

Statement of Deborah G. Rosenblum

Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs

Thank you, Senator Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and members of the committee for your consideration of my nomination to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs. It is a great honor for me to come before this committee. If confirmed, I pledge to work in close coordination with Members of Congress and this committee on behalf of the American people and our Armed Forces.

I wish to thank President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Austin for their trust and confidence in me and their support for my nomination.

I would also like to thank my extended family who has taught me, that with hard work, compassion and resilience, I can help to make the world a better place. My husband and two children are my guiding beacons, support and inspiration.

I began in public service as a career civil servant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, serving for over 12 years. I was fortunate to have become a member of the Senior Executive Service. Throughout this period, I worked on a broad range of defense issues, including ensuring that the U.S. maintained a robust nuclear deterrent, policies and programs to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as representing the United States in negotiations with North Korea over their nuclear program. I also have experience working with defense and private sector companies as a Vice President with the Cohen Group, a strategic consulting company. I witnessed firsthand the innovation that can occur through effective public and private sector collaborations.

Currently as the Executive Vice President of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a non-profit dedicated to transforming global security by driving systemic solutions to nuclear and biological threats, I am involved in all aspects of the organization's global risk reduction work, both nuclear and biological, often executed in partnership with likeminded countries and international organizations.

If confirmed, I will bring this breadth of experience and deep understanding to bear in addressing today's complex nuclear, chemical and biological threats, including the expansion of Russia and China's nuclear arsenals, growing global biological threats, the continued use of chemical weapons as well as cybersecurity threats from our adversaries and the dangerous potential for the misuse of emerging technologies.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that the United States has a safe, secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent. I agree with Secretary Austin that continuing to modernize our nuclear deterrent is a critical national security priority. To do so will require effective partnerships with the National Nuclear Security Agency, the Nuclear Weapons Council as well as with Congress. I also join Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks in supporting the nuclear triad, the bedrock of our deterrent for the past 70 years.

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the devastation that occurs when countries, including the United States, are not adequately prepared to prevent, detect and respond to biological threats. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will make improving and investing in chemical and biological defense one of my top priorities.

With that, I welcome your questions and look forward to our discussion today.