

Statement of Robert H. McMahon
Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense
For Logistics and
Materiel Readiness

Thank you Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and members of the committee for your consideration of my nomination to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness. I am honored to be before you today.

I am humbled that President Trump and Secretary Mattis have nominated me for this opportunity to once again serve our nation, and I wish to thank both of them for their confidence in me. I also want to thank Senator Perdue, Secretary Perdue, and Congressman Austin Scott for the support and encouragement they have given me during this process. Most importantly, I want to thank my family for their love and support. Today, I am joined by my wife Hope, a career civil servant for the Department of Defense, my daughter Erin Black and her husband Matt, and my son Bobby.

There is nothing more noble than serving others...especially those who have voluntarily raised their hands and said, "Here I am, send me." As a nation, we have an obligation to provide those who have raised their hand with the tools necessary to successfully accomplish the military and humanitarian missions we give them. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Secretary Mattis, Under Secretary Lord, and the rest of the Department of Defense team to ensure these brave warfighters have what they need to defend this nation.

As the guardians of this nation's freedom, we must always be ready to fight—and win--tonight. Ever present threats require an ever-ready force. Gone are the days that our nation has the luxury to take months or even years to rearm and prepare for war. What worked in World War II or even Desert Storm will not work today.

And although new systems and capabilities will be essential to maintaining our future military superiority, tonight's fight will be executed with the weapon systems currently in our cantonment yards, currently at sea, and currently on our flightlines. Therefore, it is paramount that we properly invest not only in the future, but in the readiness and sustainment of our current fleet of systems as well. Very simply, what makes the United States military stand out above others is our ability to project and sustain our armed forces at anytime and anywhere in the world; and, if confirmed, I will focus on continuing to maintain those essential attributes".

Unfortunately, 16 years of continuous combat operations has taken a toll on our equipment. This, combined with an aging fleet of systems due to limited modernization and recapitalization over the past two decades, requires us to be more aggressive and innovative in our effort to reset the force.

If confirmed, I will work with the Congress, the Services, and with our industry partners to:

- refine our current processes,
- enhance our organizational relationships, and
- revise our current policies and regulations,

all with a goal of optimizing our readiness and lethality, while ensuring we maximize the value of every tax dollar spent.

In terms of specifics, Secretary Mattis has presented a clear vision of what is necessary to achieve these two goals through his Defense Reform initiatives. The Logistics and Material Readiness team is already actively engaged in this effort with a focus on:

- transforming weapon system sustainment to enhance both near-term and long-term readiness;
- supporting the reform management initiatives...especially the supply chain initiative;
- improving cost management; and
- finding whole of government efficiencies.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading their efforts to achieve reforms in these four areas as well as other areas still to be identified.

In addition, if confirmed I will work with the Congress, the Services, and with industry to find better ways to control sustainment costs on new acquisitions. Costs, which historically have represented over 70 percent of the total life cycle cost of a weapon system.

During my 34 years in military service, the most important lesson I learned was that what differentiates our military from every other military force in the world is the quality of our people...our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines...military and civilian...active, Reserve, and Guard. If we take care of them—to include giving them the tools they need to successfully execute—they will take care of the mission. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring we as a department will do everything we can not to let them down.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.