

Opening Statement of U.S. Senator Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
(As prepared for delivery)

Room SDG-50
Tuesday, July 14, 2015

**To consider the nomination of General Paul J. Selva, USAF to be Vice Chairman of
the Joint Chiefs of Staff
and General Darren W. McDew, USAF to be Commander, U.S. Transportation
Command**

I want to join the Chairman in welcoming General Selva and General McDew this morning. I would also like to thank both of you for your many years of service to our nation, and for your willingness to continue to serve in positions of great responsibility. We also thank your families, many of whom are in the audience today. General Selva is joined this morning by his wife, Ricki. General McDew's family is also in attendance including his wife, Evelyn; his daughter Keisha; his son, Keith, along with his wife, Becca, and their 5-month old son, Henry. Keith is a Lieutenant Commander in the Coast Guard, and I thank him for his service to our country. And finally, General McDew is joined by his close family friend, Dr. Bert Sutherland.

I welcome all of them this morning, and thank them for their sacrifices and their support.

The United States faces a wide range of challenges around the world. If confirmed, you both will play an important role in addressing these complex international issues facing our national interests.

Last week, this Committee held a hearing on General Dunford's nomination to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As General Dunford testified, the threats confronting the U.S. are multi-faceted and varied. They include the campaign against ISIL and building the capacity of local forces to counter ISIL; deterring additional Russian aggression toward Ukraine and its European neighbors; the U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region; and how best to address sequestration and the ongoing fiscal challenges of the Department without undermining our military's readiness.

General Selva, if confirmed as the Vice Chairman, you will be working closely with General Dunford to address each of these issues, and I hope you will share your views on these topics today with the Committee.

In addition, if confirmed, you will assume a number of distinct responsibilities as the Vice Chairman. In the past, the Vice Chairman has been an integral participant in the interagency process, working closely with senior policy makers within the Department and at the National Security Council on critical national security issues. Additionally, the Vice Chairman oversees the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) which is charged with reviewing requirements for acquisition programs to ensure they are reasonable and necessary. Finally, as a senior member of the Nuclear Weapons Council, the Vice Chairman plays a central role in ensuring the U.S. safely maintains its nuclear weapons stockpile. I look forward to hearing more from General Selva on how he will prioritize and execute each of these critical functions if confirmed as the Vice Chairman.

General Darren McDew has been nominated to be Commander of U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM). TRANSCOM, which encompasses the Air Force's Mobility Command, the Navy's Military Sealift Command, and the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, is the backbone of our military's strategic mobility. For the past several years, TRANSCOM has played a crucial role in supplying our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as bringing home our troops and equipment after deployments.

Given the myriad of national security challenges facing the U.S., and the long-term effects of sequestration on our defense budget, I would welcome your views on the challenges TRANSCOM must tackle in this environment.

In addition, last year, this Committee released a report on cyber intrusions directed at TRANSCOM contractors and whether these intrusions harmed TRANSCOM. In recent weeks, the Obama Administration disclosed that the Office of Personnel Management suffered a massive data breach in which records for 21.5 million federal employees, including military personnel, were compromised and stolen.

In light of this recent incident, coupled with the Committee's investigation into the cyber intrusions at TRANSCOM, I look forward to your views on the progress TRANSCOM has made to ensure its network is secure, and the sensitive information it retains, is protected.

Thank you again to our nominees for being here today, and for your willingness to serve our nation. I look forward to discussing these and other issues with you.