

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for Dr. Kathleen Hicks**  
**Nominee for Appointment to be Deputy Secretary of Defense**

**Duties and Qualifications**

**Section 132 of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the Deputy Secretary of Defense shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe. Except as expressly proscribed by law or order of the President or Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary has full power and authority to act for the Secretary of Defense on any and all matters.**

**What do you perceive to be the duties and powers of the Deputy Secretary most critical to the national defense?**

The Secretary of Defense assigns duties to the Deputy Secretary of Defense in support of the Secretary's and President's priorities. As the Department's Chief Operating Officer, the Deputy Secretary provides day-to-day oversight to ensure Department components and processes execute effectively against these leadership priorities. This includes aligning the Total Force to national defense goals via planning, programming, and budgeting, personnel policy, and acquisition approaches. The Deputy Secretary has a duty to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's enterprise business operations. The Deputy Secretary performs the duties of the Secretary of Defense when the Secretary is unable to do so.

**Pursuant to DOD Directive 5105.2, Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Deputy is charged to ensure Department-wide capability and resources across all functions to carry out the strategic plan of the DOD in support of national security objectives.**

**If confirmed, specifically how would you ensure Department-wide capability and resources for such purposes?**

If confirmed, consistent with Secretary Austin's priorities, I would meet with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and key civilian and military component heads to assess the state of Department readiness to achieve those priorities, set clear performance objectives, and leverage governance mechanisms to advance decision-making toward the goals. In pursuing the capabilities and resources to achieve these goals, I would consult with Congress, interagency partners, and nongovernmental stakeholders and provide Secretary Austin and President Biden with my candid advice on the Department's needs.

**What other duties and/or powers would you expect the Secretary of Defense to prescribe for you, if confirmed?**

In his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin committed to extending to four years his recusal from matters involving Raytheon. He expressly indicated his intent to avoid both conflicts of interest and the appearance of any such conflict. This broadly scoped recusal will almost certainly prohibit Secretary Austin's participation in programmatic discussions on such matters as the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD), Long Range Stand Off (LRSO) weapon, and other timely missile defense issues.

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**Do you anticipate that you will be the decision maker for the matters covered by Secretary Austin's recusal?**

I understand that Secretary Austin has directed that any matter covered by his recusal should be referred to the Deputy Secretary of Defense or other appropriate senior Defense official.

**If so, would the Under Secretaries of Defense for Policy and Acquisition and Sustainment report directly to you on these matters?**

If Secretary Austin is recused from participating in a matter, he has directed his staff to refer the matter to the Deputy Secretary or other appropriate senior Defense official. Thus, if confirmed, for any such matter that would normally be brought to the Secretary, I expect that the Under Secretaries of Defense for Policy and Acquisition and Sustainment would report to the Deputy Secretary.

**In accordance with title 31, section 1123 of the U.S. Code, the Deputy Secretary serves as the Chief Operating Officer of the Department of Defense. In this role, the Deputy Secretary is the accountable official for improving DOD management and performance, and is charged with developing and maintaining the agency strategic plan required by section 306 of title 5, U.S. Code.**

**If confirmed, how would you change or refine, if at all, the DOD strategic goals, performance goals, priority goals, or performance measures, set forth in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2022 DOD Annual Performance Plan?**

The FY 2018-2022 DoD Annual Performance Plan is based on the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Congress requires the Secretary of Defense to issue a new national defense strategy every four years. If confirmed, I would expect to update the FY 2018-2022 performance plan to align with a forthcoming 2022 National Defense Strategy.

**If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to improve or refine the strategic planning process DOD-wide, including mechanisms to guide and synchronize DOD Components' efforts to develop and nest strategic objectives; using reliable data to monitor and measure the implementation of performance improvement initiatives; and regularizing reports of progress toward achieving established goals?**

If confirmed, I would ensure the governance mechanisms of the Department and other means of tasking, are prioritized on issues of greatest importance to achieving the Secretary of Defense's direction. I would build on and advance the use of data analytics to track and refine execution. I would work closely with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and other component leaders to ensure internal focus and incentives aligned to these priorities.

**If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider implementing with regard to the structure and operations of the DOD?**

The Department must explore innovations in its structure and operations if it is to perform at the leading edge of capability. If confirmed, I would seek to engage a broad range of stakeholders to understand where--and why--the Defense Department is not optimized to leverage the U.S. military's advantages in geopolitical competition. One potential area for operational innovation lies in rapid experimentation and fielding of capabilities that hold promise for advancing joint concepts of operation.

**To the extent that the functions of DOD Components overlap, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing unnecessary duplication?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and other relevant Components to: 1) identify areas of potential duplication; 2) determine the root cause of the duplication; 3) evaluate alternative solutions and best practices; 4) build support and buy-in across the Department; and 5) validate results and outcomes, such as through the

Deputy's Management Action Group. This effort will draw ideas from several sources, including existing Reform Management Group initiatives.

**Section 132 of title 10, U.S. Code emphasizes that the Deputy Secretary must be “highly qualified for the position by reason of background and experience, including appropriate management experience.”**

**What background, expertise, and experience do you possess that qualify you to serve as Deputy Secretary of Defense?**

If confirmed, I would bring to the role of Deputy Secretary a combination of an insider's knowledge of the Defense Department's structure and operations and an outsider's drive to modernize the force.

My connection to the U.S. military is personal. I spent my childhood crisscrossing the United States as a Navy dependent, with a parent routinely deployed away from home. I married a former Air Force dependent, and my siblings and other family members have also served—men and women, officer and enlisted. I know first-hand the sacrifices military members and their families make in their commitment to serve. I chose a different path to service, as a career civil servant and eventually Senate-confirmed civilian leader in the Defense Department. Our Constitution demands capable civilian leadership, and I am proud of my prior service in support of that central tenet of our democracy.

From my first job in the Pentagon in 1993, drafting defense planning guidance, I have supported the efforts of seven secretaries of defense and their deputies to advance national security priorities in a seemingly unwieldy bureaucracy. I have had responsibilities varying from policy to planning and programming; and from homeland defense to force posture in East Asia. I have built a special expertise in competitive strategy, force planning and posture, and force development and design.

Over the course of my career, I have developed a deep understanding for how to incent defense components toward reform, demonstrated a track record in working effectively with the armed services and modeling healthy civil-military dynamics, and negotiated hurdles to advance common national security objectives across the interagency and with Congress. I have led multiple offices and organizations comprising military personnel, career civil servants, contractors, and political appointees. Like many of them, I was working in the Pentagon on 9/11 and back at work on 9/12. A driving force in my passion for service has been experiencing that level of dedication and mission-orientation in the Department's Total Force.

Beyond government service, I have been active in civil society as an analyst, writer, and think tank leader. I pursued and completed a master's degree in public management at the University of Maryland and a doctorate in political science at MIT, both focused on security studies. I have provided analytically grounded, independent analysis to the public, Congress, and the national security community through my writing and speaking opportunities. I have been asked to serve on several congressionally-mandated national commissions and provided behind-the-scenes advice to service secretaries and chiefs on issues ranging from naval fleet structure to Army accessions strategy.

The combination of responsibilities for the Deputy Secretary of Defense are immense, but I believe my background and skills have prepared me well to perform the responsibilities of the position.

**Specifically, what is your experience in the management of large, complex organizations?**

As Principal Deputy Secretary of Defense for Policy, I oversaw the day-to-day management aspects of a 950-person organization, including three defense agencies. My responsibilities spanned human capital, budgeting, contracting, security, and research and development. My experience at managing complex organizations extends beyond this period. Throughout my time in the Defense Department, I was a leader in driving strategic goals into action across the department through the formulation of effective guidance documents, defense organizational reform, roles and missions reviews, and force development and design initiatives. Specifically, I have led multiple strategic reviews, including the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review and the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance process. If confirmed, I believe I bring the necessary know-how to assist Secretary Austin achieve his mandate that "DoD needs resources to match strategy, a strategy matched to policy, and policy matched to the will of the American people."

**Please provide an example of a situation in which you improved the management and performance of a large organization. Include in your example a description of how you leveraged strategic and performance planning, measurement, analysis, regular assessment of progress, and the use of performance information to achieve the improvements you cite.**

I have led multiple defense strategic review and risk assessment efforts inside the Defense Department. A common theme in those reviews has been the importance of security cooperation in advancing U.S. objectives. Despite this strategic emphasis, the Defense Department lacked a unified and prioritized approach to managing and resourcing this mission. In 2010, Secretary Gates launched a Security Cooperation Reform Task Force, which issued two reports on security cooperation reform. The Task

Force made many sound recommendations, but the Department still lacked the ability to bring about lasting reform absent consistent and deliberate direction.

In 2012, I thus led a specific performance improvement effort on Security Cooperation. In my role as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces, and then as Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, I led a cross-departmental process to ensure that the Defense Department synchronized its security cooperation efforts with national strategic priorities. The goal was to identify key policy decisions, such as the rebalance to Asia, for which DoD's senior-most leaders needed to provide accompanying security cooperation direction to all components.

To execute this mission, I undertook a series of initiatives. First, I chaired a weekly security cooperation governance forum, the Security Cooperation Policy Executive Council, to ensure key functional and regional assistant secretaries focus their time and attention on how to leverage and balance security cooperation tools more effectively. The Council also provided a forum for adjudicating shifts in defense activities in line with the most important priorities. Second, I led an effort to improve synchronization of security cooperation tools themselves, including an analysis of the more than 100 authorities that Congress had provided the Department. That analysis led to legislative proposals from the Defense Department to consolidate numerous authorities, thus improving the Department's flexibility to use limited resources in the most effective and timely manner. Third, I developed measures to assess security cooperation efforts over time, working with State Department counterparts, and identified areas where partner nations might be transitioned out of a program or other trade-offs might be made. Stakeholders across DoD, from Comptroller and CAPE to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and Defense Technology Security Agency, the Combatant Commands, and the Joint Staff participated in the effort to ensure a truly comprehensive and unified application of security cooperation resources.

Through this initiative, the Department elevated discourse and better targeted security cooperation activities to achieve strategic priorities. Senior Department governance forums, such as the Deputy's Management Action Group, took on key security cooperation resourcing matters. Secretary Hagel incorporated new security cooperation directives in a key department planning document. After my departure, the Department acknowledged the enduring importance of the mission set by establishing a new deputy assistant secretary position for security cooperation. Ultimately, the effort laid the foundational groundwork and strategic frame for a new chapter in title 10 for security cooperation [10 U.S. Code, Chapter 16].

**Do you believe there are any actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Deputy Secretary of Defense?**

Yes. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense, I would need to ensure I have a complete understanding of the Secretary of Defense's expectations and priorities. I would need to familiarize myself with a broad range of ongoing Department efforts aimed at aligning the Department's activities and processes to the strategic objective of deterring effectively against increasingly capable competitors, especially China. It would be especially important to understand the state of concept development and analysis used to support various posture, readiness, modernization, and force design approaches. I would also need to ground myself in an assessment of the disposition of responsibilities formerly held by the Chief Management Office to ensure business reform is prioritized throughout the Department. Further, I would need to understand the status of the FY2021 audit process and remaining impediments to a clean audit. Finally, I would need to familiarize myself with the barriers to advancing workforce priorities central to achieving all of these ends. Establishing close working relationships with senior civilian and military officials in the Department of Defense, White House officials, and leaders in Congress will be essential first steps.

### **Major Challenges**

**What do you consider the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense?**

The COVID pandemic is the most urgent challenge facing the United States. If confirmed, I would assist Secretary Austin in ensuring DoD is leaning in to support to the whole of government effort in this crisis. Over the long term, China presents the greatest geopolitical challenge to the United States. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I would seek to strengthen the U.S. military's ability to deter Chinese aggression and continue to develop a broader national security strategy for China. The military will also be called upon to assist in managing many other global threats and aggressive actors. If confirmed, I will be concerned with ensuring U.S. forces are both preparing for tomorrow and ready today.

**What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will work with DoD civilian and military leaders to ensure the Department can advance the priorities of President Biden and Secretary Austin in each of these areas.

### **Civilian Control of the Military**

**If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that your tenure as Deputy Secretary of Defense epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?**

Civilian control of the military, and appropriate civil-military dynamics are central to the health of our democracy. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense, I will help ensure that the Department recruits and retains a capable and empowered cadre of civilian professionals. I will also model and reward healthy civil-military dynamics in the Department, in the Department's interagency interactions, and in its engagement with the U.S. Congress and public.

**In its 2018 report, Providing for the Common Defense, the National Defense Strategy Commission observed, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues...Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.”**

**Do you agree with this assessment?**

I believe that civilian control of the military is foundational to our democracy. If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Austin to ensure DoD’s civilian leaders are empowered to exercise necessary control, that the Department is working with the White House, Congress, and other elected representatives when vital national security matters are at stake, and that civil-military relations are built on a foundation of mutual trust, including respect for the non-partisan role of America's armed forces.

**If confirmed, what concrete steps would you take as the Deputy Secretary of Defense to correct this imbalance in civil-military relations?**

If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Austin to ensure civilian leaders understand their roles in exercising authority, direction, and control over the Department. Civilians must be involved in the strategic, policy, budgetary, programmatic, and other major decisions and processes that inform and guide the work of DoD. I will ensure that Defense-wide decisions are the product of close collaboration between civilian and military organizations, taking full account of military advice and civilian expertise. In particular, I will collaborate closely with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and model the kind of constructive civil-military relationship I expect to be replicated across the Department. I also plan to review the health and performance of the civilian workforce in the Department, and to implement improvements in organizational and career management to ensure we are attracting and retaining the most talented civilian workforce in government.



**At his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin said “I plan to include the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in top decision–making meetings . . .” If confirmed, what would be your relationship with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in regard to matters other than those from which Secretary Austin has recused himself?**

If confirmed, I would fully support Secretary Austin's decision to include the Under Secretary for Policy in the Department’s most significant decision-making forums. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Under Secretary to ensure a fully coordinated effort in advancing the Secretary's priorities.

**If you are confirmed as the Deputy Secretary of Defense, will the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy report to you or to Secretary Austin?**

If confirmed, I would support Secretary Austin’s decisions on reporting relationships.

**If confirmed, how, if at all, would you use your position to contribute to the discussion, debate, and resolution of core U.S. defense and national security issues?**

The Secretary of Defense assigns duties to the Deputy Secretary of Defense in support of the Secretary's and President's priorities. As the Department's Chief Operating Officer, the Deputy Secretary provides day-to-day oversight to ensure Department components and processes execute effectively against defense priorities. This includes aligning the Total Force to national defense goals via planning, programming, and budgeting, personnel policy, and acquisition approaches. The Deputy Secretary performs the duties of the Secretary of Defense when the Secretary is unable to do so. If confirmed, I will work closely with Secretary Austin to determine how best to support him and his priorities.

**In your testimony before this Committee on civilian control of the Armed Forces in 2017, you said, “I think it’s fair to say every secretary comes in truly with a unique set of skills and when you’re staffing in and around that . . . you need to take account absolutely in the fuller staffing, the deputy position and others, what kind of management expertise is being brought in.”**

**If confirmed, how would you and Secretary Austin allocate between yourselves the vast and diverse duties required to lead and manage the Department of Defense effectively?**

If confirmed, I would work closely with Secretary Austin to support him and the Administration in the best way possible to ensure the Department fulfills its constitutional and statutory responsibilities and ensures good stewardship of taxpayer trust.

**What particular experience or expertise do you possess that will strengthen or reinforce the “unique set of skills” that Secretary Austin brings to bear?**

If confirmed, I would bring the perspective of a former career defense civilian, former political appointee, and practitioner-scholar of civil-military relations. I would aid Secretary Austin in his priority to restore healthy civilian oversight to the Pentagon and to model "what right looks like" to the next generation of national security leaders.

### **2018 National Defense Strategy**

**The 2018 NDS outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism.**

**In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment? Please explain your answer.**

I believe the 2018 National Defense Strategy helped consolidate a bipartisan consensus around the worrisome growth of China's military capabilities and its implications for the United States. If confirmed, I would expect to help the Secretary of Defense lead efforts to review and revise, as needed, the strategy in accordance with Congressional direction to submit a 2022 National Defense Strategy.

**If confirmed, would you recommend the 2018 NDS be revised or adjusted?**

Yes. I believe that DoD should review and revise the strategy and its path to implementation based on the evolution of the threats, current and projected, in the global security environment.

If confirmed, I would evaluate where national security threats are emerging as well as current demands on the military, our approach to warfighting in the future, our alliances and partnerships, and how DoD is balancing those demands currently.

**If so, in what ways?**

If confirmed, I would work with Secretary Austin to follow Congress's established direction on the necessary elements of the NDS review. This includes evaluating changes

in the security environment; identifying priority defense objectives and missions; and identifying priorities for designing, modernizing, employing, and ensuring readiness of the Joint Force. Areas for priority exploration might include innovative military approaches and concepts for future warfighting and advancing the state of our global network of allies and partners. Examination of these elements would be nested in the broader context of national security priorities. Strategic insights from this review process would inform how I would recommend the Department update the defense strategy and its implementation.

**Given the threats defined by the 2018 NDS, what are the core operational challenges confronting the DOD, in your view?**

The U.S. military is especially challenged by the ongoing military modernization in China—the key priority—and a disruptive Russia. These and other actors will challenge the United States along a continuum of conflict, and the military must be ready to contribute capabilities along that continuum, where appropriate. Notably, this includes being able to effectively deter and, if necessary, win a high-end conflict. As noted by the National Defense Strategy Commission, the operational challenges put forward in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review largely remain relevant today. Force development and design should leverage U.S. asymmetries and develop new ones to impose costs while closing these known operational challenges.

**The Department is working on a Joint Warfighting Concept with the first iteration due this spring.**

**In your view, what is the role of the Joint Warfighting Concept as it relates to the National Defense Strategy?**

I understand that the Department is working on development of a Joint Warfighting Concept, with the aim to ensure the effectiveness and resilience of key joint warfighting functions such as command and control, fires, logistics, and information advantage. If confirmed, I will review the effort to ensure the department has a strategy-driven, joint approach to future warfighting.

**What is the relationship between joint operational concepts that define theories of victory in each of the European and the Indo-Pacific theaters against our strategic adversaries and the Joint Warfighting Concept?**

Our joint concepts should outline the future ways of employing the joint force in war, and help drive future force development. Those concepts should be anchored in our theories of victory (e.g., high-level hypotheses about how to use the Joint Force most effectively

to achieve strategic and political objectives in war). As I understand it, DoD is developing the Joint Warfighting Concept to ensure that the Department can more effectively link those ends, ways, and means for priority, future armed conflicts. If confirmed, I will ensure that the joint operational concepts align with strategic theories of victory for potential armed conflicts in both the European and Indo-Pacific theaters, and provide robust options for assessing strategic, operational, and force structure trade-offs posed by potential armed conflicts in these theaters.

**In your opinion, should the National Defense Strategy be budget-driven or budget-informed and what do you see as the key differences in those two approaches?**

In my opinion, the National Defense Strategy should be budget-informed. If confirmed, I would advocate for this approach within the Department. A strategy development process that is resource-informed begins with -- and focuses on -- a clear-eyed assessment of current and future threats and risks and the articulation of priority defense objectives and missions, ensuring that the strategy's methods of achieving its objectives and missions are resourced sufficiently. This approach enables the Department to develop the strategy that it needs -- and to propose resource requirements accordingly.

**What progress has DOD made in developing, modeling, and validating the operational concepts required to address each of these challenges? Please explain your answer.**

It is my understanding that the Department uses a number of modeling and simulation approaches at multiple levels (e.g., campaign modeling, mission-level modeling), combined with military exercises, experiments, and wargames to assess the effectiveness of operational concepts and alternative approaches to the core operational challenges facing the joint force. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department's concepts and approaches to overcoming potential operational challenges are assessed with an appropriate array of analytic tools. If necessary, I will adjust the analytic tools to ensure sufficient robustness in concept development.

**Are there any gaps or shortfalls in force size, or deficiencies in force posture that must be remedied to implement these operational concepts, in your view?**

Joint concepts should identify gaps or shortfalls in force design and posture, a crucial step in addressing key operational challenges posed by our most capable adversaries, and should help the Department propose a range of potential solutions to senior leaders. My understanding is that the Joint Warfighting Concept, and supporting operational concepts, are still under development. If confirmed, I will closely review the Department's concept development process and the concepts themselves and ensure the Department fully considers where changes in capability, capacity, readiness, and posture of the future joint

force may be necessary, as informed by rigorous analysis, experimentation, and wargaming.

**If confirmed, what would be your role in addressing these gaps, shortfalls, and deficiencies?**

New warfighting concepts, when fully developed, may call for new capability investments. Concurrently, ongoing efforts within the Department to modernize Joint Force capabilities may enable new ways of operating. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the Department gets this balance right by directing independent assessments of the Joint Warfighting Concept and related outputs to determine what follow-on work is needed to ensure a strategy-driven and joint approach to future warfighting. I would require the overall concept to be backed by solid analysis and to inform usefully future joint and Service capability investments to maintain the nation's military edge. If confirmed, I will also ensure appropriate civilian oversight of, and a strategy-driven approach to, the development of future warfighting concepts and associated requirements.

**Does DOD have the requisite modeling, simulation, experimentation, and wargaming processes and tools—to support the Secretary of Defense and you, if confirmed as Deputy Secretary—in rigorously testing and validating DOD's force size and posture constructs? Please explain your answer.**

Ensuring that the Department's decisions about force size and posture are underpinned by rigorous analysis is a top priority for me. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department has the right process and tools in place to support the Secretary's and other senior leaders' decisions on these most critical issues.

**What additional capabilities does DOD require to execute these operational concepts successfully? Please explain your answer.**

The determination of needed capabilities should flow from the development of operational concepts. If confirmed, I would assess the Department's existing concept-to-capabilities linkages. Some priority areas that might emerge include long range fires, an integrated fires network, improved cyberspace presence, enhanced space capabilities, a joint force capable of projecting and sustaining power, and the ability to operate in heavily contested electromagnetic environments.

**Does DOD have the requisite decision support—analytic expertise, processes, and tools—to support the Secretary of Defense and you, if confirmed as Deputy Secretary, in evaluating warfighting return on investments?**

I understand the Department leverages a number of modeling and simulation approaches, along with military exercises, experiments, and wargames to assess the sufficiency of the size and shape of the Joint Force. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the Department's current analytic ability and making any adjustments necessary to ensure appropriate support to senior leader decisions.

**If confirmed, what revisions or adjustments would you recommend the Secretary of Defense make in DOD's implementation of the 2018 NDS?**

I understand that the annual, statutorily-required NDS assessment process conducted by the prior Administration last year identified that strategy implementation across DoD warrants more deliberate planning, organization, and prioritization. If confirmed, I would direct the Department first to consider lessons learned from implementing the 2018 NDS and previous strategy efforts and to account for the importance of strategy implementation during the defense strategy's development process. Further, I would focus on how DoD efforts can be better integrated with other elements of national power and with our allies and partners.

**In your view, how can DOD best contribute to a "whole-of-government" effort to develop more holistic strategies and operational concepts—integrating all tools of national power—for prevailing in competitions short of war?**

The Department of Defense cannot alone address the many complex security challenges confronting the United States. The military must, at all times, work in concert with other elements of national power – including diplomatic, economic, and intelligence activities – as part of a whole-of-government effort to address threats to the homeland, our core interests, and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I will direct the Defense team to work closely with U.S. interagency partners to ensure close cooperation with them, and, when appropriate, direct involvement with them to help ensure the President is able to leverage all elements of national power.

**The 2018 NDS emphasizes defense reform for greater performance and affordability. What does "defense reform" mean to you?**

Defense reform is the process by which the Department identifies and implements improvements to DoD business operations to increase efficiency and maximize cost- and operational-effectiveness.

**Will you make defense reform a priority of your efforts as DSD?**

Defense reform is a key enabler of our national defense as it ensures that we deliver the necessary capabilities on time with maximal efficiency. As such, defense reform needs

to be a priority of any leadership team. If confirmed, I am committed to running the Department efficiently and effectively. This will require a thorough evaluation of the Department's priorities and the way that it executes these priorities.

**If so, if confirmed, what would define your defense reform program?**

Any reform efforts must look across the entire Department, including the military Services and the "Fourth Estate." Hence, my defense reform program would entail a look at how every portion of the Department is advancing the goals of our defense strategy. This review would span people, processes, policies, posture, investments, and force structure.

**Defense reform efforts over the years have often turned into simplistic cost cutting "efficiencies" exercises, which emphasize requirements reductions, program delays or deferrals, and "salami slice" across-the-board personnel reductions, including to the DOD civilian workforce. If confirmed, how would your efforts in defense reform move beyond those limited objectives?**

Any efforts at defense reform must be well grounded in analysis and risk/benefit tradeoffs. This requires tough decisions about priorities across the Department and key efforts to change the way the Department does business. If confirmed, I will strive to move beyond simplistic approaches to reform and instead focus on targeted reform efforts with definable metrics and supported by rigorous analysis.

**What is your appraisal of the Defense-Wide Review process undertaken by former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper?**

My understanding is that the Defense-Wide Review process focused the attention of the Department's senior leadership on the effectiveness and economy of defense-wide investments. If confirmed, I will need to take a detailed look at both the decision-making process and the defense-wide divestments to determine whether this renewed focus yielded results that enabled the Department to better meet national defense challenges.

**What worked and what did not work in that process?**

I believe that the entire defense budget needs to be routinely, rigorously, and transparently evaluated to make sure that Department can justify every investment. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that all accounts, including defense-wide accounts, are thoroughly scrutinized to deliver the maximum impact on our nation's defense goals.

**The Department of Defense is not a business, but many of DOD's supporting functions—such as travel management and financial management—could**

**potentially benefit from the application of business principles and processes. If confirmed, who would you look to for advice, both inside and outside the Department, on matters of business process re-engineering and business systems modernization?**

If confirmed, I will work with my leadership team in DOD, with experts in public and business management, and with industry to ensure we leverage commercial best business practices, improve our use of data for decision-making, modernize DOD systems, and ensure DOD's limited resources lead to better performance.

**Does DOD have the requisite decision support—analytic expertise, processes, and tools—to support the Secretary of Defense and you, if confirmed as Deputy Secretary, in defense reform initiatives? Please explain your answer.**

It is my understanding that the Department has a variety of decision support processes that enable defense reform initiatives. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that those processes are operating effectively. If necessary, I will adjust the process and resources dedicated to supporting the Secretary and Deputy Secretary.

**How do you appraise the potential of modern analytical tools, such as ADVANA (Advanced Analytics), and other commercially available products and services, to improve the Department's ability to collect and visualize data to support decision-making for senior leadership?**

Data is a strategic asset. Modern analytical and visualization tools help DOD to harness the power of data for better and more agile decision-making.

**Since your last service in government, the Department of Defense has undergone repeated cuts and reductions to its management workforce and headquarters staffs, all under the justification of "defense reform." In your view, did these continual attempts at "defense reform" improve or degrade the Department's ability to manage its affairs effectively and efficiently?**

The Department of Defense is a large and complex organization. It must retain and reward a high performing management workforce to run it effectively. If confirmed, I plan to review the capability and capacity of the Department's management workforce and adjust accordingly to ensure that the Department is managed both efficiently and effectively.

**What additional capability or capacity does DOD require to develop and execute defense reform activities successfully? Please explain your answer.**



Defense reform must have a strong analytic basis and leadership buy-in across the Department. If confirmed I will assess the current capability and capacity of the Department to provide that detailed analysis and oversight. Moreover, I will ensure that the Department's leadership is committed to establishing and executing on defense reform goals.

## **DOD Readiness**

**How would you assess the current readiness of the DOD—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to accomplish the broad range of potential missions U.S. forces could face, as envisioned by the 2018 NDS?**

Readiness must be a priority. If confirmed, I would seek to understand current readiness against the requirements of the strategy and in the face of COVID and other challenges. We must ensure our armed forces are manned, trained, and equipped appropriately and that the Department take a whole-person approach to defining readiness.

**Meanwhile, what is your assessment of the risk the Military Departments and Services have accepted in regard to the readiness of their forces to execute Combatant Commanders' operational plans associated with the 2018 NDS?**

I do not have the information I would need to assess the Department's readiness to meet combatant commanders' operational planning targets. If confirmed, I would assist the Secretary of Defense in ensuring the Department has a clear and analytically sound approach to risk assessment, mitigates risk in connecting strategy, operations, and resourcing, and communicates risk concerns to Congress and the president.

**If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense, what would be your role in evaluating and reporting on the readiness of DOD Components?**

If confirmed, I will assess and reinforce all efforts currently underway to track and report on the readiness of our military forces. This includes ensuring we have meaningful metrics that convey relevant information to decision makers, consistent with the way forces are actually employed, to optimize management of the current and future force. I will employ advances in data science to make our data more strategically informative and help the Department develop predictive readiness models to anticipate, and ultimately avoid readiness shortfalls.

**In mitigating readiness gaps and shortfalls?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to improve readiness analysis and reporting to identify leading indicators that may impact readiness and improve the linkage between resources and readiness outcomes to ensure we are getting the best possible readiness return on our investment.

**Does DOD have the analytic tools and expertise to assist you in measuring joint force readiness across the spectrum of challenges presented by the strategic environment—from low intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted, high-intensity fights with major-power rivals? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I will make readiness analysis and reporting a priority, take stock of the current ability of our tools and expertise, and refine our strategy as appropriate to ensure we are employing the best technologies and people to convey full spectrum readiness.

**If confirmed, specifically what more would you do to restore full spectrum DOD readiness—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—and on what timelines?**

The Department has made progress in rebuilding the readiness of the Joint Force to meet the challenges outlined by the National Defense Strategy thanks to the support of Congress. If confirmed, I am committed to finding and employing the best analytical capabilities, in the Department and in industry, to make the most informed decisions regarding current and future full-spectrum readiness. Advanced analytics are the key to ensuring we make informed decisions about which personnel, equipment, and training are needed.

## **National Security Budget**

**In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). Former Secretaries of Defense Mattis and Esper agreed.**

**Do you believe that sustained real growth in the defense budget is necessary to achieve the aims of the existing NDS without incurring significant risk?**

Both smart strategy and adequate resourcing are vital to achieving our national security objectives. The Department must ensure it can generate the military capabilities necessary to achieve the nation's strategic aims. As Secretary Austin has stated, in light of COVID-19's ongoing impact, the Department must be fiscally pragmatic if it is to design a successful approach to strategic competition.

**If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of the defense budget?**

If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the defense budget by our ability to deter and, if necessary, defeat military aggression that threatens U.S. vital interests, and execute other missions assigned by the president, with acceptable risk to force and mission. I would also support Secretary Austin's approach to assess, discuss, measure, and convey risk as we seek to determine the adequacy of and make recommendations based on the funding the Department receives.

**In a March/April 2020 Foreign Affairs article entitled “Getting to Less,” you wrote that through “reshaping overall strategy, pursuing politically difficult efficiency gains, and cultivating innovation . . . [and] after some upfront investment, the Defense Department could expect to reduce its annual costs by some \$20 billion to \$30 billion.”**

**What is your estimate of the “upfront investment” required to achieve the reduction in annual costs you indicate?**

There is no one pathway to increasing efficiency in the defense enterprise. Some of upfront investments that could yield future savings include workforce incentives--from buy-outs to recruiting bonuses, investments in technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics, and cyber defense.

**Do you advocate a cut to the defense budget topline and if so, how much?**

The Department’s resourcing should be determined by the strategy. Resources are an important part of generating the capability to achieve our national security goals. If confirmed, my goal will be to ensure resources available to the Department are used wisely to realize the strategic aims of the Department and to ensure the nation has the military capabilities to compete and win.

**In “Getting to Less,” you wrote that “rarely does this debate touch on the real question at the heart of defense spending: what the U.S. military should be doing and should be prepared to do.” To that end, do you believe the Department of Defense currently operates under a strategy-resources mismatch? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I would seek as a priority to understand how resources in the Department are currently matched to strategy and strategy matched to policy. I would then work with Secretary Austin to assess any options necessary to optimize that alignment.

**The FY 2022 budget will be the first in a decade debated outside the context of the statutory Budget Control Act (BCA).**

**In addition to passing spending bills on time, what more can Congress do, in your view, to afford DOD the stability and flexibility it needs in the face of growing global challenges?**

Timely passage of spending bills would afford the Department the stability and flexibility needed to face growing global challenges. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to identify other opportunities to help the U.S. military be ready and agile.

**In your view, what are the effects of the BCA and cuts to headquarters on the ability of the Office of the Secretary of Defense to make policy for, and oversee policy implementation across, all components of the Department of Defense?**

I am greatly concerned about the overall health of the civilian workforce given years of personnel drawdowns and budget cuts. If confirmed, I will take a hard look at exactly what effect these cuts have had on the civilian policy workforce and review how to reverse this trend.

**The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process has remained fundamentally unchanged since its inception nearly half a century ago.**

**Do you believe the PPBE process properly allocates resources according to the strategic priorities at the Department of Defense?**

On the whole, the PPBE system provides a transparent and neutral process for allocating resources across the Department. However, as with any process, there is room for improvement. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring this process works effectively and will seek to make any necessary adjustments to meet the nation's defense needs.

**What changes would you make, if any, to the PPBE process to improve both resourcing decisions within DOD and information flow to the Congress?**

If confirmed, I will work in partnership with the Secretary of Defense and other Department leaders to ensure that the PPBE process is effective in aligning resources to the defense strategy. This includes identifying analytically informed strategic choices about the size and shape of the future force. Effective communication with Congress is critical to ensuring our nation's defense needs are met. If confirmed, I will review the Department's communication process with the intent to ensure information flow to the Congress is both timely and effective.

**In your view, should the Department of Defense consider adopting modernized budgeting and programming practices, including using advanced analytics platforms to enable portfolio and mission-based budgeting?**

The Department should use every means available, including advanced data analytic tools, to modernize budgeting and programming practices.

**Numerous outside observers have recommended that the Secretary of Defense adopt a process change whereby a sum of money is reserved upfront in the Program Objective Memorandum process to facilitate allocation by the Secretary toward joint priorities tied to operational challenges. What are your views on this recommended process change?**

If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the process by which DoD establishes fiscal guidance and will consider this change specifically, making my recommendation to the Secretary.

**Many observers assert that the only way to force DOD leaders to make the “hard choices” to divest of lower priority or underperforming programs, is to constrain the department fiscally.**

**Do you believe that this approach leads to more effective and efficient decision-making by DOD leaders?**

Yes. In my experience, both the Department and Congress have struggled with the hard decisions regarding when to divest legacy or lower priority programs to make room for new investments. If confirmed, I will work with the Department's civilian and military leadership and with Congress to determine where we should make those tradeoffs.

### **Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

**The Deputy Secretary of Defense and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff often partner to lead the Department in addressing emergent issues and policy challenges that require the integration of civilian and military expertise and perspective.**

**If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?**

As I know first-hand, a healthy and vibrant relationship between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff is vital. If confirmed, I will work hand-in-hand with the Vice Chairman to build on that relationship in order to address emergent issues

and policy challenges that require the integration of civilian and military expertise and perspective and to model “what right looks like” for the Department.

**If confirmed, how would you allocate particular responsibilities to the Vice Chairman and yourself as co-chairs of the Deputy’s Management Action Group?**

As I know first-hand, a healthy and vibrant relationship between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff is vital. If confirmed, I will work hand-in-hand with the Vice Chairman to build on that relationship in order to address emergent issues and policy challenges that require the integration of civilian and military expertise and perspective and to model “what right looks like” for the Department.

**In your view, how could the Deputy’s Management Action Group be more effective in ensuring that DOD issues with resource, management, and broad strategic and/or policy implications are addressed in a manner that aligns with the Secretary of Defense's priorities, planning and programming schedule? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I will work in partnership with Department leaders to ensure that the Deputy’s Management Action Group is an effective governance forum for assisting the Secretary in aligning resources to the defense strategy. This includes identifying analytically-informed strategic choices based on the Secretary of Defense’s priorities.

**If confirmed, what, if any, recommendations would you make to revise or refine the Joint Requirements Oversight Council process?**

There have been several recent legislative changes to the statute regarding the JROC process to better balance the roles and responsibilities of the Council and the Services. I am aware of and support the ongoing efforts of the VCJCS and the Service Vice Chiefs to better align the JROC’s efforts around the strategic requirements necessary to implement the developing Joint Warfighting Concept and its key supporting concepts. I also look forward to reviewing the JROC’s efforts on capability prioritization and ensuring that Services have capabilities that can interoperate in joint environments. I will maintain close contact with the VCJCS as he executes his statutory role as the chair of the JROC in its ongoing requirements focus.

**Strengthening Alliances and Attracting New Partners**

**Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition and conflict against a great power. To this end, the 2018 NDS stressed the importance of strengthening existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, building or**

**enhancing new ones, and promoting “mutual respect, responsibility, priorities, and accountability” in these relationships.**

**What is your view of the strength of our current alliances, relationships, and partnerships, and the trust our partners have in the willingness of the United States to meet its obligations?**

The U.S. network of alliances is among our greatest comparative geopolitical advantages. Inconsistent statements about U.S. commitments, seemingly erratic decision making, and insufficient consultation on important issues have severely impaired our ability to leverage that advantage. If confirmed, I will support Secretary Austin's goal to mend and strengthen U.S. alliances and partnerships.

**If confirmed, how would you restore and enhance that trust?**

If confirmed, I would support Secretary Austin's efforts to rebuild our alliances and partnerships in ways that enhance our ability to deter aggression, and if necessary, fight and win as coalitions. I fully support Secretary Austin's view that the Department should enhance our defense relationships based on a foundation of mutual respect, responsibility, shared priorities, and accountability.

**If confirmed as the Deputy Secretary of Defense, what specific actions would you take to strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships and leverage new opportunities for international cooperation?**

If confirmed, I expect to focus DoD efforts on strengthening collaborative planning, and increasing interoperability with our key allies and partners. I would support Secretary Austin's goal of advancing combined capabilities aligned to common security goals and synchronizing the employment of the Defense Department's security cooperation tools accordingly. Collaboration with allies and partners will also be critical to advance defense innovation, from research and development to operational concepts and combined exercises to fielding interoperable systems.

**How would you characterize the level of security burden sharing with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, in Europe, in the Middle East?**

The United States' security commitments to allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region, Europe, and the Middle East are long-standing and consistent with our treaty obligations. If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary of Defense as directed to ensure our security arrangements with our allies and partners reflect shared commitment.

**In your opinion, does security burden sharing need to continue to be an area of emphasis with partners and allies?**

Yes. The United States must ensure that our force presence and defense capabilities are optimized to meet the threats and challenges we face across the world. Our alliances and partnerships are fundamental advantages in meeting this objective. Building strong networks of like-minded, capable, and willing partners is a core part of the United States' strategy to preserve a rules-based international order that has enabled all of us to prosper. If confirmed, I will look at opportunities to ensure that we are aligning efforts with our allies and partners, including on issues such as security burden-sharing, to advance our shared interests.

**How would you characterize your familiarity with the civilian leaders of the defense enterprises of other nations and with existing multi-national and international defense-focused consultative forums?**

Over the course of my career, I have engaged with civilian counterparts around the globe. If confirmed, and at the Secretary's direction, I would look forward to representing the Department in international fora.

**If confirmed, on which leaders and forums would you focus your engagement, with a view to using your position to advance most effectively the national security interests of the United States?**

If confirmed, I would focus on the engagement of leaders and fora relevant to U.S. interests, as delineated in the National Defense Strategy and the Guidance on Development of Allies and Partners. I would rely on the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy for recommendations regarding these engagements.

### **Defense Security Cooperation**

**DOD's contribution to strengthening alliances and partnerships comprises a wide range of programs and activities designed to improve security cooperation and foster interoperability and preparedness. These programs include foreign military sales, foreign military funding, exercises and training events, military-to-military exchanges, and partnering to develop key technological capabilities.**

**Is the Defense Security Cooperation Agency appropriately organized, resourced, and trained to execute security sector assistance effectively?**



I understand that the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) has evolved over the past decade as the size and scope of security cooperation has expanded. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) to review the extent to which DSCA is appropriately organized, resourced, and trained to execute security cooperation effectively.

**If not, what changes would you make or direct, if confirmed?**

If changes are required, and if confirmed, I will engage with Congress to recommend necessary changes to DSCA.

**Is the Office of the Secretary of Defense appropriately organized, resourced, and empowered to fulfill its responsibilities under section 382 of title 10, U.S. Code, for the oversight of strategic policy and guidance and the overall allocation of resources for security cooperation programs and activities of the Department of Defense?**

I understand the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD Policy), as delegated by the Secretary of Defense, has made significant progress in executing, across the security cooperation enterprise, the responsibilities outlined in Section 382 of title 10, U.S. Code, as well as overseeing the reforms enacted via the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. OUSD Policy's statutory responsibility to advise the Secretary on strategic oversight and resource allocation of security cooperation activities ensures that programs align with defense priorities. If confirmed, I will review the Department's recently issued Guidance for the Development of Alliances and Partnerships and assess whether the Office of the Secretary of Defense is appropriately organized, resourced, and empowered to perform its strategic oversight role of the security cooperation enterprise.

**If not, what changes to OSD structures, policies, or processes would you recommend, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will communicate to the Committee any additional legislative, organizational, or resource changes that I assess are necessary to ensure strategic oversight and alignment of Department of Defense (DoD) security cooperation.

**What progress has been made in establishing the DOD Security Cooperation Workforce Development Program?**

I understand all of the major elements of the program have been implemented. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department's workforce is trained to execute all facets of the security cooperation mission.

**What skill and competency gaps remain, in your view?**

While major elements of the program have been implemented, it is too early to know what skill and competency gaps across the workforce exist. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and DSCA to ensure the we have a process in place to identify gaps in competencies and a plan to fill them.

**Management Issues**

**The NDAA for FY 2021 removed the legislative mandate for the position of Chief Management Officer (CMO), and assigns many of the duties for management oversight and reform to the Deputy Secretary By memoranda of January 11, 2021, Deputy Secretary of Defense David Norquist transferred to the Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller (USD(C)) and Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (DCAPE), many of the duties and responsibilities once assigned to the CMO.**

**If confirmed, what would be your highest priorities in executing the missions previously assigned to the CMO?**

If confirmed, I will review the planned transition of responsibilities from the CMO to other organizations, make any adjustments advisable, and ensure the final disposition of responsibilities occurs rapidly and smoothly.

**Do you agree with the way in which the duties and responsibilities once performed by the CMO have been reallocated to date?**

Based on my current understanding, the reallocation of the duties and responsibilities of the CMO appear reasonable. If confirmed, I will examine this reallocation in more detail and make any necessary adjustments to maintain and improve the Department's management processes.

**If not, what would you change, if confirmed?**

While I do not have any specific recommendations at this time, I am committed to reviewing the allocation of the responsibilities and resources of the CMO.

**Do the offices of the USD(C) and the DCAPE currently possess the capacity and capability in human capital to discharge the additional duties assigned to them by Deputy Secretary of Defense Norquist in his memoranda?**

It is my understanding that the disposition of the Chief Management Office will result in a transfer of duties and resources to other organizations throughout the Department. If confirmed, I will thoroughly evaluate the disposition outlined by Deputy Secretary of Defense Norquist and make any adjustments necessary to ensure that receiving organizations have the appropriate expertise and human capital to subsume the functions previously performed by the Chief Management Officer.

**Do the management duties previously assigned to the CMO need to be discharged by an office with a focus and expertise in management missions and commercial and public sector best practices in management and administration?**

Management duties of the CMO will require a highly capable workforce with a broad set of skills, including expertise in management missions and commercial best practices. If confirmed, I will examine the current workforce and adjust or expand that workforce as required to effectively execute the duties previously assigned to the CMO.

**Do you believe that the Deputy Secretary has the authorities and resources necessary to advance the business transformation of the Department of Defense?**

It is my understanding that the Deputy Secretary has the necessary authorities and resources to advance business transformation. If confirmed, I will assess these authorities and pursue any necessary adjustments.

**If not, what additional authorities do you believe are required?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with Secretary Austin and the Congress to evaluate whether the Deputy Secretary positions requires any additional authorities to execute a business transformation agenda.

**How do you think the Department should engage leading experts in industry and academia to make use of appropriate commercial and public sector management best practices?**

The Department must collaborate with experts in both the commercial and public sectors to ensure we are in lock step with them in identifying and using the most up-to-date best practices.

**Should the Department place a greater emphasis on acquiring appropriate commercial information technology systems, or developing defense-unique capabilities as needed to modernize management practices?**

If confirmed, I will support an emphasis on using commercial solutions and adapting business processes to the maximum extent practicable.

**A March 2019 Government Accountability Office report advised that although DOD had taken steps to implement the CMO position, it had not yet fully institutionalized the CMO's authorities and responsibilities. The Defense Business Board study on the CMO in 2019 concluded that there is a critical need for a top-level official to drive the Business Transformation effort within DOD.**

**Do you agree with this assessment?**

Strong, effective leadership is the key to driving business transformation. If confirmed, I would assess the current plan for transitioning CMO responsibilities to ensure the Department has an effective approach, holding leaders accountable for identifying less costly ways to do business and being good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

**What steps will you take to identify and support such a top-level official?**

If confirmed, I would assess the current plan for transitioning CMO responsibilities and ensure that business transformation has appropriate leadership oversight.

**This same study found that DOD culture and subcultures remain resistant to transformational business process changes.**

**Do you agree with this assessment?**

Resistance to change is natural and 100% buy-in is rarely achieved. If confirmed, I would assess the cultural challenges to business transformation, any major sources of resistance, and the most effective pathways to success.

**What steps would you take, if confirmed, to overcome this resistance?**

Inclusiveness, incentives, and proven success eventually overcome most resistance. If confirmed, I will ensure leaders include staff in the decision-making process to the greatest extent possible. We will hold people accountable and measure and celebrate successes together so that everyone feels a part of winning accomplishments.

**The study also found that CMO lacked the necessary personnel with the required skillsets and resources assigned to implement and effect transformational change.**

**What steps will you take to ensure that DOD management reform activities are well resourced and provided with staff with requisite experience and expertise?**

The Department's reform efforts will not be successful if they are not supported by qualified staff and the necessary investments. If confirmed, I will review both the manpower and the resources dedicated to management reform activities. Based on this review, I will adjust resources as necessary to maximize the efficacy of the Department's reform activities.

## **Business Systems Acquisition and Management**

**Fundamental to achieving business transformation goals, DOD has spent tens of billions of dollars to acquire modernized Information Technology (IT) systems. Since 1995, the Government Accountability Office has designated DOD's business systems modernization program as "high risk".**

**In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges to DOD's efforts to modernize its business systems and practices?**

The sheer magnitude of DOD's 2,000-plus legacy business systems is the greatest challenge to modernization. Challenges associated with consolidating and updating governances, policies, and performance measures must be overcome in order to increase warfighting capabilities, reduce cost, and improve cybersecurity.

**What steps will you take to improve DOD's ability to acquire and use modern business practices and systems?**

If confirmed, I will work with the DOD Comptroller and DoD Chief Information Officer to develop performance measures for DOD's business systems strategy, including targets and timelines; establish a specific time frame for developing an enterprise roadmap; develop migration plans for key business systems; and prioritize investment in modernizing the DOD's business systems.

**Given that numerous problems in business systems acquisition relate to workforce development difficulties and a culture of risk aversion, and a lack of resources for development, evaluation, and prototyping of such systems, what will you do to provide relevant decision makers the resources and expertise they require and to incentivize decision makers to accept risk in moving toward modern and/or commercial solutions for business systems?**

If confirmed, I will seek to encourage greater use of proven commercial solutions, balanced with an emphasis on adapting DoD business processes. I would also seek to understand challenges facing the workforce managing these kinds of efforts and work

with Department leadership to support a culture that incentivizes and encourages modern business approaches.

**What steps can DOD take to work more closely with academic experts in business, management, and public administration schools to access expertise, fund research and process development analyses and activities, and establish a workforce pipeline, similar to longstanding efforts to work with universities through research programs and personnel exchanges in STEM fields?**

Research and expertise in business management within the academic community can inform and improve Department organizational practices. If confirmed, I will review opportunities to engage with academic leaders, develop research and exchange relationships, and consult on efficient organizational and operational practices.

**Recent NDAA provision have focused attention on the need for DOD to develop capabilities to more effectively collect, disseminate, analyze, and use data related to business practices including related to financial, acquisition, logistics, acquisition and other activities.**

**What steps will you take to improve DOD's ability to collect, disseminate, analyze, and use data?**

I believe DoD should enable the Department's ability to collect, disseminate, analyze, and use data to support decision makers. If confirmed, I will work with the various OSD and Service data stakeholders to ensure they support a shared objective of data transparency and use.

**In your view, what authorities should the Department's Chief Data Officer have in order to implement more modern data practices in DOD?**

If confirmed, I would work with the DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO) and DoD CDO to ensure existing authorities allow the Department to unlock the power of its data in support of joint warfighting capabilities, senior leader decision making, and business processes. My understanding is that the CDO believes he has the authorities he needs.

### **Audit and Financial Management**

**Since 1995, DOD's financial management has been on the Government Accountability Office's High-Risk List, identified as vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Over the past several years, DOD undertook a department-wide financial audit, despite not being audit-ready, and has made significant progress toward**

**auditability. The Department is now targeting 2027 to achieve an unqualified or clean opinion.**

**What is your assessment of the Department's efforts to achieve a clean financial statement audit to date?**

I am encouraged by the efforts to date but recognize we have a lot of ground to cover to achieve a clean opinion on the DOD consolidated financial statements.

**If confirmed, what steps would you take to maintain the significant momentum achieved in auditability over the past several years at the Department of Defense?**

If confirmed, I would ensure the Department has actionable and achievable plans in place to keep making progress toward an unmodified audit opinion. All leaders will be held accountable for collaborating and completing, in a timely manner, these plans and roadmaps. I will expect my Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and other DOD leaders to work together to address and reduce the findings from the most recent audit and to continue the recent progress in the use of data analytics as an important tool in this effort.

**How would you create incentives for DOD components and personnel to accelerate progress toward auditability and unqualified audit opinions for the entire department?**

I think the best way to incentivize progress is through transparency and accountability. If confirmed, I will meet with Military Service and component leaders at the outset of each fiscal year and establish quantifiable goals toward auditability, such as the number of notices of findings and recommendations (NFRs) closures and material weakness downgraded, and closely monitor actual versus forecasted progress throughout the year. As we encounter variances, I will work with Military Services and component leadership teams to correct course or reallocate resources as needed. I believe the Department-wide visibility that the NFR database provides in terms of component progress will continue to be a catalyst for auditability.

**Do you believe the Department can achieve a clean audit opinion through better accounting and auditing, or is the systemic improvement of DOD's business systems architecture a prerequisite?**

I believe an improved business systems architecture and better accounting and auditing go hand-in-hand. Incorporating the best practices of both will enhance DOD's ability to achieve a clean audit opinion.

**How does the DOD audit contribute to operational readiness, in your view?**

One of the greatest contributions of the audit is its impact on operational readiness. The audit process improves the Department's operations through more reliable information for decision-making and improved inventory management. DOD's audit efforts will lead to strengthened internal controls, improved visibility of assets and financial resources, increased transparency and accountability, and streamlined business processes.

**What is the value of investing time, personnel, and resources in attempting to obtain a clean audit opinion with respect to broader Department needs and priorities?**

DoD financial statement audits are a critical component in reforming the Department's business practices for greater performance and affordability. Audits serve as catalysts, and achieving clean audit opinions is driving needed cultural changes within the Department. If confirmed, I will welcome the scrutiny and transparency the audit process brings.

**In your view, did the Budget Control Act hamper DOD efforts to make audit progress since 2013?**

The Budget Control Act negatively affected many DOD priorities. However, DOD is committed to fiscal responsibility and accountability to American taxpayers, and we will continue to aggressively pursue our ultimate goal of a clean opinion..

**Defense Agencies and Field Activities**

**DOD's 19 Defense Agencies and 8 Field Activities, which collectively comprise the so-called "Fourth Estate," are intended to perform consolidated supply and service functions on a Department-wide basis. Each Defense Agency and Field Activity is overseen by a Principal Staff Assistant in OSD.**

**If confirmed, specifically what would you do to improve efficiency and mission performance across the so-called "Fourth Estate"?**

The so-called "Fourth Estate" encompasses a broad range of DoD functions and missions, including critical warfighting capabilities ranging from missile defense to special operations. It must operate effectively for the Department to achieve its national defense objectives. If confirmed, I plan to review the Fourth Estate, to drive efficiency and increased mission performance.



**If confirmed, how would you ensure that feedback from warfighters, workforce, and customers is used to improve the performance of each of the Defense Agencies and Field Activities?**

Effective and timely feedback from the warfighters, workforce, and customers is critical to ensure that Defense Agencies and Field Activities are performing effectively. If confirmed, I will ensure that stakeholders have an effective means of providing feedback to Defense Agencies and Field Activities and that those components are accountable for responding.

### **Acquisition Reform**

**Recent NDAAs enacted sweeping reforms of defense acquisition organizational structures and systems.**

**Do you support the split of the Office of the Undersecretary of Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics into the Offices of the Undersecretaries for Acquisition and Sustainment and Research and Engineering?**

If confirmed, I would work to ensure the split achieves congressional intent to promote innovation, enable proper emphasis on research, technology development, and increased engineering rigor, as well as addressing the day-to-day issues and risks related to defense acquisition and sustainment. A clear and collaborative relationship between the two organizations is vital.

**What steps would you take to ensure that OSD has sufficient insight and authority to provide oversight over acquisition activities of the Military Departments and Defense Agencies?**

If confirmed, I will work with the USD/A&S, the USD/R&E, CAPE, the DOT&E, and the Services to ensure the necessary level of data transparency and visibility exists for sufficient insight and authority into acquisition programs.

**What would be your highest priorities in improving DOD acquisition practices and outcomes?**

Improving the performance of the Department's Acquisition System and its role in supporting our warfighters is a key priority. If confirmed, I would seek first to ensure that service modernization programs are aligned and executing in support of Secretary Austin's strategic direction. Within this strategically aligned portfolio, I would seek to ensure that our acquisition approach is matched with the nature of the capability being

acquired so that our acquisition system fields the capability the joint force needs when it needs it. In many areas, particularly for systems that are software intensive, this will require continued evolution of our acquisition practices.

**What steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure acquisition programs have flexibility to develop and make effective use of alternative acquisition pathways?**

If confirmed, I will encourage expanded use of alternative pathways in the Adaptive Acquisition Framework, which affords program managers the flexibility to use and tailor acquisition strategies to deliver faster, better solutions. I will leverage data transparency and advanced analytics to measure the effectiveness of our Acquisition Pathways to establish a cycle of continuous improvement.

**If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve the capabilities of the DOD Acquisition Workforce?**

If confirmed, I will assess existing acquisition workforce capabilities and talent management initiatives to recruit and retain world class acquisition professionals. I will also provide strategic direction and incentives to ensure the workforce is equipped to use the Adaptive Acquisition Framework, including flexible authorities such as Other Transaction Authorities and Middle Tier acquisition, while protecting the taxpayer and pursuing broader socio-economic goals.

**In your view, how should the Department define and manage concepts like risk and failure so that program managers can try new technologies and concepts, learn what does and does not work, and more quickly drive technological advancement?**

Innovation requires taking risk. At the same time, the Department must be a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and the Department's acquisition and research leadership to foster a culture of innovation while ensuring risk is appropriately managed.

**What best practices can the Department employ to generate realistic and feasible requirements, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas, and given that software increasingly defines the capability?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to promote dynamic approaches to requirements generation. By encouraging and leveraging emergent insights--such as from experiments and pilots--and seeking opportunities for rapid technology insertion, the Department can improve the responsiveness of its requirements process in rapidly-evolving technical areas.

**What changes, if any, are needed to the Department’s requirements process to ensure it is well aligned with ongoing acquisition reforms, including improving timeliness, reducing bureaucracy, and increasing the role of the Services?**

I believe DoD's requirements system should enable greater speed, flexibility, and interoperability across Services and allies. If confirmed, I will work with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in his role as the Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), OSD leadership, and the Services to review the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System processes to ensure that the requirements process is dynamic, responsive, and focused in the face of our strategic challenges.

**Many of the Department’s major defense acquisition programs have established overly optimistic cost, schedule, and performance goals that they have subsequently struggled to achieve, resulting in cost growth and schedule delays.**

**If confirmed, what direction would you give to the Department’s acquisition, budget, and requirements communities to help ensure acquisition programs are rooted in realistic cost, schedule, and performance expectations?**

It is important that our acquisition policy ensures that independent cost and technical assessments are completed early in order to establish realistic cost, schedule and performance goals at program initiation. If confirmed, I plan to closely monitor the acquisition system to ensure achievement of those goals and will make adjustments as necessary to ensure our programs achieve them.

**Do you see the need for any additional processes to ensure appropriate trade-offs are made between cost, schedule, and performance requirements early in and throughout the acquisition process?**

It is my understanding that current policy provides sufficient flexibility for cost, schedule, and requirement trade-offs. If confirmed, I plan to examine these trade-offs closely and will come back to the Congress with any changes I recommend.

**The Department of Defense’s most recent Industrial Capabilities Report notes that “the defense industrial base is the key to preserving and extending U.S. competitive military dominance,” but that it today “faces problems that necessitate continued and accelerated national focus over the coming decade.”**

**What do you assess to be the most significant challenges facing the defense industrial base?**

The defense industrial base continues to struggle with uncertain government spending and complex government business and procurement practices, which oftentimes are not conducive to a healthy and resilient industrial base. Efforts to expand the industrial base to include innovative new suppliers have been important and worthwhile, but they have not yet led to the level of dynamism in the industrial base that we need. Competitive pressure from foreign countries has also stressed the defense industrial base. These struggles have been exacerbated by COVID-19, which has forced some businesses to close or to try to stay viable with diminished demand from the commercial market and reduced workforces.

**How would you address these challenges, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, working with Congress to improve the defense industrial base and provide assistance to struggling businesses would be a top priority. For COVID-related challenges, assistance might be financial, such as through broad economic stimulus packages. Assistance should also entail providing incentives to establish or maintain domestic capability for critical items. If confirmed, I would ensure the Department works with interagency partners to develop appropriate incentives to spur innovation, maintain and expand domestic industrial capabilities and leverage allied and partner strengths to secure critical components.

**What role should DOD play in supporting the economic health of the US industrial base?**

DoD is rarely the largest user of U.S. industrial base capability; therefore, working with interagency partners and the private sector is key to supporting the country's economic health. DoD can also act as a catalyst for scaling important sector-based innovations, such as technologies aimed at mitigating climate change.

**What types of activities should it undertake to support domestic manufacturers and reduce reliance on China?**

Working with Congress to provide incentives to domestic manufacturers is key to addressing this issue. The Department must also work with industry to provide the demand necessary to sustain domestic suppliers, secure critical aspects of our supply chain, follow domestic content requirements, and work with allies and partners to reduce reliance on China.

**How can the Department better leverage its partners in the National Technology and Industrial Base, other allies, and trusted partners to strengthen the supply chains supporting defense acquisition programs?**

As the Biden Administration rebuilds strong defense relationships with our allies and partners, DoD must prioritize how it supports national strategy in this area. Initiatives like the National Technology and Industrial Base, among other international programs and agreements, foster collaboration, competition, and innovation to ensure a healthy supply chain. If confirmed, I will ensure these international programs are leveraged wherever possible

**The previous two administrations' defense modernization strategies, with congressional support, emphasized the need to: (1) exploit new technologies and associated operational concepts to offset the growing threat from near-peer adversaries; (2) efficiently integrate cutting edge technology innovation taking place in the commercial sector; and (3) develop acquisition practices that mirror the agile, rapid, and disciplined development of new capabilities demonstrated by the private sector.**

**Do you believe the incoming administration will sustain these initiatives? What are your views regarding their relative importance?**

If confirmed, I intend to help sustain these modernization initiatives. These initiatives are interdependent; all three are vital. Compelling operational concepts are a linchpin for connecting strategic aims to technologies and capabilities.

**Do you believe that current software development and acquisition practices across the DOD enterprise are aligned with industry best practices?**

I understand the DoD has made significant progress over the last several years to enable more modern software development and acquisition practices, policies, pilots, and training, with strong Congressional support. If confirmed, I will work with the USD(A&S), the USD(R&E), the CIO and others to further build on this momentum, and modernize enterprise processes, strategies, and culture for rapid digital capability delivery.

**In a competition with technologically advanced peers such as China, in which both sides are fueled by global technological innovation, do you believe that the pace at which we field new technical means and operational concepts is an important qualitative factor that needs sustained emphasis in designing our acquisition processes?**

Yes.

**Many profound technological disruptions in leading private-sector industries are achieved through the disciplined pursuit of a sequence of rapid incremental**

**advances. Do you believe that the Department of Defense can and should mimic this model?**

Yes. If confirmed, I would seek to promote delivery of capability in increments similar to industry, which can reduce cycle times and be more responsive to changing technologies, operations, and threats. This is particularly true for software, which is central to every major DoD mission and weapon system.

**In your view, do the current incentives, policies, and practices of the defense acquisition system sufficiently encourage and support the adoption of innovative technologies in the Department's acquisition programs?**

The department has recently implemented acquisition policies based on the employment of an Adaptive Acquisition Framework that includes multiple pathways tailored to the unique characteristics of the programs the department acquires. If confirmed, I will encourage expanded use of alternative pathways to use and tailor acquisition strategies to support the adoption of innovative technologies.

**If not, what changes would you recommend in support of these initiatives?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's senior acquisition officials to ensure that the Department policies support the adoption of innovative technologies.

**Some Defense Department leaders and independent national security experts believe that modern information technologies for sensing and targeting create unprecedented threats to traditional large and very expensive multi-function platforms, while also enabling the defeat of such threats through more distributed force elements, machine-to-machine coordination, and autonomy across the domains of space, air, ground, and sea.**

**What are your views about spreading military capabilities across larger numbers of individually less expensive, more distributed, and more integrated platforms and systems?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff, CAPE, OUSD(A&S), OUSD(R&E) and the Military Services to understand the balance and cost impact between individually less expensive and more distributed programs, and more integrated platforms and systems. I have read about the Joint Staff and Military Service efforts to develop a Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (CJADC2) concept and I will meet with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and appropriate Military Service principals to understand the impact CJADC2 will have on warfighting concepts.

**If future budgets will not support adding disaggregated systems and integrated constellations of systems on top of the existing and planned inventory of service platforms, do you support in some cases reducing the number of traditional platforms to fund advanced proliferated capabilities and enhance the overall capacity and capability of the force?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff, CAPE, OUSD(A&S), OUSD(R&E) and the Military Services to understand the balance and cost impact of adding new capabilities on existing traditional platform programs. The Deputy Secretary of Defense has traditionally played a leading role in the Planning, Programing, Budget and Execution process and I anticipate continuing that role.

**Joint and cross-domain capabilities are recognized as critical elements in force modernization to compete effectively with peer competitors, along with resourcing missions that are deemed essential by combatant commanders but may not be high priorities for the responsible Military Department.**

**Do you believe that current Joint Requirements Oversight Council and Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System processes are sufficient to identify and impose requirements for joint capabilities that the Military Services do not prioritize, to pursue opportunities for multi-Service collaboration, and to identify and designate where programs could or should be modified to take advantage of a related acquisition program?**

If confirmed, I will meet with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in his role as the Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) to review the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System processes to ensure they support the most efficient use of Department of Defense resources.

**Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SOLIC)**

**Beginning in FY 2017, successive NDAs have empowered the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SOLIC)) to serve as a “service secretary-like” civilian official for special operations forces. Among other reforms, the law defines the administrative chain of command for U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) as running through the ASD(SOLIC) to the Secretary of Defense for issues impacting the readiness and organization of special operations forces.**

**What is your understanding of the Department’s progress in implementing the “service secretary-like” responsibilities of the ASD(SOLIC)?**

The Department has taken recent steps regarding ASD SOLIC's reporting relationship to the Secretary of Defense and participation in various governance fora. If confirmed, I will review the Department's progress to ensure that the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) has sufficient authorities to execute his or her Military Department Secretary-like responsibilities.

**If confirmed, do you commit to fully implementing these reforms?**

Yes. I strongly support the role of the ASD(SO/LIC) in providing civilian oversight for special operations activities and in matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces.

**In your view, does the ASD(SOLIC) require additional authorities and resources, including additional civilian personnel, to administer oversight of special operations forces?**

If confirmed, I will review the authorities and resources of the office of the ASD(SO/LIC) and recommend any necessary adjustments to help enable the ASD(SO/LIC) to execute his or her statutory responsibilities effectively.

**In a November 18, 2020, memorandum, then-Acting Secretary of Defense Miller went beyond the administrative chain of command defined in law to making the ASD(SOLIC) a direct report to the Secretary for policy responsibilities, in addition to their "service secretary-like" responsibilities for "special-operations peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces."**

**Do you believe the ASD(SOLIC) should report directly to the Secretary of Defense for their policy responsibilities, not just those "service secretary-like" responsibilities for USSOCOM defined by law? Why or why not?**

I am aware of reporting changes for the ASD(SO/LIC) undertaken by the previous Administration. If confirmed, I will support Secretary Austin in a review of the optimal disposition for ASD/SOLIC's policy and service secretary-like responsibilities. I recognize the importance of unified policy advice to the Secretary in support of his responsibilities, including in interagency and other external interactions.

**How do you differentiate the ASD(SOLIC)'s policy responsibilities from their "service secretary-like" responsibilities for "special-operations peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces"?**



I understand the ASD(SOLIC) to have two roles. As an Office of the Secretary of Defense organization, the ASD(SO/LIC) assists the USD(Policy) in developing overall DoD policy pertaining to Special Operations, Low-Intensity Conflict, and Irregular Warfare and to ensuring that DoD maintains related capabilities and capacity, consistent with Section 138 of Title 10.

The ASD(SOLIC) “service secretary-like” responsibilities are different. The ASD(SO/LIC) is immediately superior to CDRUSSOCOM in the administrative chain of command, consistent with Section 167(f) of Title 10. The ASD(SO/LIC) exercises authority, direction, and control regarding special operations issues including, but not limited to, the readiness and organization of special operations forces, resources and equipment, and civilian personnel. These responsibilities require the ASD(SOLIC) to coordinate with and to assist a wide range of organizations, such as the USD(P&R) and the USD(A&S) and the Military Departments and Services.

### **Science, Technology, and Innovation**

**U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared, while our competitors “leap ahead” through aggressive military modernization and advanced weaponry development.**

**What should be DOD’s highest priorities for modernization?**

DoD’s current modernization priorities include 5G, autonomy, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cyber, directed energy, FNC3, hypersonic systems, microelectronics, quantum computing, and space. If confirmed, I will review the prioritization list in the context of a new defense strategy and make adjustments as technology evolves and new challenges and opportunities are identified.

**What steps should be taken to strengthen DOD’s in-house research and innovation capabilities?**

DoD has robust in-house research and innovation capabilities. Guiding the work of these organizations, however, requires the Department to carefully balance readiness and future capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure DoD laboratories and centers have the maximum flexibility to manage their workforce, to attract and recruit the brightest minds, to maintain and to modernize their facilities and infrastructure, and to enable access to and develop the next generation of talent.

**What steps should be taken to enable DOD to better access emerging technologies and promising research and development activities in industry and academia?**

The DoD has established a number of efforts to enable the Department to better access emerging technologies from the longstanding Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, the technology transfer efforts through the Navy's Innovation Exchanges, the Army's Open Campus efforts, the Defense Innovation Unit, the investment in academia through various basic research programs, and DARPA that engage America's innovative small businesses, entrepreneurs, and academic research institutions. If confirmed, I will seek to better connect and build on these disparate efforts to ensure an enterprise-wide shift toward innovation. In addition, the Department must keep abreast of cutting-edge research around the world. Science is an international enterprise and by forming research partnerships with like-minded countries the Department can amplify its own R&D work and be better poised in the global race for technological leadership.

**If confirmed, what would you do to enhance the likelihood that emerging technologies developed by DOD, industry, or the commercial sector, are transitioned into programs of record for the delivery of capability to the warfighter?**

To improve emerging technologies' prospects transitioning to the warfighter, the Department should continually improve its systems engineering expertise, apply mission-based engineering analysis, and employ robust prototyping, experimentation and demonstration campaigns. If confirmed, I will support these activities, ensure that we align emerging technologies with new concepts and key missions, and work to ensure that more technologies traverse the so-called "valley of death."

**The Defense Science Board has recommended a goal of dedicating 3% of the total defense budget to Science and Technology (S&T).**

**If confirmed, by what metric would you assess whether DOD is investing adequately in S&T programs and whether the DOD enterprise has achieved the proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T?**

The Department must maintain a long-term S&T investment portfolio with a robust basic research program that strikes the right balance between applied research and advanced technology development. It is my understanding that the Department has been maintaining the S&T investment on par with inflation at roughly two percent of the DoD budget. If confirmed, I will take a look at this metric to see if it is providing the stability and support needed for the long-term efficacy of S&T.

## **Joint Artificial Intelligence Center**

**The FY 2021 NDAA included a provision that directed the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center (JAIC) to report directly to the Secretary of Defense.**

**If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the critical mission of the JAIC receives the appropriate support and attention in this new reporting structure?**

If confirmed, the JAIC will be my primary tool for guiding and accelerating the integration of artificial intelligence into the Department's missions and activities. I will ensure a regular schedule of interactions with the JAIC Director and JAIC leadership to ensure AI transformation is considered holistically and driven at the Department level, with the urgency and level of oversight demanded. Additionally, I will leverage the Deputy's governance fora to create and track a series of metrics to gauge progress against AI transformation across the Department, and I will build upon the great partnership between the JAIC, CIO, CDO, and stakeholders to track, visualize, and use those metrics to conduct advanced analytics to inform decisions.

**What are your thoughts on the pros and cons of this reporting arrangement?**

Because AI is an operational tool across a wide range of warfighting, support enterprises, and business practices, it must have continued, visible support by Defense senior leadership. If confirmed, I will assess the reporting arrangement to ensure it enables Defense leadership to gain broad visibility and accountability for AI efforts across the Department.

**What will do you to mitigate any concerns you have about this reporting arrangement?**

If confirmed, the JAIC will be my tool for guiding the transformation of the Department through the integration of AI across DoD's warfighting, support, and business enterprises. The Services, Combatant Commands, and other stakeholders have strong influence on AI development through the AI Executive Steering Group and its supporting committees. This offers mechanisms for balance and redress if there are conflicting positions on AI implementation.

## **Protection of Technical Information**

**In its 2018 report, Foreign Economic Espionage in Cyberspace, the National Counterintelligence and Security Center warned that “foreign economic and industrial espionage against the United States . . . represent a significant threat to America’s prosperity, security, and competitive advantage.” The report confirmed that China and Russia are engaged in campaigns to steal trade secrets, proprietary information, and other forms of intellectual property from the United States, through infiltration of the software supply chain, acquisition of knowledge by foreign students at U.S. universities, and other nefarious means—all as part of a strategic technology acquisition program. \**

**What steps would you take, if confirmed, to strengthen National Security Industrial Base and National Security Innovation Base systems and processes to ensure the protection of critical information?**

Rival nations erode our technological advantage through aggressive theft of intellectual property and controlled unclassified information from the industrial base and university and research partners. If confirmed, I will continue the momentum the Department has created to strengthen the defense of our industrial and innovation bases. This includes implementation and enforcement of higher cybersecurity standards, continuing robust engagement and outreach on cybersecurity matters to industrial base partners, and vetting and monitoring foreign students working on U.S. defense programs.

### **Department of Defense Civilian Workforce**

**The Department of Defense employs more civilians than any other Federal agency or department. Issued in June 2020, DOD Instruction 1020.04, Harassment Prevention And Responses For DOD Civilian Employees, establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for preventing and responding to harassment in the DoD civilian employee population. This policy is important because sexual harassment and gender discrimination remain a problem in the DOD civilian workforce. Of note, in responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.**

**Other than the recently issued DOD instruction, what actions has DOD taken to better address sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the civilian workforce?**

The recent instruction also shepherds in enhanced training and data tracking programs. This includes more systematic training during onboarding as well as regular refresher trainings for all civilians. In addition, the Department is investing in both improved data

on these trainings, reporting of cases, and tracking of resolutions. This improved data collection is enabling a range of data-driven, targeted actions to address areas of greatest concern, such as behaviors among our younger Service members and equipping future leaders with the knowledge and capabilities they need to ensure healthy command climates. If confirmed, I will work with senior leaders to ensure we continue innovate and expand approaches to reduce harassment and gender discrimination across the total force.

**In your view, does the Department’s method for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers, with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the civilian workforce?**

The department has recently expanded and improved its approach to tracing complaints and resolutions based on the recent DOD instruction. If confirmed, I will work with senior leaders and subject matter experts to ensure that these processes yield meaningful and reliable data and when needed enhanced with qualitative information to provide leadership comprehensive and accurate visibility concerning the scope of these problems. This data-driven approach is critical to ensure leaders are aware of and accountable for eradicating such behaviors.

**Does the Department’s method for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers, with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators in the civilian workforce?**

Identifying repeat perpetrators must be a priority. I understand that the Department recently launched the ‘Catch a Serial Offender Program’ to identify potential repeat sexual assault offenders. If confirmed, I would explore the accuracy of the recording programs and where needed look for new or expanded options to hold repeat perpetrators of other behaviors appropriately accountable.

**Does the Department’s method for responding to complaints of harassment or discrimination in the civilian workforce provide appropriate care and services for victims?**

I believe it is a critical responsibility of the Department to ensure victims of harassment and discrimination have a full range of support options. To do this, I believe we need to constantly examine and reassess what efforts are working best and how we can improve by listening directly to victims and experts in this area. If confirmed, I am absolutely committed to working with our leaders and subject matter experts to get this right and to support victims and complainants.

**If confirmed, what role would you play in shaping policies and processes for the prevention of harassment and discrimination in the DOD civilian workforce?**

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our policies are robust, enforceable, matched to oversight mechanisms, and backed by resources to reduce and ultimately eliminate harassment and discrimination.

**The Deputy Secretary of Defense serves as the appointing authority for Senior Executive Service (SES) positions in the Fourth Estate [other than Defense Intelligence SES and for SES positions in the Office of the DOD Inspector General].**

**Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant levers available to the Deputy Secretary in shaping a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed, what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting a candidate for appointment to the SES?**

The Department's SES cadre must be extraordinary leaders with an entrepreneurial spirit who are able to innovate and reform in large organizations. They must share their vision in a way that engenders a willingness by their workforce to participate in the journey to a more effective organizational future. They must be excellent mentors for the next generation of dedicated public servants.

**If confirmed, how would you go about ensuring that SES under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?**

If confirmed, I would ensure leaders are held appropriately accountable for accomplishing the goals set forth in the National Defense Strategy. Specifically, I would ensure that the Department's performance management processes are tightly aligned with the Department's strategic guidance. I would also ensure the Senior Executives are judged on the quality of their leadership as much as the results they produce. Almost anyone can generate results, but it is the highest caliber leader who does so while enhancing the capabilities of the personnel under their charge. Recognizing those that can inspire loyalty and dedication while pursuing the Nation's strategic goals will set a culture of innovation and success across the Department.

**Are you satisfied that the process employed by the Military Departments and the Fourth Estate for validating whether a vacant SES position should be rehired, restructured, or eliminated is effective in responding to current and emerging mission needs?**

If confirmed, I will review the SES management processes employed by the Military Departments and the Fourth Estate to assess their effectiveness in validating SES requirements.

**If confirmed, what role would you play in this process as regards the Fourth Estate?**

If confirmed, I expect to ensure the Department's processes are designed to attract and retain a diverse cadre of leaders to fill critical positions across the Fourth Estate who have demonstrated that they have a deep respect for others and the skills necessary to lead the Department into the future.

**The vast majority of DOD civilian personnel policies comport with requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Although this Committee does not have jurisdiction over title 5, over the years, it has provided numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities tailored to specific segments of the DOD civilian workforce. Many of the extraordinary civilian personnel authorities provided to the DOD are temporary and will expire in the next few years.**

**Do you believe these extraordinary civilian personnel management authorities are useful in building a high-quality civilian workforce for the Department of Defense and, if confirmed, would you advocate their continued use?**

I understand that direct hiring and other flexible personnel management authorities have been useful to the Department for the efficient hiring of high-quality personnel for critical national security positions.

**Do you agree that the DOD civilian workforce is part of the total force, and serves as a force multiplier for the uniformed military force?**

Yes. The civilian workforce provides a unique capability in support of the successful accomplishment of the mission. Their skill sets provide for the continuity of operations in critical functional areas while allowing the military members the flexibility to meet ever changing demands on military essential tasks.

**How do you assess the diversity of the DOD civilian workforce?**

The Department oversees diversity and inclusion efforts, including for civilian personnel, to promote a workforce that reflects the diverse population of the United States. It is my understanding that DoD analyzes race, ethnicity, and sex representation across the enterprise. The newly published policy on diversity and inclusion also requires DoD components to conduct an annual assessment of the effectiveness of diversity and

inclusion programs, including standards, metrics, and programmatic performance measures.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure that diversity and inclusion within the civilian workforce is sufficiently prioritized?**

Diversity and inclusion are top priorities for both Secretary Austin and me. If confirmed, I will work with leaders from across the Department to review existing efforts, expand the most promising measures and explore new initiatives, and foster comprehensive change across the total force. If confirmed, I will also ensure there are regular, comprehensive processes to effect real change with specific actions that have measurable outcomes so that we ensure diversity and inclusion is treated as the critical readiness and capabilities issue it is.

**Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)**

**The 2005 BRAC round resulted in major and unanticipated implementation costs and saved far less money than originally estimated. Notwithstanding, the 2018 NDS provided that the “Department [would] also work to reduce excess property and infrastructure, providing Congress with options for a Base Realignment and Closure.”**

**Do you believe that another BRAC round is needed?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Department leaders to determine whether authorization for a BRAC round is something to consider in the future as we shape priorities.

**If so, and if confirmed, how will you lead the Department in “providing Congress with options” for a new BRAC?**

If confirmed, and if the Department determines that another BRAC round is needed, I will work with my senior advisors and the Military Department leaders to develop options to present to Congress for a new BRAC. Such options would support the Department’s objectives and preserve the essential elements of the BRAC process, which is recognized as a fair, objective, and a proven approach for closing and realigning installations in the United States. The key will be maintaining the essence of the BRAC process by treating all installations equally, all or none review by both the President and Congress, an independent Commission, the priority of military value, and a clear legal obligation to implement all of the recommendations in a time certain together with all the



authorities needed to accomplish implementation (specifically the authority to undertake military construction necessary to implement recommendations).

**What changes to law and policy would you recommend to improve on the outcomes of the 2005 BRAC process?**

If confirmed, I will assess the need for changes to law or policy to address congressional concerns with the 2005 BRAC round. The key will be maintaining the essence of the BRAC process: treating all installations equally, all or none review by both the President and Congress, an independent Commission, the priority of military value, and a clear legal obligation to implement all of the recommendations in a time certain together with all the authorities needed to accomplish implementation (specifically the authority to undertake military construction necessary to implement recommendations).

**If confirmed, and were Congress to authorize another BRAC round, how would you set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation across DOD?**

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize a new BRAC round, I would work with the Department's experts to identify priorities to be addressed by that round.

**What is your understanding of the responsibilities for working with local communities with respect to property disposal that would vest in DOD and the Military Departments and Services, were Congress to authorize another BRAC?**

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, I would consult with the Department's experts on this matter.

**Environmental Contaminants**

**According to the Government Accountability Office, DOD has identified 401 military installations affected by known or suspected releases of Perflourooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).**

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to address PFOS/PFOA contamination on DOD installations?**

If confirmed, I will support the DoD PFAS Task Force in proactively addresses PFAS concerns, and aggressively pursues a PFAS-free firefighting agent to meet congressionally-mandated timelines.

**What progress is the Department making in efforts to find a replacement for Aqueous Film Forming Foam?**

If confirmed, I will ensure the DoD PFAS Task Force continues aggressively pursuing PFAS-free firefighting technologies to replace Aqueous Film Forming Foam on or before the timeline mandated by Congress.

**If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing the current and future health concerns of service members and their families regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on U.S. military installations and in the context of their official military duties?**

The health and well-being of our people and their families is of paramount importance. If confirmed, I will ensure reported health concerns are promptly investigated, reviewed, and mitigated when necessary. I will direct Department of Defense officials to work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure we take care of Service members and their families. I will take a more proactive approach to protecting the environmental quality of installations for our Service members, their families, and the communities that support them.

**Operational Energy and Energy Resilience**

**The Department defines operational energy as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. As early as 2004, then-General Mattis testified before Congress that DOD must “unleash us from the tether of fuel” if U.S. forces are to sustain momentum and retain freedom of maneuver. He cautioned that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that would be exploited by the enemy.” Today, DOD energy requirements are projected to increase geometrically due to technological advances in weapons systems and distributed operations over longer operating distances.**

**If confirmed, what would you do to harness innovations in operational energy and link them with emerging joint operational concepts?**

If confirmed, I will work alongside the Joint Staff, the Services, the Combatant Commands, and industry to enhance the energy resilience of the Joint force. That includes investing in energy RDT&E, ensuring energy resilience is appropriately reflected in requirements processes, and incorporating energy resilience

into the emerging joint operational concepts through exercises, wargames, modeling and simulation, and other means.

**In what specific areas, if any, do you believe DOD needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations in its strategic planning processes?**

DoD must consider the supportability of our energy requirements in contested and competitive operating environments, including the homeland, as well as how changing geopolitical conditions affect energy supplies. If confirmed, I will review how well the Department is incorporating energy considerations into all aspects of the strategic planning process.

**How can DOD acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms?**

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the acquisition and requirements systems value and enhances the energy supportability of future platforms and operations.

**In your view, should energy supportability be a key performance parameter in the requirements process?**

Yes, energy supportability is already a key performance parameter. If confirmed, I will ask the acquisition and energy experts, in coordination with the Joint Staff, to update me on the implementation of the energy supportability key performance parameter, and will recommend any necessary improvements

**If confirmed, specifically what would you do to prioritize energy resilience and mission assurance for DOD, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to support mission critical functions and address known vulnerabilities?**

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department considers a full range of resilient, cyber-secure, and sustainable energy solutions, including renewable energy technologies, to meet the needs of mission critical functions and so our warfighters have assured access to energy that is resilient to all hazards and threats.

**Section 2805 of the FY 2017 NDAA accorded the Secretary of Defense the authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and energy security.**

**If confirmed, for what types of construction projects would you leverage section 2805 authorities best to enhance mission assurance?**

If confirmed, I will ensure that the DoD utilizes all available authorities, including section 2805, in an integrated and holistic manner to strengthen its mission assurance posture. Solutions may include microgrids, distributed on-site generation (such as renewable energy), and battery energy storage systems, among others, to improve mission assurance at our installations.

### **Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather**

**Over the last few years, hurricanes have resulted in more than \$10 billion in damage to military installations across the U.S.**

**How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on DOD from recent extreme weather events?**

Severe weather and other climate change-related impacts have degraded DoD's ability to operate and train at certain installations, imposing significant financial and readiness costs. If confirmed, I will work with all Components to develop a full understanding of the national security implications of extreme weather and climate change, taking a comprehensive approach that includes impacts on operations, readiness, installations, equipment, infrastructure, and force development.

**Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in DOD infrastructure?**

Yes, using more resilient designs is a common sense, cost effective, and arguably necessary method to promote resilience in DoD infrastructure and supporting communities.

### **Aircraft Programs**

**The 2018 NDS provides that the United States must be capable of striking targets inside adversary air and missile defense networks. A major component of that ability is the F-35 which, after a slow start, is now beginning to have a major impact on current operations.**

**Based on current and future threats outlined in the NDS, what are your views on the requirements and timing of the F-35 program?**

If confirmed, I will work with Components and F-35 Joint Program Office to focus on program execution, control of cost growth, and delivering capabilities to meet warfighter needs. My understanding is that the F-35 modernization program requirements and timing were defined specifically to combat future threats outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy.

**The follow-on modernization of the F-35 is slated to bring key warfighting capabilities to the Air Force, but the schedule and budget of this modernization program remain in flux.**

**Are you confident in the affordability and executability of the Department's plan for Block 4 Continuous Capability Development and Delivery (C2D2)?**

I do not have the information to assess the F-35's Block 4 C2D2 approach. If confirmed, I will work with the OSD F-35 program office and the military departments to ensure the success of the Block 4 modernization effort.

**Given the importance of extending the range of U.S. aircraft, what do you believe to be the overall tanker requirement for the Air Force and at what rate and on what schedule must the Air Force procure the new KC-46 to be able to meet that requirement?**

I am aware of the critical role that Air Force aerial refueling capabilities play in supporting the joint force. If confirmed I will work with Air Force leadership and the head of U.S. Transportation Command to ensure that the Department fields and modernizes the aircraft needed to support the joint force in all operations.

**Even if all of the current aircraft modernization programs execute as planned, aging aircraft require ever-increasing maintenance, which incurs ever-increasing costs.**

**What are your views on balancing current aircraft capacity and future capability to meet expected threats?**

To deter and defeat challenges from competitors like China, the Department must increase the speed and scale of innovation in the force even as it stands ready today. This requires a skillful balance among competing demands, including in aircraft inventory and readiness. If confirmed, I will seek the most effective allocation of the Department of Defense's resources, to include any Air Force modernization and force structure issues. **The Air Force's "Skyborg" program seeks to pair unmanned aircraft with a 5th generation fighter.**

**How do you envision such manned-unmanned teaming manifesting in future military operations?**

Manned-unmanned teaming has significant potential for providing a potentially attritable force multiplier. My understanding is that the Skyborg program includes several variants. In all cases of manned-unmanned teaming, the Department should seek opportunities to provide operational benefit at lower cost and reduced risk to human safety.

**Both Russia and China have recently started manned-unmanned teaming programs. Even with our current innovative and technical lead, how can the United States accelerate innovation and programmatic in the Skyborg program and others to maintain or increase our lead, rather than allowing our advantage to wane (like in hypersonics)?**

While DoD has significant investments in core autonomous systems technologies, to accelerate innovation in the application of autonomy to warfighting, DoD could pursue advancements in multiple areas. For example, DoD could expand joint experimentation across all warfighting domains, by increasing demonstration opportunities outside of programs of record and major combatant command exercises. Such efforts might allow DoD to explore new concepts of employment, develop novel tactics, techniques, and procedures, and lay the foundation for warfighter operational trust in these systems.

**Current technologies allow “low probability of intercept/low probability of detection” datalinks to connect 4th and 5th generation aircraft. As well, there has been much discussion about the importance of networking Military Service platforms operating across multiple domains.**

**What is DOD doing to make machine-to-machine command and control, across air, land, and sea domains, a reality?**

I understand that DoD has both short-term and long-term approaches to address the incompatibilities that result from different machine-to-machine information exchange standards being used between services (and even within the same service). If confirmed, I look forward to briefings on these efforts and their potential.

**What can be done to ensure that all Military Services’ airborne data links are interoperable and resilient against peer competitors?**

There are two aspects to ensuring that the DoD’s data links are resilient against peer competitors. First, the DoD is developing and fielding more resilient waveforms and directional antennas with adaptive beamforming technology to make the individual data links more resilient. Second, the DoD is increasing diversity of links available to the

network. Secure software defined networking technologies are being developed that can take advantage of all the available diversity to route around our peer competitors' attempts to interfere with our networks.

**Has DOD developed and refined the joint operational concepts that will govern this integrated fight?**

DoD is currently developing a Joint Warfighting Concept intended to integrate and inform investments in the capabilities of the Joint Force across all domains for a future warfight. If confirmed, I will work with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to ensure the Department continually adapts, test, and evaluates its overarching concept along with supporting concepts to inform the development and design of the future Joint Force.

**Navy Recapitalization**

**Despite the Navy's requirement for at least 382 ships, it is currently operating with approximately 297 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that achieving the Navy's FY 2020 30-year shipbuilding plan would require an average \$31 billion per year, one-third more than Navy estimates, and an increase of more than 50 percent compared with recent shipbuilding budgets.**

**Do you consider the Future Naval Force Study and the FY 2022 Shipbuilding Plan released in December 2020 to be appropriate given the current and future strategic environment?**

I am aware that the Future Naval Force Study (FNFS) explored a range of future fleet designs intended to meet both today's enduring maritime missions and tomorrow's global security challenges. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review the Future Naval Force Study and December 2020 shipbuilding plan and work with Navy leadership towards developing, if necessary, an updated shipbuilding plan.

**How would you characterize the risks to national security posed by the current number of battle force ships?**

It is my understanding that the Navy fleet is currently growing in size as new ships are delivered and that the Navy is planning to continue this growth in the future if budgets permit. I am also aware of the recent challenges the Navy has experienced preparing ships and ships crews for deployments after maintenance periods. If confirmed, I will review the Navy's risk assessments in performing its current and future assigned

missions, including those in support of requirements to the joint force, and work with Navy leadership to address those risks.

### **Improving Government Technical Control in Shipbuilding**

**A June 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than the initial budget; were delivered at least six months late; and were marked by dozens of deficiencies. As an example, the first procurement dollar for the Ford-class was spent in 2001. Twenty years later, construction on the lead ship is \$2.8 billion over the original budget estimate, the ship was delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.**

**Do you believe acquisition performance on recent lead ships has been satisfactory?**

As I understand it, performance on lead ship efforts such as the USS Gerald R Ford has generated some concern. If confirmed, I will work with Navy leadership to assess the performance of the acquisition process on lead ships generally as well as the plans for the multiple critical lead ship construction efforts currently underway or in the planning process.

**GAO experts have continually noted a key step in successful shipbuilding programs is technology development—the maturation of key technologies into subsystem prototypes and demonstration of those subsystem prototypes in a realistic environment prior to the detailed design of the lead ship. This type of technology maturation was not performed effectively, or at all, on the CVN-78, DDG-1000, LCS-1, LCS-2, and LPD-17 programs.**

**What is your understanding of the current maturity and technology maturation and risk reduction plans for key subsystems in coming shipbuilding programs, including the Large Unmanned Surface Vessel, next large surface combatant (DDG(X)), next fast attack submarine (SSN(X)), Large and Extra Large Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (LDUUV and XLUUV), and light amphibious warship?**

It is my understanding that the Navy is in the requirements definition and prototyping stages for these future vessels and has technology maturation plans for each future program based on the technical risk of the program. Also, as directed by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, the Navy has appointed Senior Technical Authorities (STA) to support these first-in-class capabilities. If confirmed I will work with the Secretary of the Navy to ensure the appropriate focus on understanding and mitigating technical risks in ship design efforts to improve shipbuilding cost, schedule, and performance outcomes.



**Will you commit to ensuring adequate technology maturation and risk reduction activities are funded and completed prior to the procurement of new lead ships?**

If confirmed I will work with the Secretary of the Navy to ensure sufficient resourcing of technology maturation and risk reduction activities. I fully understand the importance of early prototyping of new and emerging technologies in order to reduce cost and technical/schedule risk for lead ship construction, and will work with the Navy to ensure that the risks of new technologies are properly mitigated before beginning construction.

## **Cyber**

**In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy. The Strategy charges DOD to “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” to compete, deter, and win in the cyber domain. The Trump administration, through NSPM 13, streamlined the process for the Department of Defense to propose and gain approval in the interagency policy process to conduct cyber effects operations.**

**Also in support of the revised Cyber Strategy, the NDAA for FY 2019 clarified that operations in cyberspace may be conducted as traditional military activities under section 3093 of title 50. These actions have supported the “defend forward” and persistent engagement operational concepts and contributed to the operational maturation of Cyber Command. These authorities and processes enabled Cyber Command to actively defend against foreign interference in the elections of 2018 and 2020.**

**Do you believe that NSPM 13 and existing law provide an appropriate balance between the necessity for Cyber Command to counter adversary actions in cyberspace with the need for coordination across the government and oversight by Congress?**

I understand that NSPM-13 has enabled timely, well-coordinated, and risk-managed cyber effects operations. If confirmed, I intend to be fully transparent with Congress as we review the directive to ensure that DoD can perform its mission effectively.

**How will operationalization of the “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” concepts deter and disrupt Russia and China’s aggression in cyberspace?**

China and Russia’s malicious cyber campaigns seek to diminish U.S. military advantages and economic security. The Department must be proactive to understand an adversary’s cyber operations and capabilities. It must ensure we have better defenses against those

capabilities, and when necessary, take action to disrupt an adversary's malicious activities. The Department should work with U.S. interagency, industry, and international partners to counter adversary cyber actors.

**By memorandum of October 24, 2018, then-Secretary of Defense Mattis established the Protecting Critical Technology Task Force, reporting to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Task Force was one component of DOD's response to Intelligence Community warnings that China and Russia are engaged in campaigns to steal trade secrets, proprietary information, and other forms of intellectual property from the United States, through infiltration of the software supply chain, acquisition of knowledge by foreign students at U.S. universities, and other nefarious means—all as part of a strategic technology acquisition program.**

**Do you anticipate that the new administration will sustain the prior administration's emphasis on making concrete progress on protecting technology?**

I anticipate that the Biden Administration will continue making progress on protecting our technology while promoting a healthy and competitive innovation base. We all agree on the importance of protecting U.S. technology from actors willing to steal our technology, coerce companies to provide intellectual property, and use authoritarian practices that oppose our democratic principles.

**What specific actions would you take, if confirmed, to prevent the theft of intellectual property in critical technology areas?**

Strategic competitors of the U.S, most notably China and Russia, engage in multiple licit and illicit activities to acquire intellectual property in critical technology areas. Addressing this problem requires DoD to collaborate both with the interagency and allies and partners. If confirmed, I will focus on ensuring a cyber-hardened industrial base, continuing efforts to identify and remove our adversaries' in our supply and capability development chains, reshoring key defense manufacturing efforts, prioritizing vulnerability mitigations within nuclear deterrence and defense critical infrastructure, and aiding in a whole of government approach to defending civilian critical infrastructure from cyber-attack.

**What are your ideas for striking the right balance between encouraging foreign students, especially in STEM fields, to attend U.S. schools and remain here after graduation, and ensuring that protection of U.S. innovations is improved?**

The U.S. has less than 5% of the world's population, which means that the majority of the best scientific minds will be born outside U.S. borders. In the years ahead, national security will depend on our ability to attract and retain the world's most brilliant minds to

work on America's most challenging problems. Our economic competitors and adversaries are aware of this and are actively recruiting the same talent. If confirmed, I will pursue a balanced approach that ensures that we continue to be a destination for top students and researchers and that our protection strategies do not result in top talent going elsewhere.

**The Trump administration preserved the so-called "dual hat" arrangement whereby the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) also serves as the Director of the National Security Agency (NSA). Congress enacted legislation to prohibit the termination of the dual hat arrangement except under certain criteria.**

**What is your understanding of the pros and cons of separating the roles of NSA Director and Commander of CYBERCOM?**

I am not yet in a position to assess the benefits and drawbacks of the dual-hat leadership arrangement without conducting a more thorough analysis of its impact on U.S. national security, including on recent cyber campaigns. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of National Intelligence to conduct a thorough review of the dual-hat leadership arrangement.

**Do you think that the conditions set by Congress for ending the dual hat are appropriate or should these conditions be modified?**

If confirmed, I would review the conditions and the Department's analysis before providing a formal response on the future of the dual-hat leadership arrangement. I am committed to a DoD recommendation that provides the most effective outcome for U.S. national security and that helps to ensure the success of USCYBERCOM's and NSA's missions.

**The NDAA for FY 2021 created a Senate-confirmed National Cyber Director (NCD) to promote an integrated, whole-of-government approach to the development of strategy, policy, plans, and resource allocations to deter, defeat, and respond to significant malicious activity in cyberspace. This legislation built on the work of the Cyber Solarium Commission. The congressional members of that Commission, including the two co-chairs, believed strongly that the NCD should be Senate confirmed and thereby accountable to Congress.**

**What are your views about the legislated structure and authorities of the Office of the NCD, as well as the Office's relationship with DOD?**

I welcome all efforts to ensure that the key networks and infrastructure upon which our Nation relies are secure and resilient. I look forward to the new National Cyber Director's efforts to coordinate that unity of effort, and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense is a supportive partner to the Office of the NCD.

**How do you envision DOD working with and supporting the NCD?**

I envision the Department of Defense playing a supporting role to the NCD's efforts to coordinate cybersecurity strategy across the government and inculcate norms of security and resiliency among our commercial and international partners.

**Section 1746 of the NDAA for FY 2021 reflects an agreement in principle between the armed services committees and the Department of Defense. The agreement stipulates that the Department will develop and propose to Congress a structure and process for the Commander of CYBERCOM to develop and submit to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for Cyber Operations Forces.**

**If confirmed, would it be your intention to honor the agreement reached between the Department and the armed services committees to propose a structure and a process for program recommendations and budget proposals for Cyber Operations Forces?**

If confirmed, yes, I will work with the Secretary and across the Department to deliver a framework to enhance the authority, direction, and control USCYBERCOM has over budget proposals relating to Cyber Operations Forces.

**One of the features of the SolarWinds cyber operation that has received media attention is the adversary's use of covertly acquired infrastructure in the United States to communicate with the malware implanted in the targeted U.S. networks. This adversary-controlled infrastructure could communicate with infected machines without arousing suspicion because the domain names and Internet Protocol addresses appeared to be benign. In fact, this practice is not novel: sophisticated foreign adversaries routinely operate computer infrastructure in the United States that has been covertly purchased, leased, or compromised.**

**Does it concern you that adversary nation states' military and intelligence agencies control extensive computer network resources inside the United States and use them to evade detection while conducting hostile actions against our government, economy, and social fabric?**

Yes, it concerns me. Our adversaries are increasingly targeting the seams of our institutions and exploiting gaps in authorities in order to evade detection and increase the

effectiveness of their malicious cyber campaigns. This is an urgent and challenging issue, and, if confirmed, I will work with our DoD components, interagency partners, and Congress to develop further options for eliminating the seams and gaps in our national defenses that our adversaries exploit.

**In your view, is it feasible to improve our ability to detect and attribute foreign actor-controlled infrastructure in the United States while protecting the privacy and civil liberties of U.S. persons?**

Yes. I am committed to protecting the privacy and civil liberties of U.S. persons while we undertake efforts to deny adversaries use of infrastructure in the United States.

**What steps would you take to improve such visibility, if confirmed?**

The use of foreign actor-controlled infrastructure in the United States is a security challenge that extends beyond the Department of Defense, and affects the functions of other Departments and Agencies, including the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Commerce. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with my partners in other agencies to define a workable whole-of-government approach that denies operating space to our adversaries while protecting the privacy and civil liberties of U.S. persons.

**It appears so far that the SolarWinds compromise, which was likely conducted by a Russian intelligence agency, was intended as an espionage operation rather than as preparation for a destructive attack on government and industry networks. In addition, a malicious “back door” was installed on 18,000 government and industry enterprises. However, media reports indicate that the adversaries carefully and manually exploited a relatively small subset of that huge victim population.**

**If it is stipulated that the intent behind this massive breach was mainly to collect intelligence on key government agencies, do you agree with some expert observers that the insertion of a serious vulnerability into the networks of 18,000 government and industrial enterprises was an act of wanton irresponsibility?**

This is an unfolding incident, but the information available today is greatly concerning, as it impacts a wide swath of U.S. public and private networks. Consistent with then-President-elect Biden’s remarks, I believe that we must elevate cybersecurity as an imperative across the government in order to defend the American people and U.S. critical infrastructure. Additionally, the government must continue to strengthen its partnership with the private sector to foster greater information sharing and collaboration. Where norms of responsible state behavior are violated, we must take action to ensure that there are consequences for such violations.

**Did these actions rise to the level of an act of war, in your view?**

A cyber “act of war” determination should be considered on a case-by-case basis that considers many factors and facts specific to the incident. I understand there is still much to learn about the SolarWinds malware campaign and that, based on a joint statement from the FBI, CISA, ODNI, and the NSA, it appears to be an intelligence-gathering effort. Any intrusion operation is of great concern and this one requires a whole-of-government effort. If confirmed, I will help to ensure that DoD does its part to understand the scope of this campaign and enable the USG response actions.

**Because DOD is an extremely important intelligence target for Russia, does it concern you that the intruders apparently chose not to exploit the back doors installed inside DOD?**

Yes, I am concerned. DoD has been, for several decades, and remains a primary target for nation-state cyber operations. The need for effective cyber defense and counterintelligence capabilities is clear.

**Might we infer that the intruders did not require this back door to access DOD networks?**

I understand that DoD’s assessment of the SolarWinds operation is ongoing. I do not have enough information at this time to make an inference regarding intruder access. If confirmed, I would request a briefing on all aspects of the SolarWinds breach into the DoD information network.

**The company that discovered the intrusion (FireEye) did so only because it actively and effectively hunts for adversaries on its network. This practice is not common among most enterprises, DOD included. Most, if not all, standard intrusion detection tools, processes, and policies would not have detected this intrusion.**

**Does this suggest to you that DOD may need to invest in advanced threat hunting capabilities on its networks?**

It does. As systems and technologies become more complex and the ability to detect, and respond in near time is at constant risk, additional advanced cyber hunting capabilities and teams can provide the adeptness to find and eject adversaries that work through the Department’s defenses.

**If so, what specific actions would you take to do so, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will explore ways to expand the cyber hunt capability within the Department while ensuring the teams have the technical skills and tools to effectively identify top-level nation-state adversaries. I will also strongly support the CIO's focus on accelerating DoD's Zero Trust initiatives, enhancing behavioral analytic capabilities (vice traditional signature-based analytics) to detect threat activity, as well as the development and implementation of increasingly innovative means to reconstitute critical DoD systems and networks in a time of crisis.

### **Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy and Posture**

**The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed long-held American doctrine that includes limiting the use of nuclear weapons to “extreme circumstances” and the need to maintain the nation’s nuclear triad of land-, sea-, and air-based capabilities. The NPR also recommended the development of a low-yield nuclear weapon to deter threats from Russia, and potentially, the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the Navy fleet.**

**Do you agree with Secretary Austin that modernizing each leg of the nuclear triad and the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex is a critical national security priority?**

I agree with Secretary Austin that nuclear deterrence is the Department's highest priority mission and that updating and overhauling our nation's nuclear forces—and the DOE nuclear enterprise that supports them—is a critical national security priority. A secure, sustainable, and effective nuclear deterrent remains vital to U.S. national security and that of our allies. Secretary Austin has indicated that he supports the nuclear triad, and so do I. The U.S. nuclear deterrent is effective today; however, it remains dependent on aging weapons; delivery systems; infrastructure; and nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) systems built during the Cold War and extended far beyond their original service lives. Now we must simultaneously update and overhaul them to ensure our nuclear deterrent remains effective.

**Do you believe the current program of record is sufficient to support the full modernization of the nuclear triad, including delivery systems, warheads, and infrastructure?**

Our nuclear deterrent has served a vital purpose in U.S. national security strategy for the past 70 years and continues to be an essential component of our strategy to preserve peace and stability by deterring aggression against the United States, our allies, and our partners. If confirmed, I will support Secretary Austin's review, early on, of the U.S. nuclear modernization program as a high priority program, including nuclear warhead

programs and infrastructure programs at the Department of Energy. The Department of Defense's partnership with the Department of Energy on this complex and interdependent set of programs is critically important.

**If confirmed, how would you work across the Joint Force to mitigate the risk that all three legs of the nuclear triad could “age out” simultaneously at the end of the 2020s?**

If confirmed, I will support Secretary Austin's review, early on, of the U.S. nuclear modernization program, to include understanding any risks during the transition from legacy, Cold War era systems to modern, replacement systems. The Joint Force faces this challenge because we have deferred or delayed previous modernization efforts. Our Cold War era systems have been extended far beyond their original service lives and the tipping point where we must simultaneously overhaul these forces is here. Stakeholders across the Joint Force and the entire nuclear enterprise, including the Department of Energy, are critical to successfully understanding and addressing both risks and opportunities within our nuclear modernization and sustainment programs. We will also work with and through the Nuclear Weapons Council to ensure nuclear warhead programs and infrastructure programs at the Department of Energy are aligned with DoD delivery system programs.

**Each of the past four presidential administrations recognized the importance of conducting in-depth reviews of U.S. nuclear policies, strategies, and programs prior to enacting any significant changes. If confirmed, do you intend to advocate that such a review take place within the current administration to ensure that the implications of potential policy changes are thoroughly considered before any action is taken to execute such changes?**

As Secretary Austin stated in his confirmation hearing, the nuclear deterrence mission is the Department's highest priority mission, and updating and overhauling our nation's nuclear forces are critical national security priorities. If confirmed, I anticipate receiving an early briefing on the U.S. nuclear modernization program to ensure that it is being executed in the most cost-effective and judicious manner. I expect that the Department will conduct a deliberate strategy review, including the review of U.S. nuclear posture in the context of the new defense strategy. That nuclear posture review would account for adversary nuclear forces and doctrine, the need to maintain strategic stability, and posture and policy adjustments necessary to ensure a strong and stable deterrent.

**What is your understanding of how Russia and China have expanded and/or modernized their nuclear force capabilities?**



I am aware that both China and Russia have continued to invest in their nuclear weapons capabilities. If confirmed, I will review classified assessments of nuclear threats, including from Russia and China, as a precursor to engaging in a comprehensive review of the U.S. nuclear posture.

**In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies?**

Secretary Austin has been clear that it is not in the best interest of the United States or its Allies to see Russia or China expanding their nuclear arsenals. I concur. If confirmed, I will review classified assessments of nuclear threats, including from Russia and China, as a precursor to engaging in a comprehensive review of the U.S. nuclear posture.

**Do you believe Russia has or is willing to employ nuclear coercion as a means of advancing its foreign policy goals?**

Russia has regularly engaged in actions that undermine the interests of the United States and its Allies. If confirmed, I will endeavor to understand how Russia is using the various aspects of its national power to contest U.S. interests abroad and domestically.

**Do you agree with DOD's assessment that China intends to double the size of its nuclear arsenal over the next decade?**

I am aware that the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency has publicly stated that China will likely double, at a minimum, the size of its nuclear stockpile over the next decade. If confirmed, I commit to receiving briefs on the specifics of China's nuclear weapons program and the threat it poses to U.S. interests.

**Do you believe a nuclear "No First Use" policy would be appropriate for the United States? Please explain your answer.**

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, if confirmed, I anticipate that the Department will conduct a deliberate strategy review, including a review of U.S. nuclear posture. That nuclear posture review would account for adversary nuclear forces and doctrine, the need to maintain strategic stability, and posture and policy adjustments necessary to ensure a strong and stable deterrent.

**Given the responsibilities you will have with respect to the Nuclear Command, Control (NC3) system under statute, what is the importance of the NC3 and Communications System, in your view, and what efforts you will make, if confirmed, to ensure it is modernized?**

The United States requires an NC3 system that ensures the President has the ability to command and control U.S. nuclear forces at all times, even under the most stressing circumstances. I understand that DoD has undertaken a fundamental examination of legacy NC3 systems to facilitate a transition to a modern architecture fit for 21st century threats. As this effort moves forward, NC3 will be a top priority along with addressing critical elements of the nuclear modernization program.

**In follow-up responses to questions from his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin stated that, “. . . any matters involving Raytheon will be referred to the Deputy Secretary or other senior official without my knowledge or involvement . . . .” Is this your understanding as well?**

Yes. I understand that Secretary of Defense Austin has directed that any matter covered by his recusal should be referred to the Deputy Secretary of Defense or other appropriate senior Defense official. If confirmed, I will keep the Secretary of Defense informed to the extent permitted by his Ethics Agreement, and will consult closely with DoD career ethics officials to ensure I abide by the scope of his recusal.

**Given Secretary Austin’s recusal, the extent of Raytheon’s involvement in nearly all of the programs to maintain the effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear deterrent, and the Secretary’s own statement that “. . . nuclear deterrence is the Department’s highest priority mission and that updating and overhauling our nation’s nuclear forces is a critical national security priority . . .”, do you expect that you will be charged with leading the majority of DOD activities in this mission area, if confirmed?**

I share Secretary of Defense Austin’s views on U.S. nuclear deterrence. I understand that Secretary Austin has directed that any matter covered by his recusal should be referred to the Deputy Secretary of Defense or other appropriate senior Defense official. While I understand that Secretary Austin’s ethics commitments will allow him to be involved in broad policy matters, where the Secretary is recused from a particular matter involving the nuclear mission, that matter will be referred to the Deputy Secretary of Defense or other appropriate senior Defense official.

**The Long Range Stand Off Weapon (LRSO) is to replace the Air Launched Cruise Missile—a system that is 20 years past its retirement, under increasing threat from adversary air defenses, and considered essential to maintaining the air leg of the triad.**

**If confirmed will you support the program of record for the LRSO?**

As Secretary Austin testified, maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent is critical to our Nation’s defense. If confirmed, I will see that the Department thoroughly studies all

proposed plans and alternatives to ensure we are on the most cost-effective path to modernize U.S. nuclear forces.

**The Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) is to replace the aging the Minuteman III weapons system, which comprises our ground leg portion of the triad, deters large scale attacks against the United States, and hedges against other nations' ground launched missile systems. The existing Minuteman III cannot continue operating with high reliability as it has starting in the 2030s.**

**If confirmed will you support the current GBSD program of record?**

As Secretary Austin testified, maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent is critical to our Nation's defense. If confirmed, I will see that the Department thoroughly studies all proposed plans and alternatives to ensure we are on the most cost-effective path to modernize U.S. nuclear forces.

**The National Nuclear Security Administration currently operates nuclear facilities for uranium and plutonium to support our stockpile that date back to the Manhattan Project, nor cannot we not produce plutonium pits in a rate to support our stockpile needs. If confirmed will you support the modernization of these aging nuclear facilities?**

A secure, sustainable, and effective nuclear deterrent remains vital to U.S. national security and that of our allies. Fundamental to this nuclear deterrent are the production capabilities and infrastructure at the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). If confirmed, I will support Secretary Austin's review of the U.S. nuclear modernization program as a high priority effort, including the country's capabilities and capacity to meet requirements related to uranium and plutonium pits. I understand that the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act and Appropriations Act call for strong interagency coordination on these issues, and, if confirmed, I will ensure the Department of Defense works closely with NNSA on these programs through the Nuclear Weapons Council and other appropriate mechanisms.

## **Arms Control**

**What do you see as the role of nuclear non-proliferation and arms control measures in support of U.S. and allied security and strategic stability?**

President Biden has pledged publicly to restore U.S. leadership on arms control and non-proliferation as a central pillar of U.S. global leadership. Effective nonproliferation and arms control measures can support U.S., allied, and partner security. It does this in

several ways: by controlling the spread of nuclear materials and technology; placing limits on the production, stockpiling, and deployment of nuclear weapons; decreasing misperceptions leading to miscalculation; and avoiding destabilizing nuclear arms competition. If confirmed, I would support the Department of Defense's role in advancing meaningful nonproliferation and arms control initiatives.

**Do you believe it is in the national security interests of the United States to extend the New START agreement?**

Yes. Extending the New START Treaty will make the United States safer and more secure by preserving transparency and predictability with regard to strategic nuclear weapons.

**During the New START Treaty ratification process, the Obama administration and Congress reached a consensus on the symbiotic relationship between strategic arms control and the modernization of the U.S. nuclear deterrent. Now that the U.S. and Russia appear to be nearing an agreement to extend the treaty for five years, do you believe this principle remains relevant?**

Yes. As then-Vice President Biden stated in 2010, investments in the U.S. nuclear deterrent are not only consistent with the nonproliferation agenda, they are essential to it. Investments in the U.S. nuclear deterrent have also historically played a role in arms control as well.

**What are your views on Russian tactical nuclear forces not covered by the New START Treaty and whether arms control measures can adequately address them?**

Limiting Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons through arms control measures is a strategic imperative. If confirmed, I commit to working within the spirit of the resolution to the New START Treaty ratified by the Senate that includes a condition to negotiate an agreement with Russia to address the disparity in U.S. and Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons.

**During his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin voiced his agreement that any future reductions in U.S. nuclear forces should only be taken within the context of a formal, verifiable arms control agreements with adversaries, rather than by unilateral actions. Do you agree with this statement?**

I believe it is in the national security interests of the United States and its allies and partners to pursue formal, verifiable arms control agreements that reduce the nuclear threats from Russia and China.

**In your assessment, how would delaying or cancelling current nuclear modernization plans and programs affect our arms control negotiation leverage with near-peer and peer competitors?**

The nuclear modernization program is a strategic imperative and national security priority. If confirmed, I look forward to getting in the Pentagon and receiving an update on modernization efforts related to all elements of the program to inform the Administration's approach.

**In your view, at what threshold condition should future nuclear arms control regimes be expanded to include China's arsenal, as well as those of the United States and Russia?**

I would anticipate that President Biden will direct his Administration to conduct a thorough set of strategic reviews, including one on objectives for nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and reducing the risk of miscalculation. If confirmed, I would ask for a briefing on China's nuclear weapons program to help inform my judgments and to support the President's efforts.

**Do you believe that the United States should consider accepting limitations on its missile defense, cyber, or conventional power projection capabilities as part of an agreement with Russia or China on nuclear weapons' reductions?**

Protecting the United States, forward-deployed U.S. forces, and allies is critical to deterring attack from adversaries and maintaining credible U.S. security commitments. If confirmed, I will work to align U.S. missile defenses, cyber, and conventional power projection capabilities within these defense reviews and will support Secretary Austin's goal of ensuring the Department of Defense plays a robust role in all strategic reviews.

## **Missile Defense**

**The United States enjoys a measure of protection against ballistic missile threats from rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, but the threat from Russian and Chinese ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles against U.S. forces, allies, and the U.S. homeland continues to grow. The 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) codified existing policy on missile defense and endorsed follow-on actions to improve U.S. capability.**

**What are your views on the relationship between missile defenses and nuclear deterrence?**

As currently constructed, the relationship between U.S. missile defense and the U.S. nuclear arsenal is complementary. Both capabilities contribute to deterring attack against

the United States, with U.S. nuclear weapons presenting a credible threat of retaliation and U.S. missile defense aimed at deterring a limited nuclear attack from North Korea or Iran. U.S. assurances to allies and partners contribute to U.S. nonproliferation goals, as well as regional and global security.

**If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense, what would be your priorities for U.S. missile defense capabilities for the homeland?**

The United States is currently defended from existing intercontinental missile threats posed by countries such as North Korea by the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). If confirmed, I would assess ongoing efforts to improve national missile defense, with a particular focus on improving discrimination capabilities and sensors for detection of both ballistic and hypersonic missiles.

**In your view, are U.S. capabilities, in both quantity and quality, adequate to ensure the protection of U.S. and allied forces deployed in the Indo-Pacific AOR from Chinese ballistic and cruise missiles?**

The missile threat posed by China is increasing. If confirmed, I look forward to developing a deeper understanding of U.S. force posture in the Indo-Pacific region and to working with allies and partners to enhance missile defense efforts in the region. Cooperation strengthens deterrence and provides assurance essential to U.S. allies threatened by missile coercion and potential attacks.

## **Space**

**The 2020 Defense Space Strategy highlighted that China and Russia are training and equipping their military space forces and fielding new anti-satellite weapons to hold U.S. and allied space operations and activities at risk, even as they push for international agreements on the non-weaponization of space.**

**In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the strategic environment as it pertains to the domain of space?**

At a broad level, the 2018 NDS accurately assesses the challenges presented by an increasingly complex and volatile security environment marked by competition from China and Russia.

As highlighted by the published unclassified summary of the 2020 Defense Space Strategy, the recognition of the growing space and counterspace threats posed by China and Russia and the central role space plays in supporting other services in their

warfighting role has continued to grow since the 2018 NDS was developed. If confirmed, I would address the continued growth of adversary space and counterspace capabilities, as well as the adequacy of the steps the United States has taken to improve the DoD space enterprise, to address growing threats and challenges in the domain in the next National Defense Strategy.

**How would you assess current DOD readiness to implement the 2018 NDS, as it relates to the domain of space, and the 2020 Defense Space Strategy?**

If confirmed, I would assess the readiness and resilience of our personnel and space-based systems to meet the anticipated challenges from priority threats. I would work across DoD, to include the U.S. Space Command and the U.S. Space Force, to ensure our policies, investments, and organizational structures improve readiness within the space domain.

**What do you perceive as the most significant threats to U.S. national security space satellites?**

Based on the open literature, the growth of Chinese and Russian counterspace arsenals presents the most immediate and serious threats to U.S., allied, and partner space activities. Chinese and Russian military doctrines indicate that they view space as critical to modern warfare and consider the use of counterspace capabilities as both a means of reducing U.S. military effectiveness and for winning future wars. While Russia is a key adversary, China is the pacing threat. Iran and North Korea have also demonstrated some counterspace capabilities that could pose a threat to militaries using space-based services. At the same time, it is essential to continue developing best practices, standards, and norms of behavior in space in order to deter threatening behavior and uphold the rights of all nations to use space responsibly and peacefully.

**What do you perceive as the most significant threats to commercial space systems owned by U.S. companies?**

As with commercial services in other domains, we should not expect adversaries to discriminate between military and commercial satellites that support the military, whether in peacetime competition or in the event of a conflict. Additionally, the U.S. technological edge continues to be eroded by ever more aggressive and on-going efforts by foreign nations to illicitly gather and adopt advanced proprietary system designs and processes from the U.S. space industrial base.

**The United States is increasingly dependent on space, both economically and militarily—from the Global Positioning System on which many industrial and military capabilities rely, to the missile warning systems that underpin U.S. nuclear deterrence.**

**Our great power competitors are making concerted efforts to leap ahead of U.S. technology and impact U.S. freedom of action in the space warfighting domain. Congress created a new Military Service, the Space Force, within the Department of the Air Force, and a unified Space Command, to deal with the challenges stemming from the fact that space is now a contested domain upon which the terrestrial forces of the United States and peer competitors are highly reliant for support.**

**Do you believe that the creation of the Space Force and United States Space Command (SPACECOM) was warranted?**

Yes. The creation of U.S. Space Force and U.S. Space Command reflect recommendations from independent commissions and studies conducted over several years and multiple Administrations about how best to address the growing security challenges in space.

**If so, would you recommend changes in the structure, authorities, and missions of these organizations, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will assess the current structure of both organizations to ensure the defense space enterprise is prepared to advance our national security objectives as directed. Integration of the Department's approach, and its integration with the overall national security space enterprise, are important areas of focus.

**Do you believe other Military Services should maintain organic space capability or should all such capabilities transfer to Space Force?**

I understand that with the establishment of the Space Force, the preponderance of DoD's space capabilities transferred to the Space Force, but some organic space capabilities remained with the other Military Services to support their designated functions and forces. If confirmed, I will assess the need to transfer additional capabilities to the Space Force to optimize the overall warfighting effectiveness and efficiency of the Joint Force.

**Do you believe the Department of the Air Force is adequately funded to handle both the Space Force and the Air Force, or should there be an increase in Total Obligation Authority?**

If confirmed, I will carefully review the Department of the Air Force's mission and budgetary priorities to ensure the most critical capabilities, including for the Space Force, are prepared to support the National Defense and assess if additional Total Obligation Authority is required.



**If an increase is warranted in your view, where should the additional resources come from and how should the “pass through” be handled?**

The Department of Defense will continue to work with the Department of the Air Force to ensure the U.S. Space Force is resourced to meet requirements. The OSD staff will study the "pass through" budget over the next year and determine if current policies and procedures are the best way to proceed, or if a new direction is warranted. The goal of this effort is to solidify a Department position for future discussion with the Defense Committees, as necessary.

**As part of DOD’s approach to the domain of space, the Department established the Space Development Agency (SDA).**

**If confirmed, what would be your direction on the organization of the Space Development Agency?**

SDA is a member of the national security space enterprise, which includes the Space Force, Space Command, and the Missile Defense Agency, among others. If confirmed, I will direct a review of SDA’s role and missions within this enterprise to: ensure alignment with warfighter needs, identify opportunities to reduce duplication, and to encourage inter-organizational collaboration.

**Specifically, in light of the Fiscal Year 2019 and 2021 National Defense Authorization Acts, should it remain independent or should it be incorporated into the Space Force?**

If confirmed, I will work with Congress to ensure that DoD’s space acquisition processes and organizations continue to evolve to increase warfighting effectiveness, enhance resilience, leverage commercial technology and innovation, and rapidly respond to future threats. I will direct a review of SDA’s contributions towards these aims, and will implement Congressional direction to transfer SDA to the Space Force, while also maximizing both organizations’ effectiveness.

**Additionally, how should the roles of the Missile Defense Agency and SDA be defined with respect to the kill chain of supersonic and hypersonic missiles for both the homeland and in theater?**

My understanding of the appropriate roles is as follows: MDA is responsible for developing and fielding the weapons systems and maintaining the interoperable kill chain needed to defend the homeland against these threats. SDA will facilitate that kill chain by developing and fielding the National Defense Space Architecture, which includes a proliferated constellation of affordable satellites to detect, track, target, and disseminate

data to weapons platforms. Advanced missile targeting is the capability provided by the Tracking Layer in this architecture. The Tracking Layer is composed of a heterogeneous mixture of wide-field-of-view satellites produced by SDA and medium-field-of-view satellites known as the Hypersonic and Ballistic Tracking Space Sensor (HBTSS) produced by MDA. The two sets of satellites make up the total SDA Tracking Layer and provide data to the MDA C2BMC system to support overall engagement management, and direct to weapon platforms in this kill chain via the SDA Transport Layer.

**What particular challenges do you perceive to increasing collaboration between the private sector and DOD in the acquisition of space systems and launch options?**

The DoD is successfully leveraging the private and commercial space industry, but there is a need to continue developing new opportunities and increase the speed of acquisition processes. If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners (such as the intelligence community, Commerce, and NASA) to ensure that the U.S. maintains a leadership role for both end items & services. In cases of overlap, DoD programs utilize commercial space and space launch systems whenever possible to satisfy requirements. In cases where DoD requirements differ, we use public-private partnerships to incorporate DoD requirements into commercial systems. Challenges include the need to account for the potential risks and vulnerabilities associated with reliance on commercial solutions. When risks are identified, A&S works closely with industry and our interagency partners to mitigate.

**In establishing both the Space Force and SPACECOM, neither was given a role in controlling the provision of intelligence to terrestrial forces from space systems built by the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). However, some reconnaissance systems are funded in part or wholly by the Military Intelligence Program, which is solely under the control of the Secretary of Defense. The provision of intelligence to terrestrial military forces is one of the primary missions conducted from space, along with missile warning, navigation and timing, weather forecasting, and communications. Instead, the National Security Agency (NSA) and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA), both of which are combat support agencies, will each continue to lead separate collection tasking operations for signals intelligence and imagery intelligence.**

**What are your views regarding the exclusion of intelligence from both the missions of the otherwise unified SPACECOM and from the title 10 responsibilities of the U.S. Space Force?**

Intelligence is a critical component of both the U.S. Space Command and the U.S. Space Force missions. The U.S. Space Force was designated on January 8 as the 18th member of the Intelligence Community with intelligence and counterintelligence responsibilities;

this designation is consistent with that of the other military services. All combatant commands have Joint Intelligence Operations Centers (JIOCs) that plan, coordinate, and integrate the full range of intelligence operations in the combatant command's area of responsibility. USSPACECOM is building-out its JIOC to address operational threats in the space domain. If confirmed, I will work with the Intelligence Community to identify key areas of information sharing to strengthen our partnerships across the interagency and with allies and partners.

**Should the Commander of SPACECOM have a role over the signals and imagery intelligence operations of NSA and NGA as subordinate combat support agencies?**

Based on my understanding at this time, the Commander of SPACECOM should not have a role over NSA or NGA intelligence operations beyond that of a customer, in the same way any of the other Combatant Commands are customers to those organizations. The NSA and NGA, as the respective signals and imagery intelligence functional managers, should retain their current operational control. SPACECOM is responsible for maintaining the ability for all U.S. systems to operate unhindered from space. The NSA and NGA provide signals and imagery intelligence via numerous methods of which space represents only one.

**The NRO has not been designated as a combat support agency. Historically, the NRO has argued that such a designation would be inappropriate because the NRO is primarily a systems acquisition organization, whose operational role is limited to the technical task of transmitting commands to space vehicles on the orders of the tasking organizations that operate under the authority of NSA and NGA. However, the NRO has come to play an important operational role in decisions regarding threats to the satellites it controls. In executing this responsibility, the NRO coordinates with the commander of SPACECOM, but is not subordinate to the combatant commander.**

**What are your views as to whether the NRO's operational role in space control warrants its designation as a combat support agency?**

I understand the NRO has a unique role in the space warfighting arena. I further understand that for operational decisions regarding space control, the NRO and U.S. Space Command have established a unified defense concept of operations at the National Space Defense Center to ensure integrated operations in times of conflict. If confirmed, I will carefully consider whether this agreement provides the necessary unity of effort.

**In the event of conflict, should the NRO be subordinate to the SPACECOM combatant commander in executing its missions?**

If confirmed, I would work with the NRO to explore options for closely integrating and synchronizing operations with USSPACECOM for the “protect and defend” mission. This includes ensuring that the authority to execute protect and defend actions can be performed on operationally relevant timeframes and with appropriate personnel. My understanding is that the relationship between U.S. Space Command and the NRO is strong, and if confirmed, I look forward to strengthening this relationship further.

### **Cooperative Threat Reduction**

**The Cooperative Threat Reduction program has worked around the world to develop safe handling practices associated with other nation’s high containment laboratories for biological agents and has brought DOD scientists in close contact with these facilities and their researchers. This is in addition to stopping the spread of nuclear and chemical weapons and their infrastructure.**

**If confirmed what actions will you take with respect to this program?**

I am familiar with and supportive of the DoD Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the program addresses prioritized U.S. threat reduction priorities, consistent with national and Departmental strategies, and ensure close collaboration among DoD components, across the U.S. interagency, and with international partners to efficiently align resources.

### **Active and Reserve Component End Strength**

**What active-duty end and reserve component strengths do you believe are necessary to meet the demands placed on the Military Services by the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?**

At this time, I do not have enough information on the Department’s current operational plans to assess their implications for end-strength levels. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of Defense in working with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commanders, the Military Departments and Services, and relevant stakeholders in the Office of the Secretary of Defense in ensuring the size and composition of our military force levels is responsive to operational demands, balances risk and costs, supports our readiness posture, and is reflective of the global security environment.

**In your view, do the reserve components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both?**

The Reserve Components provide both ready operational capabilities and on-call strategic depth in support of national security requirements.

**In light of your answer, should the reserve components be supported by improved equipment, increased training, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness going forward?**

For the last two decades, the Reserve Components effectively provided both on-call strategic depth and ready operational capabilities to provide a full range of lethality in support of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) requirements. The NDS must be the primary driver in the determination of the appropriate resourcing for manning, equipping, readiness, and training of the Reserve Components. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Reserve Components are resourced to meet and execute competition, crisis, and armed conflict that the NDS requires.

**During the early days of the budget caps imposed by the BCA, the Air Force (and to some extent the Army) rapidly cut active component end strength. Both Services later experienced manning shortfalls in critical specialties like aviation and maintenance.**

**If confirmed, how will you balance military end strength with the other competing cost centers in the DOD?**

Our service members are our greatest asset. However, our people can only be effective if we pair them with the right equipment, training, and support. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department balances investment, force structure, and readiness needs.

**In your judgment, in terms of managing military end strength, what lessons should be learned from the decisions made by the Department at the start of the BCA?**

At any topline, the Department must balance investment, force structure (including endstrength), and readiness. Decisions to make changes to alter the size or shape of the Joint Force should be underpinned by rigorous analysis. If confirmed, I will ensure that is the case.

### **General/Flag Officers**

**The FY 2016 and 2017 NDAs required DOD to reduce by about 12 percent the number of General/Flag Officer (G/FO) positions by the end of 2022. As of December**

**2020, the Department has achieved only about one-third of the required G/FO reductions, mostly by cutting vacant positions. DOD currently plans to identify and implement all remaining non-Joint reductions in 2022.**

**Do you believe that the Department’s decision to delay the identification and elimination of the remaining G/FO positions is prudent? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I will assess the Department’s decision resulting in the delay of identifying and eliminating various G/FO positions as prescribed by law. I commit to ensuring the Department meets these required reductions.

**If confirmed, what factors would you consider in determining whether a G/FO position should be continued in the current grade, downgraded, or eliminated?**

If confirmed, I would make recommendations to prioritize senior officer requirements based on each position’s scope of responsibility and its role in achieving goals and objectives outlined in the National Defense Strategy, while still adhering to all statutory limitations.

**If confirmed, and as the U.S. Space Force continues to grow, how would you propose to transfer the requisite number of general officer allocations to the Space Force while also meeting the reduction mandate?**

If confirmed, I would consult with the Secretaries of each Military Department and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in order to inform recommendations to the Secretary about how to optimize the senior officer corps to best accomplish all missions assigned to the Department of Defense.

### **Military Compensation**

**DOD has traditionally assessed the competitiveness of military pay by comparing Regular Military Compensation (RMC) against salaries earned by a comparable civilian demographic. The recently completed 13<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) found that RMC for all ranks exceeds recommended benchmarks and recommended refraining from “providing targeted pay raises at this time.” The QRMC further recommended the Department of Defense develop a “time-in-grade” based pay-table and implement a pilot program for this new pay table with a service partner.**

**Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet the objectives of the 2018 NDS?**

Yes, the military compensation and benefits package must remain competitive with the private sector in order to successfully recruit and retain a highly effective force.

**What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal—particularly given the ever-tightening recruiting market?**

I understand the current military compensation package is robust and compares very favorably with the private sector; however, the Department should continuously monitor military benefits to ensure the benefits package remains effective.

**Do you believe the largely “one-size-fits-all” model for military pay adequately rewards individuals for their specialized skills and provides an appropriate incentive to scientists, engineers, and members of other high-value professions to access into the military?**

I do not have enough information at this time to assess the overall model of military pay with regard to its effectiveness in attracting and retaining those with specialized skills. If confirmed, I would seek a briefing from the Department’s military compensation experts and leaders of the Military Departments and Services to assess the Department’s efforts in this area.

**What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package?**

Although at this time I do not have any recommended changes, if confirmed I am open to considering alternatives and am willing to work with the Congress to support and sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

**Do you support the recommendations of the most recent QRMC regarding the adequacy of military RMC and the potential usefulness of a time-in-grade based military pay table?**

I appreciate the role the QRMC plays in analyzing overarching questions concerning military compensation. I understand the results of the most recent, 13th, QRMC were released in December, and although I have not reviewed the report in its entirety, I am pleased to have learned the QRMC found that Regular Military Compensation (RMC) continues to be robust and competitive with civilian earnings. If confirmed I look forward to considering all of the QRMC’s recommendations, including a time-in-grade based military pay table.

**Military personnel costs, as a percentage of the overall Defense Department budget, have remained consistent at 30 percent over the last two decades. As a result, the one-third of the budget devoted to military personnel buys far less today than it did in years past, despite the overall defense budget being significantly higher.**

**If the percentage of the budget allocated to military personnel costs remains constant, and the overall defense budget shrinks over the next several years, what would be the impact on the size of the force and the Department's ability to execute the 2018 NDS?**

Our service members are our greatest asset, and military personnel costs will always be one of the largest expenses in the defense budget. While the strategy, not the budget, should drive the size of the force, the Department must always work to ensure that it is employing the force in the most efficient and effective manner to achieve the strategic objectives. If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Austin to assess the Department's military manpower with the goal of ensuring it is properly sized to create an effective fighting force in line with the strategy.

**What specific recommendations do you have for controlling the rising cost of military personnel costs and entitlement spending?**

The Department's people are its greatest asset. Ensuring that the Department's workforce is properly compensated and cared for is critical to maintaining a high quality, all-volunteer force. However, rising personnel costs will continue to present a challenge and compete with critical investments in modernization and readiness. If confirmed, I will assess the size, composition, and compensation structure of the entire force in order to create a force composed of the highest quality individuals that are properly trained and equipped to meet our national defense goals.

### **Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Forces**

**One consequence of the relatively low proportion of American youth who are eligible and interested in military service is that the Military Services have increasingly recruited from the same sources, schools, and geographic locations, and have targeted recruits from military families. Over time, these practices can decrease diversity in the armed forces, including the diversity of background, experience, and thought that benefit any organization.**

**Do you agree that broadening recruitment efforts and promotion practices within the armed forces, with a goal of ensuring the armed forces reflect the diverse**



**population of the United States eligible to serve is a matter of national security, and should be a national priority?**

Yes. A military that reflects the Nation is critical to the readiness of our Armed Forces and should be a national priority. The Department gains an important advantage by creating an environment in which each member is valued and encouraged to provide ideas critical to mission accomplishment.

**If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to support increased diversity and inclusion within the armed forces?**

If confirmed, I will strongly support initiatives to increase diversity within the military. This includes greater data transparency on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues, education and training efforts, accountability from leadership, and improved recruiting methods.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure the Department maintains the highest levels of recruit quality and readiness, while at the same time promoting diversity as a value?**

If confirmed, I will support initiatives to increase the diversity within the military, which include development of robust marketing and advertising campaigns in both traditional and virtual venues that will generate better awareness of the military and its value as an employer of choice for today's youth from all segments of our diverse society.

**If confirmed, how would you expand recruiting efforts to reach every corner of America, including historically hard-to-recruit locations?**

If confirmed, I will fully support Military Department and Service initiatives to apply a broad array of tools and approaches to increase diversity within their ranks and within the Department. Furthermore, I will promote strategic partnerships with community leaders and other influencers to generate interest in the military as a career path of choice for our youth.

**There is a long history of honorable and courageous immigrant service in the Armed Forces, in all conflicts.**

**Do you believe that military entrance requirements and testing practices accurately measure the military potential of non-native English speakers?**

If confirmed, I will review current efforts across the Department and Military Departments and Services to ensure accession criteria and measures used are reasonable,

reliable, and fair to ensure applicants with the highest potential, to include non-native English Speakers, are afforded the opportunity to serve.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure that entrance requirements do not cause the Department to miss out, inadvertently, on talented youth who may not be native English speakers?**

If confirmed, I will review the results of the Department's study of best practices to assess academic achievement for non-native English speakers, including studies currently underway, to make recommendations to the Secretary for actions that can both reach a wider swath of the population and maintain enlistment standards.

### **Assignment Policies for Women in the Service**

**Since 2015, all military occupations and units have been open to the assignment of any service member who can meet the occupational standards, including women.**

**What challenges still exist with regard to the assignment of women and what proactive measures would you take or direct to address those challenges, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments and Services to provide appropriate oversight of the full integration of women into formerly closed units and specialties. As the Secretary has stated, we should redouble our efforts to attract and retain women in the military because data shows that women are less inclined to join the military and, further, pursue careers in operational specialties when they do. We must show prospective recruits that they can have extremely successful and rewarding careers in all specialties. If we do not, we will continue to miss out on critical talent that is vital to sustaining our all-volunteer force.

### **Non-Deployable Service members**

**The Department has published DODI 1332.45, Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service members.**

**Do you agree that service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from service or referral into the Disability Evaluation System?**

I support the current policy, which calls for an individual review to determine fitness for continued service when an individual has been deemed non-deployable for more than a year.

**"DODI 1332.45 provides that the Secretaries of the Military Departments may “retain . . . those service members whose period of non-deployability exceeds the 12 consecutive month limit . . . if determined to be in the best interest of the Military Service.”**

**Under what circumstances would the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the Military Service”?**

Service members bring different skill sets to bear for the joint force, and individual cases should be evaluated based on the specifics of each case. Individuals qualified in highly stressed career fields, for instance, may be deemed fit for continued service regardless of their deployability.

**In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?**

Department policies should keep up with developments in medical treatments. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our policies are applied consistently to all Service members. Gender identity should not impact such determinations.

### **National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service**

**Last year’s report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service made a number of recommendations to increase and facilitate service opportunities in military, national, and public service. Among these recommendations was modernizing the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) to include the registration of women, and strengthening the relationship between military and national/public service recruitment and programmatic efforts.**

**Do you support amending the MSSA to include the registration of women?**

As I stated in my testimony before the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, I support exploring amendments to the MSSA that include the registration of women.

**Do you support the Commission’s other recommendations intended to modernize the MSSA? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I will review Commission recommendations and gather input from experts across the Department. Increasing the available pool of potential Service members is critical to sustaining an All-Volunteer Force, and I look forward to aiding efforts that help the Department recruit individuals who will contribute to safeguarding the nation against future threats.

**Do you agree with the Commission’s conclusion that the Selective Service System is still needed today, but must be updated to reflect how we fight and the skills needed in today’s armed forces?**

Yes. A modernized Selective Service System can be a key talent management component of efforts to recruit individuals for the skills and experiences that will be needed to win future wars.

**What other changes to the MSSA and the Selective Service System do you believe would be useful?**

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If confirmed, I will review the Commission's report, consult with experts, and seek to identify changes I believe are necessary to modernize the SSS.

**Do you agree that expanding military, national, and public service opportunities, and encouraging greater service by America’s youth generally, not just in the military, but in national and public service, can, over time, increase propensity to serve among youth, and encourage influencers to recommend military service to the young men and women seeking their guidance?**

Yes, I believe that expanding public service opportunities can increase young people's propensity to participate in some form of public service, which strengthens civil society.

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

**Despite significant efforts by the Military Services to enhance their response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24, remains too high.**

**In your view, why hasn’t the Department been more successful in preventing sexual assaults?**

The recent increase in reports of sexual assault indicates the importance of both prevention and accountability. While younger enlisted service members account for much of the 2006-2016 increase in reporting, we must hold accountable leader at all levels. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to develop and implement policies that ensure good order and discipline in the ranks.

**Do you believe the policies, programs, and resources that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working?**

As the Fort Hood report makes clear, much work remains to be done to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military. If confirmed, I will continue to focus on all aspects of sexual assault and harassment, including training and education and accountability, in order to ensure that all service members and others in the Department's Total Force serve in a climate of dignity, respect, and inclusion.

**If not, what else must be done?**

N/A: see above.

**What initiatives will you implement that focus on the prevention of sexual assaults in the military?**

If confirmed, I will assist Secretary Austin in his top-down review of the Department's efforts to combat sexual assault and related crimes, including sexual harassment, hazing, and bullying. Leaders at all levels of the chain of command must be held accountable to address shortcomings that enable all forms of criminal behavior. President Biden has appointed a 90-day commission of current and former military leaders, sexual assault survivors and their advocates, and sexual assault experts to make concrete recommendations on these matters. If confirmed, I would examine all recommendations for expanding the Department's prevention and accountability initiatives and provide my assessment to the Secretary. initiatives and provide my assessment to the Secretary.

**What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove disposition authority from military commanders over felony-level violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assault?**

I have not yet studied the potential impacts of proposals to remove disposition authority from military commanders over felony-level violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assault. However, if confirmed, the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment will be a major focus for me, and all promising ideas should be explored. Leaders, at any rank, who contribute to a climate in which sexual assault and/or

sexual harassment occurs will be held accountable; our service members deserve to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

**In your view, why is the number of prosecutions for sexual assault and retaliation in all Military Services so low?**

While I am not familiar with historical data regarding the referral of sexual assault charges, I understand that the Defense Advisory Committee on Investigations, Prosecutions and Defense of Sexual Assault in the Armed Forces has studied the issue and provided preliminary findings. If confirmed, I will closely examine the committee's findings and recommendations and share my assessment with the Secretary.

**Why are conviction rates so low?**

While I am not familiar with historical data regarding military justice conviction rates, I understand that a statutorily mandated federal advisory committee, the Defense Advisory Committee on Investigations, Prosecutions and Defense of Sexual Assault in the Armed Forces, has studied this issue. If confirmed, I will closely examine the committee's October 2020 findings and recommendations and share my assessment with the Secretary.

**If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD's program of preventing sexual assault?**

If confirmed, I will emphasize accountability of leaders at all levels to ensure every Service member has an opportunity to contribute to our nation's defense in a climate that is characterized by dignity and respect for everyone. The Department must never rest in its pursuit of this goal and must always strive to develop new and innovative ways to prevent sexual harassment and assault. Setting these conditions begins at the top of the Department and, if confirmed, I will tirelessly support the Secretary's efforts to ensure a positive command climate across the Department of Defense.

**During the presidential campaign, President Biden said that he would appoint a commission of military leaders, survivors, advocates, and experts to make recommendations to him on "what else we should be doing" to address sexual assault in DOD and the Veterans Administration, including a discussion of the Military Justice Improvement Act.**

**What role will the Department of Defense have in creating and supporting this commission?**

Secretary Austin released a memorandum on January 23 to begin preparations. The memorandum states that the Department will be prepared to provide support to the Commission, several years of data, and a summary of its current and planned activities to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**How will the recommendations of this commission shape the Department's approach to the prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military?**

I expect that recommendations of the Commission will, at a minimum, inform how the Department moves forward with prevention and response systems. Although I would not want to pre-judge Commission recommendations before we know what they are, I think the Department must be committed to working with all stakeholders on promising efforts to eliminate these behaviors and take a strong, unequivocal stand against sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**Religious Accommodation**

**On September 1, 2020, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness released DOD Instruction (DODI) 1300.17, in accordance with Section 533(a)(1) of NDAA for FY 2013, as amended, and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. DODI 1300.17 establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the accommodation of service members' religious practices.**

**Do you believe that DODI 1300.17 appropriately protects service members' right to observe the tenants of their religion, or to observe no religion at all?**

While I have not yet studied DoDI 1300.17 and its implementation, it is my understanding that all applicable statutory requirements are incorporated in its most recent release, thereby fully protecting Service members' religious rights.

**Do each of the Military Service's policies and processes appropriately accommodate the religious practices of individual service members, in your view?**

While I am not yet fully familiar with the Services' current efforts regarding Service members' religious accommodations, if confirmed, I will work to ensure the Services' policies and processes appropriately accommodate the religious practices of individual service members.

**Do you support a policy that allows a prospective recruit to request and receive an accommodation of religious practices prior to enlisting or accepting a commission in a Military Service?**

Yes. Any American willing and able to serve his or her nation should be able to do so if their service is within the bounds of accepted religious accommodation policies and procedures.

**Do you support a policy that allows a service member's religious accommodation, once granted, to follow the member throughout his/her military career—no matter where he/she is stationed or the nature of his/her specific duties—unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation adversely affects military mission accomplishment?**

Yes, I believe that individuals should not have to make a decision between following their faith and service to our great Nation. Service members should be allowed to have their accommodation follow them unless that accommodation has an adverse affect on mission accomplishment so as to not place the Service member in an untenable position.

**In your view, do existing DOD policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by a military chaplain in both official and unofficial settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain's right to pray in accordance with the tenets of his/her religious faith and the rights of other service members who may hold with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs, who may be present in these settings?**

Yes, the current policies allow for a proper balance to be held. If confirmed, I will review our polices to ensure that chaplains have the backing of the DoD and the right to pray in accordance with the members of their faith.

### **Military Quality of Life and Family Readiness**

**The Senate Armed Services Committee views military quality of life and military family readiness as critical factors in the recruitment and retention of service members. Military families want access to high quality education for their children, and to high quality health care and child care services on military installations and in local communities. Military spouses seek education and employment opportunities, and military families benefit from modern morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.**

**If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider to be a priority?**



If confirmed, I will support the quality of life programs that reinforce a strong military community. I will focus on programs that build up and support our resilient families. My decisions on programs will be based on the program's impact on readiness, retention, and resiliency. My program priorities will include a focus on prevention of both domestic violence and harm to children, food security, tenet rights, spouse employment, and child care programs.

**Do you believe that the Department should include military family readiness considerations, such as the quality of public education, and the availability of healthcare and childcare, in its evaluation of basing options in the United States?**

Yes, I believe that these considerations, as well as issues such as housing and licensure portability for military spouses and other beneficial State-level legislation and policies, are very important due to their contribution to overall force readiness and the general well being of the military family.

**If confirmed, how would you improve the “base scoring” process to ensure that local communities are capable of providing quality services to support military families?**

If confirmed, I will work alongside the Military Department Secretaries to continue their efforts to develop criteria and systems that will evaluate State and local community actions to support the needs of our military families.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure that reserve component families receive necessary support services while their service members are mobilized and deployed?**

The DoD's approach to this matter must encompass both active duty and reserve component members and their respective families. It is essential that the Department continue to provide support for reserve component families through a coordinated network of care, including support and services provided by the Department and other Federal, State, local, non-profit and private entities.

**How would you ensure that active component families who do not reside near a military installation receive necessary support services?**

If confirmed, I will explore the current needs that exist, determine what is available to families wherever they reside in order to identify gaps, and develop innovative solutions to address such issues. Remedies, such as web-based delivery systems, may allow the Department to be more flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of the population. The Department should continue to work with those in local governments, businesses, other federal agencies, and non-profit stakeholders, to ensure support for military families wherever they live and work.

**The Committee often hears that active component military families have difficulty obtaining child care on the military installation and that there are thousands of families on waitlists to receive infant care.**

**What are your innovative ideas for increasing the availability of accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost, for military families?**

Child care is a vital resource for military families. My understanding is that the Department is currently evaluating the implications of FY21 NDAA child care language, including but not limited to: standardization of child care fee assistance, 24-hour child care, and assessment of staff pay and benefits to increase capacity. If confirmed, I will review the current efforts of the Department in this area and work with the Military Departments and Services and the Congress to develop a multi-pronged strategy that addresses identified shortfalls.

**Under the previous Administration, the Department advocated for consolidation of the commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system. If confirmed, would you support development of a single defense resale system?**

If confirmed, I will review the Department's past recommendations on this issue and evaluate the savings and efficiencies that might be gained by various service models or consolidations. I believe that it is crucial that any consolidation or shared services model maintains or improves the benefit while achieving desired savings.

## **Suicide Prevention**

**The number of suicides in each of the Military Services continues to concern the Committee.**

**If confirmed, what new initiatives would you implement to prevent suicides by military personnel and their family members?**

I am deeply committed to supporting and protecting those who defend our country, and it is imperative that we do everything possible to reduce the risk of suicide and prevent suicidal behaviors. If confirmed, I will collaborate with leaders across the Military Departments and Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and those in academia and the non-government sector to evolve our strategies and identify new, evidence-informed methods to prevent the national tragedy of suicide.

**What specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD's program of preventing suicide?**

I am aware that in the past two years, the Department has developed and released an Annual Suicide Report in addition to a more comprehensive medical report on suicide events. If confirmed, I would ensure I am briefed on the results of these reports, the initiatives that are supported by the findings, and that we are promulgating lessons learned and best practices across the enterprise to ensure we do not lose lives to suicide.

**If confirmed, specifically what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of service members across both Active and Reserve Components?**

If confirmed, I will ensure a review of current processes and identify opportunities to enhance both the accuracy and timeliness of collecting, tracking, and reporting suicides among our military community. I will continue to carry out the Department mission of supporting and protecting those who defend our country and their families, who also sacrifice for our Nation.

**Through an online survey, the Army Public Health Center found that about 11% of Fort Wainwright, Alaska soldiers reported having suicidal ideations in the previous month. Soldiers reported that mental health stigma prevented them from seeking help.**

**If confirmed, how would you strengthen suicide prevention programs at remote and isolated military installations like Fort Wainwright and on ships at sea?**

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's public health approach to suicide prevention focused on our populations of greatest concern. This will be carried out by emphasizing comprehensive efforts to help individuals before they may become at risk of harming themselves and ensuring we provide all necessary medical care and treatment. This approach includes supporting initiatives that enhance connectedness to family, friends, and fellow Service members, and promoting help-seeking behavior, particularly for those serving in remote environments. I will also ensure that DoD continues to investigate and learn why there may be higher concentrations of suicides in a particular area. In accordance with the recently passed National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, I will issue guidance requiring each suicide involving a Service member to be reviewed by a multidisciplinary board.

**How would you ensure that the Department implemented evidence-based approaches to reduce or eliminate mental health stigma in the Total Force?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with subject matter experts to ensure we are communicating effectively with our Total Force, using evidence-informed strategies, in a way that normalizes the act of seeking help. Identifying a need for help, and getting it at the earliest opportunity, can help a Service member become stronger and more resilient – all while reducing stigma and barriers to care.

### **Military Health Care Reform**

**Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as modified by Sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, transferred the administration and management of military hospitals and clinics from the Military Departments to Combat Support Agency the Defense Health Agency (DHA).**

**Do you agree with the congressional mandates for military health system (MHS) reform? Please explain your answer.**

If confirmed, I will work with Congress to ensure effective implementation of Military Health System reforms. The MHS should be focused on its core readiness mission and providing quality health care to all beneficiaries in accordance with guidance provided by Congress. Consolidating the administration and management of the military hospitals and clinics, along with public health and research activities, under the Defense Health Agency as directed by Congress has the potential to continue improving overall readiness, effectiveness and efficiency.

**If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure the rapid and efficient transfer of the control, administration, and management of all military treatment facilities to the DHA?**

If confirmed, I will seek an immediate briefing on the status of the transition. Using the Deputy's convening power, I will assess transition progress to make sure the transfer is completed to best support the future needs of the National Defense Strategy and the nation, and that it is in full compliance with all legal requirements.

**If confirmed, specifically what would you do to end actions by the Military Services to delay or reverse MHS reform?**

If confirmed, I will take into account the concerns of the Military Services and will work to address their concerns. I will facilitate unity of effort across the Military Services, push to ensure transparency and cooperation among all stakeholders, and will make clear decisions to move forward within the timelines set forth in law to accomplish the Congress' intent.

**Would you see value in restructuring the DHA as a new command—a Unified Medical Command—in the future?**

If confirmed, I will ensure the ongoing reforms Congress has directed are implemented. These ongoing reforms represent many major transformations for the MHS and should serve to increase operational readiness and improve quality and efficiency in healthcare delivery. Shortly after the completion of the statutory reforms, I will assess the net effect and determine if there is a need for further consolidation or potential value to moving to a Unified Medical Command model.

**As you now see it, please describe the pros and cons of such a command.**

If confirmed, I would seek to examine the concept of a Unified Medical Command more fully so as to provide my assessment of both the current round of reforms and the potential pros and cons of the UMC model.

**Supremacist, Extremist, and Criminal Gang Activity**

**Military personnel must not actively advocate extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes, or actively participate in organizations advance, encourage, or advocate the use of force, violence, or criminal activity to deprive individuals of their civil rights. This priority is vital for the maintenance of good order and discipline within the force, and for the accomplishment of the military mission.**

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to eliminate and prevent the active participation by military service members in supremacist, extremist, and criminal gang activity?**

These destructive forces have absolutely no place in our military. It is my understanding that the Department has taken significant steps to identify current Service members who may pose a threat to national security, good order and discipline via their association with supremacist, extremist, and criminal gang activity. If confirmed, I will review current policies, reports, and screening/vetting capabilities to determine what additional policies may need to be put in place to prevent the active participation by Service members in such activity.

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to prevent the active advocacy of supremacist and extremist ideologies within the ranks?**

If confirmed, I will review current policies and reports to determine what additional policies may need to be put in place to prevent the active advocacy of supremacist and extremist ideologies in the ranks.

## **Insider Threat**

**DOD has experienced devastating attacks from insider threats—attacks that have led to the death and injury of DOD personnel, as well as to the loss of highly-classified information critical to national security. The National Insider Threat Task Force published the Insider Threat Program Maturity Framework in November 2018.**

**In your view, how should DOD’s Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA), better posture the Department to deter, detect, and mitigate insider threats before they reach a critical point and potentially harm national security?**

To better posture the Department to counter insider threats, the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) should reinforce the current role of the DoD Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center (DITMAC), which serves as the central hub for bringing together risk information from the individual Component hubs and developing the Department's counter-insider threat capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department’s insider threat programs are fully matured to deter, detect, and mitigate insider threats and support a robust continuous vetting program.

**What can the Department do to ensure that senior leaders in each DOD Component—not only the intelligence or counterintelligence communities—are fully invested in protecting their people, facilities, information from insider threats as a core mission objective?**

Protection of DoD resources from insider threats remains a significant challenge for the Department. Establishing a common operating picture across all security domains is essential to insider threat mitigation. If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD policies enhance and facilitate information exchanges between DoD security, counterintelligence, law enforcement, and insider threat organizations and leverage such exchanges to protect the Department’s people, resources, and information and to facilitate mission objectives.

**What progress has DOD made in identifying career paths and training programs for the development of insider threat expertise and the advancement of insider threat prevention personnel?**

The DCSA Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE) serves as the central repository for DoD Insider Threat training and education. CDSE’s course materials are

designed to advance the skills of insider threat analysts and security personnel. Additionally, in partnership with the National Insider Threat Task Force, DoD developed a Counter Insider Threat certification program that has been nationally accredited. I understand that the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security is developing Insider Threat-related career paths that will advance the level of insider threat expertise resident within the Department.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.**

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.