

**OPENING STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR JACK REED
CHAIRMAN, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**ROOM SD-G50
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
Thursday, February 17, 2022**

*To conduct a confirmation hearing on the nominations of
Honorable Franklin R. Parker to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower
and Reserve Affairs;
Dr. Agnes G. Schaefer to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and
Reserve Affairs;
Dr. Ravi I. Chaudhary to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Energy,
Installations, and the Environment; and
Mr. Frank Calvelli to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(As prepared for delivery)*

REED: The Committee meets this morning to consider the nominations of Mr. Franklin Parker to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Dr. Agnes Schaefer to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Dr. Ravi Chaudhary to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Energy, Installations, and the Environment, and Mr. Frank Calvelli to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force. I thank the nominees for their long careers of service to the United States and their willingness to assume these important roles.

I would also like to welcome the family members who are with us today. Mr. Parker, I welcome your wife, Anne, son, Franklin, and daughter, Diana. Dr. Schaefer, I welcome your husband, David. Dr. Chaudhury, I welcome your wife, Uma, and daughter, Nina. And Mr. Calvelli, I welcome your wife, Melissa.

Mr. Parker, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. If confirmed, you would be the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Navy with overall supervision of a number of areas, including military and civilian personnel policy, military readiness, quality of life, and health care programs, and the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Office. You are well qualified, having held this position previously during the Obama Administration, in addition to your long career of legal counsel both in and out of government.

Our naval forces are maintaining an extremely high operations tempo across all areas. As such, issues of readiness and retention are increasingly important challenges for the department. And fostering respect within the ranks, including supporting diversity and inclusion, eradicating extremism, and addressing sexual assault and harassment, must be a priority. During your testimony I would ask that you share your goals with respect to each of these issues.

Dr. Schaefer, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. You bring a considerable academic background to this position, including your leadership on dozens of RAND studies assessing various military personnel policies and programs. I would like to know what lessons you plan to bring from those experiences to this position.

If confirmed, you will serve as the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army with overall supervision of the Army's military and civilian manpower policy, reserve component affairs, human resources, force structure policy, and other critical matters as part of the Army senior leadership. I hope you will discuss the challenges you see for this position and your plans for meeting them.

Dr. Chaudhury, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Energy, Installations, and the Environment. Your decades of experience across the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, and as an Air Force pilot should serve you well in this role.

Climate change and extreme weather have already cost DOD billions of dollars in installation damages and will increasingly impact readiness and posture. Just like any other threat, the Air Force must better prepare for the impacts of environmental degradation. The Air Force is by far the largest consumer of fuel and energy for the Defense Department, and you will be responsible for making progress in its efficiency and resilience. Similarly, contamination from PFAS chemicals remains a serious issue on Air Force installations. I would like to know your plans for addressing these challenges.

Finally, Mr. Calvelli, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force. With oversight of space acquisition, you are the first person to be nominated for this position since the Space Force was authorized in the 2020 NDAA. Your long career in the National Reconnaissance Office will lend valuable perspective to this role.

The breadth and scope of the Defense Department's acquisition laws, regulations, and directives is expansive. The FY22 NDAA improved the ability of your

position to oversee not only the acquisition efforts of the Space Force, but to ensure that space acquisition efforts are integrated across the services. I am interested in hearing your views on how to improve the Department's acquisition culture and how you will implement the directions of this year's NDAA.

Thank you, again, to our nominees. I look forward to your testimonies.

Let me now recognize Ranking Member Inhofe.