

**Statement of Jason A. Abend**  
**Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services**  
**On His Nomination to Serve as Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Defense**  
**August 6, 2020**

Good morning, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished Members of the Committee, and staff. I am grateful and deeply humbled by the opportunity to sit before you today, with my fellow nominees and for your consideration of my nomination to be the Inspector General of the Department of Defense.

I would like to thank the President for nominating me and for my incredible family, friends, and colleagues whose patience and support made this day possible:

- My wife, Valerie, who met me on a blind date 20 years ago and surprisingly agreed to marry me. I am eternally grateful for her love, support and patient understanding.
- My children, who act as constant reminders for why I wake up every day and serve.
- My parents, who instilled in me my love of country, especially my father who is the proud product of both U.S. Army ROTC and the U.S. Army Signal Corps.
- My longtime friends and mentors, Ken and John, who, over decades selflessly provided me their infinite wisdom and sage advice.

If confirmed, I will have the high honor and privilege of serving alongside 73 other Inspectors General and leading the more than 1,600 extraordinarily skilled and dedicated professionals of the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General. It is a responsibility I would not take lightly and, if confirmed, one I will gladly accept.

Inspectors General are center stage in many of today's most important matters and none more so than the DoD OIG. In addition to overseeing Department of Defense activities around the world, the DoD OIG is working with and through the broader oversight community—including the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (PRAC) and the Government Accountability Office—to oversee the Federal investment in and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Congress has appropriated \$10.6 billion so far to the DoD to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as \$20 million to the DoD OIG to provide oversight of DoD programs, operations, and activities related to COVID-19.

If confirmed, I'm confident my two decades of diverse management and oversight experience will serve me well in leading the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General. Having served as a Special Agent with two Offices of Inspectors General and with the U.S. Secret Service, I led complex civil, criminal and employee misconduct investigations. Through these experiences, I witnessed firsthand how fraud, waste, and abuse negatively impact critically

important programs and learned how important preventive and corrective actions are to the successful functioning of our government.

In closing, in my meetings with many of you and your staff, we discussed the importance of independence and transparency. I stated then—and reaffirm publicly now—my commitment to champion these two values without reservation and without exception. If confirmed, I will exercise my responsibilities as I have throughout my career—by gathering and following facts, analyzing data, and applying the law without favor or preconception.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and Members of the Committee, for this opportunity and for your time and consideration. This concludes my prepared statement. I look forward to answering your questions.