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Before the

Subcommittee on Personnel

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

TO CONDUCT OVERSIGHT AND RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE
STATUS OF MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES

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1 TO CONDUCT OVERSIGHT AND RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE STATUS OF
2 MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES

3
4 Wednesday, March 26, 2025

5
6 U.S. Senate
7 Committee on Armed Services
8 Subcommittee on Personnel
9 Washington, D.C.

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11 The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30
12 p.m., in Room SR-222, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon.
13 Tommy Tuberville, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

14 Committee Members Present: Tuberville, Scott, Budd,
15 Warren, Reed, Blumenthal, and Hirono.

16 Also Present: Senator Sullivan.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TOMMY TUBERVILLE, U.S.
2 SENATOR FROM ALABAMA

3 Senator Tuberville: I would like to call this
4 Committee hearing in session. The Senate Armed Services
5 Subcommittee on Personnel meets this afternoon to conduct
6 oversight and receive testimony on the status of the
7 military service academies. Thank you for being here.

8 The last time this body conducted a hearing on this
9 topic with these witnesses, or with any witnesses with the
10 academies, was more than 30 years ago. We are fortunate to
11 have these three distinguished officers here today:

12 Lieutenant General Steven Gilland, U.S. Military Academy;
13 Vice Admiral Yvette Davids of the Naval Academy; and
14 Lieutenant General Tony --

15 General Bauernfeind: Bauernfeind, sir.

16 Senator Tuberville: -- Bauernfeind. It is going to
17 be a long day.

18 As this is the first meeting of the Personnel
19 Subcommittee in the 119th Congress let me begin by saying I
20 look forward to working with you, Ranking Member Warren,
21 thank you for being here, as we continue the bipartisan
22 tradition of the Armed Services Committee in developing the
23 National Defense Authorization Act. Nothing is more
24 bipartisan than supporting our men and women in uniform and
25 their families. This Subcommittee has a long history of

1 prioritizing the well-being and morale of our
2 servicemembers, and I am eager to continue that work as the
3 new Chairman.

4 The military service academies are foundational to the
5 success of the military officer court. In many ways, the
6 service academies establish the culture of their respected
7 service. Moreover, the academies occupy an important
8 position in our society. They are perhaps the last
9 universities in the country that focus on building
10 character and improving the morality of their student body.

11 The American people often perceive the academies as
12 being emblematic of the entire U.S. military, for better or
13 for worse. And over the last several years, the academies
14 have lost sight in some areas of the fundamental reason for
15 their existence, which is to commission officers with the
16 education required by the respective military branches.

17 All three academies have been sued for engaging in
18 race-based affirmative action that is now prohibited at
19 every other university in the country. We have repeatedly
20 heard, over the last several years, that our diversity is
21 our strength. It is not. Diversity can be an awesome
22 advantage, but our unity of effort and shared benefits in
23 our Constitution and common values are our strength.
24 Diversity for the sake of diversity alone weakens us.

25 A professor at the Air Force Academy proudly authored

1 a Washington Post op-ed proclaiming that she teaches
2 critical race theory to cadets. Both West Point and the
3 Air Force Academy established diversity and inclusion
4 minors which can be trendy in other university settings,
5 but were so unpopular with cadets that when they were
6 abruptly cancelled by President Trump hardly anyone
7 noticed.

8 More importantly, any effort to teach our future
9 leaders to judge or sort people by immutable
10 characteristics like race runs counter to the Constitution
11 and is devastating to good order and discipline. Last
12 fall, the Naval Academy appropriately cancelled a lecture
13 after it was revealed that the speaker planned to use the
14 opportunity to make a partisan political speech. But one
15 must ask, why was this speaker invited in the first place?
16 The academies must always remember that they were created
17 in the first place. The American people devote tremendous
18 resources to maintaining all of these institutions. If the
19 academies are not entirely focused on building officers'
20 character and to lead our nation's sons and daughters in
21 combat, then what is the purpose?

22 I hope our witnesses will address these criticisms but
23 also tell us about the great things that are happening
24 every day at the academies.

25 The vast majority of the cadets and midshipmen,

1 faculty and staff at the service academies are properly
2 focused on the only mission that matters, which is
3 defending our Constitution and the American people.

4 I thank the witnesses for appearing here today, and I
5 look forward to their testimony.

6 Now I will turn the microphone over to Senator Warren.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. ELIZABETH WARREN, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MASSACHUSETTS

3 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am also
4 looking forward to continuing the bipartisan tradition of
5 this Subcommittee, and I hope to work with you and all of
6 our members to make sure that we improve the lives of our
7 servicemembers, their families, and our civilian workforce
8 so that they can stay focused on the mission of keeping
9 Americans' safe.

10 I want to start by extending my condolences to the
11 four families that just lost loved ones during a training
12 mission in Lithuania. They remind us, those who go into
13 harm's way and their families are always at risk and put it
14 on the line for the people of this United States of
15 America. We are a deeply grateful nation.

16 I am glad that we are starting this year by focusing
17 on how we recruit and retain the next generation of
18 military leaders. Our military service academies are among
19 the top academic institutions in the nation. West Point,
20 the Air Force Academy, the Naval Academy provide a high-
21 quality education, and they recruit and train almost 20
22 percent of our military officers.

23 Currently, our military academies are very selective,
24 almost as tough to get into as the top colleges in this
25 country. But that knife cuts both ways. Every student

1 admitted to the military academies has other options.
2 Academy students are often highly recruited by other
3 schools. The competition for talent for tomorrow's leaders
4 is already fierce. Attacks on our military academies
5 through policies that shrink the pool of young Americans
6 who will consider applying for military service will cause
7 lasting damage to our military and to our nation.

8 The latest U.S. census found that the youngest
9 generation of Americans is more diverse than ever. That
10 means we need our military academies to continue developing
11 successful leaders from all walks of life, not push away
12 strong recruits because they feel unwelcome or undervalued.
13 Ham-fisted efforts to reshape the academies are bound to
14 backfire. For example, a mix of military practitioners and
15 civilian instructors have successfully worked together for
16 decades to shape students at the service academies into a
17 lethal fighting force.

18 In a same way that competition for talent exists for
19 academy students, the same competition is true for faculty.
20 Well-respected professors have options, and many are
21 aggressively recruited.

22 When Secretary Hegseth seemed to suggest that
23 academies should have fewer civilian professors, and when
24 the Department of Defense imposes a ban on travel by
25 civilian personnel, it suggests that the military does not

1 care about civilians supporting its mission and that it
2 will make it harder to attract and keep top talent to teach
3 tomorrow's military leaders.

4 The foolishness of the travel ban was immediately
5 apparent. Testing sites for military entrance exams were
6 forced to close or reduce hours, so fewer young people
7 could apply to the military. While DoD has begun to allow
8 civilians to travel to these testing sites again, these
9 attacks on civilian personnel who help to support our
10 military are worrying, and civilian personnel are key to
11 keeping our academies successful, as well.

12 Our military students deserve the best teachers,
13 people who are experts in their field. Tying the hands of
14 the academies as they compete with other top universities
15 for talented faculty will undercut the academies and, over
16 time, undercut the leaders the academies are teaching.

17 Students need to develop their skills both inside the
18 classroom and outside, as well. I am sure many of us can
19 think of sports teams and extracurricular activities that
20 helped shape our experiences at school, that helped build
21 our communities, and that made us better leaders. Surely,
22 as a coach, Chairman Tuberville saw students' leadership
23 skills develop and grow through out-of-classroom work.

24 The executive orders attacks on clubs at academies
25 that it considers DEI is not creating more effective

1 warfighters. It is cutting off students from opportunities
2 to grow as leaders. When we are trying to maintain a
3 military force that can deter China, we cannot afford to be
4 shutting down engineering clubs. But under President
5 Trump, West Point has already disbanded chapters of the
6 National Society of Black Engineers and the National
7 Society of Women Engineers. Both organizations have been
8 praised repeatedly for helping recruit and retain more
9 young engineers for military service. Closing those
10 chapters at the military academies, while those chapters
11 remain open at more than 600 other colleges and
12 universities, does not help our military recruit top
13 talent.

14 This Committee held two hearings on recruiting last
15 year, and both hearings made clear that the United States
16 cannot meet its recruiting goals without women. The Army
17 met its recruiting goals in 2024, primarily because of new
18 female recruits. There was an 18 percent increase in women
19 signing up for active duty, compared to an increase of just
20 8 percent for men. Let me be clear. These women are not
21 looking for a preference or a handout. They just want a
22 chance to compete straight up.

23 But we will not be able to attract the women we need
24 if they see a new glass ceiling on their opportunity to
25 command. By removing women, like the Chief of Naval

1 Operations Vice Admiral Franchetti, from leadership roles
2 simply because they are women, and confirming a Secretary
3 of Defense who has a long record of opposing women in
4 combat, the Trump administration has already set a tone
5 from the top that women are not welcome. We are already
6 hearing concerns that women are hesitant to join certain
7 military jobs because they believe they will not be
8 welcome, solely due to their identity, not because of their
9 qualifications.

10 Black recruits face their own challenges. When a
11 Black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a man who
12 served honorably for over 40 years and who outlined our
13 most successful strategy to deal with foreign terrorists,
14 is fired solely because President Trump cannot imagine that
15 he earned the job on the merits, Black military recruits
16 across the nation get the message -- your race makes you
17 vulnerable.

18 And when national organizations to support Black
19 college students who major in engineering are suddenly
20 dropped at the military academies, while those
21 organizations remain lively at 600 other colleges and
22 universities, the message that the military academies may
23 not welcome you gets even louder.

24 Recruiting and retaining talent, including Black and
25 female talent, is a critical job for the future security of

1 our nation. Pushing away more than half our future leaders
2 is wildly self-destructive.

3 Mr. Chairman, 24 alumni from West Point and the Naval
4 Academy have written to me, sharing their stories about
5 what the academies mean to them and why they are concerned
6 about the direction this Administration wants to take them.
7 I would like to enter those into the record for their
8 letters and testimony.

9 Senator Tuberville: So entered.

10 [The information follows:]

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1 Senator Warren: Let me read from just one of them,
2 who wrote that these attacks on diversity are, quote, "a
3 direct affront to the principles upon which our military
4 was built and a betrayal of the sacrifices made by
5 generations of servicemembers." Let those words sink in --
6 a betrayal. We owe them better than that.

7 I look forward to this hearing and hearing the
8 testimony of witnesses who are here today. I thank you for
9 being with us.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Warren.

12 Now we will start with our witnesses and we will go to
13 questions and answers. We will start with you, General
14 Gilland.

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1 STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL STEVEN W. GILLAND,
2 USA, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY,
3 UNITED STATES ARMY

4 General Gilland: Chairman Tuberville, Ranking Member
5 Warren, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank
6 you for your continued support of the United States
7 Military Academy and Corps of Cadets. I am honored by the
8 opportunity to share how your military academy is providing
9 the Army and our nation with disciplined, resilient warrior
10 leaders of character, ready to fight and win on the 21st
11 century battlefield.

12 West Point produces the best-trained junior officers,
13 dedicated to the Army values and ready for a lifetime of
14 selfless service to the nation. Starting on day one, our
15 cadets are grounded in the ideals of duty, honor, country,
16 and our Cadet Honor Code. Our rigorous leader development
17 system ensures West Point graduates are prepared to lead
18 American soldiers.

19 West Point is not a traditional college or university.
20 We equip our graduates with the skills required to lead
21 small units on the battlefield. Furthermore, we develop
22 and refine the high moral character necessary to lead
23 America's sons and daughters to fight and win our nation's
24 wars.

25 Through a robust corps curriculum that encompasses

1 warfighting, scholarship, and physical training,
2 underpinned by the United States Constitution, we instill
3 both the warrior ethos and intellectual agility necessary
4 to outthink and outmaneuver our adversaries. Our graduates
5 serve as a testament to the effectiveness of our program,
6 including 77 Medal of Honor recipients, over 100 Rhodes
7 Scholars, 2 U.S. Presidents, and numerous Members of
8 Congress, including 10 current members.

9 Our team, many of whom are combat veterans, and from
10 my professional experience in the 75th Ranger Regiment, as
11 a former deputy commander of a special mission unit, and
12 the Commander of the Warrior Division in the Republic of
13 Korea, we know what it takes to fight and win in the most
14 unforgiving conditions. That mindset and toughness is what
15 West Point teaches, which is exactly the type of
16 battlefield leadership West Point produces.

17 But what truly sets us apart is our comprehensive
18 character development efforts integrated through all
19 aspects of the cadet experience. I believe a cadet gets a
20 degree in character development and leadership. We charge
21 every member of our community, staff, faculty, and coaches
22 to be developers of leadership and character. These
23 extraordinary young men and women are among America's
24 finest, hailing from our states, unified by shared
25 commitment to selfless service, supporting and defending

1 the Constitution, and living and leading honorably.

2 We invite you to West Point to participate in the
3 classroom and our training, sleep outside on the ground and
4 in the rain with our cadets, and witness firsthand our
5 exceptional future leaders in action. We know that you
6 will be inspired.

7 Thank you again, Senators, for the opportunity to
8 discuss the United States Military Academy with you today.

9 [The prepared statement of General Gilland follows:]

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1 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, General. Admiral
2 Davids.

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1 STATEMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL YVETTE M. DAVIDS, USN,
2 SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY, UNITED
3 STATES NAVY

4 Admiral Davids: Chairman Tuberville, Ranking Member
5 Warren, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank
6 you for the opportunity to appear before you today on
7 behalf of the United States Naval Academy.

8 The Naval Academy's mission is to develop midshipmen
9 morally, mentally, and physically, and to imbue them with
10 the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty, in order to
11 graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval
12 service. We are developing our Navy and Marine Corps' next
13 generation of resilient warfighters and ethical leaders of
14 character who will preserve peace, and when called upon,
15 prevail in conflict.

16 I took command of the Naval Academy as Superintendent
17 in January of 2024, and I am pleased to report to you today
18 that the Naval Academy is succeeding in its mission.
19 Having graduated from the Naval Academy in 1989, as a
20 Surface Warfare Officer, over the last 35 years I have had
21 the privilege of serving on board 7 Navy ships, including
22 command of a carrier strike crew. My husband Keith, a
23 member of the Naval Academy class of 1990, honorably served
24 as a Navy SEAL for 34 years before retiring this fall,
25 after commanding Naval Special Warfare Command.

1 I can attest that the Naval Academy has and continues
2 to develop the type of stalwart leaders that our Navy and
3 Marine Corps needs, both today and for a future fight. The
4 Naval Academy graduates and commissions over 1,000 officers
5 each year, ensigns, and second lieutenants to serve in our
6 Navy and Marine Corps. Every member of the Naval Academy
7 team, from company officers to professors to coaches is
8 committed to developing these young men and women to meet
9 and exceed the standards required, as evidenced by an
10 average graduation rate of 89 percent, well above the DoD
11 requirement of 75 percent, and the U.S. 4-year graduation
12 rate of 27 percent.

13 While we value our reputation in the various college
14 rankings, they are important for our admission efforts. It
15 is important to highlight that we are a military service
16 academy and not a college or a university. Our graduates
17 must be prepared immediately upon commissioning to lead and
18 fight.

19 As a national institution, the Naval Academy draws
20 applicants from across our great nation. The Naval Academy
21 uses a comprehensive process, a whole-person assessment,
22 balancing objective factors, including each candidate's
23 application such as GPA, with subjective factors such as
24 strength of a candidate's high school and course load. At
25 no time are race, sex, or ethnicity considered in the

1 admissions process. And despite recent challenges
2 associated with COVID-19 pandemic and drops in college
3 enrollment nationally, the Naval Academy has experienced a
4 nearly 47 percent increase in our number of applications
5 over the past 20 years.

6 Our outreach efforts have been successful in reaching
7 across the country, delivering dedicated, quality,
8 candidates. From the moment a midshipman swears their oath
9 on Induction Day to the day they are commissioned, they
10 undergo experiential leadership development, learning by
11 doing, as an integral aspect of their education and
12 training.

13 While our core academic program includes required
14 courses in English, history, and government, it also
15 includes an immense focus on leadership development, and is
16 heavily STEM focused. Our graduates will serve on nuclear
17 submarines, fly state-of-the-art aircraft, and command
18 advanced warships. This technical foundation is an
19 imperative.

20 Our philosophy of education stresses attention to
21 individual students by highly qualified faculty and staff
22 members, and our faculty is an integrated group of over 550
23 military officers and civilian professionals, historically
24 designed to be roughly equal in number. Officers typically
25 rotate to the Naval Academy for 2- to 3-year assignments,

1 bringing fresh ideas and experiences from the fleet. We
2 also have a smaller contingent of permanent military
3 instructors and professors, usually assigned for 5 to 8
4 years at a time.

5 Our career civilian faculty members, all with doctoral
6 degrees, bring continuity to the education program, the
7 academic and subject matter expertise necessary for our
8 advanced technical courses, and hone teaching skills.
9 Working together, our military and civilian instructors
10 form an exceptionally dedicated team.

11 The Naval Academy offers 26 majors. Over 75 percent
12 of our graduates major in a STEM discipline, and majors are
13 added or removed in response to the needs of the fleet.
14 Recent examples include the addition of majors in nuclear
15 engineering, cyber operations, and data science. We
16 integrate wargaming into each midshipman's professional
17 development, preparing future officers who can outthink the
18 enemy.

19 Every midshipman also maintains a high level of
20 physical fitness. They participate in classes and
21 combatives as well as swimming, and must achieve physical
22 fitness standards that far exceed Navy-wide standards. We
23 have 36 varsity sports, among the most of any college or
24 university in the nation. Developing teamwork, grit,
25 resiliency, and the will to win are all vital attributes

1 for all Naval Academy graduates.

2 Established by Congress in 1845, the Naval Academy has
3 developed into a 4-year, total immersion program designed
4 to instill professional, physical, and academic excellence
5 required to develop warfighters and leaders of character
6 for careers in our naval service.

7 Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before
8 you today, and I look forward to your questions.

9 [The prepared statement of Admiral Davids follows:]

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1 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Admiral. General?

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1 STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL TONY D. BAUERNFEIND,
2 USAF, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
3 ACADEMY, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

4 General Bauernfeind: Chairman Tuberville, Ranking
5 Member Warren, and other distinguished members, good
6 afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to address this
7 Committee on behalf of the United States Air Force Academy.

8 At the Air Force Academy, we are exceptionally proud
9 of our military, academic, and athletic heritage, where we
10 have developed leaders who have served with honor since our
11 first graduating class of 1959. With our 30 majors and our
12 19 minors, we are proud to be named amongst the top public
13 colleges in this great nation, alongside our teammates at
14 this table.

15 Additionally, our 30 intercollegiate athletic teams
16 continue to showcase our warrior spirit and our athletic
17 prowess with 248 national champions after last Friday night
18 and 928 All-Americans over our short history.

19 But this is not enough. As a nation, we are in a time
20 of consequence with global geopolitical instability. Our
21 adversaries have watched the American way of war, and they
22 are challenging our capabilities in every warfighting
23 domain. It is our responsibility to act now. At USAFA,
24 that action is a transformation that starts with our
25 updated mission in which we will forge leaders of character

1 motivated to a lifetime of service and developed to lead
2 our Air Force's Space Force as we fight and win our
3 nation's wars.

4 With our mission in mind, and building upon the
5 foundation of our service's core values, our priorities are
6 that we will forge warfighters to win, we will inspire
7 leaders of character and quality, and we will motivate
8 critical thinkers to adapt.

9 Our mission, our priorities, and our newly injected
10 warfighter training are the bedrock of forging warfighters
11 to win. The warrior ethos our nation needs must focus on
12 our readiness and driving us to be offensively minded, to
13 be the masters of our craft, and team builders who overcome
14 adversity. Our cadets will be ready for future
15 battlefields with the foundational warfighting skills of
16 shoot, move, communicate, mediate, and automate. These
17 are the skills our joint force requires.

18 Leaders of character and quality make the right
19 decisions, the right way, even if unpopular. They value
20 teamwork, hold each other accountable, maintain high
21 standards, and build each other up to exceed those
22 standards, and always uphold their honor.

23 Finally, the dynamic strategic environment of our time
24 demands critical thinkers to adapt. On a modern-day
25 battlefield our leaders must innovate solutions to wicked-

1 hard problems, while operating with limited information.
2 By developing their skills to ensure military readiness, to
3 make rapid decisions with limited data, manage operational
4 risk, our cadets will be ready to face a challenging world.

5 As a military service academy, our priorities are the
6 foundation of everything we do. Every military training
7 session, every classroom, educational experience, and every
8 athletic competition must support and reflect our
9 priorities as we develop warfighters ready to lead on day
10 one. Woven throughout that foundation is a shared
11 responsibility for instilling a culture of warfighting
12 excellence, team building, and respect to the entire team.
13 To be clear, our training will always be demanding, but it
14 will never be demeaning.

15 To achieve our goals, our Academy is undergoing
16 significant change. We have returned to the basics of
17 military training and enforcing standards for all Academy
18 personnel. While standards and accountability are critical
19 to good order and discipline, more importantly they are
20 vital to modern warfare, where precision, professionalism,
21 and trust are the foundation of complex military
22 activities.

23 We are also implementing a four-class leadership
24 development program. We are shifting away from an emphasis
25 on stress-focused training during the freshman year to a

1 comprehensive, military-focused progressive training at the
2 individual, team, and unit levels that spans a cadet's
3 entire 47-month leadership and military development
4 program.

5 Through 4 years of rigorous military training, a
6 nationally recognized academic program, and highly
7 competitive academics, we will develop graduates who
8 exemplify unwavering courage and integrity. They will be
9 prepared to lead in our Air Force and our Space Force, and
10 they will be ready to lead lethal warfighting teams to
11 deter our adversaries, and should deterrence fail, fight
12 and win our nation's wars.

13 Our path is clear. We must forge warfighters to win,
14 we must inspire leaders of character and quality, and we
15 must motivate critical thinkers to adapt, all to ensure
16 that we deliver the decisive advantage over our
17 adversaries. Our nation deserves nothing less.

18 I look forward to your questions and sharing more
19 about the incredible Air Force Academy. Thank you.

20 [The prepared statement of General Bauernfeind
21 follows:]

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1 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, General. We will
2 start with a few questions. I would just like to say
3 something. I coached for 40 years and recruited all over
4 this country. And I did lose recruits to each one of your
5 academies. And it never bothered me because I knew the
6 direction they were headed. And they were going to a
7 different team, and all three of you said something about
8 team, and that is what you are. Your entire academy is a
9 team. You are all together in one. When you are at a
10 university, you have athletic teams and all that, but you
11 are a unique situation. And I want to thank you for what
12 you all do, because you are the tip of the spear for the
13 future of our country, the leadership that you are going to
14 build.

15 So thank you for those opening statements, and let's
16 just talk about some of the inner workings of what you all
17 do. In the last 30 years, the composition and the role of
18 the faculties at each of your institutions has changed
19 significantly. Everything changes. So I want to ask each
20 one of you to answer these questions. How has the
21 military-civilian mix of your faculties changed over that
22 time? General, we will start with you.

23 General Gilland: Senator, our civilian faculty, we
24 call it a blend of excellence. Our force structure has
25 uniformed members 74 percent of the faculty, and then the

1 force structure allows 26 percent for civilian faculty.
2 What has changed over the past decade specifically is that
3 the civilian faculty bring a depth of knowledge within
4 disciplines that we are able to use for the benefit of the
5 education of our cadets.

6 Primarily the force structure I said of 26 percent
7 civilian, about 55 percent of those civilian faculty work
8 in the STEM fields -- so as we think about our engineering,
9 mathematics, and such -- which has led us to be able to --
10 we have got a cadet team that deals in hypersonics, that
11 has been able to launch a rocket that has exceeded the
12 Kármán line. Sir, the Kármán line is 100 kilometers above
13 the Earth's surface. These are undergraduate students that
14 are competing against graduate students that are able to do
15 that.

16 And the reason they are able to do that is because
17 when we think of the expertise that the civilian faculty,
18 within physics, aerospace engineering, et cetera, they
19 bring that expertise and that knowledge and continuity for
20 our cadets to be able to build year after year, and able to
21 do that.

22 Also, our Title 10 civilian instructors, just as our
23 uniformed instructors, they swear an oath to the
24 Constitution, to support and defend the Constitution also.
25 And they are charged, by me as the Superintendent, to be

1 developers of character and leadership. As I mentioned in
2 my opening statement, Senator, they are part of that
3 community to teach character and leadership, not just
4 physics or data science, but also the life lessons that
5 come with being leader in their experiences.

6 Senator Tuberville: Admiral?

7 Admiral Davids: Thank you, Senator. The Naval
8 Academy, since 1845, has modeled a 50/50 civilian-to-
9 military ratio, and we remain pretty close to that now,
10 although we are off by a little bit, I would say, at the
11 moment. Our civilians, very similar to the answer that you
12 just got, bring such an incredible depth. They tend to
13 stay for 30 years or longer. So they bring this longevity
14 and continuity that we need at the Academy that balances
15 the military personnel that either rotate in and out about 3
16 to 5 years or so, or complement our permanent military
17 instructors and permanent military professors, that will
18 stay a little bit longer, about 5 to 8 years in time, until
19 statutory retirement for some of them.

20 But it is the military and the teamwork that they have
21 got with the civilian group that really makes this robust,
22 STEM-heavy curriculum work. For us, similarly, they
23 inspire our midshipmen. They provide that continuity. But
24 more importantly, I think, the civilians, in particular,
25 provide this technical expertise that allows us to change

1 and develop in the STEM areas that we need to for the
2 longevity of the time, and to keep up with these incredible
3 midshipmen that are coming in and need to be more
4 technically advanced.

5 So the balance that they have is really important to
6 us. We value them working together as this incredible
7 team. It seems to have worked very well in our case, and
8 we are making terrific officers because of this, and
9 warfighters. And I would say that every single one of
10 them, if you are part of the Naval Academy, are very much a
11 part of developing these midshipmen into the warfighters,
12 into the leaders of character that they need to be, and
13 thus we have this 50/50 mix.

14 Senator Tuberville: General?

15 General Bauernfeind: Senator Tuberville, over time
16 the Air Force Academy, from when I was a cadet in the early
17 '90s, was very few civilian, and we have now migrated to
18 approximately 38 to 40 percent of civilian faculty is in
19 our cadet-facing instruction that comes forward.

20 And in my first 7 months I have assessed is the two
21 most important things that we provide our future leaders
22 are two things. One is subject matter expertise to
23 challenge them, to educate them, to help them develop those
24 critical thinking skills, but also operationally relevant
25 experience. So as we develop them as future warrior

1 leaders, being able to connect with them, to teach them
2 what it means to serve inside our military as that goes
3 forward. And we benefit from that capability from our
4 military instructors as that moves forward as well as a
5 good portion of our civilian instructors, many of which are
6 veterans themselves, before they have become civilian
7 instructors and faculty members, as that develops. Thank
8 you.

9 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Senator Warren.

10 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going
11 to pick up on where you were. We have been talking about
12 the military academies are charged with training the next
13 generation of leaders, and together the three of you train
14 about 1 out of every 5 of our military officers. The
15 military spends millions of dollars, many, many years to
16 train our helicopter pilots and our combat leaders, and for
17 a few, the chiefs of staff that we end up with.

18 But the Trump administration is undermining those
19 investments by tilting at windmills named DEI. In less
20 than 3 months, the Administration has cancelled student
21 engineering clubs and purged curricula based on clumsy
22 keyword searches. The Administration sends a strong signal
23 that not everyone is welcome in our military.

24 So today I want to dig in on how you all think about
25 your mission to develop the leaders who will keep our

1 military strong. Lieutenant General Bauernfeind, do you
2 consider academic and leadership potential in the
3 admissions process, so that we can develop the next
4 generation military officers who will take on the toughest
5 jobs?

6 General Bauernfeind: Senator Warren, yes, we do,
7 absolutely, in our admissions process consider leadership
8 and through their 47-month leadership development program.

9 Senator Warren: Good.

10 Senator Blumenthal: Make sure your mic is on.

11 Senator Warren: Yeah. Make sure it is on. We are
12 not getting much sound here.

13 And General Gilland, same answer? Yes?

14 General Gilland: Yes, ma'am.

15 Senator Warren: And Admiral Davids?

16 Admiral Davids: Yes, ma'am, considered in the
17 admissions process.

18 Senator Warren: Good. So you all admit cadets and
19 midshipmen based on their academic and their leadership
20 potential. Then it is your job to turn that potential into
21 reality.

22 So let's talk about where students develop those
23 skills. One place, obviously, is the classroom. That is
24 one of the reasons, as you have already described, that
25 students learn from both academic experts and practitioners

1 in the field. Military practitioners obviously have
2 valuable experiences to share with students. But the
3 academies also need the best teachers for physics and
4 cybersecurity and electrical engineering and much, much
5 more.

6 The Department of Defense has recognized this,
7 including in a 1993 report, calling on the service
8 academies to ingrate more civilian faculty so that, quote,
9 "the faculties can act in unity but not identically a blend
10 of excellence."

11 Vice Admiral Davids, does learning from both military
12 and civilian instructors help your students develop the
13 skills they need to become part of a lethal fighting force?

14 Admiral Davids: Thank you, Senator. Absolutely, they
15 learn from both, our military and our civilian. It is one
16 team to be able to develop these midshipmen, and they are
17 all in on doing that. So I am really impressed.

18 Senator Warren: Good. General Bauernfeind?

19 General Bauernfeind: Bauernfeind, ma'am.

20 Senator Warren: Bauernfeind.

21 General Bauernfeind: Yes, Senator Warren. Yes, we
22 value our facility as it comes forward, as it brings
23 forward for the two aspects, as mentioned before, bringing
24 forward that subject matter expertise and that
25 operationally relevant experience to both educate and

1 develop future leaders.

2 Senator Warren: And General Gilland, are you in
3 agreement with your colleagues here?

4 General Gilland: Yes, Senator.

5 Senator Warren: Good. But leadership is obviously
6 about what you learn in the classroom, but it is also what
7 happens outside the classroom. So I want to talk for just
8 a minute about engineering clubs. They certainly encourage
9 students to learn hard skills, to support each other, and
10 that undertaking can be really difficult. But an
11 engineering club also gives the student an opportunity to
12 take on leadership roles and responsibilities, like being
13 the treasurer, or being the president. That is true of
14 other clubs, too.

15 One cadet who helped found the Vietnamese-American
16 Cadet Association at West Point said that it helped to make
17 him a better officer and that, quote, "West Point was
18 probably the first place where I had a supportive
19 environment for my identity and who I am."

20 So Lieutenant General Gilland, do cadets grow as
21 leaders by taking initiative and contributing to their
22 communities, and are clubs a significant part of that?

23 General Gilland: Yes, Senator. All of our clubs, and
24 I would consider all of West Point as a living, breathing,
25 leadership laboratory.

1 Senator Warren: I like that. I like that. Vice
2 Admiral Davids?

3 Admiral Davids: I would agree completely, Senator.

4 Senator Warren: And General Bauernfeind?

5 General Bauernfeind: Senator Warren, I do agree, as
6 well, that our clubs provide opportunities.

7 Senator Warren: So I am concerned, because currently
8 the Administration is rolling out executive orders that
9 have led to dismantling clubs that have been around for
10 decades, and that have successfully supported students at
11 the service academies. Those leadership opportunities
12 remain available in more than 600 colleges and universities
13 around the country. Banning those clubs just at our
14 military academies does not make it easier to recruit the
15 best and the brightest.

16 The Trump administration's ham-fisted attacks on the
17 service academies undermine our ability to recruit and to
18 train talented young people who will become a critical part
19 of our lethal fighting force. I think that is bad for our
20 cadets and it is bad for our national security.

21 Thank you for being here. And we apologize for moving
22 in and out. We have got votes going on at the same time.
23 So this is not a comment on what anyone has to say. We
24 just have to play a little bit of tag here.

25 Senator Reed, I understand -- yeah, he hasn't even sat

1 down yet. Senator Reed, you are up next.

2 Senator Reed: Well, thank you all for your testimony
3 and for your service. My experience, which has some
4 connection to the academies, is that there are places which
5 build character and also critical thinking. The character
6 is understanding that you must do the harder right rather
7 than the easier wrong. But the critical thinking is
8 absolutely important, because today we are in a
9 multidimensional scheme of warfare. We have accelerated
10 technology. We have contested [inaudible]. The young
11 graduates are going into a much more complicated world than
12 I went into.

13 Admiral Davids, can you talk about the process that
14 your faculty and dean go through when determining the
15 curriculum for your students?

16 Admiral Davids: Thank you, Senator. We have a really
17 robust curriculum. It includes everything that you might
18 need to make a great officer, and having just come from the
19 fleet, I can attest to that. It has got English. It has
20 got government. It has got leadership. It has got STEM-
21 heavy to help develop them and ready them in order to be
22 ready to be these incredible officers out in the fleet on
23 day one, sir.

24 Senator Reed: Thank you, ma'am. General Gilland,
25 please.

1 General Gilland: Senator Reed, our curriculum, which
2 spans across not only the academic program but also our
3 physical and military program, is designed to develop
4 critical thinkers, as I stated in the opening statement, to
5 be able to outthink and outmaneuver our adversaries. That
6 is built into everything that we do at the United States
7 Military Academy.

8 Senator Reed: Thank you, sir. General Bauernfeind.

9 General Bauernfeind: Senator Reed, thank you very
10 much. We have a robust course of instruction that not only
11 includes our academic curriculum but our physical education
12 and our commissioning education, all designed to meet the
13 three priorities that I laid out in the opening statement,
14 as it moves forward. And we have a very dynamic curriculum
15 for all, because in our connection with our Air Force major
16 commands and our Space Force field coms we are responsive
17 to not only the requirements of the fielded forces but also
18 the direction we receive from the Secretary of the Air
19 Force, as an example, to graduate more of our future
20 leaders focused on STEM degrees, as the way of future
21 warfare is going to rely heavily on that STEM education as
22 it moves forward. And through our integrated curriculum
23 review process, as well as great faculty support, we are
24 able to ebb and flow our curriculum to meet the dynamic
25 requirements of the force.

1 Senator Reed: Sir, can I follow up with another
2 question, which is can you tell us a vignette of your own
3 personal experience that you have tried to infuse into the
4 wing at the Air Force Academy?

5 General Bauernfeind: So as an example, as we look
6 forward to curriculum review we see an opportunity, as
7 looking to the future of our corps, is a need for
8 understanding that all of our future leaders must not only
9 be air-minded but they also must be space-minded and cyber-
10 minded, to understand how to deliver and understand the
11 organizations that deliver those effects for the joint
12 warfighting campaign.

13 So right now our faculty are looking through our
14 process to how to ensure that all 1,000 graduates every
15 year come out with that full appreciation of air, space,
16 and cyber, to be effective as joint operators.

17 Senator Reed: Thank you. Admiral Davids, your
18 comments?

19 Admiral Davids: Thank you, Senator. I think it is my
20 enthusiasm for the curriculum and for the trust I have got
21 in the faculty that inspires them all to do incredible
22 things.

23 And you asked what we do individually to support. I
24 think one of my big focus areas this year has definitely
25 been wargaming. And it is sort of at a nascent level, but

1 I think we do have one of the largest undergraduate
2 wargaming efforts at one time for our midshipmen fourth
3 class at the end of each year. It is really extraordinary.
4 It is also to support the midshipmen first class as they
5 develop their capstone projects, and this is why it is so
6 exciting, because it is tied completely with the fleet,
7 with our labs, with our research projects that occur, that
8 the midshipmen are incorporating to include in some real-
9 world operational support.

10 And not to mention we have some incredible
11 extracurricular activities that we talked about before, and
12 one that I just used as an example is something we call
13 SWAT-C but imagine it is a competitive drone group that
14 goes out and competes against these two here but also other
15 schools in the real-world terrain, on understanding how to
16 use that technology in the future. It is about really
17 infusing support to the faculty and staff.

18 Senator Reed: Thank you. And General Gilland.

19 General Gilland: Senator Reed, our curriculum is
20 under continuous assessment, and it evolves to meet the
21 requirements of the United States Army. From a personal
22 vignette perspective, at West Point we have what is called
23 MX-400, which is the officer capstone course. It is a
24 superintendent's course. Our first class, our seniors,
25 take that course one semester during their senior year. I

1 address them in specifically the underpinnings of the
2 Constitution of the United States and what it means to be a
3 commissioned officer in the United States Army. And then
4 the vignettes associated with experiences that I have had
5 through almost 35 years of service in our Army.

6 Senator Reed: Just let me make two final points. One
7 of the advantages you have now is a very established and
8 experienced noncommissioned officers corps, who are
9 integrated within the cadet companies and squadrons, et
10 cetera, which is a plus. And second, I have some
11 prejudices among the academies, but Admiral Davids, I think
12 Navy really began to turn in the right direction when in
13 the 1860s you moved to Newport, Rhode Island for a few
14 years. I think that is the key point. Thank you.

15 Admiral Davids: Thank you, sir.

16 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Reed. Senator
17 Sullivan.

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is
19 good to see you at the helm here, and also as a member of
20 the U.S. Air Force Academy board. I think that is great.
21 Congratulations to Senator Tuberville on both.

22 I want to just kind of have an honest assessment here,
23 because I think one of the biggest concerns we have in the
24 Congress, certainly the American people have, is our so-
25 called elite universities in our country, the Ivy League,

1 for example, that they have become bastions of anti-
2 Americanism, anti-military institutions, antisemitic
3 institutions, the top universities in the country. And I
4 think this is a charge that is not some kind of fake
5 charge. My alma mater, Harvard University, has led the way
6 on being anti-military for decades. They still are, in my
7 view, in many ways. They do not respect the service of
8 people in our military.

9 I had an experience that I wrote about in The Wall
10 Street Journal just last year when I visited Harvard. I
11 mean, you could not believe it, a giant anti-Israel,
12 antisemitic protest put on by a radical group, in Harvard
13 Library's Widener Reading Room, during finals. It was
14 ridiculous. I mean, it was stunning how out-of-touch these
15 universities are. And Americans across the country are
16 like, "Wait, these are the universities teaching our
17 leaders?" It is a real shame, and there is a lot of
18 concern, with good reason.

19 In that Wall Street Journal op-ed I talked about the
20 experience I saw there recently at Harvard. I was shocked
21 at the lack of leadership, particularly Claudine Gay, who
22 subsequently got fired after my Wall Street Journal op-ed.
23 And I wrote, "Not all university leadership is so craven,
24 morally bankrupt, and afraid of the most vocal, radical
25 sects of their own student bodies."

1 I serve on the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Naval
2 Academy, which -- no offense, Senator Reed -- is rated the
3 number one public university in America. The contract
4 could not be starker between the service academies and the
5 Ivy League on issues like civil discourse, so-called space
6 spaces, trigger warning, American history, and yes, our
7 unique and exceptional place in the world.

8 So Admiral, I have seen a lot of what the Naval
9 Academy has done. I think for the most part it is
10 outstanding. But we have concerns that some of this DEI,
11 CRT, anti-Americanism, anti-militarism kind of is going to
12 seep over to our service academies, which I think is the
13 point of this hearing, and I really appreciate the Chairman
14 for calling it.

15 We want our service academies focused on warfighting,
16 lethality, patriotism, and I think they are still, all
17 three of you, still are at the helm of the top universities
18 in the country. But there can be improvements, and I think
19 everybody would agree with that.

20 So let me just ask, very quickly, General Bauernfeind,
21 there was a civilian professor at the Air Force Academy
22 named Dr. Lynne Chandler Garcia, published an op-ed in The
23 Washington Post where she stated, quote, "She teaches
24 critical race theories to our nation's military leaders
25 because it is vital to cadets to understand history of

1 racism that have shaped both foreign policy and domestic
2 policy." Do you think CRT is vital for future military Air
3 Force officers, General?

4 General Bauernfeind: Senator Sullivan, thank you.
5 What we are focused on is developing those warfighters,
6 those leaders of character and quality, and those critical
7 thinkers to adapt. In accordance with law, on the 2024
8 NDAA, we no longer teach critical race theory at the United
9 States Air Force Academy.

10 Senator Sullivan: Okay.

11 General Bauernfeind: To focus on those critical
12 thinkers, we are delving in hard on teaching our future
13 leaders how to think and not what to think.

14 Senator Sullivan: Good. That is a great answer.

15 Admiral, you and I have gotten to know each other
16 well. I appreciate your leadership at the Naval Academy.
17 One of the big challenges -- we just had a hearing
18 yesterday on it -- shipbuilding. And do you think having
19 our future naval officers fully understand naval
20 architecture programs is something that should be, even
21 though it is not a major for everybody, is that in the core
22 curriculum at the Naval Academy now?

23 Admiral Davids: It is part of the core curriculum. I
24 might offer also we have the second-largest wave tank in
25 the nation, which is a backup to Carderock, which could be

1 helpful in the future when we are talking shipbuilding. It
2 is exceptionally important to us. We do have a cadre of
3 midshipmen who really focus and enjoy naval architecture,
4 sir, and I am so pleased that we offer it.

5 Senator Sullivan: Are there ways to encourage
6 midshipmen, more midshipmen to take up naval architecture
7 as a major? I think it is one of our challenges on
8 shipbuilding right now. And if there is going to be a
9 source of military leaders who understand naval
10 architecture to help get us out of this challenge on
11 shipbuilding, it is going to be from the academy you lead.
12 Are there ways to do that?

13 Admiral Davids: There are ways to relook at this. We
14 are looking at our curriculum right now, just to ensure
15 that not only do we follow the executive orders but also
16 that we are completely aligned with warfighting of the
17 future. And this is warfighting of the future. This is a
18 hot button right now. It would be appropriate to
19 reconsider what we do with naval architecture. What I do
20 know is we do have a lot of wonder midshipmen focused on it
21 right now.

22 Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.
25 Just to follow up, General, is that professor still

1 employed at the Air Force Academy?

2 General Bauernfeind: Yes, sir.

3 Senator Tuberville: Senator Reed, would you like to
4 rebuttal on --

5 Senator Reed: You are very generous, Mr. Chairman,
6 but I think that history speaks for itself.

7 [Laughter.]

8 Senator Tuberville: Senator Hirono.

9 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome
10 all of our superintendents.

11 I want to be absolutely clear. The Trump
12 administration's attacks on diversity, equity, and
13 inclusion in our military and our military service
14 academies are not just misguided, they are dangerous.
15 These efforts weaken our armed forces, ignore our history,
16 and undermine the very principles that make our military
17 the most capable in the world.

18 The claim that DEI initiatives somehow detract from
19 combat readiness is not only false but flies in the face of
20 decades of evidence. Diversity is not a distraction. It
21 is our strategic advantage. The Department of Defense
22 itself has repeatedly affirmed that a diverse force is a
23 stronger force. Even the conservative Supreme Court, in
24 its disastrous ruling on affirmative action, recognized
25 that military academies have, quote, "potentially distinct

1 interests," end quote, in maintaining a diverse officer
2 corps.

3 And a Federal district court recently, in Maryland,
4 said just that ruling, that the Naval Academy's limited use
5 of race in admissions was constitutional, citing a
6 compelling national security interest in officer diversity.
7 The court emphasized that unlike civilian institutions,
8 military academies must account for how their admissions
9 policies directly affect national defense. And why is
10 that? Because diversity in leadership is not an
11 ideological preference. It is a strategic imperative.
12 Because the ability to lead diverse units, work with
13 international allies, and maintain cohesion within the
14 ranks is not an optional skill, it is a necessity.

15 In other words, having an officer corps that
16 represents the country it protects and the people it leads
17 is a force multiplier -- a force multiplier -- which gives
18 our armed forces an advantage over our adversaries.

19 Yet, instead of embracing this reality, we see efforts
20 to erase and dismantle the very programs that help us build
21 this capability. West Point has disbanded a dozen cadet
22 clubs that supported women, LGBTQ+ students, and racial
23 minorities. The Air Force removed a documentary in their
24 basic military training curriculum on the Tuskegee Airmen,
25 black pilots who had to fight two wars, one against the

1 axis powers and one against the racism in their own
2 country. And the Army, in a so-called, quote, "digital
3 content refresh," end quote, accidentally erased the
4 history of the 442nd Regimental Combat team, the most
5 decorated unit in U.S. military history, composed entirely
6 of Japanese-Americans who fought bravely while their
7 families, 120,000 Japanese-Americans, were incarcerated in
8 internment camps back home. This is unacceptable and
9 disrespectful to our brave veterans.

10 I will say that again. The Army took down a page
11 honoring a unit that fought valiantly to prove their
12 loyalty to a country that had imprisoned their families
13 back at home, reinstating the page only after public
14 outcry.

15 In Secretary Hegseth's message to the forces, he
16 claims to be committed to warfighters, he claims to care
17 about warfighting ethos and lethality. If Secretary
18 Hegseth and President Trump are proud of our warfighters,
19 then why are they erasing their legacy?

20 This hypocrisy is not just offensive. It is a
21 betrayal of our servicemembers and their sacrifices. It is
22 no coincidence that the same voices attacking DEI today are
23 the ones who stood silent when women in the military were
24 fighting for equal opportunities, when LGBTQ+
25 servicemembers were forced to hide who they were, and when

1 racial minorities were systematically denied leadership
2 opportunities.

3 This is not about merit. It is about rolling back
4 progress under the guise of readiness and lethality. Our
5 military academies are supposed to be developing leaders of
6 character -- you all testified to that -- leaders who can
7 navigate the complex global challenges of the 21st century,
8 not just fire weapons or fly a plane. Leaders who can
9 foster trust and cohesion with diverse unit, who can engage
10 with international allies, and who can uphold the values of
11 democracy and equality that we send them to defend. The
12 Department of Defense itself has argued that diverse
13 leadership is a, quote, "national security imperative," end
14 quote. Yet we are watching as this Administration
15 systematically dismantles every effort to ensure that our
16 officer corps reflects the America it serves. This is not
17 just a political talking point. It is a strategic failure
18 in the making.

19 To the superintendents and leaders here today, you
20 oversee the comprehensive training and education of our
21 future military leaders. You are responsible for ensuring
22 that our armed forces remain the best in the world, not
23 just in combat effectiveness but in leadership, character,
24 cohesion. I urge you to stand firm. Do not allow anti-DEI
25 policies to undermine the very fabric of our national

1 security. Do not allow President Trump and Secretary
2 Hegseth to erase history by dividing what we know to be
3 facially true. The strength and future of our military
4 depends on it.

5 Mr. Chairman, I would like to include in the record of
6 this hearing this list of words that The New York Times
7 printed as words that are disappearing in the new Trump
8 administration. And they are words like biases, diverse
9 groups, equal opportunity, immigrants, injustice, victims,
10 women, females, Blacks -- three pages' worth of words that
11 are no longer welcome in this Administration. I would like
12 this list to be included in the record of this hearing.

13 Senator Tuberville: So entered.

14 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

15 [The information follows:]

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1 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

3 Senator Scott.

4 Senator Scott: General Gilland, is the Army-Navy game
5 important?

6 General Gilland: Senator Scott, it is great to see
7 you again. The Army-Navy game is important. Absolutely,
8 sir.

9 Senator Scott: It would be really disappointing if
10 you ever lost, right?

11 General Gilland: We are disappointed, but we will
12 also come back.

13 Senator Scott: Did you go to the game?

14 General Gilland: Yes, sir.

15 Senator Scott: Do you remember the score?

16 General Gilland: I do, sir.

17 Senator Scott: What was it?

18 General Gilland: Well, I try to put that behind me,
19 sir, but yes.

20 Senator Scott: Okay. But to Navy, you think it is
21 really, really, really important game, isn't it.

22 Admiral Davids: Exceptionally, especially this year,
23 sir.

24 Senator Scott: Go Navy. Thank you guys for what you
25 are doing. I thank each of you for what you are doing.

1 So, first off, who is responsible for your faculty? I
2 mean, who is responsible for the mission?

3 General Bauernfeind: Senator Scott, I am.

4 Senator Scott: Okay. Admiral?

5 Admiral Davids: I am, as well, sir.

6 Senator Scott: So you are responsible for your
7 faculty, right?

8 General Gilland: Yes, Senator.

9 Senator Scott: How is your faculty chosen?

10 General Gilland: Senator, our faculty at West Point
11 is chosen through different hiring processes, as we think
12 about those departments. And department heads lead the
13 respective hiring process. So for both uniformed and
14 civilian faculty, going through the process to identify
15 those people that have the skills, particularly knowledge
16 and experience in whatever the discipline is that we are
17 looking for.

18 Senator Scott: So do you hire them or does the
19 faculty hire themselves, hire new faculty?

20 General Gilland: Sir, through the hiring process it
21 is brought to the Dean of the Academic Board and to myself
22 for approval.

23 Senator Scott: Admiral?

24 Admiral Davids: Very similar. We are looking for
25 individuals that have the expertise in the fields that we

1 need, going forward have the commitment to the Naval
2 Academy and buy-in for exactly our mission set, sir.

3 Senator Scott: Who makes the final decision?

4 Admiral Davids: Everything. I am responsible for
5 everything, but it is recommended by panel, sir.

6 Senator Scott: General.

7 General Bauernfeind: Sir, we have similar processes
8 as our colleagues at the table, and especially our Dean of
9 Faculty has great authority, under my responsibility, to
10 canvas for the best and brightest military and civilian
11 faculty instructors as we move forward.

12 Senator Scott: So ultimately each of you have the
13 ability to pick your faculty.

14 General Gilland: Senator, yes, we do, but I think
15 that what is important to clarify is that through
16 authorities that have been delegated, depending on the
17 instructor, the level, I am not personally canvassing
18 captains across the operational force to come teach in a
19 department. I have very capable department heads who
20 execute that.

21 Senator Scott: All right. Do any of you have tenure
22 or are you looking at having tenure.

23 General Bauernfeind: Yes, sir, we have both. We have
24 civilian tenure for a small number of our civilian faculty
25 as well as our military permanent professors and senior

1 military faculty that have longer duration at the Air Force
2 Academy.

3 Admiral Davids: We too have a process of tenure for
4 our civilians, sir.

5 General Gilland: We do too also, Senator.

6 Senator Scott: So why do you have tenure?

7 General Gilland: Well, Senator, I think that tenure
8 offers our civilian faculty, specifically, opportunities to
9 advance within their discipline at the United States
10 Military Academy.

11 Admiral Davids: I think it is a wonderful recruiting
12 tool to get in the best and the brightest that we can.
13 They could go to so many other places, but we draw in these
14 incredible talents that want to stay. Sir, I also think it
15 is an incentive to stay, which we want these individuals to
16 buy into the program and be able to learn and advance their
17 skills so that we can benefit from them, sir.

18 General Bauernfeind: And, sir, I would say that is
19 the process at the Air Force Academy, as well, as part of
20 the academic progression for our civilian faculty.

21 Senator Scott: So did each of you come through a
22 tenure system.

23 General Gilland: We came up through a professional
24 military system, sir.

25 Senator Scott: You don't have tenure, do you?

1 General Gilland: No. Well, I have got 35 years in
2 the Army, sir. Some would probably call that tenure.

3 Senator Scott: Yeah, but you had to perform, and if
4 you did not perform you were out.

5 General Gilland: That is correct. But tenure within
6 our civilian faculty, Senator, has to be earned. It is not
7 given. It has to be demonstrated that a faculty member
8 qualifies to meet the tenets of earning that tenure.

9 Senator Scott: On any of your areas as a tenured
10 professor ever lost their job while you have been there?

11 General Gilland: Not during my time, Senator.

12 Admiral Davids: Not during my time either, sir.

13 General Bauernfeind: Neither for me, sir, for my
14 short period.

15 Senator Scott: Thank you.

16 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Just to follow up on
17 that, can you fire a civilian, tenured teacher, professor?
18 General, can you fire one?

19 General Gilland: Yes, Senator.

20 Senator Tuberville: You can?

21 General Gilland: Yes, through the process we have the
22 ability to fire them.

23 Admiral Davids: Sir, there is an HR process in which
24 we can do that.

25 General Bauernfeind: Absolutely, Senator, there is a

1 process for all civilian and military personnel that do not
2 meet our standards.

3 Senator Tuberville: Thank you.

4 Senator Blumenthal: How about your coaches?

5 General Gilland: All the time.

6 Senator Tuberville: I guarantee you they do not have
7 tenure.

8 [Laughter.]

9 Senator Blumenthal: I asked that question because --

10 Senator Tuberville: We might have to work on that,
11 though. I am kind of partial to the coaches.

12 Senator Blumenthal: I have some serious questions.
13 You can disregard that one.

14 I think you have some of the most important jobs in
15 our military, maybe in our country, which is educating our
16 future leaders. And they are leaders not only in the
17 military but eventually in their communities, as well. And
18 I think your job has been made more difficult by some of
19 the recent talk about a woke military and some of the
20 recent orders that you have had to implement, like the DEI
21 executive orders, eliminating DEI content from your
22 curriculum and campuses, which I think has a chilling
23 effect on the discourse that takes place on campuses, which
24 is really part of the educational experience. What young
25 people say to each other, what they learn from each other I

1 think is as important as maybe some of the courses that
2 they take.

3 And I trust that you have faithfully executed the
4 orders from your commander in chief to eliminate all the
5 DEI content from your campuses and curriculum. I
6 understand in the case of West Point, sir, you reviewed
7 over 600 courses and you eliminated just 2 that come into
8 compliance, which says to me there was not a lot of this
9 extraneous DEI, woke content in your courses. Is that a
10 fair conclusion on my part?

11 General Gilland: Senator, the review is still
12 ongoing, given the time frame. We are in the validation
13 frame. But of over 600 courses that were reviewed, 2 were
14 determined to not be compliant with the executive order,
15 and thus we eliminated those two courses. They were
16 higher-level electives that had a fairly small population
17 of cadets that were enrolled in that.

18 Senator Blumenthal: What were the two courses?

19 General Gilland: Sir, one was a history course and
20 the other was an English course. Respectively, the
21 population impacted about 25 cadets in one course and 13 in
22 another.

23 Senator Blumenthal: What was the title of the --

24 General Gilland: Oh, yes sir. The title for the
25 history course was, it was HI 463, "Race, Ethnicity, and

1 Nation," and our English course, which was English 352, was
2 "Power and Difference," sir. And like I said, 25 cadets
3 impacted in the history course, 12 cadets impacted in the
4 English course.

5 Senator Blumenthal: Could you give me, for the Navy,
6 Admiral Davids, the equivalent information, and maybe for
7 the Air Force, as well.

8 Admiral Davids: Certainly, sir. Thank you for the
9 question. Out of 870 courses that we reviewed, only 2 of
10 them were cancelled. They were NL 445, "Gender Matters," -
11 - that is a leadership course, sir -- and an English
12 course, HE 374, "Gender Sexuality Studies." We had a total
13 of 18 other classes that we either needed to modify, very
14 minorly, or make some subtle adjustments to bring it to
15 compliance with the executive orders.

16 General Bauernfeind: Senator Blumenthal, we are in
17 the middle of our course review. We are conducting a
18 review of our 735, and we are doing two sets of eyes on the
19 review as we go forward. Of the 735, we have assessed that
20 right now there are 55 courses that we have identified for
21 further-on analysis. Of those numbers, right now our
22 initial assessment is 40 percent will require no change, 53
23 percent will require minor admin or reading change, and
24 only 3 of the courses potentially for suspension. I have
25 not made that decision yet, and once I do, sir, I will

1 follow up on the record with the names of those courses.

2 Senator Blumenthal: If all of you could follow up. I
3 know that this review may be ongoing, as you said, General.
4 I would appreciate knowing.

5 You know, the reason it is a somewhat impossible
6 position, in order to teach about tyranny you have to read
7 books on Naziism, right. Some of the bad stuff has to be
8 learned in order to avoid mistakes that have been made in
9 the past. The military has an extraordinary and proud
10 record of leading our nation on desegregation. It
11 literally led the nation. And we should be teaching that
12 history so that our military can be not only proud but
13 continue to lead the nation in its values and principles,
14 let me just say, of diversity, which is what you do -- you
15 are diverse and you need to teach people how to deal with
16 diverse groups that they will command -- and inclusion,
17 because you want to include people from different
18 backgrounds and races and religions, and be able to lead
19 them, as well, and do it equitably.

20 So I am very sympathetic to your dilemma right now,
21 and I hope that the Congress can help you rather than
22 hinder you with the kind of rhetoric that has become all
23 too popular about woke military and all that stuff. I want
24 to thank you for the great job that you are doing.

25 I nominate, every year, people to go to your great

1 institutions. I wish all of them could be admitted. But I
2 must say, one of the most satisfying and fulfilling tasks I
3 have is to do those nominations, because they are
4 extraordinary, just exemplary young men and women. And
5 thank you for helping to educate them.

6 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.
7 Senator Budd.

8 Senator Budd: Chairman, thank you. Thanks for
9 hosting this. Thank you all for being here, as well, and I
10 would echo those comments. It is one of our highlights.
11 It gives us great hope in our country, every December, when
12 we gather as a large panel, somewhere in North Carolina, to
13 review applicants and candidates. It is one of the
14 highlights from my time in the House and also here in the
15 Senate.

16 Let me ask about the concept of the military being a
17 great leveler, and I believe that it is. For decades, the
18 U.S. military has been the strongest representation of the
19 very best of our country. Americans from all backgrounds
20 must continue to be evaluated and promoted based on their
21 merit, encompassing their character, their commitment,
22 their ability, and their courage.

23 General Gilland -- and if I could ask all of you, as I
24 ask the questions, to keep your answers concise -- you said
25 that all appointees to West Point are fully qualified,

1 based on your scoring methodology, the whole candidate
2 score. So what is the lowest that an applicant can score
3 and still be deemed highly qualified?

4 General Gilland: Sir, the whole candidate model,
5 which is based on academic, physical, and then character
6 and service, that is one component of the admissions
7 process, of which we use the whole candidate score and then
8 the measure of the tangibles, and then there are the
9 intangibles, such as grit and tenacity, desire to serve our
10 nation, that are also assessed by our recruitment officers,
11 through our Admissions Department.

12 When we look at the whole person concept for the cadet
13 candidates that exist across our nation, and within your
14 state specifically, sir, we look at both the tangibles and
15 the intangibles.

16 Senator Budd: It would seem those additional
17 qualifiers of grit, tenacity, and desire to serve, would
18 that not be part of the whole candidate score?

19 General Gilland: Well, sir, with regards to the whole
20 candidate score, as I said, broken down, there's academic
21 which is 60 percent --

22 Senator Budd: Physical --

23 General Gilland: -- 30 percent, which is the
24 character and extracurricular activities, and then 10
25 percent physical. And then there is the assessment of the

1 intangibles as we have seen through letters of evaluation
2 that come in from coaches and teachers, respectively, the
3 interview process, the interviews that go through our field
4 force members that are out within the respective locales.
5 So there are these intangibles that are also considered in
6 the development of a candidate and determining admissions
7 to the Military Academy.

8 Senator Budd: General, is there a different minimum
9 score for any particular demographic?

10 General Gilland: No, sir.

11 Senator Budd: General, roughly 25 to 30 percent of an
12 incoming class at West Point is not required to be
13 appointed based on their order of merit. Do you oppose
14 legislation that would require you to appoint more
15 applicants based on their whole candidate score, and if so,
16 why is that?

17 General Gilland: Sir, admissions model is compliant
18 with the provision of Title 10, which has been codified
19 into law, as has been stated, sir. If there is a change to
20 any legislation we absolutely look forward to working with
21 you on what that would mean and what it would entail with
22 any modifications.

23 We continuously assess our admissions process, and,
24 for instance, as we talk about the whole candidate score,
25 each of the academies have different whole person scoring

1 models, and we are looking at ours also at this time.

2 Senator Budd: General Bauernfeind, I understand you
3 are looking at some of the Air Force Academy's admissions
4 processes. You mentioned that earlier. Do you have any
5 specific concerns, and if so, what are they? And would you
6 oppose legislation that would require you to adhere to your
7 order of merit in admissions?

8 General Bauernfeind: Sir, first of all, our
9 admissions process, to go back to the fully qualified, it
10 requires two aspects, a highly competitive application
11 process that goes into not only the academic ability to
12 succeed at one of our military service academies but
13 extracurricular activities, focused on leadership abilities
14 and depth of service. And then, as discussed before,
15 athletic capabilities, an air liaison interview, but then
16 finally a committee score that looks deeper into the
17 letters of recommendation, the interviews, that starts to
18 understand alignment to our service core values, integrity,
19 determination, grit, as that comes forward as we dig into
20 it. So I am very content with our current admissions
21 process for understanding how we are getting the best and
22 brightest.

23 The second aspect is also the nominations that we get
24 from our congressional leadership, to ensure that we are
25 getting the best and brightest from all the districts in

1 our great nation as it moves forward. And if our elected
2 leaders choose to provide additional guidance, we look
3 forward to working with our elected leaders to comply with
4 that.

5 Senator Budd: Thank you. I have additional questions
6 for the record, unless you have other time.

7 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Budd. I have
8 got one question. I apologize for people in and out. We
9 have votes. We have other hearings going on. But we do
10 really appreciate you coming. We have learned a lot here.

11 Permanent military faculty are Senate confirmed.
12 Should we have any input towards civilian professors?
13 General, on your recommendation.

14 General Gilland: Sir, I think that when we look at
15 the confirmation of our permanent faculty, which is a
16 fairly small number, we make that recommendation to you, as
17 Congress. With regards to our civilian faculty, I think
18 even with their swearing to an oath to the Constitution of
19 the United States, I would have to go back and ask about
20 from a civilian hiring practice, because the civilian
21 hiring practices and regulations that govern that are
22 different than from our uniformed members.

23 Senator Tuberville: Admiral?

24 Admiral Davids: Very similar, except that I would say
25 that at the Naval Academy we have a proven formula that

1 works, sir, and that includes these incredible civilian
2 faculty that are charged to support everything that we do
3 there. They are completely in on our mission, and they
4 complement the military aspect of our faculty, as well,
5 sir. So when I say proven, I say that 89 percent
6 graduation rate at the United States Naval Academy, and a
7 great deal of that is because of the incredible coaches,
8 mentors, faculty, and staff that we have there, all focused
9 on that mission set, sir.

10 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. General?

11 General Bauernfeind: Sir, I am very comfortable under
12 my authorities picking the civilian faculty for our force
13 as we go forward. But if our elected leaders want to have
14 a voice in that, I am also very comfortable working with
15 our elected leaders to detail a process that enables us to
16 move through that process quickly.

17 Senator Tuberville: Senator Budd, we have got time
18 for one more question, if you want to throw it out.

19 Senator Budd: Admiral Davids, how often does the U.S.
20 Naval Academy deviate from the order of merit list when you
21 are permitted to do so?

22 Admiral Davids: Sir, we have an incredible system,
23 tried and true. No race, sex, or ethnicity goals
24 associated with this. No race, sex, or ethnicity
25 whatsoever governed in the acceptance of who we actually

1 take in. We have congressional nominations, as you know,
2 and the qualified alternates list, which is by order of
3 merit. And then, once we have offered up the ability to
4 provide opportunities to every district, then we can
5 include our military nominations process, as well.

6 And then what you are talking about, sir, is the
7 additional qualified individuals there. It comes to about
8 250 individuals or so. Those individuals are identified
9 also by a whole person multiple and an incredibly active
10 and robust admissions staff of 22 members that go through,
11 similar to them, both objective and subjective insights
12 into each individual record. And in some cases individuals
13 do not score very well in an imperfect system, which is the
14 whole person multiple, and they are able to offer up some
15 certain individuals, and that would be in that particular
16 area that you are talking about.

17 We are looking for leaders of character. We are
18 looking for gems out there that are going to be proven to
19 not only can they succeed at the Naval Academy but they
20 have a propensity to serve their nation, for the Navy or
21 the Marine Corps. That is what we are looking for, sir.

22 Senator Budd: Thank you very much. If this
23 Subcommittee reached out for data on the class of 2028, I
24 guess matriculating in 2024, would you be willing to
25 provide that for the Subcommittee?

1 Admiral Davids: Certainly, sir.

2 Senator Budd: Thank you very much. Chairman.

3 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Senator Budd. I would
4 be remiss if I did not bring up something about sports, and
5 I would like one of you's thoughts about this. I have
6 always felt that playing sports was invaluable to
7 leadership development. Many of the cadets and midshipmen
8 at your institutions are athletes participating on the
9 various academy sports teams. They represent the best of
10 your institutions and our country.

11 Occasionally -- occasionally -- some of these athletes
12 develop to an elite level and are forced to forego living
13 out their dreams of playing the sport they love at a
14 professional level because of outdated, to me outdated,
15 regulations governing their service obligations. I would
16 like to see this year's NDAA reflect a serious commitment
17 to these outstanding individuals. When appropriate, these
18 cadets and midshipmen should graduate and commission with
19 their classes, and defer their service obligation until
20 their professional sports-playing careers are complete.
21 These would be commissioned officers in our armed services
22 subject to the same rules and regulations as their peers,
23 while at the same time providing valuable exposure and
24 increased visibility to the academics, while they play
25 sports at the highest level.

1 I know that is not protocol for what we do as we
2 speak. But General, I would like to get your thoughts on
3 that. With an all-volunteer military now, we are looking
4 for possible ways to get more and more young men and women
5 involved in our academies.

6 General Gilland: Senator, the Army is a team contact
7 sport. That is how I view the Army. And those men and
8 women that are coming into the Army, regardless of their
9 background and upbringing, better be prepared to get
10 involved in a team contact sport, because that is what you
11 all, as the citizens of our nation, ask of us.

12 As a result, when we think through the development of
13 leaders of character, I am looking for, it may not be the
14 best player, because numbers do not always define
15 somebody's potential. I am looking for the best player for
16 the team. And for those individuals that have the elite
17 capability to pursue professional supports, I absolutely
18 support, and I think we have to look at measures, as you
19 outlined, from a commissioning perspective, that would
20 allow those individuals to go into that professional sport
21 of whatever their talent is in, execute that, and then have
22 them serve in the Army.

23 And I think there are combinations of ways to do that,
24 though not only active service concurrent with their
25 respective playing for a team. Of course, there are

1 different things that have to go with that, with moving
2 them around and such if they are traded. Or there is the
3 deferral of the respective active duty service obligation
4 that they have.

5 But I think that it results in multiple benefits, not
6 only to each of our academies but I think it benefits our
7 services also, through deliberate outreach and engagement
8 that we would ask of those talented individuals.

9 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Admiral?

10 Admiral Davids: Sir, when I was a midshipman fourth
11 class, Napoleon McCallum was in my upper class. The
12 original admiral, David Robinson, was also in upper class.
13 They were heroes of mine. I saw how brilliant they did in
14 their careers to not only bring in incredible talent to the
15 Navy, to the Naval Academy, as well as supporting our
16 nation. There are many ways to serve, sir, and they did
17 brilliantly in that.

18 So I am a huge fan of it. I appreciate that we may
19 look at this. I think that the return on investment is
20 incredible, and I fully support it, sir.

21 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. General?

22 General Bauernfeind: Senator Tuberville, I also, as a
23 freshman, looked up to one Chad Hennings, a monster of a
24 football player.

25 Senator Tuberville: A big old boy.

1 General Bauernfeind: Yes, sir, and benefitted
2 greatly. He also, during that time, his value was not only
3 was he an amazing football player but he also went out and
4 served and flew combat operations in Desert Storm during
5 that time, bringing both the recruiting values to bear, the
6 service and the professional capabilities.

7 And I believe where the NDAA is now, by giving us an
8 opportunity of three per year is a great opportunity for us
9 to pick those truly elite athletes that can go on to that
10 next level. As a data point, over the last 5 years we have
11 had 22 Air Force Academy cadets that have moved forward
12 into professional sports. Thirteen met their first
13 seasons, and unfortunately were not able to continue, and
14 they came back to active duty, and 9 are continuing. And
15 over that time, that 2 to 3 is, I think, an opportunity for
16 us to continue to go forward.

17 I would also ask, sir, as we have this conversation
18 for pro sports, to have a fulsome conversation of the
19 impact of the transfer portal on our military service
20 academies and how that is taking young men and women away
21 from service to the nation until they have had an
22 opportunity to blossom as leaders.

23 Senator Tuberville: Yeah. Well, that is a great
24 point, and I look forward to visiting with all three of you
25 about this before our NDAA is put together this June. I

1 know it is a huge problem, and I can understand it is a
2 huge problem for you also. Again, I want to sit down with
3 all three of you before we get to that point in June, and
4 hopefully we can work something out. Because I think it
5 would be a great tool for all of you, for recruiting,
6 because you all take our best and brightest. All of us,
7 all the Senators, and Congressmen, we have an opportunity
8 to send the best young men and women we possibly have in
9 our states, and you do a great job with them.

10 I want to thank you for coming today. This a fact-
11 finding mission. We have not done it in 30 years. We will
12 do it again next year, and hopefully we will make it bigger
13 and brighter. We just want to enlighten people about what
14 you do, because leadership, discipline, teamwork is
15 everything that goes along with what our country is about.
16 And again, it is so, so, important.

17 We cannot really do this enough, but thanks again for
18 what you do, how you do it, and tell all of your cadets and
19 midshipmen that we are for them, and I look forward to
20 being on the Board of Visitors at the Air Force Academy
21 this year and visiting with you. Again, you are our
22 future, and we hope you use our young people at your
23 convenience but also give them the best and brightest
24 future they can possibly get. Because we are going to go
25 as a country as how they go.

1 Thanks again. This has been a good hearing, and this
2 hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

3 [Whereupon, at 3:57 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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