

1 TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MS. TONYA P. WILKERSON TO BE
2 UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AND
3 DR. MICHAEL L. SULMEYER TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4 FOR CYBER POLICY

5

6 Thursday, July 11, 2024

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8 U.S. Senate

9 Committee on Armed Services

10 Washington, D.C.

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12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 a.m. in
13 Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed,
14 chairman of the committee, presiding.

15 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],
16 Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Kaine, King, Peters, Manchin, Rosen,
17 Kelly, Wicker, Fischer, Rounds, Ernst, Tuberville, Mullin,
18 Budd, and Schmitt.

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

3 Chairman Reed: Good morning. The committee meets
4 today to consider the nominations of Ms. Tonya Wilkerson to
5 be under secretary of defense for intelligence and security
6 and Dr. Michael Sulmeyer to be assistant secretary of
7 defense for cyber policy.

8 Ms. Wilkerson, I would like to welcome your husband,
9 Kevin, daughter Kennadi and son Kevin Jr., and your sister
10 Samantha, I believe, is here.

11 I would also like to thank Mr. Ron Moultrie, the former
12 undersecretary of defense for intelligence and security, who
13 will introduce you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

14 Mr. Sulmeyer, I would like to welcome your wife
15 Danielle. I believe your daughter, Vivian, is here or not.
16 Okay. Well, from California. Best wishes, Vivian.

17 Mother-in-law Gilda and father Elliot. And I would
18 like to thank my colleague Senator Mike Rounds, who looks
19 much more impressive down here than he does up there. He
20 will introduce you.

21 On behalf of the committee let me thank both of your
22 families for their many years of support for your services.

23 Ms. Wilkerson, you are well qualified to be under
24 secretary of defense for intelligence and security, or the
25 USD I&S.

1 You currently serve as the deputy director of the
2 National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and you bring more
3 than three decades of leadership and technical experience
4 across the intelligence community including roles at the CIA
5 and the National Reconnaissance Office.

6 If confirmed you will be the principal intelligence
7 advisor to the Secretary of Defense. You will also be dual
8 hatted as the director of defense intelligence in the office
9 of the Director of National Intelligence.

10 The scope and complexity of the global threats we face
11 are unprecedented. China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and
12 many other state and nonstate actors are seeking ways to
13 undermine our interests and destabilize the relationships
14 that our allies and partners rely upon.

15 It is more important than ever that the defense
16 intelligence enterprise is able to employ its resources and
17 capabilities effectively. I would like to know how you
18 would plan to prioritize and improve these operations if
19 confirmed.

20 One of the key challenges you will need to address is
21 how to best provide intelligence, surveillance, and
22 reconnaissance, or ISR, support for air and ground moving
23 target indications.

24 Weapons like hypersonic missiles and low signature
25 vehicles pose a growing threat for our forces around the

1 world and our defense intelligence assets are key for
2 detecting and defending against them.

3 In particular, the National Reconnaissance Office, the
4 National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and the National
5 Security Agency must increase their support to the military
6 as the services divest of their air-based ISR capabilities.

7 At the same time, these agencies must continue to
8 assist the Space Force in providing space-based ISR support
9 to the combatant commanders for their tactical level
10 operations.

11 Ms. Wilkerson, I welcome your thoughts about how you
12 intend to foster this arrangement and ensure that the
13 military has timely and accurate intelligence to defend the
14 nation.

15 Dr. Sulmeyer, you are the very first nominee to be
16 assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy. As this
17 position was created in the fiscal year 2023 National
18 Defense Authorization Act you are well qualified for this
19 new position since you are currently serving as the
20 principal cyber advisor for the Secretary of the Army and
21 served previously in cyber policy roles in the office of the
22 Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and the
23 U.S. Cyber Command, and also in academia.

24 The committee intends for the assistant secretary of
25 defense for cyber policy to provide the service secretary

1 like functions for U.S. Cyber Command, mirroring the special
2 relationship that exists between Special Operations Command
3 and the ASD for special operations and low-intensity
4 conflict.

5 It will be important for your office to not only
6 support CYBERCOM's growth but also to maintain strong
7 civilian control and oversight of the command.

8 I would like to know how you plan to work with CYBERCOM
9 and the Department of Defense broadly to better support the
10 cyber workforce and improve cyber acquisition functions.

11 Indeed, the first challenge you will face is meeting
12 the personnel, manning, and retention goals for our cyber
13 mission forces.

14 The Defense Department faces significant difficulties
15 in training and retaining personnel for key positions
16 requiring special skills. In order to mature the cyber
17 force and advance our nation's capabilities to conduct cyber
18 operations the military services must provide qualified and
19 trained personnel to CYBERCOM on time and at the beginning
20 of their tours.

21 I would also note that the private sector has realized
22 the immense value of our cyber operators and is offering
23 them very high compensation to leave the military. I would
24 like to know how you plan to address these challenges.

25 Ms. Wilkerson, Dr. Sulmeyer, these complex challenges

1 will require the full complement of your skills. Thank you
2 for your willingness to continue your service and lead at
3 this critical time. I look forward to your testimony.

4 Now let me recognize the ranking member Senator Wicker,
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1 STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER F. WICKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MISSISSIPPI

3 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Today the committee is considering nominees to fill two
5 senior Department of Defense positions. Both roles oversee
6 national security portfolios that would be important under
7 any circumstances.

8 But as our threat environment becomes the most
9 dangerous we have faced since World War II their nominations
10 take on a greater sense of gravity.

11 Dr. Sulmeyer, you have been nominated to serve as the
12 first ever assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy.
13 If confirmed, you would be responsible for advising the
14 Secretary of Defense on all cyber matters including
15 readiness, capabilities, and strategy.

16 You have served as principal cyber advisor for the Army
17 since March of 2022. In that role you had a front row seat
18 to an increasingly dynamic and hostile threat environment in
19 cyberspace.

20 Threat intelligence assessments confirm that foreign
21 adversaries and malicious cyber actors are persistently
22 targeting U.S. networks and critical infrastructure,
23 attempting to cripple our force projection, war fighting,
24 and sustainment capabilities.

25 Equally troubling are the persistent cyber attacks led

1 by state-sponsored cyber actors such as Volt Typhoon. The
2 nation's enemies are exploiting vulnerabilities in our
3 networks to preposition themselves for disruptive or
4 destructive cyber attacks in a future conflict with the
5 United States.

6 Emerging technologies add to these challenges. New
7 tools such as artificial intelligence-enabled cyber
8 capabilities are poised simultaneously to change the pace of
9 threats we face to enhance the lethality of our adversaries.

10 To maintain an enduring advantage in cyberspace we need
11 to leverage AI tools and technologies for our own cyber
12 defense. We must also defend against adversarial AI and
13 improve readiness of cyber mission forces to confront these
14 threats.

15 With all this in mind, Dr. Sulmeyer, I hope to hear how
16 you plan to support the development, coordination, and
17 implementation of cyber operations to defend our national
18 interests across the full spectrum of competition and
19 conflict.

20 Now, Ms. Wilkerson, you have been nominated to serve as
21 the under secretary of defense for intelligence and
22 security. If confirmed, you would be the principal
23 intelligence advisor to the Secretary of Defense.

24 You would have the responsibility for exercising
25 authority, direction, and control over the defense

1 intelligence and security enterprise. You would perform
2 these duties while also being dual hatted as the director of
3 defense intelligence in the office of the Director of
4 National Intelligence.

5 Among your many responsibilities you would oversee the
6 security and law enforcement activities of the Department of
7 Defense. This authority includes vetting individuals for
8 access to classified information and guarding against
9 insider threats.

10 It also means protecting our supply chains and Defense
11 Industrial Base from the unprecedented espionage danger
12 posed by China. I would look forward to you providing the
13 committee with your assessment of these threats and your
14 plan on addressing them.

15 Armed conflict is raging in multiple theaters. Our
16 principal adversaries are deepening their cooperation and
17 Islamic terrorism is on the rise.

18 At a time such as this everyone from senior
19 policymakers down to our war fighters on the front lines
20 must have a clear understanding of our adversaries, their
21 capabilities, and their intentions.

22 In large part they get that clear picture through
23 timely and accurate intelligence. The military and the
24 intelligence community must work more closely together than
25 ever before.

1 Ms. Wilkerson, I look forward to hearing your plans for
2 ensuring the defense intelligence enterprise is postured and
3 equipped both to contend with a volatile and complex threat
4 environment and to enable more effective targeting process
5 for the military.

6 So thank you. I thank the nominees for their
7 willingness to serve. I look forward to your testimony and
8 I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

9 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker.

10 I will first recognize Secretary Moultrie, then Senator
11 Rounds for their introductions. Then I will recognize Ms.
12 Wilkerson and Dr. Sulmeyer for their statements.

13 Secretary Moultrie, please?

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1 STATEMENT OF RONALD S. MOULTRIE, FORMER SECRETARY,
2 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

3 Mr. Moultrie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 First, let me express my condolences on the passing of
5 Senator Inhofe, a great leader and a strong supporter of the
6 Department of Defense, and we greatly appreciate that.

7 So with that, good morning, Chairman Reed, Ranking
8 Member Wicker, and distinguished members of the Senate Armed
9 Services Committee. It is my distinct honor and pleasure to
10 appear before this committee today.

11 I am also deeply honored and privileged to introduce
12 Ms. Tonya Wilkerson who has been nominated to serve as the
13 under secretary of defense for intelligence and security.
14 Ms. Wilkerson's distinguished career and exceptional
15 leadership in the intelligence community make her uniquely
16 qualified for this critical role.

17 Ms. Wilkerson currently serves as the deputy director
18 of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency where her
19 leadership has resulted in significant enhancements to our
20 nation's geospatial intelligence capabilities.

21 Her tenure at NGA has been marked by a relentless
22 pursuit of excellence and a deep commitment to advancing our
23 national security interests through innovative intelligent
24 solutions.

25 Throughout her career Ms. Wilkerson has held various

1 leadership positions of increasing responsibility within the
2 intelligence community including senior roles at the CIA and
3 the National Reconnaissance Office.

4 Her strategic vision and operational expertise have
5 been instrumental in shaping intelligence policies and
6 capabilities, and critical to our defense posture.

7 Ms. Wilkerson's background exemplifies a strong
8 foundation in intelligence analysis, operational support,
9 fiscal accountability, and technological innovation. Her
10 leadership at NGA has fostered closer ties with the Director
11 of National Intelligence, greater collaboration across the
12 interagency, and with international partners, and to
13 strengthen our rapport with Congress.

14 Ms. Wilkerson is a transformational leader whose
15 background makes her uniquely suited for USD I&S. Her deep
16 CIA roots have enabled her to build strong ties with other
17 defense intelligence and security elements and has been
18 instrumental in laying the foundation for closer ties and
19 better integration with our military services.

20 She has openly embraced industry and pioneered stronger
21 ties with the private sector that will be invaluable to our
22 artificial intelligence, commercial space, and high
23 performance computing efforts.

24 I have valued Ms. Wilkerson's brilliant counsel,
25 unselfish service, and friendship for years and am confident

1 that, if confirmed, she will provide objective invaluable
2 counsel to the Secretary of Defense.

3 If confirmed, Ms. Wilkerson will also be an exceptional
4 leader of the defense intelligence and security enterprise.
5 Her perspective, judgment, and ability to transform an
6 organization's culture while recruiting and mentoring the
7 workforce of tomorrow will ensure that intelligence and
8 security remain an integral component of our nation's
9 defense.

10 I take great pride in introducing such a superb
11 candidate and a true patriot. I urge the committee to give
12 Ms. Wilkerson's nomination its utmost consideration.

13 Thank you.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Dr. -- Secretary Moultrie.

15 Senator Rounds, please?

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROUNDS, U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH
2 DAKOTA

3 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Wicker, and friends and
5 colleagues of the Armed Services Committee, it is my
6 privilege to introduce Dr. Michael L. Sulmeyer for your
7 consideration as the assistant secretary of defense for
8 cyber policy.

9 He is joined today by his wife Danielle Polebaum, his
10 mother-in-law Gilda Brancato and his father-in-law Elliot
11 Polebaum. His new daughter, Vivian Sulmeyer, was born on
12 May 31st of this year and, unfortunately, is unable to join
13 us today, although I understand that she did listen very
14 intently to most of the answers to the advanced policy
15 questions her father received from this committee.

16 We are thankful to his family for sharing him with us.
17 Our country is safer because of his service and their
18 sacrifice.

19 I can say without reservation that when this body
20 created the assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy
21 position in the fiscal year 2023 National Defense
22 Authorization Act it was done with the intention that the
23 role would be filled with competent experts such as Dr.
24 Sulmeyer.

25 Dr. Sulmeyer currently serves as the principal cyber

1 advisor to the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of
2 the Army, advising them on all cyber matters.

3 Under his stewardship the Army component of the cyber
4 mission force has thrived. Army Cyber Command and Army
5 Cyber Center of Excellence are both exemplary institutions
6 that are developing and fielding the kind of cyber operators
7 our nation requires to safeguard our forces in the cyber
8 domain and strike back decisively when the time is right.

9 Dr. Sulmeyer has worked with his counterparts in
10 uniform to improve the readiness posture of all attendees of
11 the Army Cyber Center of Excellence schools which supports
12 the entire joint force.

13 Developing such cyber war fighters is not an easy task
14 but Dr. Sulmeyer has been very forward leaning in fulfilling
15 these duties. He has proactively developed public-private
16 partnerships with leading cybersecurity institutions,
17 understanding that the department must leverage the many
18 exquisite cyber institutions and resources outside of the
19 U.S. government in order to field the best cyber mission
20 force we are capable of producing.

21 Prior to his current role Dr. Sulmeyer served in a
22 number of relevant positions including director of the Rapid
23 Vulnerability Review for the deputy secretary of defense,
24 special assistant to the President, and senior director of
25 cyber policy on the National Security Council, senior

1 advisor to the commander of Cyber Command, and outside of
2 government he was the director of the cyber security project
3 at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science
4 and International Affairs.

5 I know that he is most proud of the teams that he has
6 been a part of at the Belfer Center and the Army where he is
7 able to use his prolific talents to enable the next
8 generation of academics and policy advisors to get started
9 in their careers.

10 As assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy Dr.
11 Sulmeyer will be responsible for the implementation of the
12 DOD's cyberspace strategy and plans including those related
13 to cyberspace forces, capabilities, and their employment.

14 He will provide the guidance and oversight of DOD
15 cyberspace activities as they relate to foreign cyberspace
16 threats, international cooperation, engagement with foreign
17 partners, and international organizations.

18 He is eminently qualified for this crucial position,
19 which has remained vacant for far too long. I am confident
20 that Michael Sulmeyer's character, competence, and
21 experience will make him the right person to address the
22 cyber threats and challenges our country will face in the
23 future.

24 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

1 Senator King: Chairman, can we question this guy,
2 Senator Rounds?

3 [Laughter.]

4 Chairman Reed: Just stay there. Do not come back up
5 on the panel, okay?

6 [Laughter.]

7 Chairman Reed: No. Thank you very much, Senator
8 Rounds.

9 And for the benefit of my colleagues, before I
10 recognize the witnesses I must depart about 9:30 for the
11 Appropriations Committee for our votes and at that point
12 Senator King will take the gavel.

13 With that, Ms. Wilkerson, could you have the -- you are
14 recognized.

15 Well, because of the unusual nature of my departure let
16 me get an administrative detail out of the way before your
17 testimony.

18 There are a series of questions which all civilian
19 nominees are required to answer. You may simply answer
20 together in the affirmative or whatever the appropriate
21 response.

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

24 Ms. Wilkerson: Chairman, yes, I have.

25 Dr. Sulmeyer: Chairman, yes, I have.

1 Chairman Reed: You can simultaneously just do it, too.
2 Have you assumed any duties or taken any actions that
3 would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation
4 process?

5 Ms. Wilkerson: No, I have not.

6 Dr. Sulmeyer: No, I have not.

7 Chairman Reed: Exercising our legislative and
8 oversight responsibilities makes it important that this
9 committee, its subcommittees and other appropriate
10 committees of the Congress receive testimony, briefings,
11 reports, records, and other information from the executive
12 branch on a timely basis.

13 Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify
14 before this committee when requested?

15 Ms. Wilkerson: Yes, I will.

16 Dr. Sulmeyer: I agree.

17 Chairman Reed: Do you agree to provide records,
18 documents, and electronic communications in a timely manner
19 when requested by this committee, its subcommittees, or
20 other appropriate committees of Congress and to consult with
21 the requester regarding the basis or any good faith delay or
22 denial in providing such records?

23 Ms. Wilkerson: Yes.

24 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, I will.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you. Will you ensure that your

1 staff complies with deadlines established by this committee
2 for the production of reports, records, and other
3 information including timely responding to hearing questions
4 for the record?

5 Ms. Wilkerson: Yes.

6 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you. Will you cooperate in
8 providing witnesses and briefers and respond to
9 congressional requests?

10 Ms. Wilkerson: Yes.

11 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes.

12 Chairman Reed: Will those witnesses and briefers be
13 protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

14 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes.

15 Ms. Wilkerson: Yes.

16 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much.

17 Now that we have moved through some of the
18 administrative matters let us get back to the critical
19 issues.

20 Ms. Wilkerson, your opening statement, please.

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1 STATEMENT OF TONYA P. WILKERSON, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY
2 OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY

3 Ms. Wilkerson: Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Wicker,
4 and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor
5 to appear before you as the nominee for the under secretary
6 of defense for intelligence and security.

7 I am honored by the trust and confidence that President
8 Biden and Secretary Austin have placed in me and their
9 support for my nomination. I thank this committee and I
10 appreciate your consideration of my nomination.

11 I want to thank former Under Secretary of Defense for
12 Intelligence and Security the Honorable Ronald Moultrie for
13 his kind introduction. I admire your leadership of OUSD
14 I&N. You made a real difference for the mission and the
15 workforce. Thank you for being such a great role model.

16 I thank God for blessing me with an incredible family
17 who have supported me throughout my career. To my husband
18 Kevin I thank you for being my biggest supporter and
19 believing in my aspirations.

20 To my children Kenadi and Kevin Jr., you have
21 sacrificed as I have pursued a lifelong career in public
22 service. Thank you for your unwavering support. I am
23 incredibly proud of you and your accomplishments. You
24 inspire me to be better every day.

25 To my parents, Ralph and Eleanora, siblings Ramona,

1 Samantha, Ralph, Jr., and nephew Juwan, his wife Courtney
2 and daughter Cree, thank you for being there for me every
3 step of the way.

4 Dad, a special thank you for your service in the United
5 States Marine Corps and for modeling what it means to serve
6 our country.

7 Mom, thank you for always being there filling the gap
8 as I balance home and work. Thank you to my in-laws,
9 especially my mother-in-law Belinda who is no longer with
10 us, and my entire family. You all have given me your full
11 support. I could not have accomplished what I have in my
12 professional career without each one of you.

13 And to my colleagues, thank you for your dedication to
14 the mission and investment in the development of future
15 leaders.

16 Mr. Chairman and committee members, the mission of the
17 United States Department of Defense is vital to keeping
18 Americans safe and to advancing our interests abroad.

19 For more than 35 years I have had the privilege of
20 working in the civilian and military workforce of the
21 intelligence community and the Department of Defense.

22 My path to this hearing room today started with my high
23 school principal introducing me to a Central Intelligence
24 Agency officer looking to identify STEM talent to
25 participate in an undergraduate scholar program.

1 With that, I headed off to Virginia Tech to study
2 engineering and spent my summers working at the CIA,
3 primarily in support of the National Reconnaissance Office
4 mission.

5 I felt a tremendous sense of pride to be serving
6 alongside exceptionally talented intelligence professionals.
7 As a student I was drawn to the national security mission.
8 From that time to today my why remains the people and the
9 mission. It is what motivates me to pursue this
10 opportunity.

11 This committee has long supported our nation's
12 intelligence community and the essential missions conducted
13 within the defense, intelligence, and security enterprises.
14 If confirmed, I look forward to having a close working
15 relationship with this committee and with the Congress as a
16 whole.

17 I believe my more than three decades of government
18 service across multiple defense intelligence enterprise and
19 intelligence community agencies uniquely prepares me for
20 this position.

21 I have served in multiple senior roles, building and
22 leading teams to tackle a wide range of intelligence issues.
23 I have partnered effectively across agencies and with allied
24 partners.

25 I have focused on improving efficiency in the planning,

1 programming, budgeting, and execution processes. I also
2 personally directed operations for NRO mission ground
3 stations. I understand the National Defense Strategy and
4 the outcomes required to support the department's
5 priorities.

6 Our key challenge remains the PRC and its coercive
7 behavior. If confirmed, my priorities will include
8 delivering information at the scale and speed to provide
9 decision advantage over competitors paced to the global
10 challenge of the PRC, enhancing security and
11 counterintelligence focus across the department, recruiting
12 and retaining a skilled workforce with diverse experiences,
13 expertise, and backgrounds required to address national
14 security challenges, and leveraging interagency and
15 international coalitions and partnerships.

16 If confirmed, I will strive to accomplish these and
17 other priorities as determined by the Secretary and the
18 deputy secretary of defense.

19 I look forward to supporting Secretary Austin, Deputy
20 Secretary Hicks, and DNI Haines in ensuring that the defense
21 intelligence enterprise remains tightly linked with the
22 national intelligence enterprise and partners strongly with
23 the defense security enterprise.

24 Thank you for your time today and for your
25 consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your

1 questions.

2 [The prepared statement of Ms. Wilkerson follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Ms. Wilkerson.

2 Dr. Sulmeyer, please?

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1 STATEMENT OF MICHAEL L. SULMEYER, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR CYBER POLICY

3 Dr. Sulmeyer: Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Wicker,
4 members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before
5 you today as the nominee to serve as the first assistant
6 secretary of defense for cyber policy.

7 I thank President Biden, Secretary Austin, and Deputy
8 Secretary Hicks for their confidence in me to submit my name
9 for your consideration, and I thank Senator Rounds for that
10 very kind and generous introduction as well.

11 I also wish to thank my wife Danielle Polebaum. Among
12 other things, she is a gifted lawyer and the most amazing
13 mother I have met as we welcomed our first child Vivian six
14 weeks ago.

15 Danielle's parents, Gilda Brancato and Elliot Polebaum,
16 are wonderful in-laws and grandparents. I am also so
17 fortunate to call the Popkins, Chabras and the Watters
18 family as well.

19 Special thanks to my Uncle Larry Popkins, an-all star
20 high school football coach and tennis coach who served in
21 the Army many years ago. He turns 90 today back home in
22 California.

23 My parents Irving Sulmeyer and Gail Sulmeyer passed
24 away years ago. My father was an attorney who served in the
25 Navy as a young man. He instilled in me an appreciation for

1 history, the law, and public service, and he made the
2 mistake of letting his elementary school-aged son take apart
3 his first personal computer.

4 My mother did the heaviest lifting raising me day in
5 and day out, all while trying to understand why I needed a
6 second phone line for my computer in the days before the
7 World Wide Web. I would not be the person or the
8 professional that I am today without them.

9 While I got my start in information technology at a
10 young age, I began my career in national security at the
11 Defense Department during the George W. Bush administration.

12 I was fortunate to learn from civilian and uniformed
13 leaders at the bipartisan Center for Strategic and
14 International Studies. I studied civil-military relations
15 as a graduate student but my interests in technology were
16 rekindled when I joined the cyber policy team in the office
17 of the Secretary of Defense.

18 After a stint building a cybersecurity research program
19 in academia I have had the privilege of resuming public
20 service at U.S. Cyber Command and now the U.S. Army.

21 This is the experience I would bring to the job if
22 confirmed as the first assistant secretary of defense for
23 cyber policy. That experience has taught me about the value
24 of public-private partnerships, the criticality of human
25 capital, and the imperative of a bipartisan approach to

1 cybersecurity and cyber policy.

2 If confirmed, I would look forward to working with all
3 the members of the committee to address your concerns,
4 resolve your questions, and collaborate with you to
5 strengthen our national defense.

6 So many of the pressing challenges that confront the
7 United States today have a nexus to cyber policy. From
8 China's brazen efforts to target our critical infrastructure
9 to Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, we see our
10 adversaries using cyber operations to threaten our security,
11 and now advances in artificial intelligence could
12 dramatically expand our cyber vulnerabilities or our cyber
13 advantages.

14 As such, my overriding goal if confirmed would be to
15 generate the combat power and sustained readiness in
16 cyberspace necessary both to advance American interests and
17 to defend them from current and future threats.

18 To achieve this I would begin by accelerating U.S.
19 Cyber Command's efforts to meet and defeat threats to our
20 nation. I would do so in close partnership with the
21 commander of U.S. Cyber Command General Haugh.

22 I would also train my focus on the personnel who
23 execute the mission -- military and civilian, active, Guard,
24 and Reserve. We must retain and recruit the nation's top
25 talent to deter and, when necessary, defeat our adversaries.

1 I would also ensure we make the most of our nation's
2 advantages in artificial intelligence and quantum
3 information science.

4 In closing, please let me underscore my appreciation
5 for this committee's bipartisan approach to national defense
6 and to cyber-related issues in particular.

7 The creation of the position for which I have the
8 distinct privilege to be nominated is a product of your
9 bipartisanship, memorialized in the National Defense
10 Authorization Act that established this role.

11 If confirmed, I look forward to working with you
12 closely and collaboratively to ensure that the Defense
13 Department's strategies, plans, and capabilities in
14 cyberspace advance and defend our nation's interests at home
15 and abroad.

16 I thank each of you for your consideration and I look
17 forward to your questions.

18 [The prepared statement of Mr. Sulmeyer follows:]

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1 Senator King: [Presiding.] Thanks to both of you. I
2 will begin the questioning and then we will go on a first
3 round.

4 Ms. Wilkerson, I am concerned that you only mentioned
5 China in your opening statement and you did not mention
6 terrorism, and I am afraid that we have turned so thoroughly
7 toward great power competition that we are losing sight of
8 the risk of terrorism, which is still there -- very much
9 still there -- and the reason I think that is so important
10 for you is that the cornerstone of our defense policy is
11 deterrence and that has been the case for 70 years at least.

12 Unfortunately, the theory of deterrence does not work
13 with someone who does not have a capital city and does not
14 care about dying so intelligence is the first line of
15 defense against a terrorist attack.

16 Talk to me about maintaining a significant focus on the
17 risk of terrorism because the people who wish us harm in
18 that realm have not gone away.

19 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for the opportunity
20 to expand on that particular aspect of my stated priorities.
21 I could not agree with you more that while the PRC remains a
22 global challenge it is not the only threat that is
23 represented.

24 More and more as we think about what we see happening
25 across the globe we see that there is a strengthening of

1 ties across not only China but also Russia, Iran, North
2 Korea. The list goes on and on.

3 And so I think it is incumbent upon us to ensure that
4 we are focused in a balanced way across all of the threats
5 that exist to include the CT threat.

6 I certainly see that in my seat today as the deputy
7 director of NGA where while there are multiple crisis
8 situations that are currently ongoing we still ensure that
9 we are balancing and focusing on CT as well as those other
10 efforts.

11 Senator King: I hope you will maintain that focus
12 because it is -- the national policy is something like an
13 aircraft carrier. Once it starts to turn it is hard to turn
14 it back.

15 But we cannot lose the focus on terrorism. I just --
16 the whole world can turn upside down in one day and it does
17 not take a huge nation state. It just takes a few
18 determined people who do not care about their lives.

19 So I hope you will maintain that focus.

20 You mentioned the multiple agencies. You are a walking
21 interagency task force. You have worked with -- worked for
22 the CIA, NGA, NRO, and I think one of the important roles --
23 and, of course, certainly the Director of National
24 Intelligence has this role -- but I hope you can work in
25 terms of coordination and better coordination between the

1 intelligence agencies so that we are not siloing
2 information. Is that something that you can make a
3 commitment to?

4 Ms. Wilkerson: Absolutely, Senator.

5 I certainly can commit to ensuring that I am
6 integrating not only across the defense intelligence and
7 security enterprise, if confirmed, of course, but also
8 focusing on that relationship across with the intelligence
9 community, and I do think I am well postured to do so having
10 spent many years supporting IC.

11 Senator King: Finally -- I do not want to stress this
12 too much -- Dan Coats, the former DNI, said the role of the
13 intelligence community is to find the truth and tell the
14 truth and I hope that you will hold to that.

15 That is one of the best summations that I have found,
16 and telling the truth is very important. Telling the truth
17 to people in positions of authority, policymakers who may
18 not want to hear what the analysis actually shows.

19 So I hope you will remember Dan's admonition. Find the
20 truth and tell the truth.

21 Mr. Sulmeyer, now let us get back to deterrence. One
22 of the problems with our cyber policy, in my view, is that
23 there is not much in the way of deterrence. Our adversaries
24 are sponsoring attacks against us in cyberspace every day
25 without much fear of any kind of response, whether it is

1 cyber or something else.

2 Talk to me about applying the theory of deterrence
3 which has been so important to us in other areas to cyber
4 because we are not going to be able to patch our way out of
5 this risk.

6 Dr. Sulmeyer: Good morning, Senator, and the focus on
7 deterrence is top of mind for me, especially as we look at
8 not just the pacing challenge of the People's Republic of
9 China but including terrorists as well.

10 We really want to think about how we impose costs,
11 going forward, and I think the department does that in large
12 part by the strategy of defending forward, being proactive
13 on foreign land to disrupt and degrade adversary
14 capabilities.

15 Senator King: Is it your intention to continue that
16 policy and strengthen it?

17 Dr. Sulmeyer: And strengthen it, absolutely.

18 Senator King: Thank you.

19 Final question. One of the cyber issues that seems to
20 me in the Defense Department is the Defense Industrial Base.
21 You can have the best defense in the world in the Pentagon
22 but if a subcontractor to a major contractor is compromised
23 it seems to me that needs to be a focus of your attention as
24 well.

25 Dr. Sulmeyer: Absolutely. We share risk with the

1 Defense Industrial Base in cybersecurity and if confirmed I
2 am committed to reviewing what opportunities there are such
3 as the National Security Agency's Cyber Collaboration Center
4 and also providing cyber security as a service to small
5 businesses as well.

6 Senator King: Thank you.

7 Senator Wicker?

8 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much, Senator King.

9 Ms. Wilkerson, I am glad you cleared up in response to
10 Senator King the several threats that are working together,
11 and you did mention the People's Republic of China and then
12 in response to the question, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and
13 terrorism.

14 Do you agree that they are working together in an
15 effort against the United States as they never have before?

16 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, I do agree that we are --

17 Senator Wicker: And, Dr. Sulmeyer, do you agree with
18 that also?

19 Dr. Sulmeyer: Senator, when it comes to cyber
20 operations I think there is more skepticism about
21 cooperation and sharing the sensitive techniques. But in
22 general I agree there is a large effort and aspiration to do
23 so.

24 Senator Wicker: Okay, and you -- then let us talk
25 about our -- the people who are working with us. In your

1 testimony, Ms. Wilkerson, you mentioned leveraging interagency
2 and international coalitions and partnerships.

3 Who are our best partners in this regard? And Dr.
4 Sulmeyer, too.

5 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, when I started to think about
6 partners, certainly, first and foremost I would focus on our
7 long and enduring partnership with the Five Eyes community.

8 And so when I think about the allied partners it is
9 Canada, Australia, the U.K., and New Zealand, and that is a
10 good starting place is we start to think about how we ensure
11 we are strengthening ties across international bounds.

12 But I also think it is really important that we are
13 focusing on interagency partnerships as well and being able
14 to work effectively in a way that delivers the outcomes that
15 are necessary to meet this threat environment.

16 Senator Wicker: How valuable are our other NATO
17 partners other than the ones you mentioned?

18 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, I think that they are
19 definitely very valuable partners as well. I noted the Five
20 Eyes partners, given that those are the partners that we
21 have a longstanding relationship with.

22 But I think it is -- even as we see some of the crisis
23 situations that are unfolding today we recognize that there
24 has to be an expansion of those partnerships, and if
25 confirmed I am committed to focusing efforts on doing that.

1 Senator Wicker: Dr. Sulmeyer, do you want to comment
2 on that?

3 Dr. Sulmeyer: I would just double down on the Five
4 Eyes as well but also AUKUS and the second pillar of the
5 relationship gives a new opportunity -- additional
6 opportunity between our three countries.

7 Senator Wicker: I am glad you mentioned that.

8 And then, Ms. Wilkerson, you mentioned interagency
9 cooperation. Senator King is concerned about siloing and so
10 am I. But how are we doing on that? Are we doing a better
11 job of avoiding that now and how much further do we need to
12 go?

13 Ms. Wilkerson: So, Senator, speaking from my seat
14 currently today as the deputy director of NGA I look across
15 and feel that we have very strong partnerships across the
16 defense intel enterprise. In my day to day I have an
17 opportunity to engage quite frequently with the NRO.

18 Senator Wicker: Well, is it a problem?

19 Ms. Wilkerson: I think there is always opportunity
20 space to continue to strengthen the interaction between
21 organizations. I would not necessarily indicate that it is
22 a problem. I would rather note that there is an opportunity
23 space for continued engagement.

24 Senator Wicker: As compared to a decade ago are we --
25 have we solved that problem on a one to 10 level -- at a one

1 or a 10 or where?

2 Ms. Wilkerson: So, Senator, I think that we have
3 actually come a very long way in terms of the integration
4 across the agencies and I say that given the experience that
5 I have had across three of those organizations including
6 CIA.

7 Senator Wicker: Okay. Thank you very much.

8 Dr. Sulmeyer, on the question of U.S. critical
9 infrastructure it is commercially owned but our military
10 uses it and as such we have to be concerned about cyber
11 attacks on a commercially-owned network. Is that a problem
12 and how is DHS as the lead federal agency attacking this
13 problem? Is it a concern?

14 Dr. Sulmeyer: Thank you, Ranking Member.

15 The opportunity there is for the Defense Department and
16 U.S. CYBERCOM to enable those partners like DHS and CISA
17 that can more directly work with those private entities.
18 Because you are absolutely right, we share that risk in
19 cybersecurity so we can bring unique insights from the
20 Defense Department to help mitigate what we see already and
21 get ahead of threats coming tomorrow.

22 Senator Wicker: You would not change that?

23 Dr. Sulmeyer: Right now, Senator, I would want to
24 understand exactly the nature of that and if I felt there
25 was more that could be done I would raise that to my

1 leadership and this committee.

2 Senator Wicker: Thank you. Thank you, Senator King.

3 Senator King: Senator Rounds?

4 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

5 First of all, let me begin. Ms. Wilkerson and Dr.

6 Sulmeyer, I want to once again thank you both and your

7 families for being here with us today and your willingness

8 to continue to serve our country.

9 Ms. Wilkerson, I appreciated the opportunity to visit

10 with you yesterday as well and I wanted to follow up a

11 little bit as I indicated I would with regard to just a

12 couple of areas that I really think are sensitive and timely

13 at this point with regard to actions going on right now

14 within the department.

15 Often the U.S. government makes changes to regulations

16 without consulting key constituencies including industry,

17 academia, and even those of us here on Capitol Hill. I know

18 that I&S does not make regulations but they do make policies

19 that can have a broad impact on the defense and intelligence

20 community and the Defense Industrial Base.

21 Would you commit to engaging with the appropriate

22 stakeholders to the maximum extent possible before making

23 significant policy changes that could impact these

24 stakeholders?

25 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for taking the time

1 to meet with me yesterday. I very much appreciated that.

2 I certainly would commit to ensuring engagement with
3 this committee to ensure that you have the adequate insight
4 and the insight that you would seek to have regarding
5 decisions that are made within the department.

6 Senator Rounds: And thank you. And the reason why I
7 bring it that way is I -- the one area which is really front
8 and center right now specifically I am hoping that it would
9 be a priority for you to follow the current law governing
10 the space-based moving target indication, or MTI, that we
11 talked about yesterday, and leave its governance within the
12 Title 10 to optimize direct support for our frontline
13 warfighters.

14 There is a discussion right now going on in terms of
15 how that is going to be implemented and it really does
16 impact the agencies that you are going to be responsible
17 for, and I just want to make a commitment that we are going
18 to hear about any changes to that and that the other
19 stakeholders would also be involved before any changes or
20 policy changes would be made.

21 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, if confirmed I certainly will
22 ensure that I provide insight to decisions that are made
23 within the department relative to all topics but MTI in
24 particular, recognizing that that is a highly -- a topic of
25 a high interest at this time.

1 Senator Rounds: Okay. And then let me just -- I
2 understand that the Department of Defense and the IC have
3 completed a joint, as they call it, a 45-day study on how to
4 accomplish GMTI. It has been done for over a year now but
5 it has not yet been provided to Congress.

6 Will you commit to making sure that this important
7 report is provided to the appropriate congressional
8 committees?

9 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, yes. If confirmed, certainly
10 I will do all within my power to ensure that the committee
11 has insight into the report and I will certainly note for
12 the SecDef and DNI on the interest.

13 Senator Rounds: Excellent. And then this question
14 really is for both of you.

15 I remain concerned about the potential commercial
16 auction of government-managed wireless spectrum. Dozens of
17 the most senior DOD officials have shared their concerns
18 with me regarding -- with regard to weapon systems that
19 would be affected should some of these areas be sold.

20 However, I am also concerned about the ramifications
21 for our defense intelligence capabilities as well. I
22 realize that you are limited in what you can discuss in this
23 setting but to the extent that you can would you please
24 share where you stand on this issue and your thoughts about
25 the administration position generally with regard to the

1 sale of DOD assets in the areas of spectrum that are
2 critical to both DOD operations -- a lot of our radars that
3 protect our shorelines -- and to the IC community with
4 regard to very valuable space-to-ground communications and
5 so forth.

6 I just want to make sure that I have got commitments
7 from both of you that there is a clear understanding of how
8 serious this is and that I want to know how you are going to
9 handle the response when the time comes and there is a
10 possibility of this being sold and you are going to find
11 uniformed officers coming and saying somebody has to stand
12 up and talk about the ramifications to the Department of
13 Defense and the IC community should these auctions move
14 forward.

15 Dr. Sulmeyer?

16 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, Senator.

17 I approach that spectrum issue very carefully from a
18 threat perspective and very mindful of the capabilities we
19 have that rely on it.

20 That is why it is so critical for the department to
21 have a seat at the table and really study the feasibility of
22 what is being proposed at all times. So if confirmed I
23 commit to working very closely on that issue.

24 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

25 Ms. Wilkerson?

1 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, while I am not very steeped in
2 this particular topic I do certainly understand the
3 sensitivity and the implications given my prior experiences,
4 and so if confirmed, Senator, certainly this is an area that
5 I would focus on.

6 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Senator King: Senator Ernst?

8 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you.
9 And good morning, Ms. Wilkerson and Dr. Sulmeyer. It is
10 nice to have you both here, and thank you so much for your
11 service to our great nation.

12 Ms. Wilkerson, I would like to start with you. In the
13 lead up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine our intelligence
14 community declassified reports which shed light on Russia's
15 true intentions and this proactive approach helped counter
16 Russian disinformation and it really did build a trust
17 between the United States and our allies and our partners.

18 We enhance our collective defense capabilities by
19 sharing intelligence and strengthening our alliances, and
20 Ms. Wilkerson, can you speak to how these information
21 sharing programs help address common security challenges
22 faced by European nations?

23 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for the question.

24 I certainly understand, given the recent experience
25 from the unprovoked invasion of the Ukraine by Russia just

1 how important it is to be -- have a responsive process for
2 declassifying information in that it can be very much
3 impactful in sharing information with not only our partner
4 organizations but also bringing to light for the public what
5 is transpiring.

6 Senator Ernst: Very good. And what role does
7 information sharing play in deterring some of those common
8 threats such as cyber attacks or disinformation campaigns
9 and specifically in the European theater?

10 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, I believe in the European
11 theater what we are seeing is that it provides and
12 illuminates what is occurring on the ground and helps others
13 to be able to best be postured to support the current crisis
14 situation.

15 And so if confirmed I certainly would commit to being
16 able to, of course, in coordination with the DNI look at our
17 continued focus on efforts to be able to declassify
18 information at the right time for the right purposes.

19 Senator Ernst: Yeah, thank you.

20 And to speak a little to AI, and maybe both of you
21 could join in here, Ms. Wilkerson, we will start with you.
22 But what role does artificial intelligence play in the
23 ongoing conflict in Ukraine and what key insights or lessons
24 have been gained from its utilization in warfare?

25 We will start with you, Ms. Wilkerson, and then Dr.

1 Sulmeyer, if you have any thoughts as well.

2 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, the department has been
3 focused on using AI to make better decisions affecting the
4 battlefield and I certainly would welcome the opportunity to
5 speak at a more in-depth level in a classified session if
6 you should desire.

7 Senator Ernst: Yeah. Thank you. Dr. Sulmeyer?

8 Dr. Sulmeyer: Good morning, Senator.

9 Ukraine is a case study of how technology has grown
10 towards AI. In 2015 the power was turned out by a cyber
11 attack in Ukraine through a manual effort. The next year
12 the code that was used was much more automated and we have
13 seen that trajectory over the years towards greater
14 automation and now with the advent of artificial
15 intelligence.

16 So, if confirmed, for me that is front and center
17 looking at the future of cyber warfare and how generative AI
18 can both help our war fighters and we have to guard against
19 it.

20 Senator Ernst: Right. I do believe there is also
21 efforts using artificial intelligence and other data mining
22 means to prove different criminal actions by those Russian
23 soldiers that have come into communities.

24 There are ways of tracking them and getting
25 information, gathering that intelligence to use in cases

1 against them to prove war crimes or to show war crimes.

2 So it is just fascinating what we have been able to do
3 across Ukraine using artificial intelligence. You mentioned
4 cyber warfare. We will dive a little deeper into that, too,
5 Dr. Sulmeyer.

6 Developing a whole of government approach to cyber
7 remains a top priority of mine and others on the committee
8 and this is true as we continue to evaluate the lessons
9 learned from the ongoing conflicts whether it is in Ukraine
10 or other areas around the globe.

11 Do you feel the DOD is successfully facilitating inter-
12 service cooperation and coordination in developing cyber
13 warfare strategies within our force and alongside some of
14 our strong friends and allies?

15 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, Senator, I see each of the services
16 within our own force generating that combat power in
17 different ways and so, if confirmed, it is a big opportunity
18 to harmonize how that combat power is generated and then how
19 we can use that to enable our partners as you describe and
20 really bring about even stronger defense of the nation in
21 cyberspace.

22 Senator Ernst: Excellent. Well, again, my time has
23 expired and I want to thank you both very much for your
24 service. Thank you.

25 Senator King: Senator Kaine?

1 Senator Kaine: Thank you to my committee colleagues
2 and congratulations to our nominees. You each have decades
3 of public service where you have really climbed to the
4 pinnacle of your respective fields and I am very happy to be
5 able to support your nominations.

6 But what I would like to know is based on your past
7 experiences as you look at them what are achieved
8 accomplishments that you are the proudest of and how would
9 you bring lessons from those accomplishments to the
10 positions to which you have been nominated?

11 Dr. Sulmeyer, if you could begin.

12 Dr. Sulmeyer: Thank you, and good morning, Senator.

13 When I think about what I am most proud of in this
14 field it is the teams I have been able to build and be a
15 part of, not just in academia but now with the U.S. Army.
16 Several of them are here today to experience this.

17 And we have been able to use the hiring authorities
18 that this committee and the Congress has given the
19 department in really creative ways and I do not think I
20 would be able to do that without the -- being empowered by
21 the committee and the Congress to do so. That is what I am
22 most proud of, going forward.

23 Senator Kaine: Thank you. Ms. Wilkerson?

24 Ms. Wilkerson: Thank you, Senator, and thank you for
25 the opportunity to share about a key accomplishment. As I

1 look at my tenure as the deputy director of NGA I would say
2 the key accomplishment has been being able to strengthen the
3 stewardship of GEOINT resources.

4 So I am the senior champion for that, and what that
5 really has focused on is thinking about how we are postured
6 organizationally driving culture change, if you will, to
7 think about the governance structure that needs to be in
8 place, how we ensure we are able to provide the very best
9 financial management artifacts and as part of that also
10 strengthening our relationship with Congress.

11 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

12 Ms. Wilkerson, I am going to stick with you. As a
13 leader in the intelligence community you have witnessed a
14 lot of changes over the course of your career about the way
15 we respond to different kinds of threats.

16 One of the key advantages we have over our adversaries
17 is that we invest heavily in innovation and emerging
18 technology. In Virginia we are really proud of the Rivanna
19 Station work being done down in the Charlottesville area
20 where we have great partnership between academic
21 institutions, industry partners, and then government
22 agencies, and those partnerships help us drive innovation.

23 How would you build on the success of our centers of
24 innovation like Rivanna Station in your new capacity?

25 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, I had an opportunity to visit

1 Rivanna Station not that long ago and I could not agree with
2 you more that it is fantastic work that happens there, and I
3 do think it is because of the partnership that happens with
4 academia.

5 I do -- from an NGA perspective one of the things that
6 we have been focused on is educational partnership
7 agreements and also leveraging cooperative agreements that
8 would allow for development activities as well so that
9 academia gets insight into what the mission requirements are
10 and there is an opportunity for early engagement.

11 I would, if confirmed, certainly want to continue to
12 build upon that and then also not lose sight of the
13 opportunity that the small businesses also provide to be
14 able to tap into innovative concepts that we might not
15 otherwise consider. That is part of my current portfolio
16 and one that I have been very passionate about.

17 Senator Kaine: I was impressed when we talked the
18 other day and you talked about NGA's partnership with
19 Gallaudet and even high school students coming in to start
20 to learn about work that is being done as a way to attract
21 people into a talent pipeline into your agencies.

22 Dr. Sulmeyer, I think you might have referred to this
23 before I came in the room -- I was at another event this
24 morning -- but AUKUS. I am a big AUKUS fanatic I guess
25 because subs are built in Virginia and I am on both Armed

1 Services and Foreign Relations, and a lot of the legislation
2 to put AUKUS into place kind of straddle the two committees.

3 I am particularly interested in the kind of open field
4 of pillar two of AUKUS, how we can work together with these
5 allies on innovative new technologies.

6 Talk a little bit about the way you see AUKUS and
7 particularly what we might do in the pillar two space to
8 advance safety and security in the Indo-Pacific.

9 Dr. Sulmeyer: Absolutely, Senator.

10 So AUKUS really gives us this opportunity to see how
11 the three countries can work not just as great intelligence
12 partners but now really as militaries in cyberspace and that
13 is, as you say, open field running.

14 And so from training, exercising, capability
15 development, those are the three areas where I would look,
16 if confirmed, in the pillar two area for cyberspace.

17 Senator Kaine: Great. Thank you very much. I yield
18 back.

19 Senator King: Senator Budd?

20 Senator Budd: Thank you both for being here, and
21 congratulations on your nominations and congratulations to
22 your families as well.

23 Dr. Sulmeyer, hopefully you had some sleep recently as
24 a new father so congratulations there as well.

25 Ms. Wilkerson, I enjoyed our conversation yesterday.

1 So if confirmed you would have direct oversight
2 responsibility for the Defense Counterintelligence and
3 Security Agency.

4 As you know, DCSA took over responsibility for
5 conducting background investigations for most federal
6 agencies after the 2015 OPM breach and what happened there
7 is that it compromised highly sensitive data of millions of
8 Americans and this caused severe damage to our national
9 security. We talked a little bit about that yesterday.

10 So DCSA it conducts these background investigations
11 through a combination of recently developed systems and old
12 legacy IT systems. Those systems were previously owned by
13 OPM.

14 So as we talked about yesterday, GAO recently came out
15 with a study. It said DCSA -- it has not appropriately
16 addressed the cybersecurity risks of these IT systems.

17 So I think that is absolutely unacceptable and it
18 increases the chance of another catastrophic breach. Could
19 you talk about your thoughts on this report?

20 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for taking the time
21 to meet with me yesterday and I did appreciate our
22 conversation on this particular report.

23 Clearly, the department and the IC must ensure that we
24 are addressing any potential for vulnerabilities with
25 respect to our background investigation systems. I had an

1 opportunity to read the report and I really feel like the
2 recommendations are very compelling.

3 It is my understanding that DCSA has already started to
4 move out on actions to implement the recommendations that
5 were included in the report, many of which seem to focus
6 around on thinking about how we focus on risk management.

7 And so if confirmed I would strongly support DCSA
8 continuing to ensure that implementation of those particular
9 recommendations and then also do all within my ability to
10 ensure their success within this.

11 Senator Budd: Ms. Wilkerson, that was the second part
12 of my question. I ask if confirmed do you commit to
13 addressing these issues and that sounds like a yes.

14 Ms. Wilkerson: That is absolutely a yes.

15 Senator Budd: Thank you.

16 Dr. Sulmeyer, it was great to meet with you a couple
17 weeks ago. We talked about the increasing need for
18 cybersecurity professionals in order to ensure that we are
19 mission ready.

20 If confirmed, what will be your strategy to address
21 these readiness shortfalls of the cyber mission force?

22 Dr. Sulmeyer: Thank you, Senator.

23 Building that combat power and that sustained readiness
24 is the overall goal. That is how we will have a robust
25 deterrence posture. That is how we will be able to disrupt

1 and degrade our adversaries' work. So that, for me, is the
2 number-one priority.

3 In terms of how to do it, first, we have got to be able
4 to recruit from a broad audience that has that propensity to
5 serve, to put the interests of the team and the nation ahead
6 of themselves, and have that technical interest and
7 aptitude.

8 But then we have to retain them and to show them that
9 there is a career and a pipeline to stay in federal service
10 and national security but also if they want to get out for a
11 while they should be empowered to know that they can come
12 back and continue to help the nation later when that is
13 possible.

14 Those are just a few of the areas I would start with to
15 build that combat power.

16 Senator Budd: Thank you. I would like to discuss the
17 importance of collaborations between cyber operations and
18 Special Operations Forces as well.

19 We talked a little bit about that a few weeks ago. Do
20 you agree that the access placement and intel gathering that
21 SOF provide is vital to successfully conduct many cyber
22 operations?

23 Dr. Sulmeyer: Very much so, Senator.

24 If confirmed, I would work very closely with the
25 assistant secretary for special operations to see what even

1 more we can do on that front.

2 Senator Budd: Thank you very much. That answers the
3 second part of my question is would you confirm to work with
4 SOLIC on that issue? Thank you very much.

5 Dr. Sulmeyer: Absolutely.

6 Senator Budd: I yield.

7 Senator King: I wanted to follow up on a couple of
8 matters that we have touched on.

9 Ms. Wilkerson, you and I talked about this -- I do not
10 want to say it is easy but it is relatively straightforward
11 to count the number of tanks on the ground from a satellite
12 feed or determine the flow of ammunition or materiel.

13 What has turned out to be very hard is to have an
14 intelligence analysis of the will to fight and we saw this
15 fail in two recent examples -- in Afghanistan, where we
16 overestimated the will to fight of the Afghan government and
17 the people, and Ukraine, where we underestimated it.

18 As we look at conflicts around the world involving
19 other countries where we are going to be coming to their
20 defense or their assistance how we will approach this
21 question of the will to fight it is much harder but it is
22 also incredibly important.

23 Give me some thoughts on that.

24 Ms. Wilkerson: So, Senator, I did appreciate very much
25 that conversation and I think you make a very valid point in

1 terms of the success of a situation really hinging upon the
2 will to fight.

3 I feel like it is a challenging thing, though, to try
4 to ascertain that particular aspect.

5 Senator King: It is challenging but we need to know
6 it.

7 Ms. Wilkerson: I agree with you 100 percent and so, if
8 confirmed, it is certainly something that I would put some
9 focus on understanding how could we be able to ascertain on
10 the will to fight and --

11 Senator King: The DNI has done substantial work on
12 this. I would urge you to study, do some homework on what
13 they have already done. Talk to the DNI. Talk to your
14 colleagues in the interagency because this is a crucial
15 factor as we are talking about Taiwan, for example.

16 We need to know what the commitment of the Taiwanese
17 people are to their own defense. It just seems to me that
18 is an important bit of intelligence in determining policy.

19 Mr. Sulmeyer, a couple of quick questions for you. One
20 is attribution. If we are talking about a cyber attack it
21 is becoming harder and harder to determine where it comes
22 from.

23 Does the U.S. government have sufficient resources in a
24 coherent structure to do attribution of cyber attacks in a
25 timely and reasonably certain way?

1 Dr. Sulmeyer: Senator, the tools and the experience
2 necessary to attribute adversary cyber activity have to keep
3 evolving with their behavior.

4 So I believe that historically we have been able to
5 attribute and understand with varying levels of confidence
6 at different times who is doing what. The difference is
7 when the government is willing and when it makes sense to
8 say so publicly versus to be private about it.

9 But I commit to working with the committee and, of
10 course, my leadership on that transparency.

11 Senator King: My question is who is we. Is there a
12 central office somewhere in the federal government of
13 attribution or is some of it in the FBI? Some of it in the
14 CIA?

15 I am just concerned that this is such an important
16 question but that institutionally, structurally, we do not
17 have a central area to do this essential function.

18 Dr. Sulmeyer: It is a good point, Senator, that there
19 is a lot of different organizations, a lot of cooks in the
20 cyber kitchen.

21 And so because different kinds of malware have
22 different technical specifications you want the best experts
23 to be able to come look at any given piece of code.

24 So I would want to just make sure that that community
25 of interest is clear about who they are and that they have

1 the tools they need to work fast and then share that intel.

2 Senator King: I hope this is something you will look
3 at with your interagency colleagues. Whenever I hear the
4 term around here "all of government" I think none of
5 government because nobody is responsible. So think about
6 that.

7 Second question for you is workforce. Are you able to
8 recruit and retain the people that you need? My sense is
9 there is a giant shortfall of cyber-capable trained people
10 across the country. Does that also affect what you are
11 going to be doing?

12 Dr. Sulmeyer: Senator, for cyber operations that is
13 those higher end active defense and offense type work. We
14 find that, at least in the Army in my experience thus far,
15 it has been one of the most competitive fields, for example,
16 coming out of West Point. It is one of the hardest fields
17 to get into.

18 So the interest in doing it is there and coming into
19 the service is there. I think the bigger challenge that I
20 would commit to if confirmed is the retention side and
21 making sure we stay as competitive as we can; not matching
22 but competitive as we can with industry and being flexible
23 where possible to keep folks who want to stay and serve on
24 the mission.

25 Senator King: Thank you.

1 Senator Schmitt?

2 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Senator.

3 Ms. Wilkerson, you may be aware I am a huge supporter
4 of NGA and the work that is being done out of NGA in St.
5 Louis, which is my hometown, and the construction there.
6 There is a lot of opportunities that exist, not just for our
7 country and our national security but also that sort of
8 economic ecosystem that exists around that and I think can
9 be a real catalyst for private sector development as well.

10 But I just -- because of your experience could you just
11 speak to the importance of geospatial intelligence in
12 general as it relates to our national defense?

13 Ms. Wilkerson: Certainly.

14 And, Senator Schmitt, I appreciate your support of NGA
15 and I am very excited about the new facility as well and,
16 quite frankly, as I stepped into this job I also noted
17 really the commitment of the entire region to really focus
18 in on developing that ecosystem for geospatial intelligence.

19 To me when I think about geospatial intelligence it
20 really illuminates not only the when and where on the Earth,
21 right, but it is also how things are being done, and so that
22 is where I think GEOINT really has -- pays dividends and
23 being able to illuminate topics that, perhaps, other INTs
24 might not be able to provide.

25 Senator Schmitt: And based on your experience

1 including your recent time with NGA could you discuss a
2 little bit the importance of integrating commercial imagery
3 products and capabilities into our defense intelligence
4 operations?

5 I know there are some barriers that exist and maybe you
6 could just sort of address that a little bit.

7 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, yes, we really value -- I
8 personally do value the partnership that exists with the
9 commercial industry in providing products that are easily
10 shareable for the intel consumers as well.

11 From my perspective one of the things that we have been
12 focused on is ensuring that we are from an ODNI and OUSD I&S
13 perspective adhering to the direction in the recommendations
14 that have been made with respect to commercial imagery
15 acquisition.

16 And so in doing so it has been centralized and so that
17 centralization of that acquisition activity does help to
18 ensure that there is a cost effective and efficient approach
19 that is in place.

20 I am aware that there are conversations ongoing
21 regarding is that the best structure and so, certainly, if
22 confirmed I would ensure that I would take a look at all
23 equities and --

24 Senator Schmitt: I think that is important because my
25 understanding is that despite the importance of NGA and

1 being a major consumer of the commercial imagery the NRO
2 retains the responsibility to contract.

3 Is that -- that is your understanding as well?

4 Ms. Wilkerson: That is exactly the arrangement. NRO
5 has the responsibility to procure pixels and NGA has the
6 responsibility to procure commercial analytic services.

7 Senator Schmitt: Well, you are going to have a great
8 opportunity to look at that alignment, I think, hopefully,
9 moving forward here.

10 I do want to address one other topic quickly on sort of
11 the monoculture concerns that I have articulated as it
12 relates to our cyber systems.

13 Could you speak to the -- a little of the potential
14 dangers and vulnerabilities that could open up because of
15 this sort of maybe one vendor approach or this kind of
16 monoculture that exists in our intelligence community as it
17 relates to cyber?

18 Ms. Wilkerson: And just so that I have clarification
19 on your question, Senator, the monoculture that exists as it
20 relates to commercial or --

21 Senator Schmitt: Well, no, as it relates -- so there
22 is a discussion that is going on and I think there is a
23 little bit of a push and pull here between a bipartisan
24 group of senators who have raised concerns about some of the
25 hacks that have happened and the fact that we are very

1 reliant on a single vendor.

2 And I think it is the view of many, including me, that
3 a multi-vendor approach might provide some additional
4 security here and ameliorate some of the concerns and
5 vulnerabilities.

6 I am just curious how you view that.

7 Ms. Wilkerson: So thank you for that additional
8 context. I really think it is incumbent upon us to ensure
9 that we are providing vendors with the right tools and
10 understanding of the right tools to help to protect their --
11 the overall infrastructure within their purview.

12 And so, if confirmed, this is an area that I certainly
13 would welcome a chance to take a hard look at and understand
14 whether or not we are giving that right information to
15 vendors to be able to be best protected.

16 Senator Schmitt: Okay. All right. Thank you.

17 Thank you, Senator.

18 Senator King: The good news is that Senator Rosen is
19 on her way. The bad news is I get to ask more questions in
20 the meantime.

21 Mr. Sulmeyer, I want to go back to something I
22 mentioned earlier. Eighty-five percent of the target space
23 in cyber is in the private sector and I am particularly
24 concerned about the Defense Industrial Base and I am
25 particularly concerned not about the major contractors but

1 the subs.

2 How do you establish a partnership, which is not a
3 common term when you are talking about the federal
4 government and the private sector?

5 How do you -- how do you develop a working partnership
6 of mutual confidence and trust between your cyber
7 protections within the Department of Defense and the Defense
8 Industrial Base?

9 Dr. Sulmeyer: Well, Senator, I would begin by really
10 finding the home for where those partnerships and who has
11 got the best insight to share and represent the government
12 in that partnership.

13 I think the National Security Agency's Cybersecurity
14 Collaboration Center is a really great -- it is not the only
15 but a great front door to be able to work on the kind of
16 partnership you are talking from the government side.

17 The opportunity then is to work not just with small
18 businesses themselves but also the managed service providers
19 that help those small businesses with their IT. And so if
20 we can empower with better threat information the providers
21 that help all the small businesses we can scale
22 cybersecurity to many in addition to individual partnerships
23 as well.

24 Senator King: I think that is going to have -- that is
25 going to be the target for adversaries, I think. They are

1 going to try to get into our systems via the smaller
2 subcontractors and those areas in the private sector.

3 Ms. Wilkerson, Senator Ernst mentioned this -- the
4 instinct of the intelligence community is to hold
5 information tight, confidential, classified, and yet we
6 learned at the beginning of the Ukraine war that releasing
7 that information was a positive. It assisted us in our
8 national policy.

9 I hope you will think about pushing back against that
10 classification instinct if the information would be helpful
11 in furthering our national policy.

12 Do you see what I mean? The whole -- the default is do
13 not tell but in some cases I think it is important to have
14 that information out there.

15 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, I certainly understand that --
16 your point of view and recognize that there has to be a
17 balance.

18 But I do agree with you that we have seen great
19 benefit, especially in the Russia-Ukraine crisis of where
20 being able to share that data more readily has led to
21 tremendous success and, certainly, if confirmed I would
22 continue to look at the appropriate times to be able to do
23 that.

24 Senator King: Thank you.

25 Senator Rosen?

1 Senator Rosen: Thank you, Senator King. Appreciate
2 it, and I want to thank you to the nominees today for
3 testifying, for your willingness to serve. It is so
4 important, and I want to talk a little bit about
5 intelligence and great power competition.

6 So, Ms. Wilkerson, as the U.S. transitions to great
7 power competition with China and given the increasing
8 emphasis on technological advancements and cyber
9 capabilities, how is the U.S. intelligence community
10 adapting its methodologies to ensure comprehensive
11 intelligence collection from both traditional and emerging
12 sources?

13 And, additionally, what strategies are being
14 implemented to integrate diverse sources of intelligence
15 and, if confirmed, how do you plan to coordinate integration
16 across a defense intelligence enterprise?

17 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for the opportunity
18 to speak a bit on that topic.

19 Of course, continuous modernization and deeper
20 integration across the defense intel and security enterprise
21 are critical to supporting the objectives of the National
22 Defense Strategy, and I think as part of that really
23 focusing in on how we develop ways to be able to leverage
24 effectively emerging technology and then also expand our
25 ability to share intelligence effectively as well with our

1 allies and partners.

2 From my seat at NGA one of the things that we have been
3 focused on is how do we take full advantage of the
4 proliferated architecture and how do we take best advantage
5 of AI, for example? GEOINT AI is where our focus would be.

6 And so I recognize from those experiences the
7 importance of always thinking ahead with respect to and
8 being open to new innovations and being able to pull those
9 in and do so at a rapid manner.

10 And so, if confirmed I would look to work across the
11 department, the IC, and as well as with other stakeholders
12 to include allies and partners to make sure we are casting a
13 broad net and understanding what exists and where there may
14 be shortfalls that might need to be addressed.

15 Senator Rosen: Thank you.

16 Yes, technology moves faster sometimes than we can
17 adapt to it. But I am glad you brought up AI because, of
18 course, there is issues around the ethical use of AI and the
19 Department of Defense has adopted a set of ethical
20 principles for artificial intelligence including minimizing
21 unintended bias and protecting civil liberties and privacy.

22 However, we do know our definition of ethical AI does
23 not align with that of our adversaries.

24 So, Dr. Sulmeyer, as we work to leverage AI into our
25 cyber capabilities we know it is going to better enable our

1 war fighters to execute their missions, whatever they are.

2 How do you intend to balance the opportunities that we
3 have before us -- challenges and opportunities -- and the
4 ethical use of AI?

5 Dr. Sulmeyer: Good morning, Senator.

6 And I think the opportunity that artificial
7 intelligence offers our warfighters really is open field
8 right now.

9 But what we bring that our adversaries do not is a
10 professional military, a military of humans that we do trust
11 and that are trusted with very serious responsibilities at
12 even very junior ranks.

13 And so to use artificial intelligence to empower them -
14 - to keep the human in the loop but to empower them -- that
15 is different than what our adversaries will use AI for
16 because I do not think they trust their militaries in the
17 way that we can trust our professional force.

18 Senator Rosen: Thank you.

19 I do think that AI just potentiates what humans can do.
20 Just helps us make those better decisions. So I would agree
21 with you there.

22 And it is important, though, that we have AI. We are
23 going to have professional war fighters but we also have to
24 have a cyber workforce and a really robust cyber workforce.
25 We have to think forward into the future, and last year DOD

1 released its cyber workforce strategy really to address
2 those gaps in workforce management, ensure we are really
3 capable of addressing the growing cyber threats from our
4 adversaries.

5 So, again, Dr. Sulmeyer, what is your view on
6 implementing nontraditional methods of expanding
7 cybersecurity workforce including establishing a cyber
8 security reserve or implementing a skills-based hiring in
9 order to increase the number of qualified candidates for
10 cyberspace operations and roles?

11 I am interested really in the civilian cyber reserve as
12 a former computer programmer myself.

13 [Laughter.]

14 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, Senator, and I have appreciated
15 your leadership on cyber issues and in particular on the
16 civilian reserve.

17 I have read the legislation and we currently have the
18 beginning conversations going between the Army, where I work
19 now, and U.S. CYBERCOM to very consistent with the law to
20 see what we can do and how we can meet the steps to start
21 that pilot.

22 So I am excited to see what we can do there with this
23 civilian reserve, mostly to be able to have folks from
24 industry who want to serve but not in a full time capacity -
25 - maybe in a quiet way -- we can call in a crisis or call in

1 the run-up to a crisis to help us with technical expertise a
2 few days, a week or two at a time, and then they can go
3 back.

4 Senator Rosen: -- teaching a course some of those
5 different things. That is exactly right. Yeah. Thank you.
6 Thank you. I appreciate your time.

7 Senator King? Oh, Senator Reed, you are back.

8 Chairman Reed: [Presiding.] Thank you. I am.

9 Senator Rosen: Thank you.

10 [Laughter.]

11 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen.

12 I particularly want to thank Senator King for chairing
13 the committee in my absence. I was at the Appropriations
14 markup so we are moving forward on our appropriations, which
15 is important.

16 Let me ask a few questions.

17 Ms. Wilkerson, CIA Director Burns recently published an
18 article and he emphasized the importance of strategic
19 declassification or the intentional public disclosure of
20 certain secrets to undercut rivals and rally allies.

21 In fact, many of my geographic combatant commanders
22 have also asked for this type of operation. What are your
23 views on the importance of strategic declassification in
24 support of information operations?

25 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, thank you for the question.

1 I do believe that it is necessary to be able to be
2 strategic about how we might consider opportunities that
3 exist to be able to declassify information for specific
4 purposes.

5 I do think that there are processes in place that help
6 us to be able to effectively do that and as an example we
7 have seen in the Russia-Ukraine crisis where information has
8 been able to be declassified and more openly shared. That
9 has paid dividends in the success of the crisis situation as
10 well as being able to continue to inform the public.

11 Chairman Reed: So that would be an option that you
12 would consider at least in your new role if confirmed?

13 Ms. Wilkerson: If confirmed, I certainly would
14 consider this as a particular option and I would look
15 forward to more in-depth conversation with subject matter
16 experts to ensure that I have got it in the right way.

17 Chairman Reed: Thank you.

18 Dr. Sulmeyer, could you give us a sense of your
19 evolution of the threat in cyber and also what that means
20 for our cyber forces, both the doctrine and also integration
21 into tactical operations?

22 Dr. Sulmeyer: Thank you, Senator.

23 The threat in cyberspace historically often was around
24 intelligence collection and theft of intellectual property,
25 so the compromise of the confidentiality of information.

1 I think where the threat is now and is growing is the
2 threat of the availability of systems like critical
3 infrastructure and also the integrity of data -- that is,
4 its deletion and modification.

5 So if confirmed I -- you cannot take your eye off the
6 ball on confidentiality but really also have to focus on
7 availability and integrity as well.

8 Chairman Reed: And that also implies a cross-
9 governmental approach to cybersecurity since you are talking
10 about infrastructure both civilian and military, and you, I
11 presume, in the Department of Defense will be the point for
12 that integration. Is that your sense?

13 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, Chairman. If confirmed I would be,
14 yes.

15 Chairman Reed: Appropriate modesty is always important
16 here. Thank you.

17 [Laughter.]

18 Chairman Reed: One of the provisions we passed in the
19 fiscal year 2024 NDAA, Ms. Wilkerson, was the -- directing
20 the Secretary of the Air Force to be responsible for
21 presenting space-based ground or airborne moving target
22 indications to combat commands.

23 As we know and as I mentioned in my opening statement,
24 JSTARS and AWACS aircraft are being taken out of service so
25 we are going to depend on space for a lot of information

1 that was usually provided within the Department of Defense
2 from one of their platforms to our forces on the ground and
3 we are giving that responsibly now to the Secretary of the
4 Air Force.

5 In your role will you ensure that this provision is
6 adequately and appropriately enforced and also if there are
7 problems let us know?

8 Ms. Wilkerson: Senator, space is an operations domain
9 and not necessarily one that is assigned to a specific
10 organization. I am very, very much tracking the current
11 direction and am supportive of the decisions that have been
12 made to date by the Secretary and the DNI.

13 And so what I would look to do, if confirmed, is to
14 ensure that we do not take our eye off of the ball of
15 exactly ensuring that the right information is getting to
16 the right people at the right time, which is really the
17 outcome that we are trying to drive with respect to the new
18 architecture. And so, certainly, I would be focused in that
19 way.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Again, thank you
21 for your previous service. It has been outstanding, and if
22 confirmed I look forward to working with you.

23 So with this, let me recognize Senator Gillibrand.

24 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
25 Chairman.

1 Ms. Wilkerson, in light of Jack Teixeira's leak of
2 classified intelligence and his reportedly violent and
3 racist online behavior that went undetected during his
4 background investigation, what suggestions do you have to
5 reform security clearance investigations and to prevent such
6 people from having access to classified intelligence?

7 Ms. Wilkerson: Good morning, Senator.

8 I am certainly aware of the fact that Airman Teixeira
9 did plead guilty to an unauthorized disclosure and am aware
10 that the Secretary did direct a 45-day security review and
11 so certainly, if confirmed, I would be focused on continuing
12 to implement the Secretary's direction to enhance security
13 in depth and that really looks across the whole of the
14 department and looks to also focus a culture of individual
15 and collective accountability.

16 Senator Gillibrand: Dr. Sulmeyer, CISA and the NSA and
17 the FBI have put out a joint advisory on the PRC actors
18 known as Volt Typhoon. They have noted that the choice of
19 targets and patterns of behavior is not consistent with
20 traditional cyber espionage or intelligence gathering
21 operations.

22 If this is more akin to preparation of the battle space
23 how will you approach deterring a PRC attack on U.S.
24 critical infrastructure?

25 Dr. Sulmeyer: Good morning, Senator. I think I would

1 approach this from two standpoints.

2 First, we have to enable and act. The first step is we
3 have to enable the partners, the actual owners of those
4 systems who control the security. We have to empower them
5 with better information, more precise threat information.
6 But then we also have to act.

7 We have to act abroad to defend forward and disrupt our
8 adversaries by imposing costs in this domain.

9 Senator Gillibrand: How would you empower them?

10 Dr. Sulmeyer: Better information sharing, first.

11 Secondly, these publications that our government agencies do
12 release provide technical specificity about changes that can
13 be made in configuration to keep them better protected.

14 Senator Gillibrand: That does not sound reassuring.

15 In fact, if you were preparing for a battle space where an
16 adversary was going to bomb our subway system you would have
17 actionable items that you were going to do, that the
18 Department of Defense can do, that our intelligence
19 community could do.

20 But just because it is in cyberspace you basically
21 declare that domain an undefendable domain where you are
22 going to offer best practices, where you are going to offer
23 information, where you are going to give vendors more
24 guidance.

25 It sounds absurd if you put it in that context. Can

1 you please give me a little more reassurance that if China
2 decides that the battle space is cyber and they shut down
3 our electric grid, shut down our energy supply, shut down
4 our banking system, zero out bank accounts, shut down our
5 food supply, shut down our water supply, shut down anything
6 they feel necessary such as airfields, such as electric
7 grids that service our bases, I cannot imagine that there
8 would be no response by the DOD but best practices.

9 Dr. Sulmeyer: I agree, Senator. There would not -- I
10 cannot imagine that either and that is why I would focus
11 more from the Cyber Command side on the act, on the cost
12 imposition, but I would do that not just in response but in
13 the prevention and disruption as well before it occurs.

14 Senator Gillibrand: So can you discuss prevention and
15 obstruction before and disruption before? Can you discuss
16 that in this setting?

17 Dr. Sulmeyer: What I can say in this setting, Senator,
18 is that my focus on building combat power, which is really
19 about the people, the technology, to be able to impose those
20 costs. That is the overriding priority I would bring to the
21 job, if confirmed.

22 We have to be -- I am sorry, Senator.

23 Senator Gillibrand: Keep going.

24 Dr. Sulmeyer: We would have to be able to bring the
25 technical talent needed not just to recruit them but keep

1 them on the hardest missions focused on the targets you are
2 exactly mentioning for long enough periods of time to
3 develop that mastery and expertise so that if the order is
4 given to impose those costs to prevent and disrupt ahead of
5 time we are ready.

6 Senator Gillibrand: So this year's NDAA we have a
7 requirement in it asking you to create a plan to how you are
8 going to protect the DOD's ability to project power from our
9 bases, project power from all of our supply chain that is
10 necessary for our Department of Defense to function
11 effectively from a cyber attack.

12 A lot of times when we request a report or a study or a
13 plan it is delayed. Do I have your commitment then when the
14 NDA gives you directives to prepare a plan, prepare a
15 report, you will do so on a timely basis?

16 Dr. Sulmeyer: Yes, Senator, top priority to be timely
17 with you, and if that means I have got to come up in person
18 and give a personal briefing before the paperwork clears I
19 will do it.

20 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator
23 Gillibrand.

24 And Ms. Wilkerson and Dr. Sulmeyer, thank you for your
25 testimony and for your service over many years. There will

1 be a video of this for Vivian, Dr. Sulmeyer, so I think she
2 will be in a few years now be looking at it. And it was
3 very good to have your family here, Ms. Wilkerson and Dr.
4 Sulmeyer.

5 With that, let me adjourn the hearing.

6 [Whereupon, at 10:30 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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