

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Mr. Ashish S. Vazirani
Nominee to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Duties and Qualifications

Section 137a of title 10, U.S. Code, establishes the position of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (DUSD(P&R)) and provides broad guidance as to the DUSD's duties and powers.

1. If confirmed as DUSD(P&R), what do you believe would be your most critical duties and responsibilities?

I believe the most critical duties and responsibilities are to ensure that we are meeting our obligations with respect to Service members, their families, and the civilian workforce of the Department. In particular, the Department must be focused on Secretary Austin's commitments to build a ready, diverse, and resilient force reflective of the Nation it serves. As Under Secretary Cisneros said when he appeared before the committee in July, "Caring for the people who make up the Department of Defense's total force is a sacred responsibility." I agree wholeheartedly and if confirmed, I plan to fully support the leadership in taking care of the people, which is the most critical factor to our readiness and national security.

2. What is your understanding of the role of the DUSD(P&R) as "first assistant" to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R))?

If confirmed, as the first assistant to the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, I believe my role is to support and discharge the statutory and policy responsibilities of the office, promote and advance the Administration's values, the Secretary of Defense's priorities, and the Under Secretary's focus on recruiting and retaining a diverse force; cultivating an inclusive environment free of sexual assault, sexual harassment, prohibited discrimination, and other problematic behaviors; and promote through policy, oversight, and resource advocacy a ready and resilient force prepared to answer the national security challenges of today and the future. If confirmed, I commit to providing the Under Secretary and other Department leaders informed, candid, and pragmatic perspectives, recommendations, and advice as the first assistant, and be prepared to assume the duties of the USD(P&R) should I be called upon to do so.

3. What leadership and management experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as DUSD(P&R), if confirmed?

I bring 35 years of leadership, management, progressive learning and increasing responsibility in the military, the private and non-profit sectors.

Foundational to my career are the seven years of active military service I spent in the United States Navy, where I gained valuable leadership and management experience as a submarine officer, community manager and detailer.

Following graduate education in management and industrial design, I further developed management capabilities while leading organizations through significant transformations. I assisted global technology and pharmaceutical companies improve commercial (marketing and sales) planning and execution. I have significant expertise in strategic planning, having helped organizations identify their growth priorities and levers for growth, and then facilitating the prioritization of the most critical levers to drive impact. Driving change requires perspective to craft a vision, a willingness and capacity to make decisions informed by data and rigorous analysis, and the ability to form and motivate teams that can drive change; capabilities that I have developed. I have significant experience in organization design (structure and operations) developed through supporting my clients and through building consulting teams and organizations where I had responsibility for the people as well as profit and loss.

I translated my experience in the private sector to drive change and impact in the non-profit sector with a focus on supporting military families, a commitment I would maintain if confirmed. At the Armed Services YMCA I developed programs and partnerships to improve the well-being of junior enlisted military families. As the Executive Director and CEO of the National Military Family Association I led an organization focused on standing up for, supporting, and enhancing the quality of life for every military family through bold advocacy, innovative programming, and dynamic and responsive solutions. These experiences provided me with perspective regarding the opportunities and challenges of military life and the collaboration required to develop more complete solutions. I also served as a member of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families.

4. Please provide an example of a situation in which you led and brought to conclusion a management improvement/change initiative in a large, complex organization.

An example of the application of these skills was an engagement with the world's leading software company. During the engagement, I led a client and consulting team that collaborated to craft the strategy and implement a global agency model to transform the company's direct marketing efforts. My team was responsible for the development of the 5-year relationship marketing strategy and supporting agency model, management of the agency selection process, and design and implementation of the operating model. The global agency model created more than \$100 million in savings in the first year, and the relationship marketing strategy improved marketing effectiveness as measured by campaign metrics and customer satisfaction.

5. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice and assistance to the USD(P&R) on military and civilian personnel matters in the DOD?

During my active duty service, I served as a personnel manager (detailer) for the Submarine and Nuclear Power community of the United States Navy. I would bring a warfighter's and community manager's mindset to the areas of military personnel matters. Following my career in the Navy, I worked in the professional services sector building teams of motivated, educated, and driven individuals to solve complex problems through use of data and analytics. As DOD works to build and sustain a Total Force that is ready to address threats in emerging warfare domains, I will be able to support the USD(P&R) on issues related to recruiting, training, education, health care, professional development, and retention.

6. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice and assistance to the USD(P&R) on matters of military readiness?

Military readiness has several critical components – defining readiness based on the requirements of the national defense strategy, developing force readiness, readiness evaluation, and readiness reporting.

I have worked with global organizations to assist them with definitions of readiness for their commercial organizations (sales and marketing) based on growth and profitability objectives, organization design, professional development programs, and the measurement of commercial readiness and productivity. If confirmed, I would translate this capability with a focus on military readiness to support the USD(P&R).

7. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice and assistance to the USD(P&R) on matters of health services?

During the early portion of my consulting career, I advised companies in the health care market. Providing impactful and actionable advice required me to understand the dynamics of the healthcare market place – prevalence of disease (acute and chronic), providers, payors, and patient populations. That experience will help me to advise the USD(P&R) and the ASD(HA) on issues related to health services for the military community (active and reserve components, retirees, and their families).

During the time I spent working with military service organizations (MSOs), I represented those organizations to the Defense Health Agency to provide the perspective of the military families.

8. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice and assistance to the USD(P&R) on Reserve Component matters in the DOD?

My background and experience on Reserve Component matters is limited to issues related to Reserve component military families and access to benefits based on Title 32 and Title 10 order status. If confirmed, this is an area that would require study to assist the USD(P&R).

9. Are there are any actions you would take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and exercise the powers of the DUSD(P&R)?

Education, learning and curiosity have been enablers of my success. An engineering background helped me develop a structured problem-solving approach and advanced analytic skills. Naval Nuclear Power and submarine training required that I develop a disciplined approach to learning to comprehend volumes of information at a rapid pace, and an ability to quickly diagnose complex operational issues. While the engineering background has equipped me with technical capabilities and skills, a graduate education in business and industrial design enabled me to apply my analytical expertise to a broader set of problems, thus allowing me to address strategic and management issues with a rigorous and disciplined approach.

If confirmed, to enhance my ability to perform the duties and exercise the powers of the DUSD(P&R) I would start by learning from experts within the Department, as well as experts outside the Department, including this Committee and other Committees, in both chambers of Congress. Based on those learnings, I would work with the USD(P&R) to prioritize areas for action and those for greater study.

10. If confirmed, what specific duties might you expect the USD(P&R) to prescribe for you, particularly in light of the lines of effort set forth in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS)?

I understand that the next National Defense Strategy is currently being developed, but the common thread in our nation's defense strategy and posture is our people – the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, their families, and the civilians that support them – who have committed to upholding the values and principles of our country. If confirmed, I look forward to helping the Under Secretary in his capacity as the principal advisor to the Secretary on all matters related to the health, welfare, and resiliency, of our personnel, and the readiness of our forces to fight not only today's wars, but also to be best positioned to respond to the threats of the future.

11. If confirmed, are there any specific duties and powers you would *recommend* that the Under Secretary delegate to you, as his/her deputy?

Currently, I do not have enough familiarity with the distribution of duties and resources within the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness to speculate on the delegation of any specific duties. If confirmed, I look forward to garnering an appreciation of resource allocation and workload distribution in the organization, and will offer the Under Secretary candid advice and recommendations

on the delegation of duties based on my professional expertise and management experiences.

Major Challenges and Priorities

12. What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as the DUSD(P&R), and how would you address each of those challenges?

The contemporary challenges to readiness are significant – sexual assault, harassment, suicide, military spouse unemployment, COVID, and military family financial and food insecurity. We face challenges in recruitment and retention – shaping a defense community that reflects America and is comprised of diverse, effective teams with a range of skills in emerging domains, prepared for tomorrow’s fight.

To meet these challenges and support the Total Force will require innovation: a willingness to ask and answer tough questions, rapidly test and learn, and scale solutions. If confirmed, I will work closely with the USD(P&R), Service Secretaries and Secretary, and Congress, to care for the Total Force and our military families, to meet readiness requirements and achieve the President’s national security objectives.

13. What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?

As stated above, if confirmed I would work with experts and leaders within the Department, Congress, and external stakeholders to define a set of priorities – areas for further evaluation and areas for action. Developing plans at this point would be presumptive and I have not developed specific plans for addressing these challenges.

Civilian Control of the Military

14. If confirmed, how would you adhere to and further the fundamental principle of civilian control of the armed forces?

I have a strong conviction that civilian control of the armed forces is a necessity and understand the role and responsibility of the Under Secretary and his office as the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense for all matters related to the readiness of our forces, and the health and resiliency of the personnel that make up the Department’s Total Force. As such, if confirmed, I will always provide the best possible, candid and informed advice I can to the Under Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and the Secretary of Defense in order ensure civilian control of the armed forces.

15. If confirmed, specifically how would you ensure your inclusion in the discussion, debate, and resolution of U.S. defense and national security issues?

Our personnel are our most important and critical asset and are inextricably tied to our national security and defense posture. As such, if confirmed, I will strive to make sure that personnel considerations, readiness matters, and other workforce considerations are an integral part of the decision making and governance of the Department. I will endeavor to work with my counterparts across the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff and Combatant Commands, and the Military Departments and Services to inform deliberative process and decision making, particularly when it comes to strategic posture and policy and resource allocation.

Personnel Policy Implementation

16. If confirmed, what specific changes to personnel policies and processes would you recommend to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources management—both military and civilian—across the Department?

People are the greatest asset to any organization, and the personnel policies and processes established to manage the workforce must be efficient and effective. While I am not aware of specific changes that should be made, if confirmed, I will work with senior leaders across the Department to identify policy and process deficiencies and lead necessary changes to improve or enhance human resources management programs.

17. What is your understanding of your responsibility, if confirmed, to inform and consult with this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress, on the implementation of personnel policies directed by law?

I understand Congress' critical and Constitutionally prescribed roles in providing oversight of the Executive Branch, and in enacting legislation and appropriating funds. If confirmed, I understand that as the Department implements policies and procedures related to the personnel of the Department it has an obligation to inform and consult with this and other Committees, in both chambers, to ensure we are meeting the spirit and intent of the laws the Congress enacts.

18. What is your understanding of the timeframe in which personnel policies directed by law must be implemented by the Department?

I understand the obligation to implement statutory requirements pursuant to the law. However, I am also aware that resource constraints and bureaucratic process delays are a fact of life for the Department, just like any other organization. If confirmed, I commit to promoting timely action and implementation, and as noted above, informing and consulting with this and other Committees as appropriate if there are delays.

Oversight

The USD(P&R) prescribes policies and establishes programs across the domains of personnel and readiness. Responsibility for executing these policies and programs vests primarily in the Military Departments and Services, elements of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Defense Agencies and Activities, subject to oversight by the USD(P&R).

19. What is your view of the scope and importance of the USD(P&R)'s oversight duties and powers?

I believe that the USD P&R's oversight duties and responsibilities are extremely significant and broad, impacting all aspects of the Department's personnel and readiness requirements. While I recognize that the Military Departments have the authority to organize, train, and equip, I believe that P&R has an obligation and responsibility to ensure the Military Department's actions are in compliance with both the spirit and letter of the law and the policies of the Department.

20. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to assist the USD(P&R) in the exercise of his/her oversight duties and powers?

If confirmed I will always provide the USD(P&R) with candid, pragmatic, and informed recommendations and advice, and assist him in executing the Administration's, the Secretary's, and the USD's priorities.

21. If confirmed, how would you recommend that OUSD(P&R) resources be allocated to ensure rigorous oversight of the implementation and execution of personnel and readiness policies and programs across the DOD?

If confirmed, I believe stewardship of P&R resources will be a critical responsibility for me as the DUSD(P&R). I will work to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of P&R's policy and oversight role by assessing the allocation and balance of human capital and resources across the P&R portfolio and providing the USD with recommendations that will best align those resources with his priorities and the workload of the office. I will do so in alignment with intent and guidance from the Under Secretary and leveraging the institutional knowledge and background of the P&R Senior Career Official and other leaders across P&R.

Overall Readiness of the Armed Forces

22. How would you assess the overall readiness of the armed forces, specifically their readiness to execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and associated operational plans?

I believe our armed forces are manned, trained, and equipped to execute the strategic objectives in the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the National Defense Strategy. While our Military Services are prepared to meet today's operational missions, ensure U.S. competitive advantage, and mitigate undue risks to our warfighters, their readiness to meet future challenges, particularly with regard to

China and Russia, must remain a priority. If confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments and Military Services, and the Joint Staff to ensure readiness policies, processes, methodologies, and systems are effectively implemented and tailored so that we can keep pace with evolving threats. Our readiness policies underpin our goal to provide our senior leaders with the best information to assess the way our forces generate and sustain readiness to meet both immediate and future demands.

23. If confirmed, what specific actions would you recommend to improve personnel readiness, including with regard to the health of the force?

If confirmed, I will focus efforts on growing, developing, managing, and caring for the talent in our force that underpins the U.S. competitive advantage. This includes building a resilient and ready force, and fostering an environment that holds DoD leaders at every level appropriately accountable for building a safe and collaborative workplace. I will also support the Military Departments in these areas in order to reduce any potential impacts to readiness, because our people are the foundation of our readiness to confront the challenges of today and tomorrow. As Secretary of Defense Austin made clear in his March 4, 2021, Message to the Force, “Our most critical asset as a Department is our people and we remain the preeminent fighting force in the world because of our personnel.”

24. If confirmed, what actions would you take to oversee compliance by the Military Services with such timelines to ensure that personnel and training readiness goals are met?

As the lead office for readiness policy and oversight, it is USD(P&R)’s responsibility to set the conditions that enable the Services to meet readiness requirements. To do so, OSD must work closely with Service counterparts not only to ensure their understanding and compliance with requirements, but also to advocate for the removal of barriers that may inhibit the Service’s ability to meet their personnel and training readiness goals. If confirmed, I will also ensure that there is awareness of specific readiness risk areas, and timely solutions to address them across the Services.

25. In your view, is the OUSD(P&R) the most appropriate organization under which to align the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness? If so, why do you believe this alignment best serves the DOD? If not, under which Principal Staff Assistant to the Secretary of Defense should the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness be aligned for greatest efficacy, and why?

Based on my understanding of the responsibilities of the ASD(Readiness), I do believe that they are properly aligned under the OUSD(P&R). People are the foundational building block of readiness, and the more I look at and understand readiness, the clearer it is that the recruiting, retention, development, education, training, and management of people and their knowledge, skills, and abilities to execute the mission are the principal generator of ready forces.

26. How do the functions of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness integrate with the readiness functions of the Military Departments, the Joint Staff, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy?

ASD(Readiness) must work seamlessly with the Military Departments, the Joint Staff, and the Under Secretaries of Defense, including Policy, to set the conditions for readiness across the force. As members of the Secretary's staff, the Office of the USD(P&R) must ensure that DoD is generating the trained and educated force we need, that those forces and civilians across the Department are properly protected, and that the force is prepared to meet the nation's challenges today and in the future. OSD must work together to provide guidance to the Joint Staff, Military Departments, and Military Services to ensure they have the tools and strategic direction to build and sustain readiness to meet national defense objectives.

ASD(Readiness) is then responsible for the oversight of these activities to ensure the right policies, processes, and authorities are in place to sustain readiness under current and future conditions, as well as to develop, refine, and track readiness metrics in order to inform leadership decision-making.

Measuring Readiness

27. What is your understanding of how the Department of Defense and the Military Services measure and track readiness? Do you believe the current metrics used to measure and track "readiness" are appropriate, particularly in light of the 2018 NDS?

The Defense Readiness Reporting System – Strategic (DRRS-S), the Department's authoritative operational readiness database, provides a means to manage and report the readiness of DoD and its subordinate Components to meet immediate national requirements. It does so by providing a comprehensive assessment of a unit's operational readiness at a specific point in time. This is important but insufficient to understand the Department's long term ability to meet national strategic objectives. If confirmed, I will focus on the need to capture comprehensive readiness data with the goal of ensuring the DoD has an informed view of how decisions made today may impact the readiness of the future force.

28. If confirmed, what changes would you recommend to engage the OUSD(P&R) more directly in tracking readiness across the force? In prescribing efforts to remediate or mitigate identified deficiencies in readiness?

I believe the Department is at a critical technological inflection point, where data-driven modeling and predictive analytics can provide a fuller understanding of how decisions made today may impact the readiness of the current and future force. In order to harness this data, the Department also requires a comprehensive framework for assessing forces across a broader strategic readiness spectrum. If confirmed, I will

work with my partners across the Department to realize this shift so we can deliver actionable insights that provide senior leaders with timely and more objective analysis of readiness risks and tradeoffs.

29. Does OUSD(P&R) have the analytic tools and expertise to assist you, if confirmed, in evaluating DOD personnel and training readiness across the spectrum of challenges presented by the strategic environment—from low intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted, high-intensity fights with major-power rivals? Please explain your answer.

I believe the OUSD(P&R) has both the highly skilled workforce as well as the analytical underpinnings to guide the decision of the USD(P&R) and my decisions if I am confirmed. I understand that the Department-wide focus on enhanced data analytics driven by the Deputy Secretary of Defense has created an environment where the innovative application of best-in-class analysis techniques are partnered with expertise of the military, civilians, and contracted workforces to provide decision support to leaders across the Department. I believe this ongoing effort will improve the Department's performance in evaluating the readiness of our force.

Non-Deployable Service members

30. In your view, should service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months be subject either to separation from the service or referral to the Disability Evaluation System, as is current Department policy?

My current understanding is that all Service members are expected to be deployable and if a Service member is non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months, the Military Department concerned is required to make a retention determination. If confirmed, in order to maintain force readiness and prevent impediments to fulfilling deployment requirement, I will review current policies to ensure they are geared towards maintaining a mission-ready force while still providing for individualized review of cases to determine if their continued service is appropriate.

31. Under what circumstances would the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the service”?

I would expect these evaluations by the Secretaries of the Military Departments to be highly individualized. Secretaries of the Military Departments should consider the probability the Service member's condition or reason for the non-deployable status will be resolved as well as their ability to execute necessary military duties consistent with the member's grade and responsibilities.

32. In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?

In my view, Service members should receive fair and equitable treatment, irrespective of the medical condition involved.

33. In your view, should a service member's readiness to perform the required specific missions, functions, and tasks in the context of a particular deployment also be considered in determining whether that service member is deployable?

Yes. I am aware that the Military Departments and Services consider specific deployment criteria as they assign individuals to fulfill these requirements in order to maximize the readiness, lethality, and capability of the deployed force.

34. What are your recommendations for addressing the challenges of medical non-deployability in the reserve components?

Although I do not currently have enough information to assess the challenges faced by the Reserve Component related to medical non-deployability, if confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments on this issue.

Collaboration between the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs

35. In your view, how effective has DOD/VA collaboration been to date, and what would you do to enhance it?

The DoD and VA serve an overlapping population, and it's critical that these two Departments partner and constantly seek improvements to support our Service members. If confirmed, I will support continued efforts to strengthen the Joint Executive Committee and its activities to facilitate collaboration between the two Departments. We must continue to frequently work with one another, maintain constant communication, address any obstacles, and ensure our efforts show positive outcomes.

36. If confirmed, how would you improve the seamless transition of each service member as they move from service member to veteran status?

Military to civilian transition is an ever-evolving, complex, and multi-faceted process. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) must remain innovative, responsive, transparent and collaborative as we work with our Service members, Military Departments and Services, interagency partners, and non-governmental organizations to continuously improve transition services and support. If confirmed, I will champion transition programs and collaborate with private and public supporters to build upon current successes, achieve ever-improving outcomes, and provide our transitioning Service members with the resources they need both before and after transition to empower and enable them to become successful, visible, active Veterans equipped to reach their full potential and strengthen their communities.

37. What is your view of the effectiveness of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), and how might it be improved?

I believe TAP works, and like any program needs to evolve and continuously improve to meet the dynamic and varied requirements of transitioning service members. TAP provides comprehensive, holistic, timely and personalized transition support. It is my understanding that the support TAP currently provides reflects work over the past 10 years of continuous assessment, evaluation, collaboration, and improvements to the program. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to build upon current successes and achieve ever-improving outcomes for TAP eligible Service members by addressing barriers that could prevent successful transition to civilian life and by increasing interagency data-sharing to improve TAP evaluation and assessment.

38. Should military spouse transition preparation be better inculcated in the TAP? Please explain your answer.

I absolutely agree that spouse participation and spouse-focused transition support and services are critical to successful transition. I understand that currently military spouses are invited and encouraged to attend all TAP modules. If confirmed, I will review how we can better incorporate support to spouses in the program.

39. What is your assessment of the efficacy of TAP services and support to members of the Reserve Components as they transition from federalized/mobilized status back to civilian life and participation in their assigned reserve and guard units or positions?

It is my understanding that the Department integrated TAP and Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) curriculum, evaluation, and assessment to ensure transition and reintegration resources are available to all Service members, spouses, and caregivers all the time. If confirmed, I will ensure TAP and the YRRP work in tandem to provide support and services to all our Service members, to include TAP eligible members of the Reserve Components, and their spouses and eligible caregivers.

40. In your view, how can TAP be improved to provide better support to members of the reserve components?

While TAP is a valuable program that works for all components, we must continue to evolve TAP to best meet all transitioning Service members needs and requirements. If confirmed, I will continue building and expanding the transition and reintegration suite of resources and services to achieve ever-improving outcomes for TAP eligible Service members, spouses and caregivers by addressing barriers that could prevent successful transition to civilian life and increasing interagency data-sharing to improve TAP evaluation and assessment.

41. If confirmed, what problems would you recommend be submitted to the Joint Executive Committee for review and resolution?

If confirmed, my first step would be to listen to our subject matter experts and collect as much data and information to understand where we are, where gaps may be, and how we can most efficiently and appropriately move forward. It is my understanding that DoD and VA recently signed their most recent Joint Strategic Plan, to include several goals in the areas of health care collaboration, benefits, transition, business operations, and strengthening interoperability and benefits. If confirmed, I would look to ensure that the Department is moving forward as quickly and effectively in these areas to drive needed improvements.

42. What progress have the DOD and VA made in implementing their respective Electronic Health Records? Is each agency's EHR system fully interoperable with the system of the other? How would any delays in the VA's EHR implementation impact DOD's progress towards full implementation of its EHR? Please explain your answers.

It is my understanding that the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) purchased a common Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, a Commercial-off-the-Shelf product delivered by Cerner, which is interoperable between the two organizations. Even though they are using the same EHR system, the DoD's progress toward full implementation is independent of the VA's implementation. If confirmed, I will work with the DOD and VA to ensure both agencies continue on a successful path toward full implementation of the system and that the selected contractor meets their obligations.

Extremism

43. What is your view of the prevalence and effect of extremism within the armed forces?

It is my understanding that extremist activities in the ranks are limited. Unfortunately, extremist activities have an outsized effect and thus must be addressed appropriately to ensure the long-term safety and security of the Force.

44. If confirmed, what recommendations would you have to eliminate extremism within the ranks?

I understand Secretary Austin directed a review of this issue this past summer and may be considering additional recommendations and actions. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to put any recommendations approved into action to further increase the stability and security of our Service members, civilian workforce, contractors and their families.

Diversity and Inclusion

45. In general, what is your assessment of the diversity of each of the Department of Defense military and civilian workforces?

It is my understanding that while the Department has made progress in some areas, there remains work to be done. We need to ensure that the DoD, the Services, and our civilian workforce appropriately reflect the Nation we serve. Our diversity and inclusion efforts must help us drive real progress and change. Ensuring opportunity is not only about who we are as people, but it also ensures that we are doing more to fully leverage the varied strengths of all our people.

I understand that the Deputy's Workforce Council is working to address many of the most critical people-related efforts, including improvements for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. More must be done in these areas, and if confirmed I will closely engage with the Department's subject matter experts to support strong progress.

46. If confirmed, how would you increase diversity and inclusion in the armed forces, and work toward the goal of ensuring that the nation's military, at all levels, especially within the senior officer ranks, reflects the broad diversity of the nation eligible for service in the armed forces?

If confirmed, my first steps would be to collect information, identify specific areas of concern, work with subject matter experts to increase our understanding of these areas of concern, and ensure that our oversight and governance frameworks are set up to support comprehensive, long-term and sustained progress on these issues.

47. If confirmed, how would you increase diversity and inclusion within the Department's civilian workforce, especially at the senior General Schedule and Senior Executive Service levels?

I support the Administration's focus on strengthening diversity and inclusion in the Federal workforce, and I believe efforts should include a focus on the senior levels, including the Senior Executive Service. If confirmed, I will work closely with other DoD leaders to promote diversity of talent and remove barriers to equal opportunity in the Department's senior ranks.

48. How would you increase geographical diversity in the armed forces, especially from areas of the country and local communities that are currently underrepresented in the force?

I believe geographic diversity is important and if confirmed I will work with the Military Departments and Services to help ensure they have fully leveraged technology in an effort to improve recruiting in these local and underrepresented communities. I believe sustained investment in developing a value proposition that resonates with underrepresented communities, virtual recruiting and digital marketing

will be critical to improving diversity and expanding outreach in all communities across the Nation.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

49. In your view, how adequate and effective have the policies, programs, and training been that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault?

In a zero tolerance environment, if even one sexual assault occurs that means current policies, programs and training are falling short. I am aware that over the past several years, DoD has substantially updated and issued new policies, established new programs, and generally expanded the infrastructure in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault. While there are, to my understanding, numerous reporting options and support services for victims, we absolutely must also prevent these crimes from occurring in the first place. I understand that the Department is working through an implementation roadmap for the recommendations related to the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC). If confirmed, I will work to support Secretary Austin's vision in this area and ensure we do everything possible to appropriately address sexual assault. These behaviors cannot be tolerated.

50. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to increase DOD-wide focus on the *prevention* of sexual assaults?

If confirmed, I will support implementation of the approved IRC recommendations in support of Secretary Austin's vision. The Department must hold itself to the highest standard. The Military Departments and Services in particular have the tools and ability to shape behaviors, and they must do all they can to prevent sexual assaults, as must we all. We need increased focus on this issue and identification of the most promising practices, tools, and efforts that can help reduce – and eliminate – sexual assaults.

51. What is your assessment of the Department's implementation of protections against retaliation—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage—for reporting sexual assault?

Retaliation is completely unacceptable and must be eliminated. If confirmed, I will work to evaluate our policies and efforts to prevent retaliation and, in particular, social ostracism and reputational damage. It is my understanding that the Department's goal of eliminating retaliatory behaviors will help lead to an environment where victims feel comfortable coming forward to report allegations of sexual assault, which will, in turn, lead to increased reporting and greater accountability of alleged offenders.

Sexual Harassment in the Armed Forces

52. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the sexual harassment programs of the Department, including those of the Military Departments?

This is a critical area. My understanding is that the Department published new or updated policies in recent years to prevent sexual harassment. Nonetheless, sexual harassment remains a challenge and I know DoD can do better to prevent this unacceptable behavior that undermines unit cohesion, degrades victims, and can be a precursor to sexual assault.

If confirmed, I will prioritize review of the Department's recent and ongoing efforts in the prevention area. This is not only an issue that must be addressed to ensure our people are treated with dignity and respect, but it is also critical for our military's readiness.

53. In your view, do methods for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the military force?

My understanding is that the Department leverages surveys and data to measure the prevalence of harassment and discrimination. This approach assesses data on experiences to measure rates rather than depending only on reports received about these adverse behaviors.

Data from surveys helps leaders and organizations understand the total scope of an issue – its prevalence – and better ensure specific actions to address areas that need to be addressed.

Informal reports are another option, and at the same time it is absolutely critical that all leaders throughout DoD take immediate and appropriate action when they receive an informal report. They also must track them to understand prevalence.

54. If confirmed, what actions will you take to improve the quality of investigations into allegations of sexual harassment in the force?

The Department's leaders must always be held appropriately responsible for addressing sexual harassment complaints. To improve the quality of investigations, if confirmed I will fully support efforts to improve leadership engagement in this area, including the implementation roadmap for IRC recommendations, including investigation of all sexual harassment cases by an independent, well-trained body that is outside the chain of command. Addressing issues of sexual harassment is critical to put a stop to this readiness-detracting behavior.

55. Does the Department's method for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators in the military?

If confirmed, I will closely examine this issue. I would closely examine anti-harassment and equal opportunity policies to ensure they are robust and support efforts in this space. We must ensure that any repeat offenders are identified.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Military Families

56. What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect in the armed forces, and, if confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?

Domestic abuse, and child abuse and neglect are fundamentally incompatible with military values and negatively impact mission readiness. However, these issues do exist in our military, and if confirmed, I commit to prioritizing solutions and resources to support productive prevention and appropriate response efforts.

57. In your view, what more can the Department do to *prevent* child abuse and neglect and domestic and intimate partner violence?

It is my understanding that the Department is attacking this serious issue by focusing on an integrated primary prevention approach. If confirmed, I will ensure that the collaborative efforts in this area remain a priority.

58. Do you believe that the Department's Family Advocacy Program strikes the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect?

If confirmed, I commit to thoroughly review the program and evaluate how well it addresses prevention, support of those impacted, and appropriate accountability for those engaged in these actions. It is my understanding that these are all essential components of the Department's approach to this issue.

Department of Defense Education Activity, DOD Schools, and Dependent Education

59. What is your assessment of the overall quality of education provided by DOD schools?

It is my understanding that overall satisfaction with DoDEA schools is extremely high and standardized test scores are on par with the finest public school systems in the country. If confirmed, I will continue to support excellence in our schools for military families.

60. What lasting impacts, if any, do you believe the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the way DOD schools are run and how DOD dependents who attend those schools learn?

It is my understanding that DoDEA operated very effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially when compared with other public school systems. If confirmed, I will support the continued incorporation of adaptive curriculum and technology to not only to prepare for future pandemics, but also to provide individualized instruction to meet students' learning needs no matter their location.

61. Do you believe DODEA should further expand its capabilities to deliver online education going forward? Please explain your answer.

Although I do not know all of the details, I recently read that DoDEA is conducting a pilot program to expand access to its virtual school. If confirmed, I will be sure to assess the results of that pilot and work with DoDEA to continue focusing resources and education tools to reach its students whether in the classroom or in a remote setting.

62. What is your assessment of the preparedness of DOD schools to respond and react appropriately to active shooter emergencies?

In today's world, all schools must prepare for active shooter situations and the DoD schools are no different, even though they are on military installations. Keeping awareness of procedures through regular training and drills is vital to ensure preparedness. I am aware that DoDEA partners with installation commands to evaluate its drills, and if confirmed I will continue any and all support to ensure student safety.

63. How do you assess current class sizes (student to teacher ratios) throughout DODEA schools, and do you recommend they be adjusted? If so, why?

Because I am not an educator, if confirmed, this is an issue I want to learn more about from the Department's subject matter experts at DoDEA. We must continue to invest in our military families through our schools and this includes suitably staffing teaching requirements.

64. In your view, how, if at all, should the quality and availability of local public education factor into Departmental and Military Service basing decisions?

As an advocate who worked closely with military families, I know how much our military readiness is dependent upon family readiness and I have spent my time in the non-profit sector supporting military families – particularly young military families with children. I understand that the Military Services are beginning to include the quality and availability of local education in basing decisions, and if confirmed I will support this effort as well as implement and advocate for improvements that may be needed.

Are you confident that DODEA has in place the policies and processes to ensure that:

65. Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment by a student in locations under the jurisdiction of DODEA are properly investigated?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure the policies and procedures are in place to respond to allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment. As with all Executive Branch agencies, DoDEA must take reasonable steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination in its schools, programs, activities, and workplaces, as required under Executive Order 13160, "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs," June 30, 2000. If confirmed, I will ensure that requirement is followed.

66. Information documenting such misconduct, if substantiated, is recorded in the permanent record of the offending student and that any school to which that student subsequently transfers is made aware of that information, as appropriate?

I believe information on substantiated misconduct should be included in a student's record and transferred if and when that student enrolls in a new school and, if confirmed, I will review DoDEA's policies and take appropriate action as necessary.

67. If confirmed, what actions would you direct to ensure that DODEA takes all appropriate actions to hold its teachers, other employees, and students accountable for acts of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination?

We must continually work to end discrimination, harassment, and assault of any kind everywhere in the Department, including its schools. If confirmed, I will review the training and resources available to DoDEA teachers, staff, and students and ensure that the systems in place are being properly used to address inappropriate behaviors and take appropriate action as warranted.

Juvenile Problematic Sexual Behavior

68. What is your assessment of DOD and Military Service programs to respond to, investigate, adjudicate, and document allegations of juvenile problematic sexual behavior?

I am aware that the Department has no jurisdiction to adjudicate such cases. Therefore, it is important for DoD to work with partners in the Department of Justice, State and local governments to ensure the behaviors that reach a criminal threshold are appropriately adjudicated. If confirmed, I will commit to providing the focus on this issue and will make sure the team has the resources and support necessary.

69. How can these programs be improved, in your view?

I believe that the Department has taken a multi-disciplinary approach to respond to these behaviors that ensures this issue is appropriately addressed. If confirmed, I will focus on continued improvements to processes and policies for this program.

Military Service Academies

Over the last year, each of the Military Service Academies experienced significant violations of their respective honor codes, which prohibit lying, cheating, or stealing.

70. In your view, how should the Military Service Academies handle honor code violations?

As I understand, the Service Academies' academic standards are designed to prepare cadets and midshipmen in part for the responsibilities they will take on as commissioned officers. These high standards are important to developing the integrity and character required of our military leaders. If confirmed, I will how the honor system contributes to leader development and ensure it is implemented in a manner that meets the desired intent.

71. What is your assessment of the diversity of cadets and midshipmen enrolled in each of the Military Service Academies? What measures can be taken to increase diversity in the Academies?

Diversity within our services is critical. The Military Service Academies produce future leaders of our military; therefore, it is essential the cadets and midshipmen represent the diversity of our great country. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments and Services to improve communication of the value proposition, explore new marketing, recruiting, and community partnering methods to increase the diversity of Military Service Academy applicants.

72. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place across the Military Service Academies to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment, and to ensure that cadets and midshipmen who do report assault or harassment are not subject to retaliation—social ostracism and reputation damage—in particular?

Any form of sexual assault or harassment is unacceptable, particularly at the Military Service Academies, institutions among the top colleges and universities in the country. If confirmed, I will work with Military Department and Service leadership to make sure that they monitor such behavior to ensure the Military Service Academies properly address all forms of problematic behaviors, to include any retaliation, ostracism, or reputational damage.

73. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at each Military Service Academy to ensure cadets' and midshipmen's free exercise

of religion—to include no religion at all—and the accommodation of religious practices?

I am confident in the policies and process in place to protect and enable the free exercise of religion, or no religion at all, at the Academies. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department continues to protect and provide for the free exercise of religion, or no religion at all, as well as the spiritual readiness of all our cadets, midshipmen, and Service members.

74. What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at each Military Service Academy?

I am aware of recent media reports and understand the Department and Services take this tragic issue very seriously. If I am confirmed, I will assess the efficacy of efforts taken to date, and engage with the Military Departments and Services to seek ways to advance suicide prevention programs.

75. Do you believe the current five-year minimum active-duty service commitment for Military Service Academy graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?

I do not currently have enough information to provide an informed assessment. However, if confirmed, I will examine the costs and benefits if the Military Service Academies and work to ensure our nation is receiving a high return on its investment.

76. In your view, do the Military Service Academies contribute to the pool of military officer accessions commensurate with their attendant costs? Why or why not?

Although I am unfamiliar with costs of the Military Service Academies, especially in comparison to other accession programs, I am familiar with the excellent reputation of the Military Service Academies and the high caliber officers and citizens they produce. If confirmed, I look forward to assessing the educational costs relative to the contributions of this particular pool of officers.

77. Given the provisions of title 10, U.S. Code, applicable to each of the Military Service Academies, under what conditions would you deem it appropriate, if confirmed, to permit a military officer to play professional sports prior to completing at least two consecutive years of commissioned service following graduation from an Academy?

From recent news reports, I am generally aware of a few Military Service Academy cadets and midshipmen approved to play professional sports prior to serving at least two consecutive years as a commissioned officer. If confirmed, I look forward to examining this issue in detail.

Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC)

78. In your view, does the Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) program remain a viable source of officer accessions?

SROTC units are geographically spread across the nation. Not only do they provide a diverse source of officers, but also, as I understand it, are the largest source of commissioned officers. If I am confirmed, I will assess the Department's current programs to ensure efficiencies are maximized.

79. What is your assessment of the diversity in our ROTC programs? What measures can be taken to increase diversity in the ROTC?

I am not currently well-versed in the diversity of ROTC programs. If confirmed, I will review the ROTC programs and ensure the Department continues to focus on increasing the diversity of the officer corps.

80. In your view, should the Military Services continue to operate SROTC units at colleges and universities that fail to meet their minimum annual commissioning requirements? If not, please explain the factors you believe should be used to determine which units should be terminated.

I am interested in reviewing the circumstances surrounding those SROTC units facing viability and commissioning challenges. If confirmed, I will work alongside the Military Departments and Services and Congress to ensure maximum efficiency without the loss of cultural and geographical representation.

81. How would you modify the SROTC scholarship program to attract the top talent that our armed forces need?

SROTC scholarship programs should be designed and located at the best colleges and universities to allow the Services to recruit and commission the top talent they require. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Military Departments and Services and Congress to review current efforts and to leverage technology to attract the skills and talent the armed forces need.

Health Care Quality and Access

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take with respect to each of the following:

82. Eliminating performance variability throughout the Military Health System (MHS).

If confirmed, I will ensure the MHS uses performance measures to monitor key performance goals for medical readiness, quality, clinical outcomes, safety, access,

patient experience and satisfaction and other vital indicators. I will ensure the MHS determines why that variability may exist, whether due to circumstances unique to geography, size of medical facility, resourcing decisions, or leadership challenges and also to identify leading practices for implementation across the enterprise.

If confirmed, I will ask that MHS leaders implement performance improvement plans and milestones for areas where variability is high, and performance is poor. I also will ensure the Defense Health Agency codifies validated standard processes in official guidance and establishes accountability processes to eliminate unwarranted performance variability across the MHS. I understand that reducing variability requires continuous assessment and probing questions. If confirmed, I will hold regular management reviews of MHS performance as part of my oversight responsibilities.

83. Improving health outcomes and the experience of care for all of the Department’s beneficiaries—in both the direct and purchased care components of the MHS.

If confirmed, I will ensure the MHS continues its plans to enhance clinical outcomes and patient experience. It is my understanding that, in the direct care system, the MHS is prioritizing implementation of patient-friendly, patient-facing processes in military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) and markets to reduce administrative burdens on patients and enhance customer service. In support of great clinical outcomes, if confirmed, I will ensure the MHS remains focused on accountability for patient safety and quality and also leverages the expertise of our MHS clinical communities to establish evidence-based care pathways and practice guidelines to improve health outcomes. Finally, if confirmed, I will ensure the MHS establishes standard processes to enhance patient experience including centralized appointing, integration with the TRICARE network, and implementation of industry-standard virtual health and patient engagement capabilities.

84. Creating a value-based MHS—ensuring the delivery of accessible, high-quality health care at a reasonable cost to both the Department and its beneficiaries.

It is my understanding that the MHS is implementing standard processes in the direct care system to improve resource utilization, eliminate waste, reduce unnecessary variation and enhance clinical outcomes and improve readiness of the force. If confirmed, I will ensure the MHS moves toward a value-based care model based on quality of care rather than quantity in both the direct care and private sector care components of the MHS. I will ensure the health care teams are accountable for delivering high-quality care supportive of the overall DOD mission while ensuring effective use of taxpayer resources.

In the private sector care component, if confirmed, I will support on-going work to reduce the provision of low-value care and to enhance the use of high-value health care services. I will ensure incorporation of alternative payment models and value-

based benefit and insurance design where supported by evidence. These efforts should directly contribute to patient outcomes, readiness, access to care, and represent good stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Military Health System Reform

85. Do you support the implementation of the Military Health System (MHS) reforms mandated by the NDAAs for FYs 2017, 2019, 2020, and 2021?

Yes, I support implementation of the MHS reforms and, if confirmed, will work with the various stakeholders within the Department and Congress to implement the reforms. As I understand the reforms, they will focus the MHS on readiness and provide opportunities to enhance the quality of health care while improving overall mission effectiveness and efficiency. I recognize challenges come with significant change, however, with the reform goals as stated, if confirmed, I will work closely with all stakeholders, internal and external, to understand the issues and move forward on implementing the reforms to enhance future MHS capabilities and mission support.

86. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to change the culture within the Military Services to prompt them to embrace fully the changes necessary to improve the readiness of the medical force?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Military Departments and Services to understand their requirements and listen to their concerns. Recognizing the importance of our mutually reinforcing mission to maintain a Medically Ready Force and a Ready Medical Force, I am confident we can move forward together to enhance this critical mission for the Department of Defense.

87. In your view, are the Military Departments' medical forces properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements set forth in operational plans implementing the 2018 NDS and in the recent Joint Medical Estimate?

If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff and Military Departments to understand their medical requirements and advocate for those needs while helping them balance and prioritize those needs within the Department's budget guidance and resourcing processes.

88. In your view, is DOD's current education, training, and career development approach sufficient to ensure a military trauma care workforce that is ready to deliver expert health care (including combat casualty care) in support of the full range of military operations, domestically and abroad?

If confirmed, I will work with the MHS leadership to fully understand the requirements and any issues inhibiting our ability to provide world class military trauma care. It is my understanding that it is a very challenging area, but obviously

essential to our continued, future mission success. I plan to advocate where needed for adequate resourcing and leverage career development opportunities to address any limitations in fielding a ready highly capable medical force across the range of military operations.

Mental and Behavioral Health Care

89. If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to service members in theater and to service members and families at home station locations, including members and families of the reserve components?

If confirmed, I will ensure DoD continues to provide accessible, high quality mental and behavioral health resources to our military Service members and their families. This includes inpatient, outpatient, deployment embedded health care services, child and family behavioral health care, and tele-behavioral health, non-medical counseling, supplemented by family programs such as the Military Crisis Line, providing confidential, immediate help 24/7 at no cost to active-duty, Guard and Reserve members, and their families.

90. In your view, how could the Department better integrate the provision of mental and behavioral health care services and non-medical counseling?

If confirmed, I will seek to support mental health professionals that are positioned to provide the best possible care based on evidence-based best practices, and improve whole health of patients through compliance with current standard of care clinical practice guidelines, including recommendations for non-medical counseling and social context support systems.

91. If confirmed, what would you do to improve the delivery of behavioral health services in the MHS through telehealth? How would you expand such capabilities in both the direct and purchased care components of the MHS?

If confirmed, I will work with MHS leaders to enable tele-behavioral health services that are leveraged for mental health assessments, ongoing behavioral health treatment, and surge support for pre-deployment evaluations, and work to expand services to include continued beneficiary care through consistent and stable patient/provider relationships. Further, if confirmed, I will seek to promote collaborative efforts across the direct and purchased care components, addressing IT, network, system, and patient/provider challenges to expand capabilities and enable a patient-centric approach to promote tele-behavioral health.

Suicide Prevention

92. If confirmed, how would you strengthen the Department’s suicide prevention programs to reduce the number of suicides among service members, including in the reserve components, and their families?

We must do everything possible to prevent suicides. Preventing these tragedies must remain a top priority for the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that prevention efforts leverage the most promising evidence-informed strategies and best practices. Science and research are key. It is my understanding that the Department has focused its prevention efforts on reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors. This includes addressing relationship, financial, or mental health challenges, encouraging help-seeking, reducing stigma, and helping with the resources and skill building that can enhance an individual’s ability to more effectively work through challenging events or stressful times.

I also recognize the need to ensure collaboration – both with the Department of Veterans Affairs and other stakeholders.

93. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to provide additional suicide prevention programs in rural and isolated locations, such as Fort Wainwright, Alaska and on naval ships underway?

Suicide prevention is personal to all of us, particularly for me since my family has experienced suicide; I take this issue very seriously. It is my understanding that the Department is employing a public health approach to address these tragedies. This broad approach recognizes that suicide can be a result of factors that exist at the individual as well as the community/societal levels.

If confirmed, I will support the broadest possible approaches that the evidence and research indicate hold promise to prevent suicide. We must ensure we are constantly learning about underlying factors that contribute to suicide. That means we also take actions to understand why there could be an increase or concentration of suicides in a given area and what circumstances might be occurring in remote areas that we can better address.

Officer Personnel Management System

94. In your view, what actions can be taken to improve permeability between the active and reserve components?

As I understand it, permeability between the active and reserve components will allow the Military Departments flexibility in personnel management and allow them to make quicker talent management-based decisions. If confirmed, I pledge to learn more about this issue and will work with the Military Departments to improve permeability between the active and reserve components.

95. Do you believe current DOD and Military Service procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment, especially those with adverse or reportable information, are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?

Yes. As I understand it, there are extremely thorough processes in place to properly evaluate officer qualifications, to include any available adverse or reportable information, to ensure the decisions made by senior leaders are well informed. If confirmed, I will work to make sure the necessary information to make fully informed decisions is available.

96. Recent NDAAs provided significant flexibility to the constraints imposed by the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA). In your judgment could the Military Departments benefit from additional authorities or flexibilities, better to achieve the talent management objectives associated with implementing the NDS?

First off, I must offer my appreciation to this Committee specifically for providing the Department with modernized laws in this space that contribute to enhancing the readiness of the Services. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Congress in order to identify other potential authorities or flexibilities as the Department looks to recruit and retain the talent it needs to implement the National Defense Strategy.

Joint Officer Management

97. In your view, do the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO), and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to General/Flag Officer rank, continue to be consistent with the operational and professional demands of military service line officers?

It is my understanding that the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) and the link between attaining eligibility for promotion to General/Flag Officer are consistent with operational and professional demands. If confirmed, I will review the joint qualification requirements to confirm they are aligned with the Department's needs.

98. What additional modifications, if any, would you recommend to JQO prerequisites to ensure that military officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Service-specific leadership experience, as well as adequate professional development?

If confirmed, I am committed to partnering with Department leadership to evaluate JQO prerequisites in order to maintain our competitive advantage by developing strategically minded joint warfighters with critical thinking skills and innovative

approaches to applying military power to the national strategy that will allow for adaptability to fight under changing conditions and execute worldwide operations.

99. What are your ideas for improving the JQO system better to meet the needs of reserve component officers?

I am aware that the current Joint Qualification System (JQS) is a Total Force system allowing the Department to have a common standard that ensures all joint qualified officers are qualified to work in the joint environment. If confirmed, I commit to evaluating and, as necessary, transforming the system for the Total Force, including those critical Reserve Component officers.

100. In your view, should the requirement to be a JQO be eliminated as a consideration in selecting officers for promotion and assignment?

No, I strongly believe we need officers across the Total Force to be JQO and, if confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff and the military leaders to ensure that the JQO requirements continue to meet the Department's needs and objectives. The requirement to be a JQO recognizes that the Department needs leaders who are critical thinkers and can execute worldwide unified operations, and are able to fight during fluctuating circumstances.

Professional Military Education

101. What changes or reform would you recommend to the professional military education system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the tools necessary to ensure the Department is able to meet the national defense objectives of the future?

My understanding is that the Department's professional military education has been achieving its core functions of developing our Service members. If confirmed, I intend to evaluate how the professional military education system is educating Service members to meet not just today's threats but tomorrow's as well. I would also ensure that opportunities for professional military education are accessible to all those who meet the educational requirements.

Nuclear Forces

102. If confirmed, what would be your role in ensuring that the military services sustain efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of service members charged to execute and support the Department's nuclear mission?

DoD must support the Service members carrying out one of our highest priority mission -- nuclear deterrence. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to better understand the specific challenges their nuclear forces face and ensure their

Service members have the training, readiness, and support required to execute our Nation's most critical national defense mission.

Space Force

103. In your view, how should the reserve components be structured to support to the U.S. Space Force?

In my view, Space is critical to national security, and like all other warfighting domains, the Reserve Component plays an essential role in the ability to surge to meet emerging threats. If confirmed, I will work with other DoD leaders to ensure the seamless integration of the Reserve Component as part of the Total Force.

Military Compensation

104. Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet national defense objectives?

Yes. The pay and benefits provided to Service members and their families must be as competitive as possible with the private sector for DoD to be able recruit and retain top-quality individuals for military service.

105. What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal?

From my time as CEO of NMFA, I am aware that military members are paid well and that the current military compensation package is very competitive with the private sector. However, I also believe the Department's leaders must remain vigilant to ensure the full range of pay and benefits remains effective, particularly since most American families require dual incomes.

106. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package, if confirmed?

While I don't have specific recommendations to offer at this time, if I am confirmed, I would be open to considering changes to military compensation. I believe that Secretary Austin was absolutely right when he made "taking care of our people" his top DoD priority. Therefore, in my view, any significant change to current military pay and benefits must be carefully considered to ensure we do not jeopardize readiness while we enhance our recruitment and retention efforts..

107. What specific recommendations do you have for controlling rising military personnel costs, including entitlement spending?

I understand there are concerns regarding growth in military personnel costs over time. I believe we need to control those costs and should search for improved processes and greater efficiencies that will do so. If confirmed, I will work with the USD(P&R) and DoD's leaders, as well as the Armed Services Committees in both chambers of Congress, to ensure any future military compensation and benefits changes are cost-efficient, and contribute to maintaining a Total Force composed of the highest quality individuals that are properly trained and equipped to meet our national defense goals.

End Strength and Personnel Requirements

108. In your judgment, what role should the USD(P&R) play in ensuring responsible management of military manpower across both the active and reserve components?

If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing compliance with all applicable laws in this area. I will review actions taken so far, and ensure an action plan is in place to address any outstanding issues.

109. Is the current military end strength sufficient to meet national defense objectives? If not, what end strength is necessary?

I confirmed, I commit to fully understanding the Department's operational plans and requirements in order to conduct a review of current military end-strength policies. Under the leadership of Secretary Austin and Under Secretary Cisneros, I will work with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other uniform and civilian leadership to address personnel and readiness matters that would inform future deliberations on the size and composition of our military force levels to meet the National Defense Strategy and other objectives.

Recruiting and Retention

110. In your view, what are the main reasons that less than 30 percent of 17–24-year-olds are eligible for military service, and how would you propose to increase the size of that pool?

It is my understanding that the low-eligibility rate for military service of today's youth candidates is primarily due to obesity and other medical conditions. To improve the recruiting pool, I believe the Department must work to expand messaging and outreach to overcome the limited interest (low propensity rate) for military service and to highlight the value and opportunities offered by military service to those that meet the standards but are not interested in military service.

111. The propensity of youth to serve in the armed forces continues to drop and is at its lowest level (about 10 percent of all youth, according to DOD data) in years. What do you believe to be the root cause of this disturbing phenomenon?

I believe a variety of factors, such as lack of knowledge regarding service options, the shrinking military footprint in many parts of our country, the declining Veteran presence, recent social unrest, and the influence of military-related messaging by external organizations contribute to the low propensity of today's youth, as well as society's misperception and understanding of military service.

112. Do you believe that non-native English speakers are disadvantaged by the current testing process in qualifying for military service? Please explain your answer.

I believe that all military operations are conducted in English; therefore, the ability to communicate and understand English, in oral and written form, especially in stressful situations, is necessary for mission success. Recruiting efforts are targeted to identify and access the widest possible eligible population. If confirmed, I will continue the efforts to modernize the Department's assessment tools, ensuring today's youth are provided with the widest opportunities for Military service.

113. How would you address any such disadvantages to increase the pool of youth eligible for and interested in military service?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department uses best practices in marketing, advertising, and assessment approaches to maximize its ability to reach and access an inclusive, and qualified pool of eligible prospects. I believe our eligibility standards should optimize the match between expanding needs of the Services and member abilities.

114. In your view, should existing medical and other qualification standards be reconsidered to accommodate youth willing to enlist for service in certain high-demand specialties, such as remotely piloted aircraft pilots or the cyber workforce?

Although I am not familiar with the specific qualification standards for military service, if confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in OSD and the Military Departments and Services to ensure qualification standards are sufficiently broad enough to ensure Service members can complete their required training, achieve the standards commensurate for each role, and are able to deploy world-wide so that we maintain a ready, agile, and lethal military force.

The recently revised DOD Instruction 6130.03 Volume 1, *Medical Standards for Military Service: Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction*, provides that a "history of cross-sex hormone therapy associated with gender transition is disqualifying unless the individual has been stable on such hormones for 18 months . . ."

115. What recognized independent medical authority recommends 18 months as an appropriate timeframe to assess a patient's "stability" on cross-sex hormones?

I understand that the Department released updated standards in April 2021 that reestablished the stability period at 18 months for cross-sex hormone therapy. If confirmed, I will work with the OUSD(P&R) staff to understand the recommendations of the different recognized medical authorities regarding the appropriate timeframe required to determine if a patient can be considered stable when treated with cross-sex hormones.

116. What criteria would a licensed medical provider use to make a determination that a potential service member is “stable” on cross-sex hormones?

If confirmed, I will work with the OUSD(P&R) staff to review and understand the criteria that a medical provider uses to determine stability regarding the use of cross-sex hormone therapy.

Reserve Components

117. In your judgment, what has been the effect of increased operational tempo on reserve component recruiting and retention?

I am aware that the Reserve Component continues to contribute to the Total Force across a spectrum of categories to include domestic emergencies and in support of operational requirements across the globe. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to understand the impact of this operational tempo on Reserve Component recruiting and retention to ensure they have the needed tools to reach end strength objectives.

118. In your view, do the reserve components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the reserve components be supported by increased training, improved equipment, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness?

The Reserve Component has evolved beyond just a strategic force and is now routinely used as an operational reserve that is regularly employed. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to ensure the Reserve Component is supported with the training, equipment, facilities, and resources needed to maintain an appropriate level of readiness.

Military Lending Act and Servicemembers’ Civil Relief Act

119. What is your view of the efficacy of the Military Lending Act (MLA)? If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to ensure the act is fully implemented and enforced?

It is my understanding that the MLA is working as intended. If confirmed, I intend to monitor the MLA, in coordination or consultation with the financial regulators, to ensure protections currently afforded to Service members and their families remain in

place. During the seven years that I was an active-duty Naval Officer, I saw first-hand the negative impacts financial issues could have on the well-being of Service members, their families, and ultimately mission readiness.

120. What is your view of the value and efficacy of the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA)? In your judgement, does the SCRA require any updates to improve protections for military personnel and their families?

The Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA) is an extremely valuable set of statutory protections. Without the SCRA our military personnel and their families would suffer extreme financial hardships associated with their military service commitments. The SCRA protects our personnel from issues with rental agreements, security deposits, prepaid rent, evictions, installment contracts, credit card interest rates, mortgage interest rates, mortgage foreclosures, civil judicial proceedings, automobile leases, life insurance, health insurance, and income tax payments. If confirmed, I will review the SCRA for any potential deficiencies or shortcomings, and, if necessary, collaborate with Congress to amend the SCRA to improve protections for military personnel and their families.

Military Quality of Life

121. If confirmed, what qualify of life and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) programs would you consider to be a priority?

I fully support a robust portfolio of quality of life programs. I believe these programs are integral to mission readiness and contribute to the well-being and resilience of Service members and their families. Programs that directly support resilient families, including military family life counseling, fitness opportunities, MWR and resale, spouse education and employment support, and access to quality and affordable child care will be prioritized. These programs are key contributors to both military family and mission readiness, and as such must be sustained.

122. What metric would you apply in determining which MWR and quality of life programs should be sustained or enriched and which should be eliminated or reduced in scope as ineffective or outmoded?

If confirmed, I will review MWR and quality of life programs to sustain those programs that have the greatest impact on readiness, retention, and resiliency, while ensuring good stewardship of public funds and appropriate return on investment. I will review key metrics and measurements for existing programs to validate success in these areas.

Military Family Readiness and Support

123. What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families?

I firmly believe that military family readiness ultimately impacts the success of the mission. Child care and spouse employment are two of the main issues that I hear about regularly that have direct impacts on family readiness. In the current climate, these issues can be major stressors on the family. If confirmed, I commit to supporting the Department's efforts in these areas, and others that impact the military family.

124. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that military families are provided with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?

Without quality child care, military families are unable to work, not to mention its effects of family readiness and retention of our Service members. If confirmed, I would support ongoing efforts to improve recruitment and retention of child care staff, evaluate child care fee assistance, and collaborate with the Military Departments and Services to maximize child care capacity. Ensuring affordable, quality care is accessible to our military families will be one of my priorities.

125. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to support military spouse employment?

Supporting military spouse education and employment is a personal priority of mine. It is my understanding that the Department of Defense supports military spouse employment by providing robust resources and advocating for military spouse licensure portability. If confirmed, I would review current resources to ensure military spouses receive the individualized support and robust tools they require to plan and finance their education, define and pursue a job or career and grow their professional and personal networks to suit their needs.

Military spouses that work in licensed or credentialed career fields, like teachers or medical professionals, often face challenges becoming re-licensed or re-credentialed after a Permanent Change of Station.

126. If confirmed, specifically what steps would you take to support the work of the Council of State Governments to create of interstate compacts to enhance for military spouse license and credential portability?

I am aware that States continue to make improvements to their licensing laws to support military spouses, and that many States have approved licensure compacts to create reciprocity for military spouses. If confirmed, I will support the Department's existing efforts with the Council of State Governments in this area.

Support for Military Families with Special Needs

127. What is your view of the overall effectiveness of the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?

If confirmed, I will evaluate how the Department is meeting the needs of these important members of our military community. I will be committed to providing the resources and support to meet the unique needs of military families who have family members with special needs.

128. If confirmed, how would you incentivize service member enrollment in EFMP?

If confirmed, I will assess the effectiveness of current incentives as well as address any obstacles to enrollment in EFMP. I will also encourage the team to explore innovative incentives to further encourage enrollment for those Service members and their families who need this support, no matter where they are serving.

129. If confirmed, how would you enhance support to a service member in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs, regardless of where that family member is located?

If confirmed, I will work with Department stakeholders to improve communication, collaboration, and coordination between families, the direct care system and the TRICARE system customer services representatives to assist in obtaining and understanding medical services and support needed. In recognition of the transient nature of our military community, if confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to improve communication, collaboration, and coordination between the losing and gaining locations prior to the beneficiaries' arrival at the new duty station.

I believe early notification of movement will allow for better coordination of both primary and specialty care for beneficiaries in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), who have special needs. If confirmed, I will ensure the MHS implements established standard processes for all MTFs, which include enhanced care coordination with the TRICARE regional contractors and MTFs to support our EFMP families, wherever they may be located and to facilitate the transition when they move to a new location to ensure continuity of care.

130. If confirmed, how would you work with Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners and military commanders to ensure that the needs of service members with an exceptional family member are considered in the military housing assignment process?

Collaborating with the Military Services and Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners to ensure families with special needs have access to housing that supports their specialized requirements is crucial. If confirmed, I commit to working with appropriate DoD officials to review existing procedures and policies to make sure they are meeting the mark, and explore methods to strengthen procedures, if needed.

131. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to prioritize the implementation of section 582 of the NDAA for FY 2021, which mandates improvements and standardization of the EFMP across the Department?

If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing compliance with all applicable laws in this area. I will review actions taken so far, and ensure an action plan is in place to address any outstanding issues.

Department of Defense Civilian Workforce Matters

132. How would you describe the current state of the Department's civilian workforce, including its morale and the Department's ability to successfully recruit and retain top civilian talent?

Although I do not have access to the Department's data regarding the current state of the civilian workforce's morale, or the Department's ability to successfully recruit top talent, I recognize that the civilian workforce is a critical element of the DoD total force. If confirmed, the recruitment, retention, and sustainment of a high quality civilian workforce will be one of my top priorities.

133. In your judgment, what are the biggest challenges facing the DOD in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

I cannot speak to the specific challenges facing the DoD in managing its civilian workforce; however, for many complex organizations, the fight for high quality talent, particularly technical talent, is an issue. If confirmed, I will work closely with other Department leaders to identify recruitment, retention, and other workforce challenges, and develop strategies to address each, as appropriate.

Cyber Workforce

134. What is your view of the appropriate mix between the uniformed and civilian components of the cyber workforce?

I believe that rather than a specific workforce mix, we must look at the nature of work and the mission requirements, as well as the broader market conditions to include labor supply and cost considerations. If confirmed, I will commit to reviewing and if necessary, changing, the Department policies to allow leaders the ability to achieve appropriate total force mix and meet the mission.

135. In your view, how effective is the Cyber Excepted Service Workforce authority under section 1599f of title 10, U.S. Code, in meeting and sustaining the Department's requirements for a highly qualified and competent cyber workforce?

The authority provided by Congress to build a cyber capability to meet emerging threats in this warfare domain are critical and I applaud the Committees leadership in

this area. I understand that, if confirmed, I will collaborate with the DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO) on cyber workforce matters. At this time, I cannot speak to the effectiveness of this alternative personnel system in meeting the Department's current and emerging cyber workforce needs but, if confirmed, I commit to working with the DoD CIO to ensure the Department is making best use of the authorities provided by Congress and has a highly qualified and competent cyber workforce.

136. What actions would you take, if confirmed, to mitigate any gaps between cyber workforce capacity and capability?

If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Office of the DoD CIO to mitigate cyber workforce capacity and capability gaps. Based on my understanding of the report from the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, I anticipate actions may include identifying staffing requirements and talent gaps, and developing strategies and policies to increase workforce capacity and ensure the skillsets necessary to meet cyber workforce mission needs.

Technical Workforce

137. In your view, what are the pros and cons of having active-duty military personnel—as opposed to civilian employees—trained and working as scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the DOD research, development, and acquisition enterprise?

In an era of emerging threats and warfare domains that have become increasingly technical, I believe it is crucially important that the Department seeks to recruit and retain the best technical and digital workforce across the total force, including active military duty personnel. This includes looking at how we train and assign our Service members to support them in their ability to maintain currency in constantly changing fields. In addition to balancing the active duty and civilian workforce, I believe we need to assess how we best utilize the talent of our Reserve Component personnel.

138. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the directors of national labs under the purview of DOD have the civilian workforce management tools they need to shape their science, technology, and engineering workforces?

If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and the Military Departments to ensure the directors of the national labs have, to the greatest extent possible, the tools necessary to recruit, retain, and shape their science, technology, and engineering workforces.

Senior Executive Service

139. Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant factors in shaping a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed,

what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting candidates for appointment to the Senior Executive Service?

If confirmed, I will focus on selecting members of the Senior Executive Service who are capable of managing complex systems and organizations, who are exceptional collaborators and team builders, and who can be innovative in their leadership of a high-performing and globally relevant DoD civilian workforce.

140. If confirmed, how would you ensure that SES under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?

If confirmed, I will ensure SES members under my authority have clear and measurable performance expectations that include standards for organizational performance as well as leadership of a high performing subordinate workforce.

141. Are you satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs currently available across DOD? If not, what changes would you make to these programs, if confirmed?

I am aware that SES professionals participate in development programs but do not have specific details to speak to the subject matter and rigor. If confirmed, I will assess these programs to identify changes that may be needed and develop strategies to achieve these changes, as appropriate.

Safety

142. What is your understanding of the role of the OUSD(P&R) in matters of operational safety and occupational health?

It is my understanding that the USD(P&R) chairs the Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC), the Department's senior leader safety forum, and serves as the Principal Enterprise Safety Official (PESO). The PESO is the senior policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense and lead for integrated safety assessment, reporting, trend analysis, and mishap and accident reduction and mitigation activities related to aviation, ground, motor vehicle, afloat, space, and risk management in the workplace. I am also aware that the ASD(Readiness) is the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Occupational Health Official. If confirmed, operational and occupational safety and health will be among my top priorities for me. For leaders of the Department, no responsibility is more important than to protecting the people, military and civilian, who serve our country.

143. If confirmed, specifically what more would you do to establish OUSD(P&R) leadership in the domains of operational safety and occupational health?

Leaders at the highest levels must set the tone for the Department's safety culture.

Our people are our most important asset. If confirmed, I will commit to promoting a culture of safety for our personnel while simultaneously preserving operational capabilities. I will support the OUSD(P&R) in managing the Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) and ensure we use this forum, and other available resources, to instill a culture where safety is paramount in both high-risk situations and daily operations and activities. Safety must be an ever-present standard in all we do.

Drug Demand Reduction

144. What role does the OUSD(P&R) play in ensuring that each of the Military Services—including their respective Reserve Components—maintains an effective military personnel drug abuse testing program?

This is a critical area, as impairment can impact not only an individual's performance but endanger lives of others while performing military duties. The OUSD(P&R) role in this area must be to ensure oversight and thorough policy for drug testing, identifying emerging threats through surveillance; and working with the Military Departments and Services on new testing procedures as well as prevention.

If confirmed, I will work with experts throughout DoD to continue deterrence of prohibited and impairing substances.

145. In your view, how could the DOD drug demand reduction program be modernized while maintaining or enhancing the program's role in deterring the unlawful use of controlled substances?

If confirmed, this is an area that I will closely evaluate. It is my understanding that a comprehensive, yet agile drug testing program helps deter and detect drug abuse. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the program is robust and can quickly adjust to identify, test for, and deter emerging drug threats that can negatively impact our people and our military missions.

Voluntary Education Programs

146. Do you believe DOD's Voluntary Education Programs contribute to military recruiting and retention, and to military readiness? By what metrics does DOD assess and evaluate the contribution of such programs to recruiting, retention, and readiness? Do you believe such metrics are adequate to discern a causal relationship between these programs and desired recruiting and retention outcomes?

Yes, I believe that educational opportunities contribute to readiness as well as recruiting and retention. It is my understanding that this causation is hard to determine. Therefore, if confirmed, I will review the metrics used to evaluate the

contributions to voluntary education programs to ensure the Department is achieving the desired outcomes.

147. Does DOD receive adequate return on its investment in Tuition Assistance?

It is my understanding that the opportunity to receive additional educational opportunities while in the military is cited as a key reason for enlistment, and also plays a role in retention decisions. If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD has the information necessary to assess and evaluate the return on investment for these programs.

148. What is your view of the adequacy of the Department's mechanisms and processes for protecting service members seeking to make use of Tuition Assistance Program funding from marketing by educational institutions that offer academic programs of dubious rigor and applicability?

It is my understanding that the Department has procedures and mechanisms to help to mitigate these risks. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that Service members continue to be protected from predatory practices.

149. What is your assessment of the Department's policies and procedures for reviewing and adjudicating service member complaints against educational institutions that have allegedly failed to comply with the obligations on which their eligibility for receipt of Tuition Assistance funding is contingent?

It is my understanding that the Department takes such complaints seriously and uses the procedures and policies at its disposal to address aggressive or misleading marketing. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to take Service member complaints seriously and protect Service members from noncompliant educational institutions.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

150. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

151. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their

respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

152. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

153. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

154. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

155. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

156. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.