

Kari A. Bingen
Nominee for Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence
Opening Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee
May 18, 2017

Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished senators of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your consideration of my nomination to be the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

I wish to start by thanking President Trump and Secretary Mattis for placing their trust and confidence in me. I am also grateful to several mentors who have helped shape my career, including Chairman Thornberry, Congressman Mike Turner, and retired Congressman Terry Everett, as well as to the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) family and many of the staff behind you, who I have learned from and had the privilege to collaborate with in support of the National Defense Authorization Act.

Henry Kissinger's statement before this committee in 2015 has stuck with me: that, "The United States has not faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of the Second World War." While threats increase, our military force structure has decreased. Thus, as Secretary Mattis has stated, we have less of a military shock absorber than we once did. This makes intelligence – and a highly effective defense intelligence enterprise – all the more critical to buy our leaders the time and space necessary to develop policy, posture accordingly, and resource capabilities.

Keeping America safe and supporting our forces in harm's way is a humbling and solemn responsibility. If confirmed, my first priority will be to support the warfighter. We have troops today in harm's way in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere around the world. They deserve the best intelligence our nation can provide to protect them and to support their missions.

Additionally, we must improve our defense intelligence posture and capabilities to better address the full spectrum of security challenges, particularly from near-peer challengers, that range from high-end nuclear and advanced conventional threats to grey zone tactics in the cyber and information domain. The battlefield of today and tomorrow is more dynamic, and the defense intelligence enterprise must be more agile and adaptive – whether in its integration with operations, collection and analysis, or incorporation of new technologies and innovative concepts.

Furthermore, I am reminded of the reason why the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) was established in the first place: in the wake of 9-11, to improve the integration, management, and allocation of resources across a stove-piped enterprise. Integration and unity of effort across defense intelligence is the value that this position brings to the Secretary, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Congress. I also recognize that collaborative relationships, and motivated people focused on a clear mission, are the foundation to implementing these priorities.

It has been an honor working for the House Armed Services Committee, starting with the strategic forces and intelligence portfolio and now as policy director. I believe my time on Capitol Hill, coupled with my technical background and work in the private sector in support of the National Reconnaissance Office, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Space Office, have uniquely prepared me for this position.

If confirmed, I am committed to working with this committee and other committees of jurisdiction. I hope to earn your trust and confidence, and I am committed to providing you with the information you need to carry out your oversight. If confirmed, I also look forward to working closely with the new Under Secretary, once confirmed, and the great team in the USD(I) office and across the Department.

Finally, I would not be here without the strong support of my family: my husband, Sean Tytler, our two young sons, Henry and Harrison, and my parents, John and Rebecca Bingen. My father enlisted in the Army at 18, and both my grandfathers served in the Army during World War II. My time on HASC and, if confirmed, my role in the Department, is my opportunity to continue our family's tradition of service and to give back to our country.

Thank you again for your time today and for your consideration of my nomination.