

Dr. David Honey Opening Statement for Senate Confirmation Hearing

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a pleasure to be here. I would also like to thank President Biden, Vice President Harris, Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Under Secretary Shyu for the trust they have placed in me throughout this nomination process. I would also like to thank my wife, Cynthia, and the rest of my family for their support and understanding of the many demands I have encountered during my career.

Today, I am humbled to sit before you to be considered for the role of Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering. Bringing the best innovations and technologies to our service members and civilian workforce is paramount to protecting our way of life.

I take this charge seriously and have devoted much of my career to the defense of our Nation. I received my first security clearance as a federal employee in 1974, and have seen firsthand the evolution of many of the issues that concern us today. While the global competition and challenges we face seem daunting, I know from my experiences that there is much that we can do to overcome them. For example, while serving as a B-52 pilot, our combat capabilities benefited greatly from a series of aircraft modernization efforts, and as a result, the B-52 remains a formidable weapon system.

Having served as a scientist in the Air Force Research Laboratory, I have participated in the struggle to push research and development across the “Valley of Death” and deliver a competitive edge to our warfighters. While I have often tapped into the significant capabilities of large companies in the Defense Industrial Base, I am also a strong proponent of our highly innovative small business sector, and have actively participated in the SBIR program.

My commitment to pursuing innovation has deepened during my two tours at DARPA, where I learned how a small agency can pursue high-risk/high payoff research, and repeatedly change our world for the better. During my time as the Director of Science and Technology in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, I gained additional perspective on the nature of today’s threats to our national security and the role of S&T leadership in meeting those challenges. Having served previously in R&E, I

am keenly aware of what it takes to ensure that R&E will be a valued contributor, and I believe that my experiences have well-acquainted me with the demands this position requires.

As Under Secretary Shyu has stated before this Committee, “the mission of furthering science, technology, and innovation across the Department of Defense could not be more important than it is today.”

We face wide ranging threats from across the globe and meeting these challenges takes teamwork and collaboration. It is critical that we leverage the research being done by experts in academia, industry, and DoD laboratories. Our future success will require a new wave of diverse STEM talent, robust investments in advanced technologies and manufacturing, and enabling a culture that allows us to take risks in search of reward. It is critical that we continue to modernize in areas such as microelectronics, 5G, directed energy, and hypersonics. We must also take real steps to partner with and support the acquisition community to transition our most promising technologies into programs of record.

I do not take these obligations lightly, and if confirmed, it would be an immense honor to continue to serve our Nation, the Department of Defense, and the United States of America within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering. Thank you.