

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

**ROOM SD-G50
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
Wednesday, December 8, 2021**

*To conduct a confirmation hearing on the nomination of
Admiral Christopher Grady to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*
(As prepared for delivery)

REED: Good morning. The Committee meets today to consider the nomination of Admiral Christopher Grady to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Thank you, Admiral, for your continued service and willingness to lead in this important position. I would also like to welcome your wife, Christine. We are grateful to your family for their sacrifice and continued support of your service to our nation.

You have served most recently as the Commander of Fleet Forces Command, which included responsibility for STRATCOM's sea-based leg of the nuclear triad. That experience, along with your distinguished career of service across multiple theaters and command at all levels, will serve you well in this new role. I would also note that you are a native of Newport, Rhode Island – an admirable distinction.

As we consider this nomination, we must keep in mind that the United States is engaged in a strategic competition with China and Russia. These near-peer rivals do not accept U.S. global leadership or the international norms that have helped keep the peace for the better part of a century. This strategic competition is likely to intensify due to shifts in the military balance of power and diverging visions of governance between China and Russia and the West. This competition is also unfolding amidst a global pandemic, climate change, and the emergence of highly disruptive technologies.

Further, the Defense Department must continue to recruit and retain high caliber individuals, while restoring readiness and pursuing new high-end capabilities for the force. The interconnected nature of these challenges will drive how the Department and the military services adapt to achieve their missions.

Admiral Grady, if confirmed as Vice Chairman, you will be working closely with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Milley, to address each of these issues, and I hope you will share your views on them with the Committee.

In addition, as Vice Chairman you will serve a key role in the interagency process that often requires working closely with senior policymakers within the Department and at the National Security Council on critical national security issues. In light of the strategic challenges I referenced earlier, the committee looks forward to hearing your thoughts on the effectiveness of the interagency process..

Finally, the Vice Chairman is assigned a number of specific responsibilities within the Department. First, the Vice Chairman oversees the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), which reviews requirements for acquisition programs to ensure they are reasonable and necessary. Second, as a senior member of the Nuclear Weapons Council, the Vice Chairman plays a central role in ensuring the U.S. safely maintains its nuclear weapons stockpile. Lastly, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Vice Chairman often partner to lead the Department in addressing policy challenges that require the integration of civilian and military expertise and perspective.

I look forward to hearing how you will prioritize and execute each of these critical functions if confirmed as the Vice Chairman.

Thank you, again, for your willingness to serve our nation. I look forward to your testimony.

Let me now recognize Ranking Member Inhofe.