for making visits to Offutt Air Force Base after the
17 flooding that we saw hit Nebraska a couple of weeks ago.
18 And, Madam Secretary, it was a pleasure to be able to have
19 you at office when we were able to survey the damage
20 together there. I thank you for your commitment to rebuild
21 Offutt, and I look forward to working with you on that task.

22 I have no doubt that this committee appreciates the
23 essential value of that installation. And I do think it's
24 important that this committee also understands the full
25 impact to Offutt and what will happen if we do not provide

1 supplemental funding. You mentioned the effects of
2 sequester, a CR, if we do not get the supplemental funding
3 to Tyndall, with looking at the 61 projects that are out
4 there in 18 States, and the effect that has, not just on
5 repairs, but on readiness. But, now you add Offutt into
6 that mix, as well. Can you explain the effect that that
7 will have if we do not get this supplemental funding done?

8 Dr. Wilson: Senator, let me talk a little bit about
9 that. We have a rough estimate now of what it's going to do-
10 - what we're going to need to just recover from the damage
11 done at Offutt. So, it wasn't just that a third of the
12 runway was covered by water, it is that the water came up
13 into a number of our facilities and buildings there,
14 including some satellite facilities and other things.

15 I would say two things first. One is a real thank you
16 to the people in Nebraska. When the base put the call out
17 for needing people to help with sandbags to protect the
18 base, the city of Bellevue showed up with dump trucks' worth
19 of sand. It was a wonderful partnership, even when they
20 were also threatened.

21 The second thing that I would say is that STRATCOM
22 headquarters was in the middle of an exercise when that
23 flood hit, and they didn't miss a beat, because there was
24 redundancy in power, and they were at the -- we worked with
25 the commercial power provider to make sure that power was

1 shut off in an orderly way and shifted to the backup
2 systems. Resilience does matter.

3 The reality is, though, that we're going to probably
4 have \$350 million worth of damages there at Offutt just this
5 year, and that's not including MILCON, which will be further
6 out, to recover and rebuild some of those facilities. And
7 if we don't get the supplemental to recover from the storm
8 damage, in July we're going to have to start deferring
9 Offutt recovery other than for matters related to health and
10 safety. And that means the risk of mold and continued
11 damage to buildings that then cost more to recover will
12 increase.

13 Senator Fischer: Thank you.

14 As you both know, the 55th Wing is also at Offutt.
15 It's the home of the RC-135, which is Air Force's largest
16 manned ISR platform. Secretary Wilson, last October, you
17 responded to a question that I submitted for the record on
18 the future of the RC-135, and you stated, quote, "The RC-135
19 family of aircraft will continue to operate through at least
20 2040 to 2050," end quote.

21 General, yesterday, you were at the HASC hearing, and,
22 in testimony, when discussing the RC-135, you mentioned that
23 the Air Force is looking at fusing capabilities that are
24 platform-centric. Can you explain -- or can you expand on
25 this and what it really means for the C-135 family of

1 aircraft? I think there might have been a little confusion
2 yesterday on that.

3 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

4 First of all, let me reinforce Secretary's testimony
5 that, in fact, the RC-135, which is not only a U.S.
6 platform, but one that we also do with our U.K. partners.
7 We're partners in that program. So, our ability to fly that
8 airplane into the 2040s is going to be absolutely essential.

9 The Advanced Battle Management System, the debate that
10 we had last year that this committee supported, is bigger
11 than Joint STARS. This is about the future of joint
12 warfighting and how we move from a platform-centric approach
13 to a network-centric approach. And the visual I would offer
14 you-- you know, sometimes we, I think, are guilty of putting
15 forth PowerPoint slides that have big, red domes over
16 countries that-- as though we cannot penetrate or get in. A
17 better visual actually is a block of Swiss cheese, because
18 that's about what any country can put over the top of them
19 to defend themselves. And it's our job to actually know
20 where the holes are and get in. And once we get in, then we
21 do the -- what I call the "five Ps" of air superiority,
22 right? We've got to penetrate, we've got to persist when
23 we're inside there, we've got to protect what's in there,
24 not only on the ground, in the air, at sea, we've got to
25 proliferate, and we've got to be able to punish by holding

1 targets at risk.

2 So, if an adversary actually ever sees an F-35, which
3 is unlikely, I would like to also send them a message on
4 their screensavers that says, "We're here." Not "I'm here,"
5 but "We're here." Because the visual I would offer you is
6 that, if the F-35 is inside, it is the quarterback of a
7 penetrating joint team, and that joint team consists of an
8 F-35, a B-21, an RQ-170, an X-37 in space, low-Earth
9 orbiting satellites, a penetrating attack submarine, a small
10 team on the ground. And the key for that penetrating team
11 to operate is to connect every sensor to every shooter. And
12 that's advanced battle management.

13 And so, this is bigger than the Joint STARS. This is
14 about the future of joint warfighting and how the entire
15 Department is shifting to networked warfare of the future.

16 Senator Fischer: And as we move to that future,
17 though, the 135s definitely have a role to play, as the
18 Secretary said, through 2040 to 2050, because that future is
19 not where we are at the present. Is that a correct
20 statement?

21 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. And where I would give
22 you in the visual is, every sensor to every shooter, and the
23 RC-135 is a critical sensor.

24 Senator Fischer: Okay, thank you.

25 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

1 Senator Jones.

2 Senator Jones: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 And thank you both for being here.

4 And let me add my voice, Madam Secretary, for your
5 service. And I want to particularly thank you for the time
6 that you've spent with me over the last 15 months as I
7 joined this body. And it's been very, very helpful.

8 And, in one of our meetings, in particular, we talked
9 about Air Force's Junior ROTC program. That program really
10 came to my attention through a similar program that the Air
11 Guard in Alabama has. Colonel Sparrow -- "Swapper Sparrow"
12 has a program to give some scholarships for kids. And I
13 notice that, for the Air Force to grow from, like, 312
14 operational squadrons to 386, we're going to need, like,
15 1480 pilots for FY20. I am hopeful that, in doing that, we
16 can also increase the number of female and minority pilots,
17 which I think is really -- that Junior ROTC program is
18 directed to. And I'd like for you to just talk about that
19 program for a minute, and talk about the success for that
20 program. We have introduced a bill recently to kind of
21 expand that across the other branches of the services. So, I
22 think it's a good opportunity for you to talk about the Air
23 Force's success in that program.

24 Dr. Wilson: Well, thank you, sir. Thanks for the
25 opportunity.

1 We are facing a national shortage of aircrew and
2 pilots. And, while we are having plenty of people volunteer
3 to go through training with us and we don't think we'll have
4 trouble getting to the 1480, we need to inspire the next
5 generation of aviators and cause people to choose to fly.
6 When we look at who we don't have volunteering in the Air
7 Force and who's not stepping up in civil aviation, as well,
8 there is a disproportionately low number of women and
9 minorities who choose to fly. And when we looked at the
10 data, one of the things that was interesting was that, if
11 you ask an Anglo boy, "When did you decide to learn to
12 fly?"-- they usually say, "Fourth, fifth grade," somewhere
13 around there. If you ask girls, women, or minorities, it's
14 much more common for them to say, "In high school" or "In
15 college."

16 One of the things we looked at was the Junior ROTC
17 program. And here's an interesting factoid that I didn't
18 know before I became Secretary. But, our Junior ROTC
19 programs, which we have in high schools across America, are
20 58 percent minority. And so, last summer, with some of our
21 excess funds, we decided to sponsor 170 high school kids to
22 get their private pilot's license. We partnered with seven
23 universities around the country. They had to be in Junior
24 ROTC, which gave us a -- you know, we -- so, we're going
25 after the population we were interested in. So, they showed

1 some interest in the military. There was no requirement to
2 join the military. But, a full-ride scholarship on a
3 college campus for 7 weeks in the summer to get their
4 private pilot's license. So, we're trying to inspire the
5 next generation of aviators. About 90 percent of them were
6 successful in getting that private pilot's license, and we
7 hope that we have sparked a dream.

8 Senator Jones: Great. Well, thank you very much for
9 that. And I hope we can get that going across the other
10 agencies.

11 And, following up on that a little bit, just, General,
12 about recruiting, we've heard the challenges, sometimes, of
13 recruiting, but I notice, you know, in the budget, you're --
14 the Air Force has increased its recruiting goal without
15 really talking about challenges. Have you experienced
16 challenges? It seems that, to meet the budget, you are
17 trying to recruit 4,400 new airmen. What experience have
18 you challenges? But, more importantly, what are some of the
19 Air Force's successful recruiting strategies?

20 General Goldfein: Thanks, Senator.

21 We have met our recruiting goals, and -- but, I'll tell
22 you, what's been interesting is -- you know, there's a
23 tradition at the Recruiting Squadron; when they meet their
24 quota, they ring a bell. And normally, through most of the
25 year, they ring the bell about the middle of the month.

1 What we're seeing is that they're often ringing the bell in
2 the last day or 2 days, because it's becoming harder and
3 harder. And this is a challenge across -- this is -- this
4 has to do with, you know, 29 percent of America's youth
5 that's physically, you know, capable of serving. And we're
6 all fishing in that same pool. So, it's a challenge for all
7 services. We're happy to report that, to date, we've been
8 able to meet our recruiting goals.

9 When we looked at the growth and the glide slope that
10 we could sustain, in terms of increasing our numbers, 4400 a
11 year, plus then about 3,000 or so after that, is a -- is --
12 allows us to have a very steady growth path that allows us
13 to not only go out and recruit what we need, but also bring
14 them in. We have the right numbers in basic military
15 training, the right numbers in tech schools. So, the entire
16 pipeline now has been built to be able to sustain that
17 growth over time.

18 Probably the biggest success story, I will tell you, is
19 in our special warfare business. We stood up a new
20 recruiting squadron to going after our Special Operators,
21 our young men and women who are -- that are capable of
22 probably the most intense training pipeline of any of the
23 services, certainly in ours-- 2 years' pipeline. And we're
24 seeing a lot of success with mentors, a preparatory program,
25 and getting out to high schools and talking about what an

1 Air Force does on the ground.

2 Senator Jones: Great. Well, thank you all very much.
3 I appreciate that. I'm looking forward to talking about
4 SPACECOM next week.

5 Thank you.

6 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

7 Senator Cotton.

8 Senator Cotton: Thank you, Secretary Wilson, General
9 Goldfein, for your testimony today.

10 I know you spoke a little bit earlier about what would
11 happen if the Air Force returned to sequester-level budgets.
12 Let's hope that doesn't happen. It usually hasn't happened
13 since 2013. But, General Goldfein, I'd like for you to
14 address what would happen under an alternative scenario that
15 some people in Congress are talking about. Let's suppose
16 you got a full-year continuing resolution. So, Congress
17 couldn't reach an agreement to lift the budget caps and pass
18 the normal annual spending bills, the way we have the last
19 12 years, so Congress throws up its hands sometimes later
20 this summer or early fall, and says, "You know what? We're
21 just going to have a full-year continuing resolution for all
22 of fiscal year 2020. You'll get exactly what you got last
23 year." What would that impact be?

24 General Goldfein: Thanks, sir.

25 Just -- I'll just give you a few examples of what

1 that'll mean for us, because, of course, a year-long CR, we
2 would assume, would be to execute, with no new-starts, at
3 the '19 levels. So, new mission MILCON, KC-46, F-35, TX
4 would all stop. That would affect about 16 projects that
5 would stop and, therefore, stop our ability to bed down,
6 because you have to have the infrastructure to bed down the
7 weapon systems. We have about 18 current mission MILCON
8 projects that would cease and stop that would affect our
9 readiness. You know, any procurement, RDT&E, new-starts
10 would stop. That would affect over 89 programs, the United
11 States Air Force, for an Air Force that's working hard to
12 modernize, that this committee has supported. And if it goes
13 anything more than 6 months, it would put our end-strength
14 growth at risk, because we will not be able to bring on the
15 additional airmen we need, not to have mission growth, but
16 actually to fill our formations to do the missions that
17 we're already doing. So, it would have a significantly
18 negative impact.

19 Senator Cotton: So, almost the worst thing imaginable.

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

21 Senator Cotton: Sequester would be the worst thing,
22 but it's hard to --

23 General Goldfein: Yes.

24 Senator Cotton: -- imagine we would go back to the
25 actual sequester levels. But, a proposal that's being

1 batted around to have a full-year continuing resolution,
2 almost the worst thing imaginable.

3 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Cotton: All right, thank you for that.

5 Couple of NDAA's ago, the Congress directed the Air
6 Force to begin to transition a significant number of UAV
7 pilots to enlisted ranks, an issue on which I've worked.
8 And Senator King and Senator Jones and I are working
9 together on this pilot issue. Could you tell us how that's
10 going, what we've learned about -- learned from it?

11 General Goldfein: Sir, no surprises. As you might
12 imagine, what we learned is, our enlisted force can do
13 anything we ask them to do. And the enlisted members who
14 have been in the -- we put them in the RQ-4, the Global Hawk
15 program, and they've performed brilliantly.

16 We've now expanded the discussion, though, because, as
17 we work through in space and look at the -- building the
18 force we need to fight and win in a contested environment,
19 today all constellations are being flown by our young
20 enlisted force. You know, we have seven members right now
21 who are on duty, who are running GPS for the globe right now
22 at Schriever Air Force Base. So, the question we're asking
23 is, What is the future of the enlisted operator when you
24 look at space transitioning to a contested domain and high-
25 altitude ISR, going forward? And is there a broader

1 discussion that we're having about that enlisted operator in
2 high-altitude ISR when it's above the atmosphere and below
3 the atmosphere? And is there a career path where someone
4 can now go into the business of ISR as an enlisted operator
5 and transition between the two? So, we're taking the
6 lessons we learned from where we are today, and now
7 expanding that discussion. And that's where I think we're
8 going to land.

9 Senator Cotton: Okay, thank you.

10 I'd like to talk about the B-21 budget request. I have
11 occasional hearings on the B-21 and its progress in a closed
12 setting so we can ensure that, 20 years from now, people
13 don't look back on some of the decisions made now, as we do
14 look back on the F-35. Last year, the budget request was
15 2.3 billion. This year, it's 3 billion. Secretary Wilson,
16 in this setting, could you tell us a little bit more about
17 why we've seen that increase and what the Department plans
18 to do with it?

19 Dr. Wilson: Senator, we've got -- we're moving forward
20 with the research, development, test, and evaluation of this
21 new aircraft. We had the critical design review in -- it
22 was late last year, fourth quarter last year. And the
23 program is on track and on schedule.

24 Senator Cotton: Okay.

25 General Goldfein, anything to add?

1 General Goldfein: No, sir. Same.

2 Senator Cotton: I know we're projected at 100,
3 minimum, aircraft. Given the threat environment we face and
4 the posture review that you've undertaken, can you envision
5 a scenario in-- where we need to have more than 100 B-21s?

6 General Goldfein: I can, sir. And, not surprisingly,
7 when we did our analysis of the Air Force we need, which was
8 over 2,000 computer iterations of different force elements
9 against the latest combatant commander OPLANs, operational
10 plans, and the projection of the threat in the '25 to 2030
11 timeframe. No surprise that long-range aviation was in the
12 shortest supply and in the greatest demand. So, tankers,
13 bombers, long-range ISR and command and control, those are
14 where you're seeing the largest amount of growth required
15 for the Air Force we need. So, I do see an environment
16 where the bombers would be a larger number required.

17 Senator Cotton: And, over the long run, that would
18 produce a lower average unit cost, I would assume, right?

19 General Goldfein: It would.

20 Senator Cotton: Okay.

21 Thank you both for your testimony.

22 Secretary Wilson, thank you for your service. We're
23 sorry to see you leave. I guess, though, congratulations is
24 in order to see you leave Washington?

25 [Laughter.]

1 Dr. Wilson: I was released early for good behavior.

2 [Laughter.]

3 Senator Cotton: Very well.

4 Thank you all.

5 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

6 Senator Duckworth.

7 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Thank you both for being here, and also, thank you for
9 your service.

10 General Goldfein, you stated that F-35 is the
11 quarterback of our fighters -- fighter aircraft. And you
12 also said that, by 2040, you want a 80-20 percent dominance
13 of the Air Wing by the fifth-generation fighters, like the
14 F-35. And in all my time on House Armed Services Committee,
15 we had a lot of discussion about the need to invest in more
16 fifth-generation into our current fleet, but then also to
17 start investing in sixth-generation aircraft, certainly
18 because our competitors, on the global scale, the Chinese,
19 are pushing into the sixth-generation, themselves. So, I'm
20 a little bit confused. How will funding the F-15X -- EX --
21 affect your goal of this dominance, given that a sustained
22 defense budget is not guaranteed, moving into the future?

23 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

24 So, first, I'll just -- I'll say that the F-35, as I
25 describe it, is the quarterback of more than the fighter

1 force. It's the quarterback of the penetrating joint team.
2 And when you look at the investment in -- that we are
3 making, in this budget, in penetrating capability, you'll
4 see \$135 billion of investment. But, the -- but, that is F-
5 35, plus B-21, plus other capabilities that we're -- plus
6 space capabilities -- that are all required to penetrate
7 enemy airspace and be able to watch the enemy. So, first
8 and foremost, the F-35, which is why we are not backing an
9 inch off of our program of record, and maintaining the F-35,
10 because it is the quarterback of the joint team that we
11 need.

12 The challenge we face is a near-term challenge. Our
13 analysis indicated that, to be able to drive aircraft aged
14 to a manageable level and to be able to do the missions that
15 we require, we have to procure 72 aircraft a year to do
16 that. There's four aircraft that we have to fly in the
17 fourth generation, capacity-wise, into the 2030s, and that's
18 the F-15C, the A-10, the F-15E, and the F-16. Three are
19 going to be capable of flying into the 2030s. One is not
20 going to make it. So, the F-15 refresh is only to give us
21 the capacity we need as we make that transition from 20-80
22 to 80-20. And we find ourselves in this position again,
23 because, as the Chairman mentioned, when the decision to
24 cancel the F-22 occurred -- we're supposed to have 1100 F-
25 35s right now. We have less than 300. So, we're faced with

1 the situation we have right now. And, as the Secretary and
2 I looked at the cost estimates, an F-15 refresh, using the
3 investments that the Saudis and the Qataris have put in that
4 line, to replace the F-15C, as long as we don't impact the
5 F-35 line, was a reasonable choice.

6 Senator Duckworth: So, you're refreshing the Charlie-
7 model F-15s, and they're going into the EX. Then you--
8 what's the projected lifespan for the refresh model into the
9 future? You're saying into 2030?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. Actually, longer. The
11 model of -- the EX model has got a 20,000-hour service-life
12 expectancy.

13 Senator Duckworth: And will that affect what your
14 future requests are going to be for the number F-35s?

15 General Goldfein: Ma'am, if we ever get to a point
16 where we are trading F-35s for F-15s, let me tell you,
17 that's a bad choice. The F-15 is not an F-35. It will
18 never be an F-35. We are just -- you know, in the flying
19 business, we -- you know, we describe things as "runway
20 behind us and runway ahead of us." The run -- the decision
21 that was made on the F-22 to put us in the place we're in is
22 "runway behind us." I can't affect that. The Secretary and
23 I can only affect "runway ahead of us." And what we need
24 is, we need the capacity, and we've got to get to 72
25 aircraft a year. And we've got to look at the cost

1 projections to be able to make an affordable decision, going
2 forward.

3 Senator Duckworth: Understood. Also, "airspace above-
4 - altitude above you and gas on the ground, behind you,"
5 right?

6 Last year, it was reported that more than 126 military
7 installations or sites and their surrounding communities
8 rely on wells or groundwater sources that contain dangerous
9 levels of two chemical compounds that are tied to birth
10 defects and certain cancers, known as PFOS and PFOAs.

11 Secretary Wilson, how many Air Force military installations
12 may be threatened by dangerous levels of PFOS and PFOAs? Do
13 you know?

14 Dr. Wilson: Ma'am, we have done 110 detailed site
15 inspections. We have looked at 297 total locations. So,
16 we've done the detail of those. Of the ones we did -- so,
17 we did an initial look, and then -- and, in that initial
18 look, we identified 21 installations where we need to do
19 alternative water supplies. So, there is, immediately,
20 alternative water supplies to make sure that people have
21 safe drinking water.

22 We then go back and do a more detailed site inspection.
23 And we have done 110 detailed site inspections of a total of
24 189, I think, active facilities. We also do some on
25 locations that were BRAC'd.

1 Senator Duckworth: What about the ones that are on Air
2 Guard locations?

3 Dr. Wilson: That includes Active, Guard, and Reserve.

4 Senator Duckworth: Okay. Thank you.

5 Yield back.

6 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Duckworth.

7 Senator Rounds.

8 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 General Goldfein, Secretary Wilson, first of all, thank
10 you both for your service to our country.

11 Secretary Wilson, we're going to miss you up here, but
12 it sounds as though you've got an opportunity that -- it's
13 clearly something in your future, and you'll do great.

14 I do have a question with regard -- for Secretary
15 Wilson-- with regard to the DOD's submitted budget of \$750
16 billion this year. Why is the Air Force unfunded priority
17 list over a billion dollars -- a billion dollars greater
18 than your FY19 request, despite the top-line growth in the
19 overall DOD budget?

20 General Goldfein: Senator, I'll --

21 Dr. Wilson: I'll go --

22 General Goldfein: -- answer, if that's --

23 Dr. Wilson: Sure.

24 General Goldfein: -- okay, just because the --

25 Dr. Wilson: Sure.

1 General Goldfein: -- the unfunded priority lists
2 normally comes from the service chiefs.

3 What you'll see in the unfunded priority list -- first
4 of all, it's always those things that didn't make the cut
5 line when we were building our budget, and it -- the intent
6 is always to tell you where we would place money if
7 additional money were available. It's important to note
8 that, in the first -- and we listed ours in priority order,
9 as well, in the UPL -- the first thing we listed was money
10 for MILCON. And those -- and if we were not -- to not get a
11 supplemental, we placed in the UPL, in '20, money that we
12 would need to recover from the damage done in '19 if we
13 didn't get a supplemental. Important to note that, in that
14 money is also adding three to five additional professionals
15 at 63 bases where we have privatized housing and identified
16 privatized housing issues, because of that -- of course,
17 that issue came up after we had completed our POM.

18 What you'll also see there is in money for defensible
19 space, because we are -- we're transitioning from a
20 noncontested domain to a contested domain. And so, this
21 accelerates things that we're already doing in the program,
22 but moves them to the left. And you see that. And then you
23 see money in there for aircraft procurement so that, again,
24 if there was additional money left, it gets us to this -- to
25 60 F-35s, which is what we are told, from the company, they

1 can produce in '19, and it also adds KC-46s, which our Air
2 Force We Need Assessment told us long-range aviation is a
3 high priority.

4 Senator Rounds: All right. Well, as you both know,
5 we're very pleased with the bed-down determination, where
6 Ellsworth Air Force Base will be the first bed-down for the
7 B-21. Community of Rapid City is very pleased, and I can
8 assure you that they are prepared and willing to assist any
9 way possible to make that as workable as possible. But,
10 we're very happy with that decision, and we look forward to
11 seeing the B-21 being deployed on time and on target with
12 regard to budget.

13 I -- it -- based upon the study that you've provided
14 us, which is "The Air Force We Need," the number of required
15 bomber needs to be increased, according to your assessment.
16 And I think Secretary -- or Senator Cotton talked a little
17 bit about it. But, I want to go into this a little bit.
18 We'd originally talked about the 100 B-21s as -- first it
19 was, that's what we were looking at, in terms of the
20 budgeted items, but, really, that's a minimum number. But,
21 there really is no scenario laid out in which you could get
22 by with just 100.

23 What I'd like to do is to talk about two items. First
24 of all, what is that real number? What is the number that
25 we're really going to need to make this thing work? And,

1 second of all, you've got the F-35s coming in. And I agree
2 with you, you've got to get to the right number of F-35s.
3 But, that's not an air-dominance system. It's not designed
4 to be the F-22. And the F-22 is now, what, closing in on 40
5 years in age? So, you're going to have to be looking at
6 that next-gen air-dominance system, that platform. What's
7 the plan? What's -- how do you fit in maintaining and
8 moving forward with the required numbers of B-21s that
9 you're going to need and still allow for us to maintain the
10 air dominance necessary with that next new platform or
11 system? How does it fit together?

12 Dr. Wilson: Sir, I may let the Chief talk a little bit
13 about the numbers of bombers, but let me talk a little bit
14 about next-generation. Probably within the next couple of
15 weeks, we will be releasing the Science and Technology
16 Strategy for the Air Force. The Air Force does that every 7
17 to 10 years. But, one of the things that we are going to do
18 is go back to what we call vanguard programs, where we use
19 the authorities you've given us to prototype, to experiment,
20 and to rapidly innovate. I think there's -- if you look
21 back, there's a -- there's probably a legitimate criticism
22 of some of our major defense programs, where, you know,
23 there are multiple miracles required in a program. That's
24 probably not the way to set yourself up for success. And
25 so, rather than looking at a particular platform, our next-

1 generation air-dominance will identify the technologies that
2 we need to develop and test, and then make decisions along
3 the way on how we will deploy those technologies. And
4 beyond that, I think, probably we should go into -- I'll
5 talk to you in a classified setting, on what we're thinking
6 about.

7 General Goldfein: Sir, in -- with respect to bombers,
8 the minimum number we need to be able to meet the current
9 operational plans of the combatant commanders is 175. And
10 that's 100 B-21s and 75 B-52s. To be able to keep the B-52
11 flying in the period of time -- and we did a business-case
12 analysis to look at the cost of a brand-new bomber versus,
13 you know, taking the B-52 and reengining it and putting new
14 radars in it. And what we found is that the cost alone for
15 a, you know, EMP-hardened new bomber, to be able to bring
16 that level of payload in a standoff capacity, is far more
17 significant than the cost of just upgrading it, because it
18 has good bones and can last for awhile.

19 So, it's 175 that is the minimum number in the Air
20 Force we need. We have -- you'll see that that pluses up
21 from a current squadron number of 9 to 14, with an
22 additional 5 squadrons. Those 5 squadrons are based on the
23 simultaneous missions and the simultaneous plans that we're
24 going to have to support, be that STRATCOM, NORTHCOM, EUCOM,
25 or PACOM.

1 Senator Rounds: But, the key was, the B-52 was a
2 standoff--

3 General Goldfein: Yes.

4 Senator Rounds: -- weapon system --

5 General Goldfein: Absolutely.

6 Senator Rounds: -- not a penetrating.

7 General Goldfein: Not a penetrator.

8 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

9 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

11 Senator Shaheen.

12 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 And thank you both for being here today.

14 Let me add my voice to the others on the committee who
15 have said how much we will -- have appreciated your service,
16 Secretary Wilson, and how much we will miss you.

17 And, General Goldfein, we're glad you're staying.

18 I had -- a couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity
19 to be at the "Last Plane Out" ceremony for the KC-135 that
20 left the 157th Air Refueling Wing at the former Pease Air
21 Force Base. And I just want to share with you one of the
22 things that commander of that unit, Colonel John Pogorek,
23 said as he was saying goodbye to the plane. He pointed out
24 that the -- for the third year running, that the 157th has
25 flown more sorties, and more sorties per KC-135, than any

1 other Guard unit, Reserve unit, or Active Duty unit in the
2 world. So, as you can appreciate, we -- and I should point
3 out that the plane that left was the oldest plane in our
4 inventory. And it wasn't through yet. It was built in
5 1957, and it was going to Arizona. So, obviously, we're
6 waiting, with great angst, for the new tankers to come to
7 Pease. And I know there have been some reports in the news
8 lately indicating that there has been another discovery of
9 foreign debris found in the aircraft, and that there has,
10 again, been a halt to delivery of the tankers. So, I
11 wonder, Secretary Wilson, if you can give us an update on
12 where we are with this and what you expect to happen with
13 Boeing and the production of the tankers.

14 Dr. Wilson: Senator, the production is going forward.
15 I had the joy of being on the first KC-46 to fly in to
16 McConnell. And Senator Inhofe brought the first one in to
17 Oklahoma, I believe. We have found some debris on the line.
18 The inspectors found some debris that shouldn't have been
19 there, should have been wiped out of some of the
20 compartments on the KC-46, on the manufacturing line. We
21 have worked with Boeing on a corrective action plan. It
22 will also require greater inspection and attention for
23 quality assurance by both the Air Force and Boeing. But, we
24 expect that they will be able to implement those quality
25 improvement plans this month so that we can restart

1 acceptance of the aircraft and the arrival of the aircraft
2 at Pease will not be affected.

3 Senator Shaheen: I'm delighted to hear that. And are
4 the issues that were found with the -- as I understood, it
5 was the electronics that also had some issues with the
6 plane. Has that been resolved, as well?

7 Dr. Wilson: There were two issues that we accepted the
8 plane with, where we had some deficiencies that we had to
9 work through. One of them is going to be fixed at Boeing's
10 expense, and that has to do with the remote vision system.
11 So, in the KC-135, as you know, you kind of look out -- you
12 lie down and look out the back window.

13 Senator Shaheen: Right.

14 Dr. Wilson: In the KC-46, you look at a video screen
15 that has cameras on the back, and there's some distortion of
16 that screen because of the way the cameras are located and
17 so forth. We have reached agreement with Boeing on how that
18 needs to be fixed, and that that will be retrofitted into
19 aircraft -- all of the aircraft, and added in on the line,
20 going forward. And that will be done at their expense.

21 There was one other deficiency that we identified. And
22 that had to do with the stiffness of the boom when refueling
23 an A-10, which is a very light aircraft. And they met the
24 international standard, so that actually will be a change
25 that the Air Force will pay for. And it just -- it's the

1 change of an actuator to affect the stiffness of the boom.

2 Senator Shaheen: Great. Thank you for the update.

3 I also should thank you for the responsiveness of the
4 Air Force to the PFAS issues that we've had at Pease, and
5 the -- your support for the study that the Agency for Toxic
6 Substances and Disease Registry is doing, the first long-
7 term health impact of PFOA and PFOS that will have been
8 done. So, that should provide a lot of information that we
9 can use, going forward.

10 Unfortunately, we've also heard from a number of
11 military retirees and their families who believe that
12 exposure to a dozen other known carcinogens at the air base
13 has caused them health impacts, including a number of
14 cancers, ranging from prostate to bladder cancer. The
15 National Guard has requested that the Air Force Medical
16 Support Agency conduct a public health study for military
17 personnel and civilian individuals that lived and worked on
18 Pease to determine if there is a higher-than-expected rate
19 of morbidity and mortality. Can you tell me if that is a
20 possibility and what would need to happen in order for us to
21 be able to get that done?

22 Dr. Wilson: Senator, I don't -- the answer -- the
23 quick answer is, I don't know what would have to happen in
24 order to do that kind of a study. But, of course, we'd have
25 no objections to that kind of a study being done.

1 Senator Shaheen: Well, if there's anything that I can
2 do, and anything that we need, in terms of the upcoming
3 defense bill, I'm happy to work on that.

4 Thank you very much.

5 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

6 Senator Perdue.

7 Senator Perdue: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 And thank you both for your service and outstanding
9 performance in the last 2 years.

10 Two years ago, when you sat before us, you inherited
11 the smallest and oldest Air Force ever. You reminded us of
12 that. You also called out, Secretary, that your three
13 priorities were readiness, recap, and rationalization. And
14 I want to thank you both for what you accomplished in the
15 last year and a half on readiness. It's remarkable to see
16 what you've done to bring us -- bring our force to a -- to
17 the current level of readiness. I know we have a lot of work
18 yet to do, but I want to thank you for that.

19 Chief, can you just give us an update -- you mentioned
20 it earlier -- on ABMS? I have two questions for both of
21 you, so I'd appreciate some brevity, here. But, in June of
22 last year, in 2018, the Air Force announced that Robbins
23 would actually host some of the initial elements of ABMS.
24 And it called -- that statement actually said it is a
25 service transition-- and I quote, "transition to ABMS, the

1 Air Force will fly the E-8C JSTARS fleet in the mid to late
2 '20s. The air and space systems that make up the ABMS
3 network will include a fusion center and associated
4 supporting activities." Can you give us an update on what's
5 happened in the last year, how that's progressing, and how
6 it's developing, and how you're managing the gaps from
7 current technology into this model that you're talking
8 about, in this environment?

9 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. Thank you.

10 You know, the decision that was made to place Air
11 Battle-- Advanced Battle Management System at Robbins was
12 based primarily on the fact that that's where our Ph.D.'s of
13 battle management exist. And so, we looked, first and
14 foremost, at that community, who understands this business
15 better than any other community. And so, they're the
16 doctors of battle management that we need to lead us into
17 the future.

18 There's three increments to this transition. Increment
19 one is focused on taking the current sensors that we have
20 and advancing them and connecting them in ways that they're
21 not currently connected. So, one of the first things we did
22 with the money that you authorized us to put, is, we bought
23 back E-3 AWACS as they were currently -- we were planning to
24 retire, and we put money into them to be able to bring in
25 feeds that didn't currently exist. Because this is about

1 current -- increment one is current sensors, and connecting
2 them together. And that is on track.

3 Increment two is about bringing new sensor capability -
4 - many of those are going to be in space -- and bringing
5 that new capability on, and connecting them together.

6 And the final increment is to connect it all together.
7 And we've just brought on, this year, an architect, Mr.
8 Preston Dunlap, to lead us through that. His first stop was
9 to meet the doctors of battle management at Robbins. Matter
10 of fact, I believe he's still there today. And so, we're on
11 track, and I'm really excited that Robbins is going to lead
12 the way.

13 Senator Perdue: Thank you, sir.

14 Madam Secretary, in your first testimony here, you
15 talked about China. We've just received this RAND report.
16 It's an update on their views of what's going on. My
17 concern about China was that they were moving out from a
18 defensive posture, evidenced by publishing the Made in China
19 2025, along with what they've known they've been doing with
20 the BRI, Belt-Road Initiative, along with their port loans
21 in Africa and South America. The one that really concerns
22 me is that their air force investments and what they're
23 doing right now looks like they've been moving more to a
24 strategic posture, certainly over the next 10 years. So, as
25 you talk about what we need, in terms of the 386 squadrons

1 and so forth, does that reflect this change in strategy that
2 you see China moving to right now?

3 Dr. Wilson: We do see rapid innovation in China, and a
4 change to their strategic approach to the world from being a
5 largely -- the old PLA was largely internally focused and
6 focused on internal control. They made a decision to be
7 more of a regional power and a -- they have words for it. I
8 can't remember them, like, off the top of my head, but there
9 was a very good Defensive Intelligence Agency unclassified
10 study recently on this subject, as well, looking outward and
11 developing a military commensurate with their place in the
12 world, I think is kind of the way it was. The J-20, which
13 is a -- is in service now in the Chinese air force, and
14 they've just flight-tested the J-31, so they are moving
15 forward with advanced aircraft, but also advances across the
16 board in other kinds of capability as air defense, of
17 course, their surface navy and so forth. So, we're seeing
18 modernization across the board and in all domains.

19 Senator Perdue: I'd like to say one last thing, Mr.
20 Chairman. The greatest threat that these two people have,
21 certainly General Goldfein as he faces this next year, is, I
22 think we're staring down the barrel of a CR, September 30th.
23 We have 39 working days left between now and 31 July. If we
24 don't move this up as a priority, there is no way we're
25 going to get defense authorization done -- HHS, if we have

1 to combine them, whatever we have to do. This needs to be
2 our committee's top priority right now to make sure that, in
3 the remaining few days we have before that, quote, "August
4 work period" comes up again, that we get this defense budget
5 authorized and appropriated. Because we're staring down the
6 barrel of another CR. And after 2 years of not having --
7 the number-one thing I've heard from these guys and others
8 that we've met over the last 2 years is that this is the
9 number-one threat to getting readiness back and beginning
10 this long haul toward recap. I'll just close.

11 Madam Secretary, thank you for your service. You guys
12 have accomplished great things in the last 2 years under
13 your leadership. And as "off you go into the wild blue
14 yonder," I wish you all the best.

15 Thank you.

16 Chairman Inhofe: Well, thank you, Senator Perdue. Let
17 me assure you, that is our intent, and that's our
18 commitment. And I'm fully aware of the time remaining. And
19 I'm also fully aware of the fact that we've never had to
20 face a China like this before, or, for that reason, a --
21 also a Russia.

22 Senator Warren.

23 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Secretary Wilson and General Goldfein, thank you.

25 The private companies that were put in charge of

1 managing military housing failed to provide safe and clean
2 homes to military families, but they still managed to make
3 millions of dollars in profits. And the services have
4 fallen short in their oversight responsibilities. Now, many
5 of these families have developed chronic medical conditions
6 from exposure to mold, lead paint, and other hazards. Last
7 week, I asked the Army Chief of Staff, General Milley,
8 whether he believes, as a matter of principle, that the U.S.
9 Government has the responsibility to cover the lifetime
10 costs of treating servicemembers and their families for
11 health problems connected to unsafe military housing. And
12 he said, quote, "Absolutely yes," end quote.

13 General Goldfein, do you agree with him?

14 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

15 Senator Warren: And, Secretary Wilson, do you agree?

16 Dr. Wilson: Yes, ma'am.

17 Senator Warren: Good.

18 One other quick question. I'm concerned that the
19 southern border deployment is having some negative effects
20 on readiness. General Neller recently wrote a memory to the
21 Secretary of the Navy that listed border deployment among
22 the factors contributing to readiness challenges. General
23 Goldfein, have any training exercises or overseas
24 deployments been canceled or delayed due to units supporting
25 border developments?

1 General Goldfein: No, ma'am.

2 Senator Warren: Not --

3 General Goldfein: Not in the Air Force.

4 Senator Warren: Not -- okay.

5 I also want to ask another readiness issue facing the
6 Air Force: climate change. The Defense Department's most
7 recent report on climate change discussed the impact of this
8 human-caused problem on our military operations and bases.
9 This report included a statement by the Chairman of the
10 Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dunford, who said, quote,
11 "When I look at climate change, it's in the category of
12 sources of conflicts around the world and things we have to
13 respond to."

14 General Goldfein, just a simple yes or no on this one
15 is fine, and then I have some followups. Do you agree with
16 General Dunford?

17 General Goldfein: I do, ma'am. I do think -- if
18 there's time at the end, I'd like to sort of quality where I
19 think he was going with that.

20 Senator Warren: Sure. But, let me ask, Does adapting
21 military bases and other infrastructure to climate change
22 contribute to Air Force readiness?

23 General Goldfein: It does, ma'am. I think what
24 General Dunford was referring to, though, is that -- I mean,
25 if you go back -- if you take a look at Syria as an example,

1 most don't remember what caused the Syria conflict to start.

2 It started because of a 10-year drought --

3 Senator Warren: Yes. Water.

4 General Goldfein: -- and folks having to move from
5 their family farms into cities, where they then were not
6 getting any support and, therefore, a civil war began. I
7 think what Chairman Dunford was talking about is that we
8 have to respond military very -- militarily, very often, to
9 the effects of -- globally, of climate change.

10 Senator Warren: Good.

11 So, let me ask, Do you think it is prudent for the Air
12 Force to incorporate climate change when making strategic
13 decisions, like strategic basing decisions, for example?

14 Dr. Wilson: Senator, let me take that one.

15 Senator Warren: Sure.

16 Dr. Wilson: We just published an Infrastructure
17 Investment Strategy, and we also just finished a major piece
18 of work on weather. And maybe the Air Force looks at these
19 things more because weather is such a big impact on us for
20 all of our flying operations every day, and we're the ones
21 responsible for weather forecasting around the globe. The
22 infrastructure strategy looks at resilience and, How do we
23 get more out of every dollar that we spend? So, there's a
24 number of pieces of that strategy. But, the resilience of
25 our bases is very important because we fight from our bases.

1 We don't leave our bases to fight. We fight from our bases.

2 And so, their resilience is very important to --

3 Senator Warren: And how would you rate Air Force
4 installations as a whole, in terms of their climate
5 resilience?

6 Dr. Wilson: Senator, it probably varies a lot. I
7 couldn't give you a red, yellow, or green chart on that at
8 this point, but I know that, overall, we've got significant
9 infrastructure challenges overall, but from a number of
10 factors.

11 Senator Warren: Well, I see that the Air Force is
12 requesting nearly \$5 billion in emergency funds to rebuild
13 Air Force bases in Florida and Nebraska, alone, that were
14 damaged by natural disasters. So, I think it's very
15 important that the Air Force and the other military services
16 continue to incorporate climate change in their planning so
17 that when disaster strikes, the impact on operations is
18 minimal. I -- this clearly is a readiness issue.

19 So, thank you for your work on this.

20 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator.

21 Senator Tillis.

22 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 Thank you both for being here, and, Secretary Wilson,
24 for your service. I was also sad when I heard you were
25 moving on, but I can certainly thank you for everything

1 you've done and share the Chair's advice to you that it's
2 still not too late to change your mind.

3 I think I'll start with General Goldfein. It's on the
4 KC-46. And, specifically, I know that -- I believe that
5 Senator Shaheen asked a question earlier. I'm more
6 interested in our current plans in the basing in Seymour
7 Johnson, whether or not that's shifting to the right, or
8 what the current status is.

9 Dr. Wilson: Senator, we're -- I think we're -- we are
10 going to be fine on the basing. We're not seeing an impact
11 there. We just needed to have Boeing stop, put a corrective
12 action plan in place, get up to the standards that we expect
13 on the manufacturing line, and then get the line moving
14 again. You actually can't fix a manufacturing line while
15 it's stopped. It has to be flowing. But, they have to put
16 the corrective actions in place for quality assurance.

17 Senator Tillis: I also had a question on the talent
18 marketplace. I think, right now, the -- almost all the
19 officer assignments are in there. Give me an idea of how
20 that's working and what progress has been made.

21 General Goldfein: Sir, it's working well. As a matter
22 of fact, you know, when I travel and talk to, especially,
23 young officers, you know, what I hear over and over again is
24 the fact that they want to have a little bit more control
25 over their future, and they want to have a better visibility

1 on what's out there. And, not only them, but also hiring
2 officials want to know -- get a -- have a better sense of
3 who they can look at for hiring purposes. And so, the fact
4 that we're now connecting them for dialogue is pretty
5 powerful. And so, initial rollout's been very -- very
6 successful, and -- but, we're not going to slow down. We're
7 going to continue to listen to the force, screen with our
8 ears, and modify it to make it better.

9 Senator Tillis: On a related note, how well are we
10 doing, or what kind of changes have we put in place to
11 address the pilot shortage?

12 General Goldfein: So, this year we were successful at
13 stopping the reduction. So, it's the first year where we
14 actually haven't had increasing numbers leave. So, we see
15 that as --

16 Senator Tillis: What do you think that could be
17 attributed to?

18 General Goldfein: I think it's a combination of
19 things, sir. I think, you know, what I hear over and over,
20 it's a combination of quality of service, quality of life.
21 The financial incentives that Congress has approved, I
22 think, have been very helpful. But, it's as much quality of
23 service as it is quality of life. And so, I think the
24 combination -- we have, like, 69 different initiatives that
25 we're working on. I don't think there's one silver bullet.

1 A combination of reducing overseas deployments, I think, has
2 helped. Putting more white space on the calendar, we've
3 looked at every one of our exercises and reduced those that
4 aren't value-added. And I think that making flying in the
5 United States Air Force as rich an experience as we can make
6 it is going to have the most lasting effect. And that's
7 going to start with inspirational and courageous commanders
8 and senior NCOs. And so, where the Secretary and I have
9 focused is on where -- when we select and how we develop
10 these young officers to make sure that, when they are in
11 command, they can build a culture that thrives.

12 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

13 I share Senator Perdue's concern about where we're
14 headed with respect to a CR. And I see your budget request.
15 I tend to agree and would support and advocate for it. But,
16 I believe it's more or less going to be a paper exercise,
17 and that we're going to be looking at a CR. So, I think one
18 thing that we need from you, Madam Secretary or General
19 Goldfein, is an understanding of the consequences of that,
20 because here is a trajectory to increase readiness
21 capabilities and things that I think are important. I think
22 we also have to understand the consequences of our inaction,
23 to go through regular order appropriations. And we'd like
24 to see that so that, when those who would resist moving
25 through regular-order appropriations understand the

1 consequences of their actions, we need that. You can infer
2 it, but I'd like, very specifically, to look at things that
3 are going to be affected by that.

4 Secretary Wilson -- I mean, we can talk about that now,
5 but I think I'd -- what I'd prefer to do is go, if you don't
6 get this and you have to deal with the consequences of a CR,
7 what does that look like in the near term, and how it could
8 potentially be disruptive to progress that you've made?

9 Secretary Wilson, you have a comment on that?

10 Dr. Wilson: Senator, there will be 16 new MILCON
11 projects for new missions that wouldn't start. And that
12 means that we can't put those aircraft at those bases.
13 There were the 18 MILCON projects for existing missions that
14 would not go forward, and 89 new-starts for programs where
15 we're trying to modernize this force and trying to stay --
16 you know, I -- the -- our adversaries don't have to deal
17 with continuing resolutions or sequester. They keep going.
18 And so, there is risk in deciding that we're just going to
19 do a CR.

20 Senator Tillis: We need to look at that in terms of
21 the effect that it has on MILCON and then the effect that it
22 has on what we would flesh out after those MILCON projects
23 are complete. And people really need to understand that,
24 because I think we're doing you all a disservice. And we
25 need to make sure that those who oppose going through that

1 process understand the direct consequences of their actions,
2 both in terms of the opportunities in the communities for
3 these projects to move forward, but, more important to me,
4 the capabilities and readiness that we're leaving on the
5 table when we talk, in every committee, about our great-
6 power competition and the need to really move forward with
7 these projects. People need to start taking responsibility
8 for holding up what I think is an important regular-order
9 process.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Tillis.

12 Senator Manchin.

13 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 And thanks, both of you, for your service. I
15 appreciate it very much.

16 And we're sorry to see you going, Secretary Wilson, but
17 thank you for what you've done. I've got one last request
18 before you leave, too. I met with Secretary Shanahan on
19 Tuesday, and he mentioned, in the city of Martinsburg, that
20 has still not received their money for PFAS. And he agreed
21 we're going to get on that. So, only thing I'm asking --
22 it's less than \$5 million, and this little city really needs
23 that. It means a lot to them, and they've put the money out
24 already, and they just don't have the resources. So, before
25 you depart, if you would check into that. The city of

1 Martinsburg. It's the National Guard base. Our Air Base
2 National Guard there in Martinsburg does a great job, and it
3 would be very much appreciated.

4 The other thing I want to ask for is, you know right
5 now statute only allows us to tap operations and
6 maintenance, O&M, dollars from the Air National Guard. And
7 that's what I consider to be unfair, considering that they
8 are using the same firefighting foam as the Active component
9 uses. So, my question would be, Do you agree -- or will you
10 agree that we should be able to use defense environmental
11 restoration dollars for the National Guard facilities, the
12 same as military does?

13 Dr. Wilson: I -- Senator, whenever I get involved in
14 the Guard issues, there are different colors of money there,
15 and I'm going to have to take that question for the record.
16 Our commitment is to do the cleanup on all of our bases
17 where we've been responsible for this. And a -- but, I'll
18 have to get back to you on that specific question about
19 which funds can be used for which kinds of --

20 [The information referred to follows:]

21 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Manchin: Yeah. I don't know why they would be
2 objectionable, because --

3 Dr. Wilson: I don't --

4 Senator Manchin: -- in NDAA, we've tried to do this,
5 and got stripped out. And it -- I think every Senator has a
6 Guard component that, basically, needs to be able to use
7 their money the same as the branches use theirs. Okay?

8 Dr. Wilson: Senator, you may well be right. I just
9 don't know.

10 Senator Manchin: Okay. I appreciate your -- again,
11 that's one other question before you leave, because I know
12 you're be diligent about that.

13 Dr. Wilson: Yes, sir.

14 Senator Manchin: And I think this is probably --
15 General Goldfein, maybe you can help me on this one. The F-
16 15EX -- and I understand the arguments for -- procuring
17 capabilities. I understand all of that. Where I'm unclear
18 about is the plan how you're going to integrate that.
19 Because I think it's a 4-year phase-in, and, during that 4-
20 year phase-in, even though it's the same aircraft, the
21 components are different. So, I'm understanding that we
22 don't have the ability to train or -- or the simulators that
23 it will take to train them, and won't be ready in 4 years.
24 How are we going to have our pilots ready and prepared for
25 the -- for that to come onboard in 4 years, and them not

1 have the proper training?

2 General Goldfein: Sir, because the F-15EX is only
3 intended to help us with a short-term capacity shortfall and
4 replace only the F-15Cs, the --

5 Senator Manchin: How many aircrafts, General, we --
6 are we speaking about?

7 General Goldfein: Right now, we're looking at 80 --

8 Senator Manchin: Eighty.

9 General Goldfein: -- is what we have laid --

10 Senator Manchin: And that's because the F-35 is not
11 going to be able to meet the demand.

12 General Goldfein: It's to supplement the F-35 program
13 to make sure -- and I said before --

14 Senator Manchin: I understand that, and I'm okay with
15 all that. I'm --

16 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

17 Senator Manchin: -- just understanding -- as a pilot,
18 myself, and you as -- having many hours, as you have --
19 there's still some simulation time it takes to integrate
20 into that.

21 General Goldfein: It does. The 90 percent of the
22 architecture -- the support equipment for the F-15C is
23 common to the F-15EX. That's one of the reasons -- so,
24 we're not looking at --

25 Senator Manchin: You're not concerned about the

1 transition.

2 General Goldfein: No, sir. Matter of fact, that's one
3 of the reasons that we only looked at an F-15 --

4 Senator Manchin: Okay.

5 General Goldfein: -- as a replacement.

6 Senator Manchin: I trust you on that.

7 Next, my final question is this. This picture here.
8 This shows the J-31 and the F-35. They kind of look
9 similar, I think, if you look at it. They're fairly
10 similar, here. I'll pass just around to my colleagues. And
11 I'm not an expert on jet fighters, but they sure do look
12 like that someone had some plans. My concern is this. And I
13 understand we have the prime contract, and then it goes from
14 the prime to sub to sub to sub to sub to sub to sub. This
15 didn't happen by accident. They're able to -- and I'm
16 understanding they're actually able -- the Chinese and
17 Russians, and whoever else, has been able to get up to speed
18 quicker by being able to access -- and maybe it might not be
19 high priorities or high profiles -- they were able to get
20 into things that weren't classified, and reverse engineer.
21 And we're not holding our subs accountable, and we're not
22 holding the prime accountable to the subs. Do you all see
23 that as a tremendous concern? And how do we change it? And
24 will you work with us to change the procurement process,
25 holding the primes -- holding your prime subcontractors

1 totally responsible for the food chain, if you will, and
2 bringing some of these platforms to reality?

3 Madam Secretary?

4 Dr. Wilson: Sir, very happy to work with you on that.
5 The intelligence threat, particularly from China, is
6 significant, and it's --

7 Senator Manchin: But, I'm saying it's continued. And
8 for them to have the rapid acceleration -- and everybody
9 here is concerned about that -- that has to be stopped. And
10 we're not doing anything to stop it. I'm on Cyber -- I'm on
11 Cyber Command, I'm concerned about this. So, I'm just
12 hoping that you all are in total agreement with this. It
13 needs to be changed. Do you all agree it needs to be
14 changed?

15 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And I'll tell you that
16 we've stood up a Cybersecurity Task Force, under the
17 leadership of General Pawlikowski, when she was Air Force
18 Materiel Command. That Cybersecurity Task Force is designed
19 to do just what you're talking about, look at every system
20 and subsystem to --

21 Senator Manchin: Who's heading that up?

22 General Goldfein: Now it's Colonel -- the Commander of
23 Air Force Materiel Command. And if --

24 Dr. Wilson: McMurray.

25 General Goldfein: Yeah, thanks. General McMurray.

1 Senator Manchin: General McMurray, okay. Thank you.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

4 Senator Hawley.

5 Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Thank you, Madam Secretary, General, for being here.

7 And thank you, as always, for your exemplary service.

8 To Secretary Wilson, I was delighted, last week, to get
9 the news that Whiteman Air Force Base is slated to be the
10 second location for the B-21 Raider. Of course, I think we
11 ought to be the first location, but we're delighted to be
12 hosting the B-21. And I just want to say for the record how
13 proud I am of the 509th Bomb Wing and the work they've done
14 with the B-2 Spirit over many a year. And we stand ready at
15 Whiteman to receive the B-21 when the time comes.

16 I know Senator Cotton asked you about the schedule and
17 whether we were on schedule, in terms of production. Let me
18 ask -- and you testified that we are -- let me ask you just
19 about the budget. I know the target price is about 500
20 million apiece. Are you confident that we're going to come
21 close to that number? What's it looking like?

22 Dr. Wilson: Senator, the -- we don't discuss publicly
23 the B-21 program costs, and we're -- actually would be very
24 happy to come and talk to you in detail about where we are.
25 But, we are pleased with the management of the program, thus

1 far, by both the contractor -- and we're doing this one a
2 little bit differently. We do this through our Rapid
3 Capabilities Office. It's a small high-performing team, and
4 they're doing a very good job.

5 Senator Hawley: Very good. Thank you.

6 Let me shift gears just slightly and ask you about a
7 number that appears a number of times in your written
8 testimony, the 386 number. Let me ask you about the
9 relative importance of this. The NDS states very clearly
10 that the Joint Force and the Air Force need to focus on
11 improving in our key warfighting scenarios against China and
12 Russia while doing -- carrying out operations in the greater
13 Middle East more economically. And I'm wondering, Why is
14 purchasing more platforms now better, relatively speaking,
15 than investing in R&D, munitions, base resilience? I mean,
16 can you give me some sense of why 386 is important, and how
17 you got there?

18 Dr. Wilson: Senator, the 386 is a size construct, but
19 it also -- the work that we did in this evaluation looked
20 also at different ways of fighting. It is not just more of
21 the same. It's not just about capacity. It's also -- it
22 also looks at, What do we have as a stand-in force, what do
23 we have as a standoff force, how do we integrate things so
24 that we get more bang for the buck, if you will? And if you
25 think about this, you know, to -- and the Chief talked about

1 Desert Storm and having 401 operational squadrons. If we're
2 talking about meeting a near--- defeating a -- deterring and
3 defeating a near-peer adversary, a safe, secure nuclear
4 deterrent, homeland defense, countering violent extremism,
5 and deterring rogue states, all at the same time, with 386
6 squadrons. They're obviously more capable squadrons and a
7 different way of fighting. So, it's both.

8 Senator Hawley: You're satisfied, then, that this
9 budget advances the NDS priorities, and particularly those
10 on, not just capacity, but also capability, lethality,
11 resilience.

12 Dr. Wilson: I am. You know, there are always more
13 things that we can do, and we're always making tradeoffs.
14 But, even things like multidomain operations and the need to
15 connect everything as part of a network, and driving those
16 things forward. Our science and technology -- early-stage
17 science and technology budget is -- you know, combined with
18 research, development, test, and evaluation, is fairly
19 healthy.

20 Senator Hawley: General, do you want to comment on any
21 of this?

22 General Goldfein: Sir, I'll just tell you that, by the
23 time Secretary Mattis rolled out the National Defense
24 Strategy, the last version I saw was version 67. I said
25 that because it was very inclusive -- typical Secretary

1 Mattis -- very inclusive. We had folks that were there, and
2 it allowed us-- it allowed Secretary Wilson and I, actually,
3 to align the '19 budget, because we were part of the writing
4 of the National Defense Strategy, and then '20, our guidance
5 to the team, and our scoring of our budget inside was
6 alignment with the National Defense Strategy. So, that's
7 what this budget submission is all about.

8 Senator Hawley: Thanks very much.

9 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hawley.

11 Senator Heinrich.

12 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Chairman.

13 General Goldfein, I want to ask you a little bit about
14 artificial intelligence. It is going to be critical, both
15 on and off the battlefield in the future. And, as you know,
16 AI is just not possible without good, high-quality data.
17 And AI is only effective if we have a workforce that really
18 understands how to take care of that data. Do you think
19 that the Air Force is, at this point, adequately able to
20 recruit a workforce that is literate and understands that
21 future?

22 General Goldfein: Sir, I think we're in the beginning
23 stages, really --

24 Senator Heinrich: Yeah.

25 General Goldfein: -- of -- and the Secretary and I

1 have-- maybe turn it over to the Secretary, because, you
2 know, having a Secretary that was formerly a president of a
3 STEM university, and understanding how the universities
4 work, and how you bring in young people, and how you
5 motivate them, and you bring them in as interns. I think
6 we've done a lot to make sure that we are a -- we're an easy
7 place --

8 Senator Heinrich: Are you extending her work
9 assignment?

10 General Goldfein: Would love to.

11 Senator Heinrich: Yeah.

12 One other thing, and then I do want to get to you,
13 Secretary. It -- is it -- is there value to thinking about
14 whether there should be someone within the services that
15 just has that responsibility -- and maybe this is a good
16 time to pivot to you, Secretary -- for making sure that
17 we're recruiting coders and data scientists and the folks
18 that we're going to need as we make this transition into AI?
19 And, specifically, I'm curious whether it might be even
20 worth considering a mission occupational specialty for that
21 area, to make sure that we do make that transition quickly.

22 Dr. Wilson: That's actually an interesting idea. In
23 the Air Force -- you know, the Navy has been talking, I
24 know, to the committee about a Chief Information Officer
25 position. In some ways, the Air Force already has -- we've

1 got our Chief Information Officer, our Chief Data Officer,
2 and our Chief Management Officer all in the same -- all
3 combined and reporting directly to the Under Secretary of
4 the Air Force. So, we've got -- organizationally, got that.
5 I would say that we've got-- AI is not just about the data,
6 it's about gathering and directing that data, and analyzing
7 it, at speed. And, in many cases, it's about the analysis
8 happening right at the sensor edge and not as you bring it
9 in. So, for all of us, in the military and in the wider
10 society, we are probably going to see a significant shortage
11 of data scientists and analysts over the next couple of
12 decades. And it's a very high priority.

13 Senator Heinrich: Secretary, I want thank you for your
14 service, and specifically, as -- you know a great deal about
15 what we now call the Space Rapid Capabilities Office and how
16 much that has contributed to our national security with its
17 infrastructure and personnel and acquisition authorities.
18 And I just want to thank both of you, really, for your work
19 in building secure facilities at Kirtland for Space RCO and
20 enabling that office to really quickly deliver solutions to
21 the military. And I look forward, General, in continuing
22 that progress with you.

23 Secretary, one other thing I want to ask you about is -
24 - I'm starting to hear from another of -- a number of folks,
25 both in and outside the services, who have said that if the

1 U.S. doesn't start to buy the emerging commercial offerings
2 that we're seeing, in terms of small satellites, small
3 launch providers, that we could see those things migrate
4 overseas. Is the Air Force being assertive enough in
5 procuring or even just experimenting with some of these
6 smaller commercial capabilities?

7 Dr. Wilson: I think there's going to be a huge demand
8 for small commercial capabilities, globally. The Air Force
9 has funded, through DARPA, an experiment. It's called Black
10 Jack, and it's looking at a small satellite constellation
11 using commercial satellites. But, I will say this. We've
12 done a lot of modeling and simulation. Many of you have
13 participated in a tabletop exercise that we've done about
14 the shift from an uncontested environment to a contested
15 environment. And what is the strategy that makes sense in
16 that environment? And then, how do we develop programs to
17 support that strategy? One of the challenges with a
18 proliferated low-Earth-orbit satellite system that's where
19 commercial satellites usually live and operate is, it's very
20 close to the Earth. That's great to be able to see things,
21 but it also means that they are vulnerable. And the
22 commercial systems, without any defenses on them, are also
23 quite vulnerable. So, we need to think about not just how
24 expensive they are, but, Do they survive in a contested
25 domain? And I -- the way I like to put it is, you know, I

1 drive a Subaru. It's a great -- I love it. It's less
2 expensive than a tank. But, I wouldn't take it into combat.
3 So, we need to think about it from a warfighting point of
4 view.

5 Senator Heinrich: Well, Secretary, I want to thank you
6 again for your service. And just -- I'm out of time, here,
7 but, before you begin your transition, I would just urge
8 you, on the PFAS issue that Senator Manchin brought up,
9 whatever we can do to make these folks, who have been so
10 severely impacted by that, whole, really through no fault of
11 their own, in all of these cases, I would just urge you to
12 give that all the attention you can before you make your
13 transition to El Paso.

14 Dr. Wilson: Thank you.

15 Senator Heinrich: Thanks.

16 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

17 Senator Cramer.

18 Senator Cramer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Thanks, both of you, for appearing again.

20 And let me add my congratulations and just tell you I
21 agree with all the accolades you've received today,
22 Secretary Wilson. And I don't think any of them are even a
23 little bit exaggerated. But, thank you for your service.

24 And, to both of you, thank you for your candor. You
25 have spoken with great clarity, and particularly in

1 differentiating the Air Force we need from the Air Force
2 that we can afford. And, more importantly, thank you for
3 your candor in answering the what-if questions, the "What if
4 the worst? What if we don't get our jobs done as it relates
5 to appropriate appropriations?" So, we need that clarity,
6 our constituents need to hear that clarity, and I thank you
7 for that.

8 I'm tempted, of course, to ask about plans to modernize
9 two very important aircraft to me, the Global Hawk in Grand
10 Forks and the B-52s. I think we've talked a lot about that.
11 But, before we get to that, I've not heard a lot today
12 about, and I'm very intrigued with, and interested in, Space
13 Force. And I'd like the -- the message that is coming out,
14 he -- I think you have 72 million in this budget for the
15 headquarters. But, I would ask each of you to, maybe,
16 elaborate a bit, first of all, on the importance of it -- as
17 we look at scarcity of resources, and we're talking about a
18 sixth branch, there -- you know, lots of people have lots of
19 opinions, and yet this domain seems -- well, I think it
20 seems critically important, and I haven't heard anybody --
21 any of the combatant commanders or anybody else, whether
22 related to Space Force or not, say that it's not a good
23 idea. But, I just would open the floor to let you explain
24 to us one more time why it's so important, maybe starting
25 with the Secretary.

1 Dr. Wilson: You know, Senator, we are the best in the
2 world at space. And our adversaries know it, and they are
3 seeking to develop the capability to deny us the use of
4 space in crisis or in war. And, in private conversations,
5 as we've received briefings and so on from combatant
6 commanders -- not from the Air Force, but from combatant
7 commanders and other services -- they understand the
8 importance of space as an enabling capability for everything
9 they're trying to do. We have made significant changes in
10 programs, based on threat analysis and strategy, in fiscal
11 year '19, which this committee and others in the Congress
12 supported, and we propose, in FY20, another boost, a 17-
13 percent increase in our space portfolio in the FY20 budget.
14 So, we're making the financial investments. We are also
15 buying those capabilities faster and smarter. And, in fact,
16 in the space realm, we -- you know, we set ourselves a goal
17 10 months ago. And, in some ways, it was a gimmick, but it
18 got people focused. We wanted to strip 100 years out of Air
19 Force procurement in 12 months. So, look at every program,
20 see if we could optimize these in a -- you know, not-- we're
21 not skimping on any requirements. We're going to buy a
22 tailored suit rather than a suit off the rack. We're
23 currently at 78.5 years taken out of Air Force procurement
24 programs. Of that, 21 came from space, alone. So, we are
25 moving forward to buy things in space faster and smarter.

1 Our policy is to maintain American dominance in space so
2 that space capabilities are available to the Joint Force,
3 and so that we deter any attack on the United States or our
4 allies.

5 So, the organizational change that was put forward in
6 parallel with this budget is actually -- you know, it's a
7 change that elevates, that enhances the influence of space
8 and leaders in the Pentagon. And that's in it for the long
9 haul. So, I think one of the things that -- taken all
10 together, the combatant command, which is being stood up,
11 plus the increases in spending that all of you have
12 supported, and the shift to a strategy for a -- strategy and
13 the programs to support it for a contested domain, will keep
14 us dominant in space. And that is our job.

15 Chief?

16 General Goldfein: Thanks, ma'am.

17 You know, I look at it from a warfighter perspective.
18 And having been the space coordinating authority and
19 component lead for Central Command for -- deployed for 2
20 years, I've employed space capabilities against an enemy.
21 And so, I look at it from a warfighting perspective. And I
22 see, given the situation we're in, and obviously aligned
23 with the Secretary's statement -- the problem statement,
24 that we are the best in the world, we've got to do three
25 things simultaneously. First, we have to defend what we

1 have, because it's going to be there for awhile, and we all
2 rely on it. From the blue dot on our phone to the
3 indications and warnings of missile launch, I mean, we rely
4 on space capabilities. So, we have to defend what we have.

5 But, it's not good enough to -- just to step in the
6 ring and defend and take punches. At some point, you've got
7 to be able to punch back. And our adversaries need to know
8 that we can punch back. And it needs to be part of their
9 calculus. So, we have to develop offensive capabilities.

10 And the third piece we have to do is develop the force
11 that can fight and win, because this transition from an
12 uncontested domain to a contested domain requires a -- that
13 force to be developed for the future.

14 So, I believe that, as we were in a robust debate about
15 how to get at the President's guidance, we were debating
16 between a separate service, separate department, separate
17 Secretary, separate Chief, to a Med Corps, JAG Corps. Where
18 we landed, which is a separate service within the Department
19 of the Air Force, to me, is the most recognizable model from
20 a business of warfighting. Of all the things that we're
21 doing, going forward, I would offer, the most important act
22 that I would ask this committee to take on this year is to
23 stand up U.S. Space Command with a commander. Because, in
24 the business of joint warfighting, that aligns how this
25 entire Department does business, going forward.

1 Senator Cramer: Well said. Thank you both.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Inhofe: Yeah. Thank you, Senator Cramer.

4 Senator King.

5 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 I want to pursue this question of the Space Force, but
7 I understand we're having a full hearing next week, so I'll
8 defer. Put me down as skeptical that an organizational
9 change costing half a billion dollars a year is going to
10 change our capacity. So, be prepared to help me through
11 that question. And I look forward to that discussion next
12 week.

13 Secretary Wilson, everybody's praised you today. I
14 plan to do something about it. You'd better watch the
15 National Defense bill. I'm thinking of an amendment
16 prohibiting your retirement. So, you'd better have that --
17 have your legislative staff scour that document as it goes
18 forward.

19 You have done a sensational job. And I think a perfect
20 example is the comment you made a few minutes ago about the
21 amount of time you've cut out of the procurement process.
22 That's a big deal. Procurement has two problems,
23 historically, in the Defense Department. One is money,
24 cost, and the other is time. And you have done something
25 that is -- had needed doing a long time, and I really want

1 to thank you for that.

2 A second general comment. And I understand neither of
3 you had anything to do with this, but I just don't like this
4 OCO-for-base business. Twenty-five percent of your budget
5 is OCO, and three-quarters of the OCO is OCO-for-base, which
6 is a non sequitur. If it's base, it's base. If it's OCO,
7 it's OCO. And again, I realize that you're -- this is
8 something that was handed down from other parts of the
9 government, but it's not honest government, it's not honest
10 to the Congress or the people of America. This isn't OCO.
11 Let's get real about what these numbers are.

12 General, the light-attack experiment, which is to use
13 existing platforms, try to develop a new counter-violent-
14 extremist -- I understand the A-10 is -- I heard, yesterday,
15 from people in the maintenance business, that they are hard
16 to maintain now. They're just wearing out. How's this
17 experiment going? Where does it stand?

18 General Goldfein: Sir, let me tell you, first, that
19 light attack, A-10, two completely separate --

20 Senator King: Okay.

21 General Goldfein: -- issues, here. Light attack is
22 not designed to, nor will it ever, replace the A-10. And
23 our intent is to fly the A-10 as one of the four weapon
24 systems --

25 Senator King: You can --

1 General Goldfein: -- that we need through the 2030s.

2 Senator King: Because we've been hearing, for the last
3 3 or 4 years, about getting rid of the A-10. Are we now
4 back to maintaining the A-10?

5 General Goldfein: We are. And -- through the 2030s,
6 for the A-10.

7 Senator King: So, let's move now to the light attack.

8 General Goldfein: Light attack. Sir, to understand
9 light attack and where we're going -- and I will tell you
10 that I can't think of a better example of how we used the
11 authorities you gave us to accelerate our understanding
12 about a particular weapon system. You go back to the
13 National Defense Strategy, the second line of effort is
14 about building allies and partners. That's what the light
15 attack is all about. And the question-- the strategy in the
16 National Defense Strategy is to drive violent extremism down
17 to the point where it can be handled inside the borders of
18 governed nations. And this is a global challenge, from the
19 Philippines to Nigeria. So, the question we asked to
20 ourselves was, How do we build a platform sensor/weapon
21 combination and an intelligence-gathering and a network that
22 will allow more allies and partners to join us in the fight
23 against violent extremism? And so, we went out --

24 Senator King: So, this would be a -- an aircraft that
25 could be utilized by our allies.

1 General Goldfein: Absolutely. That's been the primary
2 focus. It remains our focus. So, again, we went out, 5
3 months after I signed an initial declaration of an
4 experiment, when it went out, companies came in, we did an
5 experiment at Holloman Air Force Base. We went on to a
6 second experiment. What you'll see in our budget is money
7 to procure three of each kind of airplane that we've been
8 experimenting with. We're going to put a detachment at
9 Nellis, where we do our task-level training. We're going to
10 put a detachment at Hurlburt, where we do Special Ops.
11 We're going to invite allies and partners. And the most
12 exciting part of this experiment, that we would not have
13 been able to do without your authorities, is, we have built
14 a coalition-friendly intelligence-gathering and information-
15 sharing network that we don't have to tell anybody, "No, you
16 can't have this information." And it's platform-agnostic.
17 And so, by owning these airplanes, now, as prototypes, we
18 can modify. We're going to bring industry in, we're going
19 to bring allies and partners in, and we're trying to solve
20 the math equation that currently exists in North Africa.
21 One-thousand Americans plus 4,000 French enables 35,000
22 fighters that are taking on violent extremism across North
23 Africa. This is the air-component contribution to the
24 National Defense Strategy, to do just that.

25 Senator King: And I take it from your comments that

1 you feel like this has been a worthwhile experiment, and
2 that we're making some real progress.

3 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. Not only has it been
4 worthwhile, but I will tell you that the companies that have
5 been with us from the beginning have been spectacular. And
6 I think this is -- there is no better example I can give you
7 of how we used your intent for these authorities to advance.
8 We're not even 2 years --

9 Senator King: You mean you're saying, for the record,
10 that we did something right?

11 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And we jumped on it.

12 Senator King: Thank you.

13 I'm out of time, but a question for the record. I'm
14 very interested in maintenance levels and readiness levels
15 of aircraft, and increasing those levels to, if not
16 duplicate, but approach commercial availabilities. For the
17 record, if you could give me some thoughts on where we are,
18 progress made, perhaps graph where we are. You understand
19 the nature of the question.

20 [The information referred to follows:]

21 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

22

23

24

25

1 Senator King: Thank you very much.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator King.

4 Senator Kaine.

5 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 And thanks, to the witnesses. Secretary Wilson, I'll
7 add my congratulations. I'll tell you who I'd be -- who is
8 really nervous right now. The individual running Air Force
9 ROTC at UTEP, because if that program isn't the best-
10 performing one in the country, with the former Secretary of
11 the Air Force as president of the university, that person's
12 going to have some 'splaining to do, I think. So --

13 Dr. Wilson: Sadly, there's only Army ROTC at UTEP, so-

14 Senator Kaine: Okay, good. All right. They ducked
15 that bullet. Congratulations to you.

16 I just want to pick up, first, on comments -- a number
17 of folks on the other side of the dais here have raised the
18 specter of CR. Folks on this side of the dais aren't
19 talking about CR. The notion that we're heading toward a
20 CR, I hear that from one side. I don't know where that's
21 coming from. We don't want a CR. We want an appropriations
22 bill. And we'll get one. We got a great appropriations
23 deal at the end of 2018, with two Republican houses, that
24 Republican colleagues here voted for. But, then, after the
25 President said he didn't like it, folks switched their

1 votes, they voted against it, and we shut the government
2 down for 35 days. And that hurt the military. Didn't hurt
3 the Air Force directly, but the Coast Guard's part of the
4 military, even though it's not part of the DOD. And they
5 weren't getting paid for 35 days. So, let's be clear who's
6 talking about CR, who's expressing worry about CR, who's
7 saying we might run into a CR. It's not Democrats. We don't
8 want a CR. We want a budget.

9 And let me just ask, If there is a CR and sequester
10 kicks back in, my understanding is, it's not steady-state
11 funding. Am I correct that funding would start to ratchet
12 down under a CR if sequester kicks back in?

13 Dr. Wilson: Senator, if you move to a sequester, the
14 cut for the Air Force would be about \$29 billion. And I
15 think you were at another hearing when I was talking about
16 this, but that's four times the size of the sequester we had
17 last --

18 Senator Kaine: Yeah.

19 Dr. Wilson: -- time the Air Force went through this.
20 And just to -- so, the choices -- I mean, sequester would be
21 across the side --

22 Senator Kaine: Right.

23 Dr. Wilson: -- of all program elements. But, if it
24 were concentrated, the scope of this is -- it would be all
25 F-35s, all KC-46s, all B-21s stopped, ground-based strategic

1 deterrent, all research, development, test, and procurement
2 of space, and most fourth- and fifth-generation
3 modifications, all science and technology. You add all of
4 that together, and you get \$29 billion in a single year.

5 Senator Kaine: Sequester would be foolish. CR would
6 be foolish. There's nobody on this side of the dais who is
7 talking about either. We can do an appropriations bill.

8 Let me move to hurricane relief. I have a publication
9 from the OSD Comptroller, and I just want to make sure this
10 is right. The Air Force hurricane recovery estimate -- just
11 the Air Force -- is 5 billion -- that's my understanding --
12 for Tyndall, Eglin, Warner Robbins, Goldsboro, Sumter, and
13 Hampton, VA. Is that 5-billion number accurate, Madam
14 Secretary?

15 Dr. Wilson: It's 3.7 plus 1.2.

16 Senator Kaine: Okay. So, 4.9 -- \$4.9 billion. Now,
17 that's the Air Force number. And the -- DOD-wide, the
18 hurricane recovery request is \$8.9 billion. That's for
19 Hurricanes Michael and Florence. And here's the way that
20 we're proposing to deal with that. The DOD has -- they're
21 trying to cobble together 2.4 billion out of the FY19
22 budget, and they're flexing cash around to be able to do it.
23 They may need a supplemental of 1.8. They may not be able
24 to find enough, but they're trying to find 2.4 billion in
25 FY19. And the Department has, in the budget -- the budget

1 before us -- 3 billion for FY20. So, that gets to 5.4 out
2 of the 8.9. And that leaves 3.5, 3.6 billion unfunded for
3 hurricane relief. Now, I'm struck, when I saw that the
4 unfunded requirement for hurricane relief is \$3.6 billion,
5 that that is exactly the amount that the President is taking
6 out of the FY19 MILCON budget: \$3.6 billion. It's 3.6
7 billion out of MILCON. It's 2.5 out of the drug
8 interdiction account.

9 So, if we were not taking the 3.6 out of MILCON to deal
10 with what your colleagues have testified here is a
11 nonmilitary emergency, that \$3.6 billion could be used to
12 fill the unfunded requirements for hurricane relief for the
13 entire DOD. And so, I'm just putting that on the record,
14 because many of us voted against the declaration, a few
15 weeks back, because we don't think a nonmilitary emergency
16 should give the President a license to ransack the
17 military's budget. And the numbers, dollar for dollar, are
18 the same. That \$3.6 billion is the amount of the unfunded
19 requirement to do the hurricane relief on Tyndall and on
20 other installations -- Lejeune, et cetera -- that are
21 outside the Air Force. That's important.

22 General Goldfein, the last thing I want to say is this.
23 Military housing folks have asked you about it. Your
24 statement in that hearing, where you said, "I've lived in
25 military housing most of my life, as a child, as a member in

1 the military, and my wife and my kids have lived in military
2 housing." I think you said 50 years, plus, in military
3 housing, or something like that. And you said that you have
4 never worried for your own health, you've never worried for
5 the health of your spouse, you've never worried for the
6 health of your kids in military housing. And you said that
7 in a very powerful way to point out that people who are in
8 military housing right now shouldn't have to, either. And
9 that comment gave me a feeling that there is a command
10 presence here that's going to take this very, very seriously
11 until we get it right. We'll make sure that you do. But,
12 I'm given confidence by the way you expressed that.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator.

15 You know, let me just make one comment, here, and we
16 can discuss this in a different setting, perhaps. Just keep
17 in mind that the problem that many on this side of the aisle
18 see is parity. This is the first time in my memory that
19 we've been in a situation -- and I'm older than you are,
20 I've been around longer than you have, and I've observed,
21 certainly since World War II, that we have not been in a
22 situation where defending America wasn't the number-one
23 priority. It is no longer, as a result of the last
24 administration.

25 Senator Blumenthal.

1 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

2 I know there have been questions about the F-35 and the
3 F-15. And, as you well know, prior to the release of the
4 President's budget request, my Connecticut colleagues and I
5 sent a letter to Acting Secretary Shanahan expressing
6 concern about the then-rumored cuts to the F-35 program. I
7 am deeply disappointed, more so now than then, that these
8 reports proved to be true. Instead of the robust investment
9 in the fifth-generation F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, this
10 budget request proposes a mix of fourth- and fifth-
11 generation fighters. This step seems to be a shift in
12 strategic planning. This shift appears to have been
13 directed by the Secretary -- or, I should say, the Acting
14 Secretary of Defense, not the Air Force. Is that true?

15 Dr. Wilson: No, sir. The Secretary of -- Acting
16 Secretary of Defense did not direct us to do that -- or did
17 not direct me to do that.

18 Senator Blumenthal: Was it your initiative?

19 Dr. Wilson: I'm sorry, sir, I didn't hear you.

20 Senator Blumenthal: Was it your initiative?

21 Dr. Wilson: Sir, when we put together a budget and
22 make sausage, there's -- we put forward ideas, they then go
23 forward to the OSD level and cost analysis and program
24 evaluation, and the Comptroller then look at various
25 programs and how all of this works. In the process of that,

1 we did a deep dive particularly looking at tactical air and
2 how are we going to get to where we need to be without our
3 airframes -- we've got some airframes, particularly the F-
4 15C, that's not going to make it there. And you look at the
5 various sand charts and pieces of analysis and what the
6 combatant commander requirements are, and we cannot meet
7 their requirements in capacity, because that F-15C -- it's
8 just not going to live long enough. And so, what should we
9 do about that within the money that we have? And the
10 solution that we came up with, in concert with CAPE and the
11 Comptroller, was to buy -- we're committed to the F-35-- was
12 to buy 48 F-35s and then, instead of trying to extend the
13 life of those F-15Cs, replace them with an F-15E.

14 Senator Blumenthal: What was the initial
15 recommendation, though, that you made before all of the
16 grinders --

17 Dr. Wilson: Well --

18 Senator Blumenthal: -- then took over?

19 Dr. Wilson: The -- I can tell you that, when we --
20 what the -- what we could do within the money that we were -
21 - the way this works -- and I didn't know it when I was up
22 here on the Hill, but you -- we, basically, are given a top
23 line internal to the Air Force and try to build the best
24 program we can to achieve the National Defense Strategy
25 objectives within that top line. That included a proposal

1 for 48 F-35s. With that, we would see a decline in the
2 number of fighter squadrons we would have in the out years,
3 because those F-15Cs weren't going to make it. When we went
4 forward and said, What does this mean for our ability to
5 meet combatant commander requirements? -- the answer was
6 good. We can't keep declining in the number of fighter
7 squadrons we have. And, in cooperation with CAPE and the
8 Comptroller, one of the ideas was to replace those dying F-
9 15Cs with an F-15EX off the line. And, by doing that, the
10 Qataris and the Saudis have kept the line open, and have
11 invested in modernization there. We wouldn't have any
12 MILCON cost. We could do local training to shift from an F-
13 15C to an F-15E. Most of the ground equipment is the same.
14 Many of the parts are the same. We wouldn't have to retrain
15 the maintainers. So, when it's a balance of capacity and
16 capability, given the budget that we have available, that
17 was what made, we thought, the most sense.

18 Senator Blumenthal: So -- I hate to be simplistic
19 about it -- your initial recommendation, as I understand it,
20 your initial budget that you submitted to the Secretary of
21 Defense did not include the F-15s, and then all of these
22 factors were made aware to you?

23 Dr. Wilson: Senator, we do the best we can with the
24 top line we're given internally, and that included 48 F-35s
25 and a declining size of the number of fighter squadrons.

1 The question then was, What is the impact of that? When we
2 went forward with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and
3 the CAPE and the Comptroller -- and, you know, they never
4 allocate all the money out when we go through this process,
5 and it was, "Well, if there were more money available, can
6 we stem that decline in the number of fighter squadrons we
7 have available?" And so, the first thing was to keep 48 F-
8 35s. We're committed to that platform. It's a game
9 changer. How can we reduce the impact of the loss of the F-
10 15C? And this was the answer we came up with.

11 General Goldfein: Sir, I would just offer that, as
12 part of the dialogue, one of the things that the Secretary
13 and I made very clear was that we were not going to take
14 money from the F-35 and put it into an F-15. This is
15 additive, F-15. We absolutely have to keep the F-35 program
16 on track, because, as the largest customer, we speak not
17 only for the United States Air Force, but also for our
18 teammates in the Navy and the Marine Corps that are buying
19 the F-35, and all of our international teammates, because we
20 need our international allies and partners in the fifth
21 generation with us. To give you an example, we need Canada,
22 who's going through their process right now. We need them.
23 They're part of an alliance that we've worked together in
24 NORAD for 60 years. And to defend our homeland together, we
25 need them in the fifth-gen. So, we're not backing an inch

1 off the F-35 as we go forward.

2 Senator Blumenthal: Well, I take it at word, because
3 my time is expired, that there will be no diminishing of
4 commitment to the F-35. And I think that is certainly the
5 right goal.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you very much.

8 Let me make one comment about the F-35 that I don't
9 think was -- has been made. Yeah, we have the figure of
10 1763 -- 1763 that's supposed in this timeframe. We are now
11 at 182. We should be at 1100. I think you would agree with
12 that figure. So, that's one of the problems that we have not
13 had a chance to explore, but it's a problem, certainly not
14 of your doing.

15 Appreciate very much the great responses that you made
16 to all these questions.

17 We're adjourned.

18 [Whereupon, at 11:36 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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