

**Elaine McCusker**  
**Senate Armed Services Committee - Nomination Hearing**  
**Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)**  
**Opening Statement**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed, Members of the Committee. It is a privilege to be here to answer your questions regarding my nomination to the position of Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller.

I am humbled and honored by the confidence Secretary Mattis and the President have placed in me with this nomination.

Before I provide a very brief statement, I would like to introduce and offer my deepest appreciation to my mother, Kathleen McCusker and my sister, Michele McCusker-Whiting for being here today.

I have a deep personal commitment and dedication to the U.S. military and to the security of this great nation. I have been fortunate to work in various positions for a series of great leaders. Amazing teammates have allowed me to leverage my skills in the service of the country that I love.

I also have a keen appreciation for the challenges facing the Department, particularly in the area of resourcing. It is important that we carry out legal, ethical and accountable budgeting and financial management so the Department can maintain focus on rebuilding and maintaining the readiness and capability necessary to carry out its roles and responsibilities for the nation.

The Comptroller has several important challenges and opportunities to attack in the coming months. To name just a few, if confirmed, my priorities will include:

- 1) Supporting the Secretary in obtaining the top line defense budget and resources necessary to rebuild the military;
- 2) Participating in defense strategy, reform and other reviews;
- 3) Starting the Department's first full audit.

If I am confirmed, the DoD Comptroller, in partnership with my CAPE colleague here on the panel, performs a critical role in linking strategy to resourcing. Together, we must provide sound analysis and compelling justifications for the resources the Department requests. Continued interactions with the Committee will be critical.

I have more than 20 years of experience in academia, the private sector, on Capitol Hill, in the Pentagon, and at U.S. Central Command. I have built a diverse skill set that, if confirmed, I will aggressively and relentlessly apply to the duties and responsibilities of the Principal Deputy Comptroller position and to the challenges facing the Department.

I am grateful for your consideration and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.