

Christopher J. Lowman Nomination
Hearing Senate Armed Services
Committee February 15, 2022

Good morning, Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Committee members. I am deeply honored to come before you today as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment. I would like to thank the President for nominating me and Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I am excited for the opportunity to continue serving our nation in this critical role during these extraordinary times.

I want to start off by acknowledging my wife, Tracey, who is here with me today and has been by my side for the last 25 years. Tracey is the bedrock of our family, whose support has made my career and service to this nation possible. Our greatest joy are our 4 children, two of which are here today, Shayne, a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, and Ian, a high school senior. Our other two children, Rhyane and Addison are currently students at the University of Virginia and are watching virtually. In fact, my daughter, Addison, is currently enrolled as a Navy intern with a focus on computer programming. I am also grateful to my immediate and extended family for their sustained and honorable service to this country. We are a multi-generational, multi-service family, representing every service, and the Coast Guard, going back 80 years.

My family's legacy of service has been a guiding force during my 36-year career, which began in 1984 on the well-known, yellow footprints at Parris Island. I started my post-Marine Corps life with the Army as a young GS-5, serving alongside both women and men - soldiers and civilians who dedicated their lives helping to sustain the readiness of our forces. I could not be more proud to call them colleagues and friends, and if confirmed I will continue to serve at their side.

The purpose of the Department of Defense is to provide military forces needed to deter war and ensure our nation's security. To accomplish this mission, we must posture our sustainment capabilities to enable the readiness and meet the nation's requirements when needed. Sustainment is most effective when integrated with the joint force and in coordination with our allies and industry partners. I appreciate the importance of sustainment, and throughout my career I have learned that resilient sustainment is critical to enhancing our military's effectiveness, as well as applying all instruments of national power.

The role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment is to ensure the resources needed to execute the Department's mission are readily available, while maximizing execution and affordability. The Assistant Secretary must ensure the services have the policies and processes necessary to succeed, and the Department has the proper oversight to ensure our strategic readiness posture is sufficient. The ultimate goal is to provide our service members with the most modern, capable, and sustainable military equipment and supplies necessary to deter or defeat our adversaries.

Secretary Austin has laid out clear priorities in his March 2021, Message to the Force: *Defend the Nation; Take Care of our People; and Succeed Through Teamwork*. To that end, and if confirmed, my priorities will be to ensure our supply chain is resilient and defended; our civilian workforce is trained and equipped with the necessary analytical skills and tools needed to sustain a military in a complex, multi-domain environment; that our organic industrial base is modernized and fortified to meet the challenges of sustaining technologies required on a modern battlefield; and finally, that our modernization programs account for life-cycle and sustainment costs early in the acquisition cycle. I will work towards sustainment strategies that balance readiness requirements with cost in order to produce the maximum amount of combat power. There are numerous challenges in each of these areas, but with the help of the members of this committee and Congress, we will make the necessary improvements to ensure sustained readiness far into the future.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with Congress, the services, industry, our partners and allies, and other stakeholders to enhance and sustain military readiness. The heavy responsibility and demands of this position are evident. Given the critical nature of the role and the importance of the mission I will dedicate myself fully to the task. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

