

Opening Statement Confirmation Hearing

Todd A. Weiler

Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to be here today as the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staffs on the challenging issues facing the Department in this year and setting a pathway forward for future M&RA's.

I would like to begin by thanking my family, friends and colleagues that are here today. They are the backbone to my success in and out of government service. Beginning with my spouse who cannot be here today due to a new job, but is certainly my rock for over 8 years and demonstrates everyday the perseverance and strength of character needed for a strong family and successful career. I would like to recognize someone else that is not here. In my last year of college and only months before I was commissioned in the Army, my Mother passed, but I know that she would be very proud of her three sons. She taught us the importance of selfless and altruistic service. My older brother, Jeff, who served in the Air Force and is now in the oil and gas industry joins his wife, Allison, in their church in Texas every week to help the needy and make life just a little better for folks. My brother, Dana Mitchell, his wife, Angel are with me today and recently transferred with the FAA to DC from Oklahoma. Everyone that meets them speaks of their charm and just plain downhome niceness that is so refreshing. They are a light for so many as they have demonstrated the strength that comes from struggle and sacrifice. {if present}And Senator Inhofe, I know that Angel looks forward to saying hello to you again, if you are available. All of these folks, family and friends set the example of compassion and caring that I hope to bring to this position.

If confirmed, I commit to bring the lessons taught by my Mother and exemplified by my family to the M&RA family. I commit to enter each day with a constant ear to the voices of our Service members and their families. I realize that this is a new position with great challenges, from Total Force personnel policy changes to benefit adjustments, efficiencies and continued mobilizations. These are challenges that I will not shrink from, but will face each day with the determination and resolve to improve the Department, while maintaining the compassion for its people. It has been many years since I served in the Army and later as a Deputy Assistant Secretary to that Service, but I look forward to bringing that experience and a diverse background in government service, entrepreneurial commercial leadership and nonprofit advocacy to the issues that face our Service members and their families. I have always remembered from my entry in the Army and will follow: Mission First, People Always.

I thank you for this humbling opportunity and look forward to answering your questions.