

Advance Policy Questions for Thomas Modly
Nominee for Under Secretary of the Navy

Department of Defense Reforms

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 included the most sweeping reforms since the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

Do you support these reforms?

Yes. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Navy to implement the reforms enacted in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 within the Department of the Navy. I will also work closely with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Chief Management Officer to help implement those reforms that impact the business management functions of the Department. I will keep the defense committees updated on the progress of implementation.

What other areas for defense reform do you believe might be appropriate for this Committee to address?

At this time I do not have a strong position on other areas where the committee might be helpful. Given the scope of the reforms in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, I believe it will be important for the Department to absorb these changes effectively. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the implementation of these reforms and assess the impact to the Department of the Navy. Given this assessment, and other observations that I may make with respect to applicable and advisable reforms for the Department of the Navy, I will make the appropriate recommendations to the Secretary of the Navy.

Section 911 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 required the Secretary of Defense to establish cross-functional teams to address critical objectives of the Department.

Do you agree that the Department must be able to integrate its diverse, functional capabilities well in order to successfully defend the nation from increasingly complex and dynamic security threats? Will you meet this requirement to the best of your abilities?

Yes, given the increasingly complex range of threats to national security, the Department should always seek to better integrate diverse capabilities in a way

that optimizes lethality and agility.

What are your views on the potential focus areas and uses for future cross-functional teams?

If confirmed, I will dedicate substantial effort to determining how best the Navy and Marine Corps can leverage cross-functional teams in order to increase lethality and agility across the full spectrum of missions. Advanced communications technologies create tremendous potential in this area if properly developed to maximize interoperability and collaboration.

Qualifications

What background and experience do you have that qualify you for this position?

Over the course of my professional career I believe I have developed the necessary skills that uniquely qualify me for this position. As a Naval Academy graduate and former Naval Aviator, my formative years as a young professional were developed within the naval service and the broader context of U.S. national security. In the private sector, I developed analytical business skills that honed my ability to assess and value organizations and organizational performance. As the first director of the Defense Business Board I developed the formal process for leveraging private sector business expertise to provide recommendations for reform for the Secretary of Defense. Additionally, as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Financial Management I gained critical experience leading broad transformational efforts for the Business Mission Area of the Department. I have also lead economic development teams in both Iraq and Afghanistan. These experiences built an even greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the sacrifices made by our Sailors and Marines, and their families, every day. If confirmed as the Under Secretary of the Navy, I am certain that this combination of skills, experience, and appreciation for our warfighters will serve me well.

Duties

Section 5015 of title 10, United States Code, states the Under Secretary of the Navy shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of the Navy may prescribe.

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of the Navy?

The U.S. Code states that the Under Secretary shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of the Navy may prescribe. By regulation, the Under Secretary is the deputy and principal assistant to the Secretary in managing the Department of the Navy. The Under Secretary also serves as the Chief Operating Officer of the Department. In accordance with section 904(b) of the FY 2008 NDAA, the Under Secretary also serves as the Department's Chief Management Officer.

What recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of the Navy, as set forth in section 5015 of title 10, United States Code, or in Department of Defense regulations pertaining to functions of the Under Secretary of the Navy?

After review of the statutes and regulations, I do not currently recommend any changes. If confirmed, I will review these statutes and regulations within the context of the current challenges of the Department of the Navy and propose any changes that I may identify as meriting attention through the appropriate channels.

If confirmed, what additional duties, if any, do you expect will be prescribed for you?

If confirmed, I expect the Secretary of the Navy to assign me duties that I can execute by leveraging my strengths and experiences that will assist him with advancing his priorities and vision for the Department of the Navy.

Section 904(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, directs the Secretary of a military department to designate the Under Secretary of such military department to assume the primary management responsibility for business operations.

What is your understanding of the business operations responsibilities of the Under Secretary of the Navy?

The Under Secretary of the Navy is responsible for overseeing the business operations of the Department and he or she should direct the business environment be more effective, efficient, agile and accountable. If confirmed, I will develop and lead a comprehensive strategy to modernize business operations that align with DoD-wide business reform initiatives. At the core of these efforts will be an emphasis on improved business risk management that prioritizes and rewards innovation, collaboration, speed, adaptability, and transparency. Additionally, if confirmed, I will dedicate my efforts to improving the Department's understanding and management of costs to ensure valid and verifiable data is always at the core of key management decisions.

How do you perceive your role in setting the agenda for the Navy Deputy Chief Management Officer?

If confirmed, I will analyze the role of the Navy DCMO and align it to focus the Department's business operations on enhancement of two primary organizational characteristics: agility and accountability. If confirmed, I envision using the office of DCMO as the primary change agent to modernize business operations to include the business systems environment, financial management and accountability, and human capital development. Additionally, if confirmed, I will leverage the office of Navy DCMO to foster a culture of innovation that seeks closer relationships and collaboration with the private sector.

Duties and Responsibilities as Chief Management Officer

Section 904 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 designates the Under Secretary of the Navy as the Navy's Chief Management Officer (CMO). Section 908 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 requires the CMO of each of the military departments to carry out a comprehensive business transformation initiative.

What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Under Secretary in the capacity as CMO of the Department of the Navy?

The CMO's primary duties are to (a) ensure that the Department can carry out its strategic plan, (b) ensure the core business missions of the Department are optimally aligned to support the warfighting mission, (c) establish performance goals and measures for improving and evaluating overall economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and monitor and measure the progress of the Department, and (d) develop and maintain a Department-wide strategic plan for business reform.

To help ensure management processes, information technology, business systems, and administrative services are complementary, and integrated with and aligned to the Department of the Navy's mission, the duties and responsibilities of the CMO and DCMO are prescribed by the Secretary of Defense so that they may effectively and efficiently organize the business operations of the Department. The duty of the DCMO is to assist the CMO in carrying out those objectives and, if delegated, assume primary responsibility for those functions.

What background and expertise do you possess that qualify you to perform these duties and responsibilities?

The Under Secretary must have a thorough knowledge of the Department of the Navy; understand and respect the cultures of the Navy and Marine Corps as well as the DoN's civilian workforce. Additionally, the Under Secretary must also have a strong working knowledge of innovative management tools and techniques being employed in the highest performing organizations, both inside and outside of government.

If confirmed, I will use my expertise in national security, defense management reform, and private sector management innovation. During my previous tenure in DoD I was intimately involved in the evolution of the CMO roles for each of the military departments as I advocated for this when reporting directly to the DoD's CMO, the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Given the experience I have driving transformation at the OSD level, I am acutely aware of the necessity for the military departments to lead change and business management improvements within their respective enterprises. With respect to the Department of the Navy, the Under Secretary, in his or her role as departmental CMO, must be viewed as the key transformational leader and he or she must break down and align organizational silos that inhibit enterprise thinking.

If confirmed, I will make it clear that defense management reform in the Department is a priority and that it has my full attention, and I will drive advocacy at the highest level in the Department.

Do you believe that the CMO has the resources and authority needed to carry out the business transformation of the Department of the Navy?

Yes. If confirmed, I will review the resources and authorities to determine whether any are insufficient.

What role do you believe the CMO should play in the planning, development, and implementation of specific business systems by the military departments?

The CMO should be ultimately responsible for the development and execution of an effective enterprise transition plan for the Department of the Navy's business mission. This should include modernization and rationalization of the business systems environment to enhance operational performance and accountability.

What steps will you take to promote management innovation in the Navy?

If confirmed, I would prioritize, measure and reward innovation at all levels of the Department. I would also seek to infuse the Department with private sector expertise in relevant areas, while also providing opportunities for Department personnel to learn and develop new skills through exposure to innovative

management techniques outside the Department of the Navy.

Data Analytics

Do you think that the Navy does an adequate job of collecting and analyzing data to support business management decisions and changes?

If confirmed, I will investigate this question. I recognize the power of data analytics in improving business operations but I do not currently have any insight regarding the Navy's employment of such tools and techniques beyond a very rudimentary level.

What steps will you take to improve the Navy's ability to improve its management processes?

If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Secretary of Defense to implement his management reform agenda to include supporting decisions and activities that create broader shared services and streamlined business processes across the Department. I will also work with the Assistant Secretaries of the Navy to evaluate and implement cross-functional areas of improvement that enhance the overall management of the Department of the Navy as integrated enterprise.

Major Challenges and Priorities

In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next Under Secretary of the Navy?

The major challenges facing the next Under Secretary of Navy have both near and long term dimensions. In the near term, the Department of the Navy faces an unsustainable dichotomy—the demands of an increasingly complex global security environment and the constraints imposed by reduced levels of funding to sustain and modernize our forces. This dichotomy has already lead to a deterioration of readiness while our adversaries, both large and small, continue to develop and employ capabilities which are becoming more challenging and complex to counter. While the Department must address readiness to meet near-term obligations and the regional requirements of the combatant commanders, a focus on current state readiness must not supersede the longer term challenge of the construction of a lethal, agile, and accountable Navy and Marine Corps for the next 50 years. Balancing these two critical issues to ensure both near and long term superiority of our naval forces will be the core challenge for the next Under Secretary of the Navy.

If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

The Secretary of the Navy has articulated his priorities and, if confirmed, I will diligently work with him to ensure these priorities are communicated and embraced broadly across the Department of the Navy. I will also build out an effective team at the Secretariat level that is innovative and forward-thinking to match the organizational characteristics that are essential for building the Navy and the Marine Corps of the future while also managing the risks inherent in the current operating environment. Broad cultural change must be consistently lead and advocated for at the most senior levels of the Department and I will work to ensure that the Secretariat is a change agent that pushes the entire Department to higher levels of agility and accountability.

If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish and how will you measure progress in achieving these priorities?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy's priorities which are focused on both ensuring that our people are highly trained and well equipped, and aligned toward the long term mandate of improving and modernizing our capabilities and processes. I will also support the Secretary's efforts to restore direct authority to those decision makers who are immediately responsible for solving critical issues, thereby increasing their span of control and minimizing hierarchical overhead. I concur with Secretary Spencer that our highest priority is to address fleet wide readiness by strengthening and leveraging our capabilities, while setting the conditions to modernize and grow capacity. I will ensure that the Department has adequate tools, most importantly intellectual capital, to address these priorities, and that we have meaningful metrics to assess our progress on the path to greater agility and accountability.

Relations with Congress

What are your views on the state of the relationship between the Department of the Navy and the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?

It is essential that the Department of the Navy has a strong relationship and partnership with the Senate Armed Services Committee and Congress. While not a perfect analogy, I view Congress as the Department of the Navy's board of directors and I believe that the best boards of directors are those that challenge management to higher levels of performance in a spirit of collaboration and shared interests. In my previous tour in the Pentagon I developed a strong working relationship with my oversight committees in Congress and believe this was critical to my ability to drive progress forward in the Department. If

confirmed, I look forward to ensuring these relationships are nurtured and that strong trust, maximum cooperation, coordination, and transparency characterize the Department's interactions with Congress.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and the Department of the Navy?

If confirmed, I will invest a significant amount of my time to build relationships and open communications with Congress. I will not tolerate a lack of transparency, and I will ensure that the Department will be proactive and responsive to all Congressional matters of importance and provide robust justification for all budget requests. It will be a high priority of mine to ensure Congress is never caught by surprise by any actions of the Department of the Navy.

Torture and Enhanced Interrogation Techniques

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014, and required by section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92)?

Yes. I have read these documents and I support the standards they define.

National Security Budget Reductions/Sequestration

The original discretionary caps imposed by the Budget Control Act (BCA) will be in effect for Fiscal Years 2018 through 2021, unless there is an agreement to change budget levels.

In your assessment, what would be the impacts of continued implementation of the BCA discretionary caps through Fiscal Year 2021 on the Department of Defense?

Both the sequester caps as imposed by the BCA, and the continuing resolutions to date, continue to erode the readiness of our forces. This situation must be resolved or it is highly unlikely that the Navy and Marine Corps will be able to meet both near term readiness requirements and longer term modernization goals to include the construction and deployment of a 350+ ship Navy. If confirmed, I will work closely with this Committee and Congress to accurately quantify the magnitude of this problem and to provide fiscally responsible, but realistic, solutions that can remedy this acute challenge.

If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of Department of the Navy funding?

If confirmed, I will develop a risk-based approach to quantifying the financial challenges facing the Department that will clearly demonstrate trade-offs and the risks associated with them. This approach must include a concurrent emphasis on both readiness and modernization/expansion of the forces themselves. I concur with Secretaries Mattis and Spencer in their belief that fleet readiness of both the Navy and Marine Corps is of utmost concern. However, if confirmed, I will also support their desire to avoid a myopic focus on current state readiness that ignores the long-term viability of the forces. Ultimately, I will seek to ensure that we drive decisions that protect the people we put in harm's way as a top priority.

Administrative Overhead

The National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 direct reforms to consolidate the headquarters functions of the Department of Defense and the military departments, and downsize the number of personnel in overhead positions.

If confirmed, what would be your role in streamlining functions, as well as identifying and implementing reductions in the Department of the Navy headquarters?

I recognize that the overall management of the Department of the Navy is the responsibility of the Under Secretary in his or her role as Chief Management Officer. As such, if confirmed, I will act on behalf of the Secretary to ensure that the Department of Navy, in coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, fully complies with the requirements identified in NDAA for FY 2016 and 2017 to reduce headquarters size and consolidate functions and overhead positions. If confirmed, I will also seek to reevaluate and restructure Office of the Secretary of the Navy to institutionalize it as a change agent for broad transformation of the Department's business mission and as a focal point for driving innovative thinking about the future of our naval forces.

What areas and functions, specifically and if any, do you consider to be the priorities for possible consolidation or reductions within the Department of the Navy?

Based on my previous experience in the Department I am convinced that there are multiple opportunities to reduce redundancies and develop shared services offerings in coordination with the other military departments. It is my understanding that Deputy Secretary of Defense Shanahan is driving initiatives in this regard and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with him to implement

DoD-wide initiatives while also evaluating and addressing areas of opportunity within the Department of the Navy.

To the extent that the Department of the Navy has functions that overlap with the Department of Defense, Joint Staff, or other military departments, what would be your approach to consolidating and eliminating redundancy?

It is my understanding that the Deputy Secretary of Defense is driving changes in this regard. If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Secretary and his team to implement the appropriate changes and consolidation of functions. In so doing, I will not abandon my advocacy for the Navy and Marine Corps and will defend opportunities to retain certain functions within the Department of the Navy if they are indeed unique, relatively cost-neutral, and critical to the effective execution of the Navy and Marine Corps missions. In addition to the initiatives lead at the OSD level, if confirmed, I will also lead a parallel effort to address areas of opportunity within the Department of the Navy itself. My approach would be guided by an adherence to the concept of “tiered accountability” which recognizes that not all functions are best consolidated at the enterprise level.

How will you assess whether personnel reductions are negatively impacting the Navy’s ability to execute important management and administrative functions?

Personnel reductions must be implemented with an understanding of prospective impacts that are well-understood in advance. Therefore, if confirmed, I will oppose personnel reductions that merely impose random percentage cuts applied equally across all organizations. Additionally, if confirmed, I will establish metrics to monitor and measure operational performance of the impacted organizations.

End Strength

The President’s Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 requested a Navy active-duty end strength of 327,900 and a Marine Corps active-duty end strength of 185,000.

In your view, can the Navy and Marine Corps meet national defense objectives at the requested Fiscal Year 2018 strength levels? What about at the strength levels that would be required in the event of sequestration?

The requested end-strength in the President’s Budget for FY 2018 would minimally meet national defense objectives; however, a return to sequestration would not. In the past sequestration imposed reductions in resources and force levels that resulted in sea duty gaps, cancellation of deployments, reduction in

steaming days and flying hours, reduced training and furloughs of civilian workers. These are adverse outcomes that impact readiness and severely impact the ability of the Navy and Marine Corps to meet national defense objectives.

If either the Navy or Marine Corps have to reduce end strength as a result of sequestration, where would you propose they take risk with respect to meeting national defense objectives?

I have not studied this issue in detail; however, if confirmed, I would not support any end strength decisions that would undermine the safety and security of our Sailors and Marines.

What is your understanding of the need for additional force shaping tools requiring legislation beyond what Congress has provided the past several years?

If confirmed, I will assess the extent to which the Department may need additional authorities to recruit, develop, shape, and retain the talent necessary to meet the mission of the Department of the Navy. I will also seek ways to better connect our forces with the private sector to foster a more productive exchange of ideas and innovative approaches to problem solving.

What is your view of the adequacy of the numbers of general and flag officers authorized for the Navy and Marine Corps?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps have been required to reduce the number of flag officers both for service-specific billets and for joint billets. I agree that some adjustments are necessary to adjust the number of flag officers and their respective scopes of responsibility. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Navy to address these requirements with the CNO and the CMC to determine their adequacy. Once completed, I will support the Secretary in providing his views to Congress.

Overall Readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps

How would you assess the current state of readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps?

I agree with the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and all the Service Chiefs who have expressed grave concern about the state of the military's current readiness. The degradation of readiness is exacerbated by an increasingly uncertain security environment in which our adversaries are advancing their capabilities across a broad spectrum of disruptive and destructive threats.

How would you plan to restore full spectrum readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps and under what timelines? Additionally, how would you enforce those timelines to ensure that goals are met?

Restoring full spectrum readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps will not be a short-term proposition as the current deficiencies did not occur overnight, but rather over an extended period of nearly a decade. Given the overall constraints imposed by the budget, I support the Secretary of Defense's decision to address this issue via a three-phase campaign that focuses on warfighter readiness in FY 2017, addresses pressing shortfalls in FY 2018 while continuing to rebuild readiness, enhances modernization and begins to build a larger, more capable and more lethal joint force in FY 2019. I support the Department of the Navy's FY 2018 budget request within this broader DoD imperative.

If confirmed, I will seek ways to accelerate the rate of readiness recovery with every year's budget in a way that puts the safety of our sailors and marines first, and will also ensure that the Department of the Navy retains a focus on deploying agile forces that can respond to a full range of prospective threats today and into the future.

Acquisition Issues

The National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Year 2016 and 2017 made many changes to defense acquisition processes, including reinserting service leaders' influence and accountability into acquisition processes.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to aid in ensuring that the Department of the Navy is prepared to effectively manage its acquisition programs?

If confirmed I will support the Secretary of the Navy in driving a culture of accountability across the Department, and most specifically within the acquisition community. It is clear that major acquisition programs in the Navy have suffered from poor cost and schedule performance that, in the end, will cost taxpayers billions of dollars. This is unacceptable. If confirmed, I will direct the Assistant Secretary for RD&A to perform a complete review of this persistent problem and implement changes to address core issues, to include driving greater transparency into the process so that the reporting of truth is encouraged, and so that cost and performance risks are identified and addressed far earlier. I also recognize the need to improve efforts to link and streamline the Department's requirements, acquisition, and budget processes, building on the provision of Section 808 of the FY16 NDAA and the Services commitments associated with this provision.

Financial Management and Audit Readiness

What are your views on the importance and role of timely and accurate financial and business information in managing operations and holding managers accountable?

Every business enterprise is dependent upon timely and accurate financial and business information to facilitate informed, fact-based decision-making. It is very difficult to assign accountability without access to such information, and therefore an organization that operates without it is likely sub optimized.

How would you address a situation in which you found that reliable, useful, and timely financial and business information was not routinely available for these purposes?

If this were the case, it would be my priority to correct it as quickly as possible.

If confirmed, what role do you envision playing in managing or providing oversight over the improvement of the financial and business information available to Navy managers?

If confirmed, I believe this will be one of my primary responsibilities and I will approach it as such.

Despite the passage of the Chief Financial Officers Act in 1990, the Department of Defense remains unable to achieve a clean financial statement audit. The Department also remains on the Government Accountability Office's list of high risk agencies and management systems for financial management and weapon system acquisition. Although audit readiness has been a goal of the Department for decades, it has repeatedly failed to meet numerous congressionally directed audit readiness deadlines.

What is your understanding and assessment of the Department of the Navy's efforts to achieve a clean financial statement audit?

I understand that the Department of the Navy will undergo a full audit of all of its financial statements commencing in 2018 in accordance with the law. I also understand that the Department has been preparing for this audit for the last several years in compliance with the Department of Defense's Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) guidance. I also understand Navy has a list of deficiencies they seeking to correct, and while the Navy is ready to begin audit much work remains on systems and processes. I am aware that many of the obstacles that existed during my previous tenure in the Department still exist. If confirmed, I will ask for a full review of the progress made in the Navy's FIAR

efforts to determine whether the proper focus was applied in the proper areas, and so that future efforts to achieve an unqualified audit opinion is achievable.

In your opinion, is the Department of the Navy on track to achieve this objective, particularly with regard to data quality, internal controls, and business process re-engineering?

The DON will not achieve a clean (unqualified) opinion in 2018. I believe the Navy is on track to perform an audit, but much work remains on the fundamental deficiencies before obtaining an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. I believe that the audit will likely produce valuable lessons that will further reinforce the value of continuing improvement efforts and could ultimately lead to an unqualified opinion if properly lead. It must be understood, however, that achieving this requires leadership and an organizational culture change with respect to the basic tenets of sound financial management.

If not, what impediments may hinder the Department of the Navy's ability to achieve this goal and how would you address them?

There are multiple impediments to the Department's ability to achieve an unqualified audit opinion. Many of these have been well-documented by the GAO and the DoD's FIAR office in both systems and processes. If confirmed, I will lead the effort to put the financial audit at the forefront of the Department's business transformation activities—not simply as a way to achieve an audit for its own sake, but rather to use it as a way to improve overall business operations and drive greater financial accountability at all levels.

In your view, are the steps that the Department of the Navy needs to take consistent with the steps that the Department of Defense needs to take to achieve full auditability?

Yes, I believe these steps are consistent. If confirmed, I will work closely with the DoD Comptroller and the FIAR office to ensure there is alignment in these efforts.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the Department of the Navy moves to achieve these objectives without an unaffordable or unsustainable level of one-time fixes and manual work-arounds?

If confirmed, I will commit to building sustainable financial accountability as an integral part of the Department of the Navy culture and business systems environment. In so doing I will ensure that manual processes and workarounds that degrade financial controls are minimized and that investments in business systems comply with enterprise standards to achieve interoperability and data fidelity.

In your view, what is the value to the Department of the Navy of investing significant resources in achieving and maintaining a clean financial audit statement?

There are three primary points of value derived from financial audit of the Department of the Navy's financial statements that yields an unqualified opinion. First, the unqualified audit opinion provides independent assurance to the Congress and the American people that funds provided to the Department were used for their intended purpose. This helps build confidence and trust. Second, the improvements to processes and systems that will be required to facilitate an unqualified audit opinion will, by their very nature, improve managerial discipline and financial accountability across the enterprise. Third, the integrity of financial data as verified by the unqualified opinion will facilitate more informed decision-making through greater data integrity, and can also ultimately lead to a better understanding of actual costs.

In your view, what confidence can the public and Congress have in the Department of the Navy's ability to execute increased budgets efficiently and without waste or fraud, given its inability to pass an audit?

The Department of the Navy's inability to receive an unqualified opinion on its financial statements certainly undermines its credibility with the public and Congress with respect to its ability to execute budgets without waste or fraud. If confirmed, I will work diligently to earn this credibility by building a more financially accountable culture that not only values and delivers an unqualified audit opinion, but one that is financially transparent and cost-conscious.

Defense Capabilities

What do you believe are the appropriate end strength levels for the Navy and Marine Corps to reach by 2022?

While I recognize that the security requirements are demanding more and more of our forces, I do not have any preconceived notions regarding the adequate end strength levels for the Navy and Marine Corps. There is no question in my mind that we need a bigger Navy, and so commensurate with the growth in the number of ships we will need higher end strength levels to support them. With respect to the Marine Corps, I understand that Marine Corps believes the acceptable end-strength level is somewhere between 185,000 and 195,000, but I have not studied this issue in detail.

If confirmed, I also look forward to working with the Commandant and the

Marine Corps leadership to achieve the appropriate end strength levels that balance the requirements of defending the nation while relieving the strain on Marines and their families.

How would you propose achieving those levels with a focus on continuing to recruit and retain high quality candidates?

If confirmed, relying on the advice of the CNO and CMC, I will use every available authority, resource, and technology available to recruit and retain a high quality force, with the capabilities to meet emerging challenges and carry out mission requirements.

What is your opinion on the necessity to modernize Navy and Marine Corps weapons systems in light of current and emerging threats?

The Navy and Marine Corps team must always focus on modernizing current systems and procuring new systems in a timely manner. Our adversaries are not standing idle. They are investing in new capabilities that allow them to project power and operate with greater assertiveness to counter the advantages we have enjoyed since the end of the Cold War. Additionally, asymmetric threats require new innovative thinking and investment in capabilities that may not be traditional, but will still require rapid prototyping, deployment, and continuous improvement strategies.

What are the most critical capabilities the Department of the Navy needs to prioritize over the next 10 years?

I believe the critical capability that requires the highest prioritization is the procurement of ships that both expand the Navy's ability to forward deploy with greater lethality, and with reduced stress on our Sailors and their families. Concurrent with this must be an emphasis on advanced sensors, combat systems and weapons that take advantage of emerging technologies and enhance our forces' ability to interoperate in a networked environment. Any new capability must address our ability to act in the electromagnetic spectrum in contested environments. This has direct application to the priority to maintain the investment in 5th generation aircraft as well as unmanned platforms that expand the range, and reduce the vulnerability, of our forces.

I also believe that the DoN must prioritize the advancement of an organizational culture defined by high agility. The DoN must have people and platforms who (that) are flexible and adaptable in order to effectively respond to the unpredictable security environment they will most likely face in the future. This

will require deliberate investments in the development of our people and platforms that consider agility as a necessary outcome.

If confirmed, how will you contribute to keeping Navy and Marine Corps acquisition costs under control and ensure the U.S. taxpayer receives the best defense capabilities for their precious and scarce defense dollars?

A well understood, and well established, set of requirements are essential to taking cost and schedule risk out of the acquisition process. Additionally, critical technologies must be mature enough to support stable production, and flexible enough to facilitate upgrades as required over the acquisition and sustainment lifecycle. Additionally, we need to ensure our research and development (R&D) efforts are aligned with our acquisition priorities so that tangible benefits from R&D are realized.

If confirmed, I will enthusiastically and visibly support the Secretary of the Navy in his commitment to be an active and accountable leader in the acquisition process. I will use the authorities granted to me to drive greater accountability across the Department's acquisition community and to build a culture of cost consciousness and improved stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Navy Shipbuilding

President Trump has vowed to rebuild the Navy toward a goal of 350 ships. In December 2016, the Navy set the current Force Structure Assessment (FSA) requirement of 355 ships. The previous FSA requirement set a goal of 308 ships. The Navy's current naval battle force contains only 273 ships, and will not achieve a force level goal of 308 ships until 2021, even though various individual requirements are not met. The Navy has not announced a plan for reaching the 355-ship force structure or delivered a 30-year shipbuilding plan associated with the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request.

In a November 2016 report, the Congressional Research Service found that achieving and maintaining a notional 349 ship force structure would require adding on the order of 45 to 58 ships to the Navy's Fiscal Year 2017 30-year shipbuilding plan, or an average of about 1.5 to 1.9 additional ships per year, at a cost of roughly \$3.5 billion to \$4.0 billion per year over the 30-year period.

In your view, how large a Navy, consisting of what mix of ships, will be needed in coming years to adequately perform Navy missions?

Given the global security challenges that impact our maritime strategy there is no question that we need a larger Navy fleet. I understand that the most recent Force

Structure Assessment recommends 355 ships. I directionally agree with this recommendation, but also understand that the precise force mix will require further analysis to ensure we are focused on the capabilities of this larger fleet. It is my understanding that the 2018 National Defense Strategy will include a new force sizing construct that will further inform our force structure growth. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with Congress to ensure that we are driving toward an achievable, affordable force mix that can deliver the capabilities required.

What steps would you recommend evaluating to achieve a 355-ship Navy, particularly related to additional ship procurement and the funding required?

A first step to achieving a 355-ship Navy is to improve the longevity and viability of our existing fleet. This will require renewed emphasis on maintenance to maintain readiness and extend the service lives of the ships we currently have. Second, I agree with the Secretary of the Navy that we must work with industry to increase its capacity to produce ships that meet our requirements on a more accelerated and predictable timeframe. Third, regardless of our success in steps one and two, we will require increases in defense spending caps, and I believe strongly that congressional action to amend the Budget Control Act is necessary.

The Navy has begun acquiring the replacements for the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs). The new *Columbia*-class boats are projected to have an acquisition cost of \$10 billion per ship. The Navy has stated publicly that it could not afford to buy both the new SSBNs and maintain other required procurements under Defense Department budget top lines that would be consistent with the defense discretionary spending caps within the Budget Control Act.

What steps will be necessary to enable the Navy to expand to a 355-ship fleet, while also procuring the *Columbia*-class SSBNs?

Given the strategic imperative to modernize the sea-based leg of our nuclear triad, I believe it will be necessary to fund the *Columbia*-class SSBN using dedicated funding that does not encroach on other modernization and readiness efforts. Funding SSBNs in this manner will not set precedent as similar approaches were employed in previous SSBN procurement periods, where ship construction funds were increased significantly to account for SSBN procurement.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the United States procured the current *Ohio*-class SSBN submarines within the Navy's shipbuilding (SCN) account. In 2015, Congress created a special fund, the National Sea-Based Deterrence Fund (NSBDF), for procurement of *Columbia*-class SSBNs.

Do you have a view on how the cost of *Columbia*-class SSBNs should be funded – solely from Navy resources, from a combination of Navy and other-than-Navy (e.g., OMB and other Defense) sources, or with a different approach? If so, please explain.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy and Congress to determine the best approach to funding the *Columbia*-class SSBN program. I believe that funding for the *Columbia*-class, as the third leg of our strategic nuclear triad, should not be compromised by other requirements of the Navy. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress to ensure the proper acquisition authorities are used and that the DoN consistently looks for ways to make this critical program more affordable.

Aircraft Carriers

After more than \$2 billion in cost growth in each of the first three *Ford*-class aircraft carriers, the costs of these ships range from \$11.4 billion to \$12.9 billion.

In your view, should the Navy and Marine Corps explore options to complement *Ford* and *Nimitz*-class aircraft carriers and/or increase the lethality and survivability of amphibious ready groups with smaller, less expensive aircraft carriers?

I believe the DoN should consider all force structure options. With specific regard to a smaller carrier, I do not believe that this capability should replace the requirement for continuing investments in the *Ford*-class carriers, nor the multi-mission, versatile amphibious platforms, such as LHA 8 Class ships, but rather it should complement these ships for unique missions in which the carrier is not the most cost-effective or agile platform for force projection.

When the construction contract was signed in 2008, the planned delivery date of the USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN-78) was September 2015 at a cost of \$10.5 billion. The ship was delivered in May 2017 at a cost of \$12.9 billion.

What is your understanding of the reasons behind the CVN-78 delivery delay and cost overrun?

It is my understanding that the USS GERALD R. FORD (CVN 78) was delivered 20 months behind the original delivery date and significantly over cost. I also understand that her delivery was delayed due to a number of factors both within the Navy and with industry, and that the inclusion of four major unproven technologies was a contributing factor to these delays. While I have not had

access to a detailed analysis of the issues which drove the cost and schedule overruns, if confirmed, I will commit significant effort to ensure that the next ships in this class will take full advantage of the learning curve that both the Navy and industry experienced during the development of the first ship in the class. If confirmed I will strive to ensure that the Navy leverages this learning curve to deliver carriers at a lower cost and on a more reliable schedule.

What lessons should the Navy learn from the CVN-78 experience?

The Secretary of the Navy has stated that he will be accountable for, and drive accountability into, the acquisition system. If confirmed, I will share this accountability with him to reduce the cost for the follow-on ships in the Ford class. More broadly, I believe valuable lessons from the Ford-class experience can be applied to other new acquisition programs to avoid similar cost and schedule overruns. If confirmed, I will review in detail the issues that drove these problems to ensure they are not repeated in the follow-on Ford procurements as well as other major complex acquisition programs.

Littoral Combat Ship (LCS)

In February 2016, the Secretary of Defense announced his decision to down-select to a single LCS variant and reduce the procurement quantity to a combination of 40 basic variant LCS and frigate variants of LCS, as codified in revision 3 of the LCS acquisition strategy signed in March 2016. Section 123 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 prohibits revisions or deviations from this acquisition strategy unless the Secretary of Defense submits a certification to the congressional defense committees. In the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2018, the Navy indicated the frigate requirements were being reviewed to increase lethality and survivability and that the frigate competition (FFG(X)) would be full and open to existing U.S. and foreign frigate designs, which would be built in the United States.

What is your view of the LCS program?

The Secretary of the Navy has stated that he will take a deep dive into the LCS program to gain a full understanding of the history, the problems, the corrections and the options for the future. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to ensure this review is comprehensive and that it drives the appropriate decisions to fulfill the warfighting requirement for a total of 52 Small Surface Combatants (SSCs). While I understand that the Navy intends to fulfill the SSC requirement with a combination of LCS and its successor, the Frigate, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to ensure the Navy selects the optimal mix between the two ship classes and that the Frigate development and construction program is

highly competitive and managed with speed, cost-consciousness, and integrity.

What is your understanding of the FFG(X) program and how it will differ from LCS?

I understand that while LCS was designed to be a focused-mission ship, the FFG (X) will provide Combatant and Fleet Commanders a ship with multi-mission warfare capabilities to achieve select sea control objectives and perform maritime security operations, while facilitating access in all domains in support of strike group and aggregated fleet operations. It is also my understanding that the FFG(X) program is seeking to meet its requirements leveraging mature ship designs and technology, and that the Navy intends to maximize competition by looking at many possible alternatives, including foreign ship designs. If confirmed, I will support this approach and work with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for RD&A to ensure a highly competitive procurement process with a level playing field for all qualified competitors.

What is your understanding of the current LCS acquisition strategy, which transitions from LCS to FFG(X) procurement in Fiscal Year 2020? Do you support this acquisition strategy?

I understand the Navy will procure additional LCS in FY 2018 and 2019 as part of the revised LCS acquisition strategy in order to allow adequate time to define the requirements, mature the Frigate design, and thoroughly evaluate design alternatives. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy to ensure we have a sense of urgency in our efforts in delivering on the strategy.

LCS mission modules give the current LCS vessels their primary mission capability. The initial operational capabilities for the 3 LCS mission modules have been delayed by a cumulative of 27 years – 5 years for the surface warfare package (occurred 2015), 9 years for the anti-submarine warfare module (expected 2019), and 13 years for the mine countermeasures package (expected 2021) – creating a significant mismatch between the 27 LCS on contract and their ability to deploy combat capabilities.

Do you consider it acceptable to have 27 LCS on contract with little ability for these ships to deploy with their primary combat capability?

No, I do not believe that delays in the delivery of the select mission packages to the Fleet are acceptable. These ships must be able to deploy with their primary combat capability. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to review the Navy's acquisition strategies for both the LCS sea frames and the mission packages to ensure we are delivering needed capability to the Fleet both

affordably and in a timely fashion. If confirmed, I commit to Congress that I will provide my candid views on this topic once I have gained a better understanding of all the issues involved.

Would you consider halting procurement of further LCS sea frames or maintaining procurement at only the minimum sustaining rate at least until all three modules have achieved an initial operational capability?

If confirmed, I will review the Navy's acquisition strategies to ensure we are delivering needed capability to the fleet. If halting procurement of further LCS sea frames or maintaining procurement at only the minimum sustaining rate is the best decision with respect to delivering needed capabilities, I will not hesitate to recommend this to the Secretary of the Navy.

Naval Aviation

What is your assessment of the most important challenges facing Naval aviation? If confirmed, what steps would you take to meet those challenges?

The most important challenges facing Naval Aviation are not dissimilar from those facing the entire department—managing the absolute imperative to improve deteriorated readiness while also modernizing an aging aircraft mix to meet next generation security challenges.

Does the Navy have a sufficient number of strike-fighter aircraft? If not, if confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure they do?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy in his review of the current strike fighter inventory and projected procurements. In my view, the sheer number of strike-fighter aircraft in the inventory is less important than the capability and availability of those aircraft. If confirmed, I will ensure that any review of the Navy's inventory considers plans and investments to make those aircraft maintained and available at a higher rate than I understand they are currently.

What is your understanding of the physiological episodes that the Naval aviation community is confronting and the plans to address such episodes?

It is my understanding that the recent physiological episodes experienced by naval aviators may be related to hypoxia and decompression events. I have not been given access to detailed reports in this regard, but it is my understanding that a thorough review is underway. If confirmed, I believe my most important responsibility will be to ensure that we provide our Sailors and Marines with

equipment that is safe. As a father of an Air Force pilot, I want to know that the aircraft the Air Force is asking him to fly are safe and so I empathize with the naval aviators and their families who share strong concerns about this physiological issue. Therefore, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and the Naval Aviation enterprise to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.

Marine Corps Aviation

What is your assessment of the most important challenges facing Marine Corps aviation? If confirmed, what steps would you take to meet those challenges?

The most important challenges facing Marine Corps aviation are the same as those facing Naval Aviation, as well as those facing the entire department—managing the absolute imperative to improve deteriorated readiness while also modernizing an aging aircraft mix to meet next generation security challenges.

Is Marine Corps aviation readiness at an acceptable level? If not, if confirmed, what steps would you take to improve aviation readiness?

No. I believe that, like the Navy, the Marine Corps has accepted too much risk in aviation readiness. This situation has accrued due to 15-years of wartime operational tempo and chronic underfunding of many readiness accounts. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary and work with Congress to examine the magnitude of this problem and to support investments that will restore readiness of the current fleet and the future readiness of aircraft to be purchased through the Marine Corps' aviation modernization programs.

F-35 Joint Strike Fighter

What is your assessment of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter? If confirmed, what changes would you seek to implement in the program?

I am in support of both the Navy and Marine Corps' commitment to the F-35. The Navy and Marine Corps need a 5th generation aircraft to ensure we maintain air superiority and provide global precision attack against emerging threats. I am also aware that the F-35 is very expensive and will present unique integration challenges that will require sustained focus and attention to ensure promised capabilities are realized. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary's review of this program to assess the overall status.

In your view, are there alternatives for the Department of the Navy worthy of exploring other than purchasing 340 F-35C fighter aircraft, such as purchasing advanced fourth generation fighters still in production, such as enhanced F-18s, or developing a next generation fighter aircraft beyond the F-35's capabilities? What would be the best arguments for and against such an alternative?

I support the Department's plan to procure and modernize a mix of 4th and 5th generation aircraft as the most cost effective solution to meet the challenges of the next decades. Our 4th generation aircraft provide the capacity required for both low and high intensity conflict. The F-35 brings 5th generation capability to the Carrier Air Wing and an ability to penetrate airspace that would be impenetrable by a 4th generation aircraft such as the F-18. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to examine the optimum 4th/5th generation strike fighter mix based on threat assumptions, technology maturation, and future strategic assessments.

Carrier Air Wing

Do you believe the Navy's carrier air wing is designed to provide the capability we expect it to contribute to the carrier strike group? Specifically, will the projected air wing have sufficient available strike range, available payload, electronic warfare capability, and command and control capability? Why or why not? If not, if confirmed, what steps would you take to address any gaps?

Although I have not been briefed on any potential capability gaps because of classification, I believe the Department has composed, and will continue to balance, the carrier air-wing (CVW) with the right mix of capabilities to meet the needs of the nation. Although the Navy is taking positive steps to modernize the CVW, in terms of new aircraft, new sensors, and new weapons, it will take time and resources to ensure we maintain a competitive advantage over our adversaries. If confirmed, I will continue to review CVW capabilities to ensure they are capable of delivering the warfighting capability and capacity needed to fulfill the requirements of the Combatant Commanders and respond to the threats faced by our nation.

Unmanned Aviation

What is your assessment of the appropriate role unmanned aviation should play in Naval and Marine Corps aviation? If confirmed, what steps would you take to achieve that vision?

I believe that unmanned systems will play an increasingly important role in Navy and Marine Corps aviation, as other unmanned platforms will in all other aspects

of naval warfare. In particular, Unmanned Aviation will play a key role for both the Carrier Strike Group and Marine Air Ground Task Forces. Initially I believe these systems should be focused on surveillance, targeting, and extending the range of our manned systems. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to assess how we are investing in, and prioritizing, unmanned systems in order to extend our forces' strategic and tactical advantage today and into the future.

Munitions

Munitions inventories, particularly those of precision guided munitions, have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies and operations short of major combat, such as in the current operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure we have sufficient inventories of munitions to meet our combatant commanders' needs?

I am aware that munitions inventories have also been challenged by several years of budget reductions and instability. It is my understanding that the Navy is working to recover readiness in FY17 and address pressing shortfalls in FY18, consistent with the Secretary of Defense's priorities. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to increase readiness recovery and restoral of these pressing shortfalls as a high priority in FY18, and support the proposed investments in improving munitions inventories.

Cruise Missiles

In your view, how serious is the cruise missile threat to the Navy?

The cruise missile threat is very serious as our adversaries have developed, and are proliferating, advanced capabilities that put our naval forces at risk at ranges that could limit our maritime operations in defense of our national interests.

What is your understanding of the Navy's cruise missile defense strategy?

My understanding is that the Navy has conducted numerous analyses to defend naval forces and advanced bases from the cruise missile threat and has invested in near, mid, and long term capabilities to counter the emerging threat. I have not been briefed on the details and outcomes of these analyses.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that the Navy is adequately addressing this threat?

If confirmed, I will review the investments we have made to address this threat to ensure they are adequate. If they are not, I will work with the Congress to fund strategies to mitigate any deficiencies.

Navy and Marine Corps-Related Defense Industrial Base

What is your understanding and assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk among the entities that form the Navy and Marine Corps industrial base?

Sustaining a healthy industrial base is a critical national security requirement. I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps should always incorporate industrial base concerns into their acquisition/procurement strategies to ensure risk is appropriately managed. I also believe that the Navy and Marine Corps and our industrial suppliers must view each other as partners, and not adversaries. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to ensure the Department of the Navy will continue to manage the risk associated with maintaining a healthy industrial base while balancing prudent expenditure of resources. I will also focus on ensuring the Navy and Marine Corps are good customers who are respectful and demand high standards, but also place reasonable expectations on their industry partners.

How should Department of the Navy acquisition leaders consider impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major end items such as ships, aircraft, munitions, or key repair parts?

The Department of the Navy relies on a healthy and productive industrial base. It is a key national strategic asset. Any action that Department of the Navy takes to willingly or unwillingly undermine the health and long term viability of the industrial base ultimately damages our own ability to execute its mission. If confirmed, I will seek to foster a strong, respectful relationship with industry that aligns around common goals and values.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to improve identification, monitoring, assessment, and timely actions to ensure that risk in the Department of the Navy-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed in order to develop, produce, and sustain technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems?

I am not currently aware of the specific systems and processes the DoN uses to monitor risk in the industrial base. If confirmed, however, I will review whatever processes may exist, and in close collaboration with industry, seek opportunities

for improvement so that a healthy and competitive industrial base is capable of meeting the Department's requirements as part of the national security strategy.

Science and Technology

What is your understanding and assessment of the role that science and technology programs have played and will play in developing capabilities for current and future Navy and Marine Corps systems?

It is my understanding that science and technology programs play a vital role in developing capabilities to address current and future threats. These programs are sources for innovation that have the ability to create "force multipliers" for the Navy and Marine Corps, and other joint programs where developed technologies can be leveraged.

If confirmed, how will you ensure that successful Navy and Marine Corps science and technology programs will transition to operational warfighting capabilities?

If confirmed, I will provide full support to the Secretary of the Navy's commitment to build on the strong foundation of research, with the talented people and partners in government, academia and industry, and to continue to develop evolutionary and revolutionary capabilities while reducing cost and increasing speed. If confirmed, in the role of Chief Management Officer, I will place particular emphasis on how science and technology programs can be leveraged to advance the efficacy of the business mission area of the Department as well.

If confirmed, what metrics would you use to judge the value and the appropriate investment level in Navy and Marine Corps science and technology programs?

If confirmed, I will assess how these programs are currently being evaluated, and what metrics, if any, are being used to determine whether such metrics are appropriate and whether they motivate proper behaviors. I recognize that an emphasis on innovation can yield both workable and nonworkable solutions. The essence of innovation is to accept that failure can occur, but that there is value in the learning that comes with trial and error. Additionally, particularly in research and development programs, it is important to encourage and reward risk-taking and not stymie innovative, out-of-the-box thinking. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Navy's science and technology programs seek every available avenue to innovate more rapidly and with greater efficacy.

Test and Evaluation (T&E) Efforts

In your opinion, what are the appropriate roles that test ranges should play in ensuring that new technologies are ready for deployment? If confirmed, what steps would you take to achieve that vision?

Test ranges play a critical role in ensuring that new technologies are proven and ready for deployment to the fleet where our Sailors and Marines depend on them to execute their combat missions and assure their safety. I am encouraged by the general trends among defense organizations globally to integrate virtual and constructive simulation into the process of fielding new technologies. This will reduce risk, cost, and time required for fielding new capabilities and also allow our operators to learn in a safe and repeatable environment. Such capabilities should not replace live fire exercises for which we rely on our test ranges, but there is no question that it can augment such testing to reduce uncertainties and better, and more safely, familiarize our Sailors and Marines with new capabilities. If confirmed, I will assess the Department's test range operations to ensure we are maximizing the value of new approaches to augment our testing strategies.

What metrics will you use to assess the quality of the Department of the Navy's T&E infrastructure?

If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary of the Navy in addressing this area to ensure the DON has the required T&E infrastructure, to include exploring the private sector for best practices in testing and evaluation.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to reduce the burden of bureaucracy and red tape on Navy laboratories and warfare centers, especially with respect to personnel and management issues?

While I am not familiar with the specific bureaucratic burdens that apply to Navy laboratories, if confirmed, I will seek every avenue to reduce the burden of bureaucracy and red tape on all aspect of the Department's operations.

Information Technology Programs

What major improvements would you like to see made in the Navy's and Marine Corps' development and deployment of major information technology (IT) systems?

I believe that the number one priority with regard to the Navy's and Marine Corps' major information technology (IT) systems must be to enhance our Cyberspace Operational Posture - Cyber Deterrence and Cyber Resiliency. This is a critical requirement, and a critical vulnerability, for both warfighting and business systems IT. Additionally, I believe the Navy and Marine Corps must

continue to wean themselves away from proprietary legacy systems whose expensive maintenance and poor interoperability with modern systems inhibits operational performance. Increasing usage of industry standard technologies and adoption of modern service models are two ways the Navy and Marine Corps can improve how we develop and deploy major IT systems. If confirmed, I will work closely with Navy leadership and our industry partners to explore new avenues to leverage the rapid pace of IT evolution in the private sector to enhance the Department's information management and security strategies.

If confirmed, how will you encourage process and cultural change in organizations so that they maximize the benefits that new enterprise IT systems can offer in terms of cost savings and efficiency?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy's goal to leverage his private sector experience regarding business efficiencies and change management in the Department of the Navy. I have a similar background combined with practical experience driving broad business transformation efforts in the Department of Defense a decade ago. If confirmed, I will immediately assess the existing business systems IT environment to determine what value has been derived from the Department's substantial investment in Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems and other IT modernization efforts and determine what course corrections, if any, are required.

What is the appropriate relationship between the Department of the Navy's efforts to implement enterprise IT programs and supporting computing services and infrastructure to support Department of the Navy missions and efforts being undertaken by the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA)?

I believe that DISA, as a shared service provider to the Department of the Navy, must be required to treat the Department as its customer. In this regard, if confirmed, I intend to hold DISA to the same high standards for performance and cost-competitiveness as we would with any other supplier of services to the Department. I agree with the Secretary of the Navy when he stated in testimony that he will "look to DISA as a competitive supplier of enterprise IT services and expect to benchmark them as such."

How will you ensure that appropriate business process reengineering is undertaken and accomplished before initiating new business systems and IT program development and deployment?

If confirmed, this will be one of my primary responsibilities. New business system implementation must be accompanied by substantial efforts to reengineer business processes; failure to do so limits the opportunities for success. Such

reengineering efforts are mostly culture change exercises that require relentless leadership engagement and encouragement from the most senior levels in the Department. If confirmed, I will be engaged in this work and I will use my influence to engage the most senior civilian and military leaders as well. I will not support investment in new business systems that do not demonstrate a path for success that includes compliance with enterprise standards, a positive impact on financial auditability, and an organizational commitment to implement the technology with minimal customizations.

What role will the Department of the Navy's research and testing enterprise play in the development and deployment of Navy and Marine Corps business IT systems?

I believe there are tremendous opportunities to leverage new technologies in the development and deployment of Navy and Marine Corps business IT systems. Because of the need to deploy, there are certainly some unique characteristics to Navy and Marine Corps business operations; however, commercial technologies are so advanced, standardized, and flexible that customizations that alter the core capability of hardware or software are largely unnecessary. If confirmed, I intend to utilize the Navy's research and testing enterprise to help the Department's business mission better understand how commercial IT developments in areas such as data analytics and artificial intelligence can be put to use across the Department's business enterprise to help rationalize systems and provide more credible, accurate, and timely data to decision makers.

Investment in Infrastructure

Witnesses appearing before this Committee in the past have testified that the military services under-invest in both the maintenance and recapitalization of facilities and infrastructure compared to private industry standards. Decades of under-investment in Defense Department installations have led to substantial backlogs of facility maintenance activities, created substandard living and working conditions, and made it harder to take advantage of new technologies that could increase productivity. These challenges have been exacerbated by current budget pressures.

What is your view of Navy and Marine Corps infrastructure investment?

It is my understanding that in recent years, the Department of the Navy has not prioritized necessary infrastructure investments. This lack of investment has created a significant project backlog which is negatively impacting readiness and creating higher costs for maintenance and long term lifecycle sustainment.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you propose to increase resources to reduce the backlog and improve Navy and Marine Corps facilities?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy to conduct a thorough review of all DON requirements to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are focusing our limited resources on the most critical and highest priority facilities projects. I recognize that the emphasis on improving readiness may constrain investment in these projects, but the Department must understand the implications of not making these investments and build appropriate risk management disciplines to mitigate them. If confirmed, I will seek innovative ways to leverage public private partnerships and third-party financing in order to overcome the limited availability of appropriated funds to finance such project and I will work with the Congress to seek additional authorities that may be helpful.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Officials of the Department of Defense, including previous Secretaries of the Navy, have advocated for accession to the Law of the Sea Convention.

Do you support U.S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

Yes. While I understand there are objections to some provisions of the Treaty, I believe the United States is in a better position to negotiate changes, and hold violators accountable, if we are a party to the agreement.

How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

I disagree with those who say the Convention is not in the national security interest of the United States. Our Armed Forces must be free to lawfully operate on, over, and above the world's oceans and the Convention codifies binding tenets of international law that are essential to the global mobility and operations of our military. These include the right of unimpeded transit passage through straits used for international navigation, the twelve nautical mile limitation on the maximum breadth of the territorial sea, and the reaffirmation of sovereign immunity for our warships. While I recognize that there are risks in surrendering some measure of national sovereignty by becoming a party to an international treaty, but I believe the benefits in this case outweigh the risks. By becoming a party to the Convention the United States will have a far more credibility in raising issues and concerns regarding the freedom of navigation.

In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea

Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes, such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

Recent and emerging events in the South China Sea and the Arctic demonstrate why the United States' accession to the Law of the Sea Convention can strengthen our hand in dealing with those who seek to violate longstanding international maritime norms. With regard to the South China Sea, China asserts claims which are not recognized under international law and attempts to exclude other states from lawful activities (such as military reconnaissance) in international waters. While the United States may not take sides in various territorial disputes in the South China Sea, we do have an enduring national security interest in ensuring disputes are resolved peacefully, with adherence to the rule of law. Similarly, as the Arctic becomes more accessible, it is increasingly important for the U.S. to secure the resources located in our extended continental shelf and resolve disputes over those resources. Our ability to respond to both of these challenges is more certain as parties to the Convention. Because we are not a party to the Convention, the United States has a far more difficult time asserting leadership, obtaining clarity, and demanding accountability from those nations who choose to violate international maritime law.

Base Closure and Realignment

The Department of Defense has repeatedly requested a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

Do you believe another BRAC round is necessary? If so, why?

Every effective enterprise regularly and systematically reviews and realigns its real property assets to determine the most effective use of capital in support of its overall strategy. The Department of Defense should be no different. In my opinion previous BRAC rounds produced real savings. I believe that a regular assessment of our real property footprint is necessary, but I also believe that this review must not be solely cost-driven but rather it must be "strategy-driven" just as it is done in the private sector. It must take into account strategic factors and risks to include the impact on our servicemembers and their families, the proper disbursement of forces, the economic and environmental impact on local communities, and cost.

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, how would you go about setting priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation within the Department of the Navy?

If confirmed, I would advise the Secretary of the Navy to ensure that BRAC decisions were “strategy” and not simply “cost” driven. In this regard BRAC should consider the Navy and Marine Corps missions of today, but also those anticipated in the future. I would also advise him to make this assessment of aligning infrastructure to strategy based on military value a regular exercise so that the Department would always be ready to respond with thoroughly developed thinking when and if a new BRAC round is authorized. BRAC should never catch the Department of the Navy by surprise. It should always be assessing how best to manage/consolidate/redeploy its real property assets. If confirmed, I will work with the Department’s Installations and Environment team to establish this discipline.

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, what is your understanding of the responsibilities of the Navy and Marine Corps in working with local communities with respect to property disposal?

It is my understanding that if Congress authorized another BRAC round, DON would work closely with all affected local communities and DOD recognized Local Redevelopment Authorities to achieve transfer and redevelopment goals. I understand this process was used in previous BRAC rounds and that it was mutually beneficial to the Department and the impacted communities.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

What is your assessment of the Navy and Marine Corps sexual assault prevention and response programs?

In addition to the devastating and permanent effects it has on its victims, sexual assault is a significant problem that corrodes morale, good order, discipline, and readiness of the Department of the Navy. My understanding is that the sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) programs that have been instituted by the Navy and Marine Corps are comprehensive and that there has been increased awareness across both Services. I also understand that both Services within the Department are engaged in the active pursuit of ensuring heightened awareness of sexual assault, how it threatens the armed forces, and reporting options for victims and witnesses. The effectiveness of these programs must be evaluated, and adjusted, over an extended period of time to ensure they eliminate incidents of sexual assault and the disrespectful and destructive climate that contributes to such incidents. The Department must continue to emphasize a climate of dignity and respect where male and female victims alike are empowered to report this crime, and their peers, shipmates, and fellow marines support them and show zero tolerance for such crimes.

If confirmed, I am firmly committed to continuing to focus our resources and enhancing our efforts in terms of both prevention and response. This will require persistent attention from leadership to monitor and adjust programs to ensure their effectiveness.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources the Navy and Marine Corps have in place to prevent sexual assaults and to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault?

I am familiar, at a high level, with the training and resources the Navy and Marine Corps have dedicated to this effort. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Navy, key leadership in the Secretariat, the Services and the private sector to identify any inadequacies, resolve them, and explore ways to improve the system.

If confirmed, I will strive to make the Department of the Navy's approach to resolving sexual assault issues be considered the gold standard. Given the serious nature of the crime, and the implications it has for the effectiveness of our fighting forces, there is no reason why the Navy and Marine Corps should not be viewed as one of the best organizations in the world for addressing and resolving this issue. I believe that both Services take sexual assault seriously and understand the intolerable and corrosive effects that it has on our institutions. If confirmed, I will do what is necessary to change the negative elements of their respective cultures that have facilitated this problem.

What is your assessment of the Navy and Marine Corps Victims' Legal Counsel programs?

I have no direct data or knowledge upon which to build a fair assessment of the Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) programs. I have learned, however, that VLCs are certified, trained, and qualified attorneys who provide confidential and privileged legal advice and counseling as well as assistance and representation for victims of sexual offenses as cases navigate the military's disciplinary and administrative systems. In principle, this sounds entirely appropriate and useful as it should ensure victims have legal advocacy with knowledge of the resources and tools available to them. I also understand that the VLC programs are dynamic and they will require adjustments over time as the Services gain more experience dealing with these issues.

What is your understanding of the adequacy of Navy and Marine Corps resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

It is my understanding that substantial efforts have been dedicated to addressing this problem. However, I have no factual basis from which to make an assessment of the adequacy of the programs themselves. I believe that having such programs are an absolute necessity in order to help victims deal with the medical, psychological and legal assistance they need. The Department has an obligation to not only seek justice on behalf of victims, but also to help heal the deep wounds such assaults can inflict. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy to ensure Navy and Marine Corps leaders at all levels have the resources they need to train unit personnel as well as advise and assist victims of sexual assault. If confirmed, I will explore ways to measure the effectiveness of these efforts and to improve, sustain and expand them as required.

What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove the disposition authority from military commanders over violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

In my experience as a Legal Officer on a U.S. Navy ship, I found that the disposition authority of military commanders to be both necessary and effective. I also believe commanders, beyond their legal authorities, are charged with fostering an environment where sexual assault and the behaviors and actions that may lead to such misconduct are unacceptable. They must drive the command climate and culture and ensure a safe and productive working environment. Commanders are personally responsible for the good order and discipline of their forces. They must have authority to meet that responsibility by implementing necessary disciplinary measures, and the commander is in the best position to evaluate what, if any, disciplinary measures are required. To that end, their involvement in the disciplinary process is crucial. I believe it is critical to the military justice process that military commanders maintain disposition authority over all justice matters within their respective commands, including over sexual assaults, and do not favor removing this authority from commanders. In these cases, I also believe that commanders must rely on all professional legal advice and counsel available to them to ensure justice is done and that victims are protected.

What is your assessment of the Navy's and Marine Corps' protections against retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault?

The Department of the Navy must not tolerate retaliation and reprisal against those who report sexual assault. I am in favor of live-action interactive training that involves audience participation in scenarios designed to educate on how to recognize and prevent retaliation and ostracism and I believe that these themes must be constantly and consistently reinforced to the point that they become a part of the culture. To date my exposure to these programs has been only at a high level, however, if confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy in assessing our training and support programs and helping sexual assault survivors heal and succeed - both in the Service and in their personal lives. Driving cultural change to create collaborative and respectful work environments requires constant education and reinforcement. Private sector companies take this seriously and so should the Department of the Navy.

Child Abuse in Military Families

Recent press reports indicate that the number of incidents of child abuse in military families has increased.

What is your understanding of the extent of this problem in the Navy and Marine Corps, and if confirmed, what actions will you take to address it?

I have not received any briefings containing specific data regarding this issue, however, I have learned that the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) monitors all reported incidents of child maltreatment in the Department of the Navy and that the Department submits to OSD and works with the other services to address this issue. If confirmed, I will review this sensitive information to better understand the extent of the problem and support the Secretary of the Navy as he directs appropriate analysis, aligns our prevention and education efforts accordingly, and monitor clinical programs that support families who are at risk or have experienced child abuse and neglect.

Abusive Online Conduct

Recently, this Committee considered testimony on reports that certain members of Marines United, an unofficial Marine Corps Facebook group, were found to be posting degrading comments and sharing nude photos of female service members. Members of the group included a number of active-duty service members, former military members, and military retirees.

What is the current Department of the Navy policy for use of social media by Sailors and Marines?

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy policy is that any form of

harassment, unlawful discrimination, or hazing, online or otherwise, is not tolerated, and is inconsistent with the core values of the Navy and Marine Corps. As consistent with the UCMJ, commanders are empowered to address this misconduct with a variety of tools, to include court-martial, non-judicial punishment, and/or administrative measures, as appropriate. Behaviors that rise to the level of sexual harassment, whether conducted person-to-person, online, or by any other method, are also covered under this policy and are not tolerated.

I have also learned that the Marine Corps and Navy have recently promulgated new guidance for wrongful distribution or broadcasting of intimate images in order to address concerns in the wake of the Marines United issue.

In your view, is this policy adequate to address abuses such as what occurred in the Marines United incident?

Without reviewing the impact that these policies are actually having on the Navy and Marine Corps I cannot assess whether they are sufficient. I agree with the Secretary of the Navy that vigilance is the key to ensuring that the DON social media policy has teeth to preclude the behaviors the policy is intended to prevent. Online media presents the Navy and Marine Corps with unique challenges to combating harassment, discrimination, and hazing. These challenges are reflective of those that society as a whole is facing. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary in addressing this challenge head on as it has the potential to be highly destructive of morale and mission effectiveness, in addition to the damage it inflicts on its victims.

I also agree with the Secretary of the Navy that additional policy changes may be necessary to address online misconduct and inappropriate online behavior and to modernize and adapt our approach to this relatively new issue and to ensure that leaders and their Marines and Sailors understand how to behave responsibly online.

If confirmed, what action would you take to ensure that members of the Navy and Marine Corps are not subjected to abusive online conduct?

If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Secretary of the Navy to train all personnel in the Department of the Navy on how to behave responsibly online. This will include an emphasis on the Navy and Marine Corps' enduring values that do not, and should not, waiver regardless of advances in technology and communications. If confirmed, I will also assess the actions the Navy and Marine Corps have taken in the wake of the Marines United revelations. This assessment will look at the appropriateness of any punishments and the effectiveness of policy and training in reducing the number of future incidents.

In your view, do the Navy and Marine Corps have sufficient legal authority to hold offenders accountable for such misconduct?

Yes. I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps have sufficient legal authority to deal with most misconduct that may be committed by Sailors and Marines. I also understand that as new forms of technology emerge, there may be adjustments necessary to ensure available authorities keep pace. I believe that there may be a need for a specific offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) addressing the nonconsensual distribution of intimate images, or other misuses of social media that are detrimental to morale, good order and discipline. I understand the DoD Joint Service Committee for Military Justice has proposed such a provision. If confirmed, I will consult with legal experts from within both the Judge Advocate community and outside the Department to provide the Secretary with the best possible advice in this regard.

What legislative authorities, if any, do you believe are necessary to address this problem?

I understand that the Navy and Marine Corps conducted an assessment of all legal and administrative tools and the Secretary of the Navy implemented the change to the U.S. Navy Regulations prohibiting the wrongful distribution or broadcasting of intimate images. Moreover, these offenses are now subject to mandatory administrative separation processing. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to determine whether the Services have the necessary tools to address this problem. I will not hesitate to ask the Secretary of the Navy for any assistance needed to eradicate this behavior from the Department of the Navy.

Religious Guidelines

In your view, do Department of Defense policies concerning religious accommodation in the military appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs, including individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

Yes, I believe that the DoD religious accommodation policy is appropriate and effective.

Do you agree that the primary role of the military chaplaincy is to provide for the free exercise of religion by all service members and that military chaplains are sufficiently trained to perform or provide for this constitutional right in today's pluralistic military community? If not, why not?

Yes, I believe that the Navy Chaplain Corps properly trains Navy Chaplains to provide religious services for those of their own faith, and to facilitate the meeting of religious needs of those service members of other faiths.

Do you believe it is the role of military chaplains to provide for the religious and spiritual well-being of all members of the armed forces, regardless of their faith beliefs?

Yes, I believe Chaplains provide and facilitate for the religious beliefs of all members, to include for the faith-specific needs of co-religionists. In my own experience as a naval officer on a large surface ship I found the Chaplain's office to be a tremendous resource for sailors of all faiths, and also for those without a specific faith.

Do you believe that current policies provide sufficient guidance to military chaplains who conduct non-religious command training where attendance is required or encouraged to allow chaplains to discuss their religious faith anecdotally and respectfully in a pluralistic setting to support the training objectives?

Yes, and there is nothing that I have witnessed in my own professional military experience or when I worked as a civilian among troops in Iraq that would suggest to me that military chaplains are anything but respectful and dedicated to the spiritual well-being of those in uniform or out regardless of personal faith.

Women in Combat Integration

Do you believe it is necessary for improved military readiness to allow women to serve in the combat arms?

Yes, I do. I believe that every person who is willing to take the oath and pledge his or her life to defend the Constitution and the nation should be afforded that opportunity if that person is capable of meeting the standards of the Navy and Marine Corps. We are a stronger nation, with stronger armed forces if our warfighters have diverse experiences, background and ideas. Allowing women to serve in combat arms will challenge some cultural biases, but if women can meet the standards required to serve in such positions, and their fellow sailors and marines treat them with respect and dignity, there is no reason why this would not contribute to improved military readiness.

What is your understanding of the plan to integrate women into the ground combat arms?

It is my understanding that all combat arms positions are open to women who meet the qualifications to fill them. I also learned that first female officer recently graduated from the Marine Corps Infantry Course. This is a tremendous milestone for the individual officer, but also for the Marine Corps. It is also my understanding that the number of applicants for Navy Special Warfare combat positions is relatively small to-date, but that the opportunity is available to anyone who can meet the qualifications. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy in keeping a close eye on the progress to determine whether it becomes necessary to revisit any aspects of the integration plan itself. I also plan to visit several Navy and Marine Corps combat training facilities to develop my own perspective on how the integration of women into the combat arms is progressing.

The Marine Corps' research demonstrated that women suffered higher injury rates among women than men when engaged in field combat exercises and training. Does this research concern you? If so, how will you mitigate these effects?

This data concerns me as I believe we have an obligation as a nation to help maintain the health and safety of all service members, regardless of gender. I have not reviewed Marine Corps research data in detail, but I have reviewed data regarding injuries sustained by Division I female athletes that demonstrated certain vulnerabilities for women that are not as preponderant in men. If confirmed, and as additional data is gathered, I will assess any necessary measures to protect the health and safety of all service members.

If women become subject to the draft, should they also be prepared for involuntary assignment based upon the needs of the Navy and Marine Corps?

Yes. In the highly unlikely event of a draft, all who have registered with the Selective Service should anticipate being assigned in accordance with the needs of the Service to which they are affiliated.

What is your opinion on whether men and women in combat and special forces specialties should be subject to the same physical requirements for participation in those specialties?

I support Congressional intent to apply previously developed and validated operationally relevant and objective standards for all career fields to assure that leaders assign tasks and career fields throughout the force based on ability, not gender.

Recent Changes by Former Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus

Former Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus made a number of changes to Navy

programs during his tenure. This Committee heard from Sailors and Marines inquiring as to the reasons for these changes.

What is your opinion on requiring female Sailors to purchase new uniforms that are designed to more closely resemble the male Navy uniform?

I am aware of the concerns about the uniform design changes in the Department, as well as in the Congress. In general, I favor common uniform standards, but I also agree with the Secretary of the Navy that a more effective dialogue with the force would have served to alleviate some of the concerns. Uniforms have, and will, evolve over time, but I believe that any changes should be dignified, well-considered and avoid placing undue financial burdens on our Sailors and Marines.

If confirmed, will you commit to informing this Committee of the rationale behind any changes to uniforms, ratings, or personnel policies during your tenure?

Yes.

Military Health Care

Section 702 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 transferred direct oversight and management of military hospitals and clinics from the Services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA). In March and again in June 2017, this Committee received the Department of Defense's interim reports on section 702, which described the Department's intent to develop a component model to administer and manage military treatment facilities. Under this component model, the Department would establish intermediary medical commands, and those commands would be subject to two separate lines of authority – the DHA and the Services.

Do you believe that a component model, with establishment of new intermediary medical commands under two separate lines of authority, would make the military health system flatter, more agile, and more efficient?

From my understanding the new component model will allow for the DHA to drive greater efficiencies and standardization without compromising the operational connection to the Services. While having two separate lines of authority are not ideal with respect to command and control, multiple reporting lines and matrixed organization structures are not uncommon and they can lead to greater agility and efficiency if properly implemented.

In your view, how would a component model achieve the Committee's goal to eliminate multiple inefficient layers of management and bureaucracy in Department of Defense medical operations?

I believe that DHA will have the ability to transform, standardize, and streamline management of the Direct Care System if properly implemented. The organizational model itself will not determine the success or failure of this structure. Rather, like all corporate reorganizations and consolidations, the benefits will be derived through effective leaderships and implementation. To the extent that DHA can drive standardization, reduce redundancies and bureaucracy, deliver greater buying power, while still understanding the unique characteristics of its Services customers, there is no structural reason why it would not achieve the Committee's objectives.

In your view, how would a component model eliminate the current stove-piped medical command structures of the Services?

I believe the component model can eliminate the current stove-piped medical command structures of the Services by consolidating core health care management business functions and eliminating unwarranted duplicative activities. The establishment of the Service intermediate commands should help to retain focus on Service-unique customer requirements and establish an integration point for the administration and management of health care delivery in military treatment facilities.

If confirmed, will you work with the Deputy Secretary of Defense to reevaluate the Department's decision to proceed with a component model to implement section 702?

Yes. In my opinion, the key to the success of this decision has less to do with structure than with implementation. Therefore, if confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Secretary of Defense, as required, to ensure all aspects of this are carefully evaluated, and consistently reassessed, to ensure implementation is effective and that the value delivered is quantifiable and measurable.

If confirmed, how would you ensure a rapid and efficient transfer of the operations of the Navy's military medical facilities to the DHA?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy to ensure the DoN is an active, collaborative partner in the implementation of this new structure without losing focus on our primary mission of providing quality healthcare for our servicemembers and their families.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy reduces its medical headquarters staffs and infrastructure (including regional command staffs and infrastructure) to reflect the changing scope and size of its health care mission?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to establish leadership and accountability for this effort. I will ensure there is a well-articulated plan with measureable milestones, in short increments, which will allow the Department and OSD to monitor the transition in a fact-based way.

Family Readiness and Support

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for Marines, Sailors, and their families, and, if confirmed, how would you ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced, especially in light of current fiscal constraints?

I agree with the Secretary of the Navy that the most important family readiness issues are: 1) Unstable fiscal environments that adversely impact Quality of Life and readiness; 2) Identifying and implementing effective solutions to reduce sexual assault, suicide, child abuse and neglect, domestic abuse, and other destructive behaviors; and 3) Improving facilities to support training, operations, and Quality of Life. If confirmed, will work with the Congress to ensure the Department has the appropriate level of resources to mitigate the risks related to these issues and to ensure that the families of our servicemembers are protected, respected, and nurtured in the ways in which they richly deserve.

Senior Military and Civilian Accountability

While representative of a small number of individuals in the Department of Defense, reports of abuses of rank and authority by senior military and civilian leaders and failures to perform up to accepted standards are frequently received. Whistleblowers and victims of such abuses often report that they felt that no one would pay attention to or believe their complaints. Accusations of unduly lenient treatment of senior officers and senior officials against whom accusations have been substantiated are also frequently heard.

What are your views regarding the appropriate standard of accountability for senior civilian and military leaders of the Department of the Navy?

I have no tolerance for abuses of rank and authority in any context, whether it be in the military, civil service, or the private sector. Senior leaders set the tone for the entire organization and abusive behavior is demeaning, corrosive and detrimental to organizational effectiveness. Our most important assets are our people and if our leaders conduct themselves in a way that demeans, abuses, and strips our people of their dignity we will erode those assets very quickly. If confirmed, I will ensure that officers and senior civilians who engage in this type of behavior will be held accountable, but more importantly I will do everything in

my power to deny them the opportunity to lead our people.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that senior leaders of the Navy and Marine Corps are held accountable for their actions and performance?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy's assurance to the Congress that every allegation of misconduct involving senior leaders will be investigated thoroughly and fairly. All completed investigations will be reviewed and, when warranted by the evidence, appropriate administrative or disciplinary actions will occur. If confirmed, I will also support the Secretary's emphasis on the importance of character development as essential to the long-term viability of the Department.

Systems and Support for Wounded Sailors and Marines

What is your assessment of the progress made to date by the Department of the Navy to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured Marines and Sailors, and their families?

Our Wounded Warriors deserve the best possible care we can provide them and their families must be supported and treated with respect and dignity. I believe that as a nation we have made great strides over sixteen years of war in learning how better to rehabilitate the bodies of our wounded, and we are putting even greater emphasis on healing their minds and spirits. I confirmed, caring for our Wounded Warriors will always be one of my top priorities and I look forward to determining how we can improve the services we provide to them and their families.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase the Department of the Navy's support for wounded, ill, and injured Marines and Sailors, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

Yes, we have an obligation to constantly pursue new approaches to providing support for wounded, ill, and injured Marines and Sailors. Most important is to seek ways in which they can continue to contribute to the nation's defense if that is their desire, or to help them develop new careers in the private sector. I am convinced that the private sector, to include academia, are enthusiastically supportive of our wounded warriors and are seeking ways in which they can connect to them and offer them opportunities to move forward in their lives despite their injuries. I believe the Department can be very useful in developing a robust connection to the private sector in this regard and, if confirmed, I will fully support the Secretary with his efforts in this regard.

Management and Development of the Senior Executive Service

The transformation of the armed forces has brought with it an increasing realization of the importance of efficient and forward thinking management of senior executives.

What is your vision for the management and development of the Navy and Marine Corps senior executive workforce, especially in the critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields?

I believe the Senior Executive workforce is critical to the successful execution of the Department of the Navy's mission and we must ensure that the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps have talented executives in positions to accomplish the mission while also building the pipeline to sustain mission success. We must support the senior executives' efforts to promote new ideas and approaches and we must ensure that they are provided the proper tools, exposure, and education to broaden their skills, adaptability, and creativity so that they can lead their respective organizations to higher and higher levels of performance. If confirmed, I will work with our senior executive workforce to determine how best to foster innovation and encourage new thinking that challenges the status quo. I believe our Senior Executives must be change agents who are relentless in seeking ways to improve the Department's operations and the agility and efficacy of our forces. They also must shoulder the responsibility for identifying, mentoring and advancing the next generation of civilian leaders whether they come from within the Navy's ranks or from other public and private sector organizations.

Do you believe that the Department of the Navy has the number of senior executives it needs, with the proper skills, to manage the Department into the future?

While I do not have detailed knowledge with respect to the proper numbers or skills of senior executives in the Department, if confirmed, I will work across the Department of the Navy enterprise to ensure that we have the right senior people in the right jobs and that we are grooming the next generation of leaders from within the ranks of our most innovative, collaborative, and creative civilian staff.

Anti-Access/Area Denial

Over the past few years, much has been made of the emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities of certain countries and the prospect that these capabilities may in the future limit the U.S. Navy's freedom of movement and action in certain regions.

Do you believe emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities are a concern?

Yes. There is no question that the development and proliferation of advanced systems that can sense, target and strike Naval assets at increasing ranges and accuracy is a vital concern. This capability will have profound implications for how we design and employ our platforms and people.

If so, what do you believe the Navy and Marine Corps need to be doing now and in the next few years to ensure continued access to all strategically important segments of the maritime domain?

The Navy and Marine Corps must consider today how existing capabilities can be aligned and networked most effectively to counter these threats, but more importantly they must examine all options to design future platforms and operating strategies that reduce the vulnerability, and increase the lethality, of our deployed forces. I believe this will require substantial creativity and a willingness to abandon old, well-established paradigms about power projection in favor of enhanced agility and flexibility.

China

From your perspective, what effect is China's expanding economy and growing military having on the region at-large, and how does that growth influence the U.S. security posture in the Asia-Pacific region?

There is no question that China's increasing assertiveness and growing military capabilities are of concern to our allies and partners throughout the Asia Pacific region. Particularly troubling are China's excessive Exclusive Economic Zone claims in the South China Sea. China's posture should not change our longstanding conviction that we should be able to operate, with allies and partners, anywhere international law allows. China's expanding influence, growing military, and its increasing willingness to reject well-established tenets of international law present a competitive challenge to U.S. military activity within the region that we have not been required to contend with for many years.

What can the U.S. Naval forces do, both unilaterally and in coordination with allies and partners, to counter the increasing challenge posed by China in the East and South China Seas?

I believe the U.S. must continue to rely on forward presence of forces in order to protect vital sea lanes and respond to a wide range of contingencies rapidly and decisively, to include humanitarian assistance that strengthens the bonds between the U.S. and other nations in the region. I do not believe we can afford to cede the military, or moral, high ground in the face of China's growing economic power. We must also prioritize advanced military cooperation with our traditional allies in the region while nurturing new ones with countries such as Vietnam. We

should also accelerate investments in technological improvements to better network our forces and facilitate improved stand-off capabilities. Given the wide range of contingencies we may face, a critical aspect of our investments and force projection strategies must be to enhance our agility to address a broad spectrum of threats.

Asia-Pacific

Do you believe that helping countries in Southeast Asia increase their naval capacities is in the strategic interests of the United States? If so, in your opinion, what is the best approach to maximize U.S. security assistance funding?

Yes, I believe it is in our interests, as well as it is in the interests of our allies. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to recruit, man and equip the most powerful and capable naval forces in the world. That being said, I will also support our regional allies and partners who seek to improve their capabilities in a way that helps us interoperate and together shoulder the burden for maintaining peace and security in the region.

Russia

Senior U.S. military officials have said Russia is the number one threat to the United States.

Please describe the challenges U.S. Naval forces face from Russia and what steps may be required by Naval forces to address these concerns.

I believe that Russia is a significant competitor for global influence, and a potential military threat, but I hesitate to characterize it as our number one threat as I believe that we must diligently guard against the full range of threats which at any time could cause severe disruption to, and destruction of, U.S. interests and lives. I believe the 4 plus 1 framework for assessing the current threat environment is more appropriate as each of these nations or transnational movements (Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, +Global Jihadist-inspired terrorism), present dangers to our national interest that are real and near term.

With specific respect to Russia and its implications for the Navy, the Russians have made significant technological advancements that will allow them to threaten U.S. naval forces and the U.S. homeland now and into the future. Additionally, Russian pilots are employing increasingly aggressive tactics to “buzz” our aircraft and surface ships reminiscent of the Cold War. This careless and provocative behavior is concerning and our forces must be diligent to ensure they protect themselves lawfully.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to routinely assess Navy readiness and the ability to execute operational plans against all potential adversaries, and recommend to the President and Secretary of Defense any changes required to ensure success.

Iran

Iranian malign influence appears to continue to grow throughout the Middle East.

Please describe the challenges U.S. Naval forces face from Iran and what steps may be required by Naval forces to address these concerns.

The evidence is clear that Iran is a threat to the United States and our allies. They are both a destabilizing regional force in the Middle East, as well as a dangerous global player seeking to expand its influence in other parts of the world to include the Western Hemisphere. Iran's greatest challenge to U.S. Naval forces is currently within the region of the Persian Gulf where their navy and shore-based missile systems have become more capable. Their actions in the gulf have also become more assertive and confrontational. Additionally, their subversive work through surrogates in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan is counter-productive to U.S. interests in the region. In order to address these concerns, I believe the Navy must maintain a strong forward presence in the region to ensure the protection of the commercial sea lanes in the Arabian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, the Gulf of Aden, Bab-al-Mandeb (BAM), the Red Sea, and the Suez Canal. Additionally, I believe the Navy must support an integrated Security Cooperation framework with our allies in the region to help build their capabilities as a credible counter balance to the Iranian threat. This counter balance must consider factors beyond mere weapons systems to include the leadership, organizations, and sustainment capacities of our partner nations in the region.

Authorized Management Flexibilities

There is concern that the Navy is not making full use of management flexibilities authorized in law in areas such as personnel management and acquisition, and other areas where internal Service bureaucracy can be reduced or decentralized.

What steps will you take to ensure that the Navy uses and delegates authorities to help transform Navy business processes?

If confirmed, I will ask for a full review of these authorities to see how these management flexibilities may be utilized to improve the operations of the Department. In my previous tenure in the Department, I made full use of authorities granted by the Congress to bring private sector experts in IT, enterprise architecture, systems engineering, and transformation into the Department as HQEs. These efforts were very effective and, if confirmed, I will take full advantage of whatever authorities Congress has provided in this regard.

Operational Energy

In his responses to the advance policy questions from this Committee, Secretary Mattis talked about his time in Iraq, and how he called upon the Department of Defense to “unleash us from the tether of fuel.” He stated that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that were exploited by the enemy.”

Do you believe this issue remains a challenge for the Department of Defense?

Yes. I agree with Secretary Mattis’ testimony and the DON will continue to pursue energy initiatives that are good for the warfighter, improve readiness, and those projects that have a strong business case. Fuel is an essential enabler of combat capability and past and future improvements will enable our forces to extend combat range, remain on station longer, and reduce the vulnerability of our forces by decreasing our logistical tail. Investments we have made in nuclear power validate Secretary Mattis’ comments as they have substantially increased the flexibility and lethality of the Navy’s forces by extending the range of our carriers and submarines substantially. Similarly, the Marine Corps continues to introduce intelligent and hybrid power systems focused on extending the operational reach of Marine Air Ground Task Forces by making them more resilient and self-sufficient. We should consider other “step function” energy innovations like this, but also seek to incorporate energy efficient technologies, better operational procedures, and a reinforced culture of conservation to fully support the CNO’s Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority and the CMC’s Marine Operating Concept.

If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to unleash the Department of Defense from the tether of fuel?

If confirmed, I will support SECDEF and SECNAV efforts to increase operational energy capability throughout the DoN research labs, warfare centers, warfighting labs, and energy offices to explore alternative power and energy sources such as Fuel Cell technologies, renewable resources, by increasing the efficiency of current and future combat platforms, and developing better capabilities to

command and control energy on the battlefield.

If confirmed, what priorities would you establish for defense investments in and deployment of operational energy technologies to increase the combat capabilities of warfighters, reduce logistical burdens, and enhance mission assurance on our installations?

If confirmed, I will support the Secretary of the Navy's intention to have the DON remain focused on delivering energy solutions that enhance the flexibility of the warfighter, improve readiness, or that have a strong business case. My first priority in this regard will be to focus on energy solutions that make our Sailors and Marines safer and more capable of taking the fight to the enemy. In this regard, I will push for energy solutions that increase the ability to operate without the dependence on extended supply lines for energy. I will also promote energy efficient weapons, propulsion systems, and electrical generation that reduces energy dependence and allow our forces to operate more autonomously and with greater agility. With respect to shore installations I will emphasize investments in reliable, resilient, and efficient energy sources that drive down the cost of operations and take advantage of innovative partnerships with commercial utilities, distributed energy and storage solutions, and the use of micro-grid technology.

If confirmed, how will you consider operational forces' energy needs and vulnerabilities during training exercises, operational plans, and war games?

As we consider deterring conflicts with more capable competitors we must plan for the possibilities of losing access to adequate supplies of energy to maintain our forces. We must be prepared for contingencies in which access to energy sources is denied, and we must develop well thought out alternatives to address such contingencies. If confirmed, I will work with CNO and the CMC to ensure that this element of uncertainty and risk is prominently addressed in training exercises, operational plans, and war games.

Energy and Acquisition

How can our acquisition systems better incorporate the use of energy in military platforms, and how, if at all, are assessments of future requirements taking into account energy needs as a key performance parameter?

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy is considering how to formalize energy considerations in its acquisition governance process. If confirmed, I will support this formalized process and the overall emphasis on

energy considerations in the acquisition process and I will ensure the Navy's senior energy officials are engaged.

Energy Resiliency in the Fight Against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

Back in July 2016 after a coup attempt, the Turkish government cut off power to Incirlik Air Base, which is the primary platform for launching coalition airstrikes in the fight against ISIS. For roughly a week, deployed units had to operate relying on backup generators, which is expensive and is certainly not the preferred method of operation given the demanding tempo of sorties against ISIS. Recently, the Air Force described an incident in the past (via open source) in which a remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) based in the United States was flying a targeting mission overseas. Because of a power outage stateside, the RPA feed temporarily lost visual and the target was able to get “away and is able to continue plotting against the United States and our allies.”

If you are confirmed, how will you specifically address and make energy resiliency and mission assurance a priority for the Department of Defense, to include acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to improve combat capability for deployed units on our military installations and forward operating bases?

I have learned that the DON is instituting an Energy Security Framework that sets energy security requirements, facilitates gap analysis, helps compare gaps to mission risks, and provides a methodology to prioritize shortfalls against available funding and third party financed options. I have not analyzed this framework, but I believe this is a good start toward improving energy resiliency and mission assurance. If confirmed, I will evaluate this framework to ensure it is adequate and that its implementation is effective.

Do you support the J-4's enforcement of the energy supportability key performance parameter in the requirements process?

Yes, energy supportability should be a key performance parameter helping guide our acquisition decisions. Part of that equation is working to equip the force with platforms that have unmatched capability, but we must ensure that those platforms are sustainable in forward austere environments. Energy Key Performance Parameters work toward that aim, enabling the force to realize the full capability of future combat systems.

Section 2805 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 gave the Defense Department new authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and mission assurance, and to help address and mitigate against incidents like Incirlik, not to mention secure micro-grids to help prevent

cyber-attacks.

If confirmed, will you commit to use section 2805 to support mission critical functions, and address known energy vulnerabilities with projects that are resilient and renewable?

Yes, if confirmed, I will support these initiatives and seek other opportunities to take advantage of this legislation.

Environment

If confirmed, will you comply with environmental regulations, laws, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

Yes.

If confirmed, will you make the same level of investment for the Defense Department's Environmental Research Programs?

If confirmed, I will evaluate the Department's investments in environmental research and their effectiveness with the input and advice of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Navy to maintain our strong record of environmental stewardship while preserving our ability to train and operate worldwide.

If confirmed, will you work with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness and protect the environment on and around U.S. military installations?

Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure the DON will be a good steward of the environment and will work with these agencies and other stakeholders to develop a collaborative relationship with shared interests.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Under Secretary of the Navy?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate committees in a timely manner?

Yes.

Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee, or to consult with this Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Yes.

Do you agree to answer letters and requests for information from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?

I agree to respond appropriately to letters and requests for information from members of this Committee.

If confirmed, do you agree to provide to this Committee relevant information within the jurisdictional oversight of the Committee when requested by the Committee, even in the absence of the formality of a letter from the Chairman?

I agree to respond appropriately to letters and requests for information from members of this Committee.