

Ms. Rachel Jacobson Opening Statement for Senate Confirmation Hearing

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Department of Defense
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today to be considered for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment. I am honored by the confidence and trust placed in me by President Biden, Vice President Harris, Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Secretary Wormuth. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you cooperatively and in good faith to address the pressing needs of the Army's Soldiers and their families, and to advance national security interests.

My career demonstrates my devotion to public service, which began at the U.S. Department of Justice. One of the first cases I brought was on behalf of the Army against a contractor that committed fraud by delivering defective tank parts. In another case, I sought financial contribution from an oil refinery to pay for cleanup of a petroleum plume that migrated through groundwater to a BRAC-closed Army facility. In every instance, the Army showed its integrity and professionalism, and in the environmental cases, its commitment to environmental stewardship and protecting the public by ensuring that the cost of cleanup is borne by all those responsible, not just U.S. taxpayers.

My background provides me with a deep appreciation of the issues and the challenges of the position for which I am being considered. I served previously at the Department of Defense as the Deputy General Counsel for Environment, Energy and Installations, where I was privileged to contribute to the Army's mission on a variety of matters, ranging from reconciling a solar transmission line with critical testing and training, to resolving a long-standing interagency dispute regarding creation of a national monument. In each of my roles in the federal government, it has been an honor to serve the public.

If confirmed, I will be informed not only by my work at the Departments of Justice and Defense, but also at the Department of the Interior, where I gained significant policy experience. Based on my background, I understand how interagency cooperation, and transparency before this Congress, is necessary to effectively implement the Army's installation, environmental and energy missions.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Soldiers and Army civilians to confront emerging national security threats, and to ensure the readiness of the Army to deploy and fulfill its worldwide

responsibilities. Energy and climate are directly related to mission and readiness. I believe that the Army must remain laser-focused on confronting climate change, including by incorporating resilience and energy security at Army installations. I am eager to work with the Army at all levels to capitalize on the dynamic efforts already underway, as well as to address unresolved challenges and to implement effective solutions.

I am keenly mindful that the Army's People are its top priority. Those who call an Army installation home deserve to be provided quality of life services that are commensurate with their sacrifices. I am committed to ensuring that Army installations and surrounding communities are not threatened by harmful contaminants, and that proactive remediation steps will be taken when required. I am also committed to ensuring Soldiers and their families can live with dignity, in safe, high quality housing. We must not break trust with those who serve us so very well.

I recognize the urgency required for the Army to effectively address these challenges. If confirmed, I will devote myself to the task of supporting the Army and the Department of Defense to advance our Nation's national security interests.

Thank you for your time and consideration today. I look forward to answering your questions.