

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MR. MARC J.
BERKOWITZ TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
SPACE POLICY; DR. JOSEPH S. JEWELL TO BE ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY;
MR. JAMES R. CAGGY TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE
DEFENSE FOR MISSION CAPABILITIES; AND MR. BRENDON P.
ROGERS TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR
ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

Thursday, October 28, 2025

Washington, D.C.

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1 TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MR. MARC J. BERKOWITZ TO BE
2 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPACE POLICY; DR. JOSEPH
3 S. JEWELL TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SCIENCE
4 AND TECHNOLOGY; MR. JAMES R. CAGGY TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
5 OF THE DEFENSE FOR MISSION CAPABILITIES; AND MR. BRENDON P.
6 ROGERS TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR ENERGY,
7 INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT
8

9 Tuesday, October 28, 2025
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11 U.S. Senate

12 Committee on Armed Services

13 Washington, D.C.
14

15 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in
16 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Roger
17 Wicker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

18 Committee Members Present: Senators Wicker
19 [presiding], Fischer, Rounds, Ernst, Scott, Tuberville,
20 Mullin, Budd, Banks, Sheehy, Reed, Shaheen, Gillibrand,
21 Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King, and Kelly.

22 Also Present: Senator McCormick.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER F. WICKER, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM MISSISSIPPI

3 Chairman Wicker: A quorum is now present. We'll come
4 to order. I ask the committee to consider a list of 3,475
5 pending military nominations. Included in this list is the
6 nomination of General Kenneth S. Wilsbach, U.S. Air Force
7 for reappointment to the grade of general and to be the
8 chief of staff of the Air Force. All of these nominations
9 have been before the committee for the required length of
10 time.

11 Is there a motion to report these 3,475 pending
12 military nominations to the Senate favorably?

13 Senator Scott: So moved.

14 Chairman Wicker: Is there a second?

15 Senator Scott: Second.

16 Chairman Wicker: All in favor say aye.

17 [Chorus of ayes.]

18 Chairman Wicker: And the motion carries. This
19 executive session is now adjourned. But that doesn't mean
20 people can leave.

21 The hearing is now in session to consider the
22 denominations of Mark J. Berkowitz to be Assistant Secretary
23 of Defense for Space Policy, Dr. Joseph S. Jewell to be
24 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Science and Technology,



1 Mr. James R. Caggy to be Assistant Secretary of the Defense
2 for Mission Capabilities, and Mr. Brendon P. Rogers to be
3 Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations
4 and Environment.

5 I welcome our witnesses today and thank them for being
6 here. The American people need public servants to step up
7 and help us deter our enemies. We face a threat environment
8 more dangerous than any since World War II. I say this at
9 almost every hearing because it bears repeating. In such
10 challenging times, I'm grateful that these individuals have
11 answered the call to serve.

12 Space is an increasingly contested domain. Peer
13 adversaries, China and Russia, have been rapidly advancing
14 their capabilities to challenge U.S. dominance and disrupt
15 our space-based assets. As these nations invest heavily in
16 anti-satellite weapons and electronic warfare, the United
17 States must move with urgency to stay ahead. Mr. Mark
18 Berkowitz has been nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary
19 of Defense for Space Policy. If confirmed, he will play a
20 critical role in developing policy. That policy must ensure
21 our space systems are not only modern and resilient, but
22 also fielded on timelines that match or outpace our
23 adversaries. We simply cannot deter war with China if we do
24 not have dominance in space. Our national security depends



1 on maintaining strategic advantage in that domain and
2 requires forward leaning leadership.

3 Dr. Jewell is nominated to be Assistant Secretary of
4 Defense for Science and Technology. The department
5 currently faces bureaucratic bottlenecks when it works to
6 transition technology into fielded weapons systems. If
7 confirmed, Dr. Jewell would help remove those
8 inefficiencies. Additionally, he must ensure that our tech
9 research is properly secured from theft by our adversaries.
10 Research security is paramount, whether it's been conducted
11 at a federally funded research and development center, or at
12 affiliated universities that work on behalf of the
13 department.

14 Mr. Caggy is nominated to be Assistant Secretary of
15 Defense for Mission Capabilities. If confirmed, he will
16 lead broad portfolio. His office would coordinate
17 experimentation campaigns to help integrate innovative
18 weapons into the joint force. Those efforts will help us
19 field new systems more quickly. I'd like to understand his
20 views on how the department can more effectively bridge any
21 interoperability challenges across diverse weapon systems.

22 And finally, the department cannot project power if it
23 does not have facilities to do so. Mr. Brendon Rogers has
24 been nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Navy



1 for Energy, Installations and Environment. If confirmed, he
2 would oversee Navy facilities as the department implements
3 crucial reforms, including the need to maintain a 4 percent
4 plant replacement value by 2030. Again, let me say that if
5 confirmed, he would oversee Navy facilities as the
6 department implements crucial reforms, including the
7 statutory need to maintain a 4 percent plant replacement
8 value by 2030.

9 I think my ranking member will emphasize that if it
10 needs to be, we must invest in our facilities so that our
11 service members and defense civilians are not working,
12 living in decrepit conditions. So there's a reason that we
13 put that in our Senate passed legislation. The Navy is at a
14 pivotal point when it comes to both privatized housing as
15 well as unaccompanied barracks. The department has begun
16 allocating the proper resources to these initiatives, but
17 the assistant secretary position must hold contractors
18 accountable for privatized housing. At the same time, the
19 office holder must ensure safe and adequate unaccompanied
20 housing. I look forward to hearing how Mr. Rogers intends
21 to tackle these challenges.

22 And with that, I turn to my friend and colleague,
23 Ranking Member Reed.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE
2 ISLAND

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and I
4 want to welcome our witnesses to the hearing today.
5 Congratulate you on your nominations. I also welcome your
6 family and your friends who are here today to support you
7 and also welcome my colleague, Senator McCormick. Thank you
8 for joining us.

9 And Mr. Berkowitz you are nominated to be Assistant
10 Secretary of Defense for Space Policy. This is a demanding
11 and strategically vital role responsible for overseas space
12 and missile defense policy, The Space Force and Space
13 Command. Both space and missile defense sit at the
14 forefront of our national security challenges, especially as
15 space becomes increasingly a contested domain. Russia and
16 China continue to develop and demonstrate counter space
17 capabilities that threaten U.S. and allied military and
18 civilian systems.

19 This position is responsible for guiding policy to
20 ensure freedom of action in space, strengthening deterrence,
21 and guarantee that space-based assets effectively support
22 the joint force. If confirmed, you would also oversee
23 policy for the President's Golden Dome Initiative, an
24 ambitious effort to defend the homeland from advanced



1 missile and drone threats. I would like to hear your views
2 on deterring adversaries in space, your perspective on
3 coordination between the Space Force and the National
4 Reconnaissance Office, and your assessment of what can
5 realistically be achieved under Golden Dome, given its
6 scope, cost, and relationship to our nuclear deterrent.

7 Dr. Jewell, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary
8 of Defense for Science and Technology. This is an important
9 role at the intersection of research, innovation, and joint
10 capabilities. If confirmed, you would oversee the
11 department's entire science and technology portfolio from
12 defense lab and reverse universities, to small business
13 innovation programs, and emerging technologies such as
14 quantum biotechnology, advanced materials, and hypersonics.

15 This position is also essential to sustaining the
16 department's scientific and engineering workforce, the
17 people who turn research into war winning capabilities.
18 However, I'm concerned that this administration's workforce
19 reductions and proposed budget cuts threaten to hollow out
20 our labs, federally funded research and development centers,
21 and university affiliated research centers undermining our
22 technological edge. Dr. Jewell, I would like to know how
23 you would shape this position to protect the Department of
24 Science and Technology Enterprise, sustain its workforce,



1 and defend our research base at leading universities.

2 Mr. Caggy, you are nominated to be the first Assistant
3 Secretary of Defense for Mission Capabilities, a new and
4 consequential role created to better integrate technology,
5 concepts, and systems to meet the demands of joint war
6 fighting. This position reflects the urgent need to move
7 faster and more coherently from concept to capability to
8 stay ahead of pacing threats. If confirmed as Assistant
9 Secretary Defense for Mission Capabilities, you would
10 develop and support future war fighting concepts, close
11 capability gaps, strengthen engineering authorities, and
12 drive engagement across the joint force.

13 Through mission engineering, prototyping, and
14 experimentation, your office can help shape the future of
15 joint operations. Mr. Caggy, I would like to know how you
16 intend to define this position, accelerate delivery of new
17 technologies to the war fighter, and expand mission
18 engineering principles across the department.

19 Finally, Mr. Rogers, you are nominated to be Assistant
20 Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and
21 Environment. This position is responsible for the
22 management and oversight of all Navy and Marine Corps
23 installations worldwide. If confirmed, you'll be challenged
24 to improve the department's energy resilience, military



1 construction, PFAS remediation, climate adaptation, and
2 environmental stewardship. In particular, you'll need to
3 ensure that both privatized housing and enlisted barracks
4 continue to receive rigorous oversight to minimize the
5 problems that military families and military personnel
6 experience.

7 And as energy demand grows, I would like to know how
8 you plan to expand the Navy's use of non-defense funded
9 mechanisms to improve energy resilience and reduce cause
10 across the force. Again, thank you to our nominees. I look
11 forward to your testimonies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Reed. Senator
13 McCormick is here to introduce Mr. Rogers. I think what
14 we'll do is we'll hear that introduction and then hear Mr.
15 Rogers' opening statement. After that, Senator Banks will
16 introduce Dr. Jewell and Senator McCormick will be excused
17 if he desires to. And then we'll hear Dr. Jewell, Mr.
18 Berkowitz, and Mr. Caggy.

19 So, Senator McCormick, we are delighted that you've
20 joined us today and we're interested in hearing your
21 introduction.



1 STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID MCCORMICK, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 PENNSYLVANIA

3 Senator McCormick: Good morning, Chairman Wicker.
4 Thank you, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members
5 and friends on this great committee. It's really an honor
6 to be here today to introduce my friend Brendon Rogers, a
7 former Navy Seal, term Senior financial executive as the
8 Trump administration's nominee as Assistant Secretary of the
9 Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment.

10 Now, over the course of a three-decade distinguished
11 career, Brandon has demonstrated exceptional leadership in
12 investment management, the investment world, and also as an
13 officer in the United States Navy. He currently serves as
14 the Chief operating officer and partner at BDT and MSD
15 Partners, a premier merchant bank with over 60 billion in
16 assets under management. There, his leadership has been
17 instrumental in integrating two firms, BDT Capital Partners
18 and MSD Partners into a unified enterprise driving
19 exceptional alignment and improving financial transparency.

20 He's really a visionary in data technology and
21 organizational design, and he's overseeing the firm's
22 rollout of cutting-edge business processes, all good
23 preparation for this important job. Throughout his career
24 as a chief operating officer and investment portfolio



1 manager, Brendon led operations improved accountability,
2 process integration and cost efficiency, while always
3 supporting business growth.

4 Now, as relevant, before his time in the private
5 sector, Brendon served 10 distinguished years as a Navy SEAL
6 officer rising to the rank of Lieutenant Commander. His
7 military record includes command roles in Europe, Africa,
8 and the Pacific leading high impact special operations and
9 international training missions. He's a graduate of the
10 United States Naval Academy, Go Army, and Harvard Business
11 School. Brendon's career reflects a consistent pattern of
12 uniting teams, optimizing performance, and successfully
13 navigating complex organizations. He'll have that
14 opportunity if confirmed in the Navy.

15 His distinguished career makes him exceptionally
16 qualified to represent the Trump administration as the
17 Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations
18 and the Environment. And for that reason, I wholeheartedly
19 support his nomination and I encourage my colleagues and
20 friends on this committee to do the same. Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman.

22 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator McCormick. You're
23 welcome to stay for the entire hearing if you'd like, or you
24 can depart at your own pleasure and reopen the government



1 for us, whichever you desire.

2 Senator McCormick: Thank you. Thank you. I'll get
3 back on that government.

4 Chairman Wicker: Thank you. Mr. Rogers, your opening
5 statement, sir. Thank you for being with us.

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1 STATEMENT OF MR. BRENDAN P. ROGERS TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS AND
3 ENVIRONMENT

4 Mr. Rogers: Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and
5 distinguished members of the committee, it's an honor to
6 appear before you as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of
7 the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment.

8 I'm grateful to Senator McCormick for his generous
9 introduction and to President Trump for his trust and
10 confidence in me. I'd also like to thank Secretary Hegseth
11 and Secretary Phelan for focusing on the war fighting
12 culture during this cri crucial period. Three things bring
13 me before you today in consideration for this nomination.
14 My friends and family, my commitment to our sailors and
15 marines, and appreciation for the threats we face.

16 My motivation begins with my friends and family whose
17 combined support has shaped my path. Most importantly, my
18 wife Brigid, and my four children, Michala, Tiernan, Keely,
19 and Finn are with me today. I want our kids to inherit the
20 same freedoms and opportunities that I've been blessed with.
21 Those freedoms are not guaranteed. They're secured by our
22 strength and sacrifices of those who serve. I'm committed
23 to supporting our Navy and Marine Corps war fighters and
24 their families in the pursuit of the missions so our nation



1 remain strong and free for all Americans.

2 Second, I'm inspired by our sailors and marines who
3 face demands every day. My grandfather graduated from the
4 Naval Academy in 1932 and served as a career surface warfare
5 officer. My father graduated from the Naval Academy in
6 1957, spent 30 years as a marine helicopter pilot. I
7 followed their path, graduating from the Naval Academy in
8 1990 and serving 10 years in Naval Special Warfare.

9 The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy,
10 Installations and Environment oversees a portfolio critical
11 to how our war fighters live, train, and operate. If
12 confirmed, I will tackle these responsibilities with urgency
13 and resolve, focused on delivering reliable infrastructure,
14 safe housing, resilient energy and water systems, and
15 continued access to realistic training environments. Our
16 nation asks a great deal of our war fighters and their
17 families, and we must match that with unwavering support.

18 Third, I feel a strong call to service, especially in
19 these uncertain times. I've watched with growing concern
20 indicators of a broader conflict emerging, escalating
21 espionage, global competition for resources, attempts to
22 restrict freedom of navigation, and divergent views of a
23 world order. We are seeing intrusions on our home soil with
24 increasing frequency, a sustained cyber assault on our



1 infrastructure and frequent drone incursions over our
2 military facilities. These are not abstract incidences or
3 distant occurrences. They're real and present threats. Our
4 national leadership is responding and I feel obligated to
5 join that effort.

6 Throughout my career, I've been privileged to work both
7 in and out of uniform. In the SEAL teams, I operated across
8 the globe in various challenging environments; sea, air,
9 land, and subsurface alongside joint service members and our
10 international allies. These experiences gave me deep
11 respect for the operational excellence and the need to be
12 ready for any challenge. Mission readiness not only
13 underpin strategic success, it is also a responsibility owed
14 to our war fighters and their families.

15 In the private sector, I cut through complexity to make
16 investment and operational decisions while managing diverse
17 stakeholders. 10 years as an investor taught me how to
18 uncover operational and financial truths of a business,
19 revealing overly optimistic narratives that are often
20 presented. 10 more years serving as a chief operating
21 officer taught me to lead across disciplines with distinct
22 cultures and priorities and align them around common goals
23 and discipline trade-offs.

24 In both roles, I learned that mission success depends



1 on clear and consistent communication, as well as robust
2 accountability and experience-based risk management,
3 principles that guide my leadership today. My finance
4 career instilled in me a deep respect for fiduciary
5 responsibility, a principle that guides the decisions made
6 on behalf of our clients. If confirmed, I will bring the
7 same commitment to managing the substantial assets and
8 budgets of the Navy energy, installations, and environment
9 portfolio.

10 Smart stewardship demands innovation, fresh thinking
11 and cost discipline. If confirmed, I will emphasize
12 readiness, innovation, open communication, and importantly,
13 accountability. Much has been accomplished, but more is
14 required to meet the significant challenges ahead. I will
15 draw on my experience in uniform and in business, and work
16 in close partnership with this committee, Congress within
17 the Department of War, and with additional stakeholders
18 across government, industry, and our communities.

19 Together we will strengthen the foundation on which our
20 sailors and marines live, train, and fight, ensuring the
21 Navy and the Marine Corps remains a globally present,
22 forward deployed force, ready to project strength, and
23 secure our national interests. Thank you, and I look
24 forward to your questions.



1 [The prepared statement of Mr. Rogers follows:]

2 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very, very much. Now
2 Senator Banks, are you prepared to introduce Dr. Jewell?

3 Senator Banks: Yes, sir.

4 Chairman Wicker: Go ahead.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JIM BANKS, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

2 Senator Banks: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
3 for allowing me to introduce a fellow Hoosier for today's
4 hearing.

5 I'm proud that President Trump has nominated Dr. Joe
6 Jewell to be the Assistant Secretary of War for Science and
7 Technology. The threat of China overtaking us in military
8 technology has never been greater, and we need leaders like
9 Dr. Jewell to help get us back on track.

10 Dr. Joseph Jewell is a professor at Purdue University
11 in my home state of Indiana, focusing on hypersonics. At
12 Purdue, he leads the Hypersonic Mock six Quiet Tunnel
13 Research Group and the Wind tunnel at the Purdue Applied
14 Research Institute. Purdue's partnership with Naval Surface
15 Warfare Center Crane has helped make Purdue a national
16 leader in hypersonic research and development. Dr. Jewell
17 has also authored more than 150 published research papers in
18 aerospace engineering and hypersonics, and his research has
19 led to patents that advance our hypersonic capabilities.

20 Dr. Jewell received his PhD from Caltech and his
21 master's degree from Oxford where he was a Rhodes Scholar.
22 He has served as a subject matter expert on both classified
23 and unclassified hypersonic programs, worked at the Air
24 Force Research Laboratory, and serves on the defense science



1 study group. With Dr. Jewell joining what is already an
2 outstanding research and engineering team led by Under
3 Secretary Emil Michael, I know that America will meet the
4 gravity of this moment. Dr. Jewell could not be more
5 qualified for this role and position. He will make an
6 outstanding Assistant Secretary of War for Science and
7 Technology.

8 Mr. Chairman, I strongly recommend that we continue our
9 work on this committee that we've already accomplished this
10 year by quickly sending Dr. Jewell's nomination to the
11 floor. We need him at the Pentagon, ASAP. Thank you. I
12 yield back.

13 Chairman Wicker: Well done. Thank you, Senator Banks.
14 Now, Dr. Jewell, we'll be delighted to receive your opening
15 statement.

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1 STATEMENT OF DR. JOSEPH S. JEWELL, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

3 Dr. Jewell: Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and
4 distinguished members of the committee, it's a profound
5 honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee
6 for Assistant Secretary of War for Science and Technology.
7 I'm deeply grateful to President Trump and Secretary Hegseth
8 for their confidence in nominating me to this critical role,
9 and I thank the committee for the opportunity to speak with
10 you today and earn your trust.

11 I also want to express my gratitude to my family who
12 have made the trip out from Indiana and Michigan to be here,
13 especially my wife Katie, and our three sons, Richard
14 Theodore, and Elliott Jewell, 10, 8 and 5 years old
15 respectively, and God's sweetest blessings in our lives. My
16 mother and sister, Suzanne and Elizabeth Jewell, and my aunt
17 and uncle Barb and Tal Day.

18 I have in mind today also those in my family who have
19 served our country, stretching back to the Revolutionary War
20 in which my eight and seven times great-grandfathers via my
21 dad, Steve and grandmother Kay Jewel, Colonel Daniel and his
22 son, Lieutenant Elijah Plimpton mustered as part of the
23 Massachusetts militia down to my four times great-
24 grandfather, Emory Plimpton, who during the Civil War was



1 captain of Company M of the 4th Michigan Volunteer Cavalry
2 Regiment. The company recruited primarily from Berrien
3 County in southwest Michigan, where 120 years later I was
4 born and raised.

5 The most significant formative influences in my life
6 came in that corner of Michigan from my grandparents, three
7 of whom served during World War II, Chief Petty Officer
8 Charles Jewell, U.S. Navy, and First Lieutenant Richard
9 Kramer, U.S. Army, who were in the Pacific Theater, and my
10 grandmother, Dorothy Fiedler Kramer, who was in the U.S.
11 Public Health Services Cadet Nurse Corps.

12 While I have not had the privilege of serving in
13 uniform as they did, their example of service to family and
14 country resonates strongly with me. Throughout my career in
15 academic work at Michigan, Oxford, and Caltech as a research
16 scientist at the Air Force Research Laboratory, and now as a
17 professor at Purdue University, I've been privileged to work
18 at the intersection of advanced science and national
19 defense.

20 My research has focused on hypersonic
21 aerothermodynamics, flight test data analysis, and the
22 development and operation of uniquely capable hypersonic
23 wind tunnel facilities, areas that are not only technically
24 demanding, but also strategically vital to our national



1 security. As an active aerospace researcher and educator, I
2 have sent numerous graduates into impactful science and
3 engineering roles in national security in the DOW, national
4 labs and industry, and have executed hypersonic test
5 programs for the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

6 If confirmed, I will bring to this role a deep
7 commitment to ensuring that the United States regains and
8 maintains its technological superiority over our
9 adversaries. We are in an era of renewed great power
10 competition where nations, including the People's Republic
11 of China, are investing heavily in disruptive technologies
12 to challenge our military advantage. The Department of War
13 must respond with urgency, clarity, and resolve.

14 President Trump, Secretary Hegseth, and Under Secretary
15 Michael have made clear that peace through strength is the
16 cornerstone of American security. That strength must be
17 underpinned by a robust and agile science and technology
18 enterprise. If confirmed as Assistant secretary, I will
19 prioritize the acceleration of basic and applied research
20 with relevance for defense needs in areas like hypersonics
21 directed energy, and artificial intelligence, while ensuring
22 that our investments are aligned with war fighter needs and
23 national strategic objectives.

24 I believe that innovation is not just about discovery,



1 it is about delivery. We must shorten the timeline from
2 laboratory breakthroughs to battlefield capabilities. That
3 means effectively leveraging the best of American academia,
4 fostering public-private partnerships, and empowering our
5 defense laboratories to operate with greater flexibility and
6 speed. It also means holding ourselves accountable for
7 results and ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely
8 and to maximum effect.

9 Furthermore, as I see every day as an aerospace
10 engineering professor in my laboratory and classroom,
11 America's technological edge depends on our ability to
12 cultivate and retain the world's best scientists, engineers,
13 and technologists. If confirmed, I will work to support
14 STEM education opportunities like the ones I received at
15 Lakeshore Public Schools back in Stevensville, Michigan,
16 empower early career researchers, and create new pathways
17 for talent to enter the defense innovation ecosystem. We
18 must inspire the next generation to serve not only in
19 uniform, but also in the laboratories and industries that
20 power our defense enterprise.

21 Finally, I want to emphasize the importance of
22 collaboration. The challenges we face are too complex for
23 any one institution to solve alone. If confirmed, I will
24 work closely with our military services, combatant commands,



1 allies and partners in academia and industry to ensure that
2 our science and technology strategy is unified, coherent,
3 and mission driven.

4 In closing, I'm humbled by the opportunity to serve, I
5 believe deeply in the mission of the Department of War and
6 in the power of American innovation to preserve peace,
7 protect freedom, and secure our future. If confirmed, I
8 look forward to working with this committee and with all
9 stakeholders to ensure that the nation that my three young
10 sons, Richard, Theodore, and Elliott, someday inherit, is
11 the global leader in defense science and technology.

12 Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome
13 your questions.

14 [The prepared statement of Dr. Jewell follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]



1 Chairman Wicker: Are those Richard, Theodore, and
2 Elliot right behind you?

3 Dr. Jewell: They are, Chairman.

4 Chairman Wicker: Mighty fine looking young fellows.
5 Did you say the Massachusetts Militia during the
6 Revolutionary War?

7 Dr. Jewell: Yes, that's right.

8 Chairman Wicker: And not the continental Army?

9 Dr. Jewell: The Massachusetts militia as close as I
10 can tell.

11 Chairman Wicker: Great. That's quite a genealogy
12 there. Thank you very much for --

13 Senator King: And his and his ancestors were on the
14 union side in the Civil War, Mr. Chairman.

15 Chairman Wicker: Absolutely. Well, I certainly am
16 delighted to be a part of that greatest union that the world
17 has ever seen.

18 Mr. Berkowitz, your testimony.

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1 STATEMENT OF MR. MARC J. BERKOWITZ, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPACE POLICY

3 Mr. Berkowitz: Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed,
4 distinguished members of the committee, it's an honor to
5 appear before you as the President's nominee for the
6 position of Assistant Secretary of War for Space policy.
7 I'm grateful to President Trump for nominating me for this
8 important position. In addition, I'd like to thank this
9 committee for its role in the legislation which elevated it
10 to a Senate confirmed position and for considering my
11 nomination.

12 Please let me express my deep appreciation for my wife,
13 Mary, my children, Melissa, Margaret, Maria, and Michael and
14 son-in-law Scott, as well as my parents, sisters, extended
15 family and friends for their love and support. Michael
16 recently passed away and was very proud about this
17 opportunity for me to return to the federal government. Our
18 family has a history of public service, including my
19 paternal grandfather serving under General Pershing during
20 the Mexican expedition, both of my grandfathers seeing
21 combat in the Army during World War I, my uncle's service in
22 the Army during the Second World War, and subsequently at
23 Los Alamos, and my father's service in the Navy during the
24 Korean conflict.



1 It has also been my good fortune to have been guided by
2 wise mentors and thoughtful colleagues. I especially
3 appreciate the inspiration, opportunities, and counsel
4 provided by Dr. Colin Gray, General Tom Moorman, and Mr.
5 Pete Aldridge. I believe my prior experience in both the
6 public and private sectors have uniquely prepared me for the
7 responsibilities of the office for which I've been nominated
8 and if confirmed, working with this committee to protect and
9 advance U.S. national interests.

10 Over the course of my 45-year career, I've served in
11 directly relevant and increasingly responsible positions in
12 the federal government and industry. In particular, I
13 served from the end of the Cold War to the Global War on
14 Terror, as the executive in the office of the Secretary of
15 Defense, responsible for the analysis, formulation,
16 coordination, and oversight of the implementation of United
17 States and Department of Defense Space policies.

18 After departing federal service, I was an executive at
19 a leading aerospace and defense corporation where I was
20 responsible for strategy, strategic planning, and systems
21 engineering and architecture analysis. I also served as a
22 special government employee, senior advisor and consultant
23 to both the defense department and the intelligence
24 community.



1 America has leveraged its position as the preeminent
2 space fearing nation to advance our national interests,
3 especially our prosperity and security. Indeed, space
4 capabilities enable our armed forces to deter aggression,
5 project power, and defend the homeland in U.S. interests.
6 Unimpeded access and use of space is a vital national
7 interest. As this committee is aware, the threat
8 environment is extraordinarily complex and perilous. Our
9 rivals, most notably China, have fielded and operate a
10 variety of space, counter space and missile capabilities to
11 undermine our historic advantages in space contest, our
12 freedom of action jeopardize our military forces and
13 operations and hold the U.S. homeland at risk.

14 In this regard, I want to commend the President for
15 providing the historic leadership to create the U.S. Space
16 Force, reestablish U.S. space command and initiate the
17 Golden Dome for America to establish a comprehensive
18 homeland missile defense. During their confirmation
19 hearings, Secretary Hegseth, Deputy Secretary Feinberg, and
20 Under Secretary Colby outlined the President's national
21 security goals and the department's key objectives. These
22 included reestablishing a warrior ethos, rebuilding the
23 military, restoring deterrence, and achieving peace through
24 strength. I strongly support those goals and objectives.



1 In his first annual address to Congress, George
2 Washington said that to be prepared for war is one of the
3 most effectual means of preserving peace. The Assistant
4 Secretary of War for Space policy is responsible for policy
5 guidance and oversight of the department's conduct of space
6 and missile defense activities. If confirmed, I look
7 forward to working with this committee and doing everything
8 in my power to assure that U.S. space and missile defense
9 forces are prepared to defend the homeland and prevail in
10 conflict to deter aggression and preserve peace through
11 strength.

12 Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you
13 for your time and attention. I look forward to your
14 questions.

15 [The prepared statement of Mr. Berkowitz follows:]

16 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Wicker: Well said, Mr. Berkowitz.
2 Mr. Caggy, your opening statement.

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1 STATEMENT OF MR. JAMES R. CAGGY, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF THE DEFENSE FOR MISSION CAPABILITIES

3 Mr. Caggy: Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and
4 distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the
5 opportunity to appear before you today. I'm honored to be
6 the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of War for
7 Mission Capabilities, and I'm deeply grateful for the
8 confidence President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have placed
9 in me.

10 This is a humbling moment and I appreciate your
11 consideration of my nomination. I want to thank my family
12 for being here today, particularly my son, Alexander,
13 Reverend John Kelly, and Tish Kelly. I also want to
14 recognize my many battle buddies and friends who honor me
15 with their presence, many who I first met in combat or
16 crisis responses around the world.

17 I have spent my career at the intersection of
18 technology and national defense. I served for over a decade
19 as U.S. Army Infantry Officer, including combat deployments
20 in Afghanistan and the Middle East. And those experiences
21 impressed upon me the importance of giving our war fighters
22 every possible advantage. After my military service, my
23 held executive leadership roles in the technology sector,
24 delivering cloud computing, advanced analytics, and



1 artificial intelligence capabilities to war fighters. Most
2 recently, I served as a technical advisor in the offices of
3 Secretary of War Strategic Capabilities office, where I
4 focused on rapidly prototyping new capabilities for the
5 joint force. This blend of frontline military experience
6 and technology leadership over two decades has me excited
7 for the opportunity to lead the Mission Capabilities office.

8 We are at a pivotal moment. The United States faces
9 the most complex and challenging security environment since
10 World War II. Advanced technologies are emerging at
11 breakneck pace, and our competitors, especially the Peoples
12 Republic of China, are investing aggressively to outpace us.
13 As a soldier in combat, I learned firsthand that having
14 superior capabilities can be a matter of life or death for
15 the troops on the ground. As a technologist, I see how
16 cutting-edge innovations such as artificial intelligence,
17 directed energy weapons, hypersonics, and advanced space
18 systems can transform our military if we can get those
19 innovations out of the lab and into the field quickly.

20 It's about ensuring we can develop, test, and field the
21 tools to our war fighters faster and more effectively than
22 our adversaries. If confirmed, I will focus on three
23 priorities: first, accelerating prototyping, and delivering
24 new capabilities to our war fighters at speed. We must



1 shorten the cycle from idea to impact. Success in this area
2 means we won't just innovate in a lab, we will get
3 technology into the field where it can make a difference for
4 the men and women on the front lines. I will push the
5 department to remove bureaucratic roadblocks that slow down,
6 transitioning proven technologies to the joint force so that
7 war fighters receive state-of-the-art capabilities on
8 timelines measured in months, not years.

9 Second, we must improve our development pipelines and
10 test infrastructure to drive innovation at scale. It's not
11 enough to invent or procure a single new gadget. We need to
12 continually transition good ideas into fielded capabilities.
13 I intend to work with the services and combatant commands to
14 increase the number of joint prototyping and experimentation
15 activities over the next year, so we identify and fix
16 problems early and get capabilities in the war fighter's
17 hands faster.

18 The metric I care about is speed with credibility. How
19 quickly we can prove that a technology works and field it at
20 scale. If confirmed, I'll insist we measure and shorten
21 both timelines without compromising safety or effectiveness.

22 Finally, we must strengthen the war department's
23 partnership with the emerging defense tech sector. Startups
24 have transformative ideas, but get stuck in our processes.



1 We need to be a better partner. We must be clear, fast, and
2 predictable, so a promising technology becomes a funded
3 pilot in months, not years.

4 In closing, I am motivated above all by the obligation
5 we have to the men and women who serve in uniform. We ask
6 our war fighters to deter aggression and if necessary, fight
7 and win our nation's wars. So we must ensure they have
8 every advantage we can give them. This is what the mission
9 capabilities office is all about: making sure that when our
10 troops go into harm's way, they are the best equipped and
11 best prepared fighting force on the planet.

12 If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to maintain
13 America's technological edge. I'm humbled by the prospect
14 of returning to public service, and I'll approach the job
15 with a mission first bureaucracy last mindset every single
16 day.

17 Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, members of the
18 committee, thanks again for considering my nomination, and I
19 look forward to your questions.

20 [The prepared statement of Mr. Caggy follows:]

21 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Wicker: Well, thank you Mr. Caggy, and thank
2 you all.

3 It's now appropriate for me to ask a series of standard
4 questions this committee poses to all civilian nominees, and
5 I just ask you to answer all simultaneously with a yes or a
6 no, and that will be the simplest way to get through these
7 questions.

8 Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations
9 governing conflicts of interest?

10 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

11 Chairman Wicker: Have you assumed any duties or taken
12 any actions that would appear to presume the outcome of the
13 confirmation process?

14 [Witnesses answer in the negative.]

15 Chairman Wicker: Exercising our legislative and
16 oversight responsibilities makes it important that this
17 committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate
18 committees of Congress, receive testimony, briefings,
19 reports, records, and other information from the executive
20 branch on a timely basis. Do you agree, if confirmed, to
21 appear and testify before this committee when requested?

22 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

23 Chairman Wicker: Do you agree to provide records,
24 documents, and electronic communications in a timely manner



1 when requested by this committee, its subcommittees or other
2 appropriate committees of Congress, and to consult with the
3 requester regarding the basis for any good faith delays or
4 denial in providing such records?

5 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

6 Chairman Wicker: Will you ensure that your staff
7 complies with deadlines established by this committee for
8 the production of reports, records, and other information,
9 including timely responding to hearing questions for the
10 record?

11 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

12 Chairman Wicker: Will you cooperate in providing
13 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
14 requests?

15 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

16 Chairman Wicker: Will those witnesses and briefers be
17 protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

18 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

19 Chairman Wicker: And a quick yes or no. Do you commit
20 to following Congress's recommended spending recommendations
21 in the Defense Reconciliation Bill unequivocally?

22 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

23 Chairman Wicker: All right. Thank you very, very
24 much. And now we'll move into a series of questions. Five



1 minutes per member.

2 So, Mr. Caggy, have you read the FoRGED Act, much of
3 which is in the NDAA reported by the Senate?

4 Mr. Caggy: Senator, yes, I have.

5 Chairman Wicker: And then you understand that it seeks
6 to make it easier to do business with the government using
7 commercial procedures to attract new companies to the
8 defense industrial base. How would you encourage these new
9 companies and also facilitate putting their own path to
10 larger production contracts?

11 Mr. Caggy: Chairman Wicker, the FoRGED Act is in my
12 mind an important reformation for how we acquire new
13 technology, how we engage with commercial industry how we
14 encourage some of our more innovative commercial companies
15 to engage with the department. You know, certainly in the
16 last decade or two, we've had fits and starts with working
17 with the most innovative companies to bring their
18 technologies to the department, harden them, ruggedize them,
19 prepare them for war fighter activity in combat.

20 So, certainly, you know, I'm fully supportive of what
21 has been outlined in the FoRGED Act.

22 Chairman Wicker: I think we need to bring them in and
23 then we need to help them understand as they are more
24 flexible to get bigger and more capable of the huge job.



1 Mr. Rogers, let me ask you about something I mentioned
2 in my opening statement. We placed in the 2025 NDAA a
3 provision that would require the department to budget the
4 commercial industry standard minimum of 4 percent plant
5 replacement by the year 2030. Will you ensure that this law
6 is enforced and will you commit to this committee to report
7 to Congress if there are those in the department that are
8 knowingly not following the law?

9 Mr. Rogers: Mr. Chairman, absolutely we'll follow the
10 law. Importantly, the installations that we have are the
11 base in which we power project globally and the investment
12 in that is absolutely critical. So certainly, support and
13 appreciate the support that Congress has been giving on this
14 important factor. If confirmed, we'll commit to continuing
15 to invest in our installations so that they are ready,
16 reliable, and resilient, and follow the law.

17 Chairman Wicker: It's just easy to take money in a
18 tight time away from that and say, well, we'll just do it
19 later. We want that to stop. That's the reason. Not only
20 do does the Congress put the money there, but we placed it
21 in the statute. We want it done, and we want to make to
22 make sure that we've got your back when you do spend that 4
23 percent.

24 Now Dr. Jewell, the Department of Defense Laboratory in



1 infrastructure has been identified for over a decade as
2 aging, unsafe, and inefficient. GAO says more than 60
3 percent of DOD laboratory facilities are over 40 years old.
4 So, Dr. Jewell, if confirm, what specific steps will you
5 take to address this chronic underinvestment and poor
6 execution?

7 Dr. Jewell: Chairman Wicker, during my five and a half
8 years at the Air Force Research Laboratory, it's fair to say
9 that we had exquisite, in my case, wind tunnels, hypersonic
10 wind tunnels surrounded by buildings that were often
11 literally crumbling old buildings. So we had new technology
12 and old buildings. In my laboratory at Purdue University,
13 we have issues sometimes with HVAC causing issues with our
14 electronics.

15 So you really need a safe and secure and
16 environmentally controlled laboratory area in which to do
17 fundamental research and applied research. So if confirmed,
18 I would make it a priority to get out into the field and
19 visit the Defense Laboratories for which I would be
20 responsible and advocate for any necessary resources that
21 they might need to give these researchers and their
22 facilities the infrastructure that they really deserve to
23 sustain their work.

24 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.



1 Senator Reed, you are recognized.

2 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
3 Mr. Berkowitz, you stated and published essays that the
4 under secretary of the Air Force should also serve as the
5 director of the National Reconnaissance Office. Can you
6 explain your rationale why you believe that the under
7 secretary should also be the director of NRO?

8 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for that question, Senator or
9 Ranking Member Reed. That's not exactly correct. I've
10 written recently about intentionally thought provoking
11 pieces, if you would, to consider options for improving the
12 efficiency of the department's space activities. I
13 appreciated the time that we spent discussing this in your
14 office. And what I'd note is that throughout much of the
15 history of the National Security Space Program either the
16 secretary, under secretary, or Assistant Secretary for
17 Space, and the Department of the Air Force was dual hatted
18 as the director of the NRO.

19 And for much of that time both the Defense and National
20 Reconnaissance Programs were run very efficiently and
21 effectively. And so if that is an option that's worth
22 considering, I would support it if it was appropriate.

23 Senator Reed: Thank you. Dr. Jewell, you pointed out
24 how we are in a technological race with China particularly



1 and I think we're sort of putting one hand behind or tying
2 one hand up by cutting dramatically research in our
3 universities, CDC, and NIH. Biological warfare is something
4 that is not a historic fact now. So how can you help
5 reverse this trend of undercutting our civilian, as well as
6 our military research organizations?

7 Dr. Jewell: Ranking Member Reed, as an academic
8 researcher myself and indeed one whose research portfolio
9 depends mostly on department grants and contracts, or those
10 given by industrial concerns that are ultimately funded by
11 the Department of War, this is an issue that's near and dear
12 to my heart. And within the purview of the position for
13 which I'm nominated I am to oversee the defense 6.1 through
14 6.3, that is the basic research and the first couple of
15 levels of applied research portfolios.

16 I think strong continued investment in those early
17 stages of research and development is critical. That's the
18 seed corn that feeds later innovations that can be applied
19 to benefit for the war fighter. So, if confirmed, I'll
20 certainly take a hard look at resourcing levels and will not
21 hesitate to advocate for the resources that are needed both
22 within the department and through external collaborators
23 such as academia.

24 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.



1 Mr. Caggy, you're going to be the first in this
2 position, and can you give us a sense of what you perceive
3 as the current limitations in the Department of Defense for
4 developing capabilities, operational assessments, and then
5 making the trade off so that we can get in the hands of the
6 war fighter the equipment they need?

7 Mr. Caggy: Ranking Member Reed, we have incredible
8 innovators inside of the department today, both civilian
9 uniform services and of course, our industrial base supports
10 the department every day in developing new technologies,
11 testing and prototyping, and getting out the field. You
12 know, that being said, we often hinder ourselves with our
13 own bureaucracy with you know, overly burdensome rules and
14 regulations that prevent us from doing experimenting and
15 prototype at a more rapid clip.

16 It's incredibly important that, you know, the Mission
17 Capabilities office works and partners with the services,
18 with laboratories both in the services and of course, DARPA
19 and works alongside the combatant commands to ensure that we
20 can prototype, task, experiment, get validated, warfighter
21 feedback back to our industry partners, such that we can
22 develop these capabilities at a much, much faster rate than
23 we are doing today, and, of course, ensure that we have a
24 successful transition to the services.



1 Senator Reed: Thank you. Mr. Rogers any doubt about
2 your capability was removed when a West Point graduate
3 recommended you, so I just want to make that clear. You've
4 served with distinction in the seals. You know the
5 importance of housing for the quality of life of service
6 members, recruitment, retention. And one of the big focuses
7 of your efforts, I hope, is going to be ensuring the high
8 quality of both family housing and barracks and your
9 assurance would be appreciated.

10 Mr. Rogers: Regular Member Reed, it's absolutely
11 critical, and it is our responsibility to provide clean,
12 comfortable, and safe housing for both our families and for
13 our unaccompanied meaning the barracks. This is absolutely
14 critical. It is both a readiness and a retention issue, and
15 it is at the core of our ability to fight. And so if
16 confirmed, you absolutely have my commitment to focus on
17 this area, given the impact that it has on our sailors and
18 our Marines globally.

19 Senator Reed: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr.
20 Chairman.

21 Chairman Wicker: Senator Reed, I think you're trying
22 to point out that Mr. Rogers has a lot to live up to based
23 on his recommendations.

24 Senator Reed: Absolutely.



1 Chairman Wicker: Senator Fisher.

2 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank
3 you gentlemen, and thanks to your families for your
4 willingness to step forward and serve this country.

5 Mr. Berkowitz, in your opening remarks, you stated that
6 the threat environment is, "Extraordinarily complex and
7 perilous." You've been working in and around space policy
8 for most of your career. In this setting, can you share how
9 the space domain has evolved in recent years, and what do
10 you see as the most significant challenges that you would
11 address if you are confirmed?

12 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for that opportunity to
13 discuss one of the reasons why I have agreed to come out of
14 retirement to seek this position. Rivals view space as a
15 war fighting domain and have taken steps to weaponize it.
16 For example, China has fielded and operates a variety of
17 space, counter space, and missile capabilities that can
18 contest our freedom of action, jeopardize our forces and
19 operations, and hold the homeland at risk.

20 The threat is dramatically different than it was during
21 the Cold War. Consequently, if confirmed, my priorities
22 would be to ensure that we have all of the capabilities
23 required to sustain U.S. dominance in space activities and
24 protect and advance our national interests. The challenges



1 that I would expect to confront if confirmed are really
2 twofold. The first is addressing the national security
3 policy issues required to enable us to deal effectively and
4 urgently with the pace, scope, and complexity of space and
5 missile threats.

6 And the second is the broader national policy issues to
7 sustain United States position as the world's leader in
8 space exploration and use.

9 Senator Fischer: Thank you very much. Much of the
10 time when we talk about the space domain, it can only be
11 discussed in a classified setting, and I think it's
12 important for this committee and also for the public as a
13 whole to be able to hear some of the perspectives in an
14 unclassified environment. So thank you for that.

15 Dr. Jewell, space technologies are one of the
16 department's critical technology areas identified by the
17 under secretary of defense for research and engineering. If
18 confirmed, how do you see your role in ensuring the military
19 has what it needs to face those threats?

20 Dr. Jewell: Thank you, Senator. And I share your
21 belief in the importance of the space based layer for both
22 sensing and other applications in our national defense. I
23 think in particular with the genesis of the Golden Dome for
24 America, we're going to rely on some of those space-based



1 layers as well as ground-based layers in order to execute
2 the sensing and custody that we need prior to addressing in
3 a kinetic fashion any threats that may face the homeland.

4 If confirmed, I intend to support research into space
5 technology, and I think one of the most critical areas of
6 research will be that sensor layer, and indeed how we can
7 build that sensor layer in a way that's resilient, such that
8 even in a threat rich environment, we can still rely upon
9 our space-based technology in order to maintain custody of
10 those threats.

11 Senator Fischer: Thank you very much.

12 Mr. Berkowitz, an underappreciated, but a very vital
13 component of the Golden Dome will be improving our ability
14 to detect and track potential threats, as Dr. Jewell said,
15 that's sensing layer. Whatever combination of interceptors
16 we deploy or develop, they will need to all rely on an
17 upgraded sensor architecture. If confirmed, how will you
18 work with General Guetlein with SpaceCom, with Northcom and
19 the services to ensure that we are procuring and integrating
20 the right mix of space-based sensors into this larger
21 architecture that we have?

22 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for the question, Senator.
23 If confirmed, I would expect to work very closely and
24 collaboratively with General Guetlein and all of the



1 department's components involved in the Golden Dome for
2 America program not only on sensors which are a critical
3 aspect of it, as well as potentially space-based
4 interceptors, but also on the battle management command and
5 control and communications capabilities that are essential
6 to network, all of the systems that will comprise the
7 Homeland Missile Defense.

8 In that regard, the fusion capabilities and the sense
9 making capabilities are going to be essential for ensuring
10 that we actually can engage in defeat any threats.

11 Senator Fischer: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr.
12 Chairman.

13 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Fisher. Senator
14 Shaheen.

15 Senator Shaheen: Good morning. Congratulations to
16 each of our nominees, and let me echo Senator Fisher in
17 thanking you all and all your families for your willingness
18 to continue to serve this country.

19 Mr. Rogers, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is in the
20 middle of critical upgrades as part of the Shipyard
21 Optimization Program. My state of New Hampshire shares the
22 shipyard with Senator King -- I have to point that out, or
23 he gets upset. But the address is Portsmouth, New
24 Hampshire. I would just point that out.



1 Chairman Wicker: There'll be order.

2 [Laughter]

3 Senator Shaheen: Obviously still an issue, except that
4 we are all very proud of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and
5 this project is a generational project to modernize the
6 nation's public shipyards to meet the growing demand for
7 submarine maintenance. Now, by 2030, Portsmouth expects to
8 be able to double the number of submarines that are
9 undergoing maintenance at a time. And that requires not
10 just that maintenance for the submarines, but it requires
11 installation resources to support the submarine crews that
12 serve on board these vessels along with their families.

13 And Mr. Rogers, you probably already know this, I
14 learned it recently that public shipyards are not classified
15 as home ports when it comes to support services for the men
16 and women serving on them. And while the other three public
17 shipyards are co-located with installations that are home
18 ports, that's not the case in Portsmouth. And as we look at
19 the challenges right now at its current size providing
20 housing and support services can be challenging.

21 So if we're talking about doubling the number of ships
22 that are being served that's going to require additional
23 support for those crews, for their families, for
24 particularly housing. So can you talk a little bit about



1 how you envision ensuring that we address this issue for our
2 public shipyards?

3 Mr. Rogers: Senator Shaheen, the SIOP program is
4 foundational to the defense of the country not just at
5 Portsmouth, but across our other public shipyards. And so
6 certainly if confirmed, we'll continue to support that
7 program as we move forward. You mentioned housing, and like
8 I said, the responsibility that we have is to the crews, to
9 their families to provide that.

10 If confirmed, I will certainly look into that. As I
11 sit here today, I don't know all the details specific to
12 Portsmouth in terms of their requirements, but we'll
13 certainly look into that because the requirement is that we
14 support these families, and if we're going to increase the
15 number of submarines, which is important through the
16 shipyard, we need to also support the families.

17 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. I appreciate that.
18 Will you come up and visit the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard? I
19 know that Senator King and I would be happy to work with the
20 shipyard commander to host you in that kind of a visit.

21 Mr. Rogers: Senator Shaheen and Senator King, if
22 confirmed, I would absolutely come and visit you.

23 Senator Shaheen: Great. We will take you up on that.
24 Thank you.



1 Mr. Caggy, you talked in your opening remarks about
2 wanting to strengthen the ties between the department and
3 tech companies. How do you propose to do that?

4 Mr. Caggy: Senator, so, one of the things I've
5 observed over the last few years is that the vast majority
6 of American companies want to serve our nation. They want
7 to develop and deliver capabilities to our war fighters.
8 Sometimes they don't always understand from a threat and
9 form perspective what our key operational problems are. And
10 so sometimes they go down one development path and building
11 a product or capability that is exactly what we need. And,
12 occasionally these products and capabilities are not exactly
13 solving the problem that we had before us in the joint
14 force.

15 If confirmed, my intent is just to strengthen our
16 relationships with you know, not just tech companies, but
17 really just American industry and companies overall to make
18 sure that they're aware of what our key operational problems
19 are, what the joint force needs today, that we're providing
20 them a threat informed picture of what we are currently
21 dealing with out in the operating environment and what we
22 may be dealing with in the next few years.

23 Senator Shaheen: Well, one of the programs that's been
24 very successful in promoting innovation has been the Small



1 Business Innovation Research Program, which encourages small
2 businesses. They work directly with -- Dr. Jewell's
3 nodding, because I'm sure you've seen that. So I hope that
4 you will take a look at that and encourage reauthorization
5 of that program because it's about to expire, and we need to
6 make sure that it continues to provide the innovation that
7 our military needs. Thank you.

8 Chairman Wicker: Senator Shaheen, I'm thinking about
9 going up and visiting that shipyard. Which state would have
10 the better hotel rooms if I make that visit?

11 Senator Shaheen: Of course, it would be New Hampshire,
12 because it's located, its address is Portsmouth, New
13 Hampshire?

14 Chairman Wicker: I do. I thank you for that input.
15 Senator Rounds.

16 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen,
17 first of all, let me thank you for your offer of continuing
18 to serve our nation and to your families. As well as my
19 colleagues have indicated, it means not only are we asking
20 you for this, but we also recognize that it places a
21 challenge to your families as well, and we thank you for
22 making that offer.

23 As a number of you have discussed with me when we met
24 earlier -- and I think I met with all of you except Mr.



1 Rogers, and I look forward to having that opportunity in the
2 future -- but we've discussed, and I think you're aware of
3 the fact that I'm going to be asking specifically with
4 regard to the management of the electromagnetic spectrum.

5 There have been attempts in the past, and we suspect
6 that there will be attempts in the future, to force the
7 department to vacate or share in a suboptimal manner, the
8 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz and the 7.4 to 8.4 gigahertz band of
9 spectrum. And it would have real negative consequences for
10 our war fighting capabilities, including homeland defense
11 missions like Golden Dome and force protection for our
12 troops overseas.

13 Mr. Caggy, if confirmed, will you advocate for and
14 defend the department's war fighting systems that operate on
15 or use those bans of the spectrum, including the radars that
16 will make President Trump's golden dome possible?

17 Mr. Caggy: Senator, I want to thank you for the time
18 you and your staff provided me in your office, and this is
19 obviously an important topic. As someone who's built a
20 number of space and ground systems over the years and I know
21 how important it is that we protect and understand our
22 spectrum requirements from a war fighter perspective,
23 especially in S-band and X-band.

24 Yes, Senator, absolutely we'll ensure that we



1 continuously do a review of all of our spectrum needs, and
2 that we do everything needed across both the department and
3 the U.S. government to protect that spectrum for our usage.

4 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

5 Dr. Jewell, if confirmed, will you advocate for
6 resources to be allocated to develop dynamic spectrum
7 sharing technology, which would ultimately mitigate issues
8 pertaining to spectrum usage?

9 Dr. Jewell: Thank you, Senator. As you know, the
10 lower three gigahertz, half the so-called S-band radio wave
11 range is absolutely critical. It's sort of the beachfront
12 property of spectrum, and that the wavelength of the radar
13 signals are long enough that it passes through most weather
14 effects and yet short enough, and that it can still be used
15 to discriminate targets. So this is really a critical
16 range.

17 Of course, if confirmed, I would support ways to
18 intelligently leverage and share that spectrum research
19 towards those ways, I should say. But again, the position
20 for which I'm nominated, of course, is the fundamental
21 research and first level of applied research. So, while we
22 pursue those efforts, I would want to be sure if confirmed,
23 that we don't impede legacy systems that depend upon access
24 to the S-band and the X-band for that matter, as they stand



1 today,

2 Senator Rounds: Those legacy systems are the ones that
3 defend our homeland, and they defend any place in which one
4 of our destroyers is now located. Fair enough?

5 Dr. Jewell: That's absolutely correct.

6 Senator Rounds: You reaffirm that the Navy alone had
7 indicated it's over \$250 billion to them, and perhaps 20
8 years to replace those same assets in those spectrum areas?

9 Dr. Jewell: It would take a huge investment of course,
10 far beyond the purview of my office.

11 Senator Rounds: Also fair to say that China would love
12 to see us have those particular bands impacted by the sale
13 to commercial operators. Fair enough?

14 Dr. Jewell: I think very, very true.

15 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Mr. Berkowitz, will you
16 defend this department's access to spectrum for those space
17 systems required for homeland defense and space dominance?

18 Mr. Berkowitz: Yes Senator, and I thank you for coming
19 off the floor in the midst of a vote to speak with me.

20 Access to Spectrum is essential for the mission
21 effectiveness at Armed Forces. And if confirmed, I will be
22 a staunch advocate for the Spectrum requirements for our
23 space and missile defense capabilities.

24 Senator Rounds: Thank you.



1 Mr. Caggy, we discussed the drone dominance in my
2 office, and I would like to expand on that. The ongoing
3 drone revolution has dramatically reframed the cost curve
4 and operational tempo of warfare. What is the department's
5 definition of drone dominance?

6 Mr. Caggy: Senator, drone dominance is one way of
7 explaining how we overmatch our adversaries through the
8 offensive or defensive usage of various drones technology,
9 and of course, autonomous systems and all forms of robotics
10 are critical for us to be prototyping and experimenting with
11 at a more rapid clip over the next few years.

12 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Wicker: Senator Hirono.

14 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Congratulations to each of you and thank you and your
16 families for your commitment to service. To ensure the
17 fitness of all nominees to serve, I ask the following two
18 initial questions, and I'll very quickly go down the line,
19 starting with Mr. Berkowitz.

20 Since you became an adult, have you ever requested --
21 excuse me. Since you became a legal adult, have you ever
22 made unwanted requests for sexual favors or committed any
23 verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature?

24 Mr. Berkowitz, we'll go down the line.



1 Mr. Berkowitz: No.

2 Dr. Jewell: No.

3 Mr. Caggy: No.

4 Mr. Rogers: No.

5 Senator Hirono: Have you ever faced discipline or
6 entered into a settlement relating to this kind of conduct?

7 Mr. Berkowitz: No.

8 Dr. Jewell: No.

9 Mr. Caggy: No.

10 Mr. Rogers: No.

11 Senator Hirono: This is for Mr. Rogers. The Navy's
12 efforts to permanently close the Red Hill Fuel Storage
13 facility must remain a top priority. And the water
14 contamination crisis in 2021, which impacted over 90,000
15 residents on Oahu, severely undermined public trust and how
16 the Navy handled the whole situation. So we need to
17 continue to pay attention to the closure, make sure that
18 it's safe, and there are ongoing environmental concerns that
19 we need to address as the facility is closed.

20 So, I would like to have your personal commitment to
21 see through to completion the transparent closure of Red
22 Hill, which involves not only providing of adequate
23 resources and manpower, but also the close collaboration
24 with state government officials and the community to resolve



1 trust and faith with the military. And while this was a
2 Navy situation, as far as the community is concerned, the
3 military presence in Hawaii is so important that anything
4 that any one of the services does, it pretty much impacts
5 how people feel about the entire military presence.

6 So I'd like your commitment that the significant
7 closure and the after impacts of the closing of Red Hill
8 will be a priority for you, Mr. Rogers.

9 Mr. Rogers: Senator, the closure of Red Hill is a
10 priority, and if confirmed, I will certainly commit to
11 continuing to see the good work that's been done there.
12 Despite what occurred, my understanding is the transparency
13 in which engaging the community in terms of the podcast, the
14 website, which has the testing, all of this information is
15 important.

16 Also, having grown up in Hawaii, first in Kailua and
17 then Kahaluu, I understand how not only strategically
18 important Hawaii is, but how important it is with the
19 military and the community relationship in Hawaii.

20 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much. And I also want
21 to thank you for acknowledging the critical importance of
22 SIOP, and as you know, we have one of the major, one of the
23 four shipyard facilities in Hawaii. And of course, I invite
24 you to renew your familiarity with Hawaii by visiting our



1 shipyard. And as you probably know the largest
2 infrastructure project that the DOD, the department is
3 engaged in is the dry dock at the Pearl Harbor Shipyard.
4 And there are significant delays happening there with the
5 dry dock building. And so that's even more important for
6 you to see for yourself the facility.

7 For you again, Mr. Rogers, the Navy recently released a
8 draft EIS on the intention to retain over 8,000 acres of
9 state lands on Kauai that this is often referred to as
10 Barking Sands. And that lease situation is coming up for
11 renewal, and we want to make sure that the negotiations that
12 occur noted how the importance of transparency because there
13 are significant cultural interests that are attendant to the
14 facility at PMRF.

15 So how do you plan to ensure that these negotiations
16 regarding the renewal of values of PMRF is conducted in a
17 way that make sure that the community concerns are
18 addressed?

19 Mr. Rogers: Senator, The Pacific Missile Range
20 facilities are absolutely critical to the defense of the
21 country. It's a unique testing environment, both, as you
22 well know. In terms of the cultural sensitivities, I also
23 understand that there are cultural areas within this area
24 that are important to the community. Early in this process



1 that I'm in, I did get a chance to meet with Ms. Kalipi and
2 the Hawaiian Coordination Cell, and we will absolutely
3 continue if confirmed to do that. Again, I understand the
4 importance of you know, some of the cultural areas in
5 Hawaii. I also understand the strategic importance of
6 keeping this testing range open. I also understand that
7 it's important that we extend the lease. So we'll certainly
8 do that in a transparent way, if confirmed.

9 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much. I will submit
10 for the record other questions for some of the other
11 nominees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 [The information referred to follows:]

13 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Hirono. Senator
2 Tuberville.

3 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
4 morning, gentlemen. Thanks for your service.

5 Mr. Rogers, our military construction process is a
6 disaster. It's plagued by poor initial planning, cost
7 overruns, delays that do nothing but cost taxpayers money
8 and readiness for our troops. I've seen it big time in my
9 state of Alabama. You know, a quarter of the 598 MILCON
10 projects underway in 2023 were delayed for a year or more.
11 Something is clearly broken. If confirmed, as regards to
12 the Navy, do you have any answers to this disaster?

13 Mr. Rogers: Senator Tuberville, MILCON's obviously a
14 critical program, and we're spending billions of dollars to
15 support the infrastructure. And as we talked about, the
16 installations are the area in which we power project. And
17 so getting that right is important. I mentioned in my
18 opening statement the concept of fiduciary responsibility.
19 I think that applies here for the dollars that are spent
20 that there's a collective interest in getting the most out
21 of those dollars.

22 So if confirmed, I certainly will be looking into this.
23 The specific areas of interest are a couple things. One,
24 what is really driving the premium that we are always paying



1 in MILCON, certainly relative to commercial opportunities?
2 I understand some of the drivers of that. I'd like to
3 understand that more. And also welcome Congress's help in
4 potentially changing some of the elements of the unified
5 facilities criteria to maybe lower that cost. That's number
6 one.

7 Number two is schedule. And with schedule comes cost.
8 Coming from the commercial side, if you're building in the
9 commercial side, you care about schedule, cost, and your
10 reputation and you manage those very, very closely and
11 specifically around how do you manage the risk of projects.
12 So if confirmed, I look forward to spending more time with
13 NAVFAC and CNIC on these issues.

14 Senator Tuberville: We've visited with the Secretary
15 of War and several other secretaries and Chiefs of staff in
16 the military, and they all agree there is a huge problem.
17 So hopefully we can rectify that and help our troops and
18 save some money. I know in our state of Alabama, we have
19 gone to more privatization instead of MILCON, and so it's
20 worked well in terms of speed and cost.

21 Mr. Berkowitz, in 2020, the department released the
22 defense space strategy, the first and last report of its
23 kind. While other reports have come out of the DOD on space
24 related topics such as the 2024 report on commercial space



1 strategy, it has been over five years since we've seen a
2 department wide strategy report. Are you aware of the
3 strategy released in 2020 and do you believe the strategy
4 should be updated?

5 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for raising this topic,
6 Senator. And I must say I appreciated the time to meet with
7 you and your staff in your office. Given the time that's
8 passed I think it is entirely appropriate to review and
9 update the department's commercial strategy. In fact, I
10 would note that there are three commercial strategies, one
11 for the Defense Department, one for the Space Force itself,
12 and one also for U.S. Space Command.

13 And if confirmed, I would want to review them and
14 ensure that they're appropriate to today's security
15 environment.

16 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Mr. Jewell,
17 Huntsville, Alabama is a major hub for innovations,
18 hypersonics, space warfare, quantum computing, just to name
19 a few. I don't need to tell you. We're already years
20 behind our adversaries and a lot of these critical
21 technologies. What will you do to accelerate the testing
22 and evaluation of critical technologies, especially as
23 threats from adversaries like China continue to mature?

24 Dr. Jewell: Senator, that's absolutely correct that



1 our peer and near peer adversaries have invested heavily in
2 this kind of technology. We have a number of programs in
3 the United States such as MACH TB which seek to increase the
4 pace of flight test opportunities to close that gap. But I
5 think that we need to be vigilant with that. And if
6 confirmed, I will seek to ensure that those investments
7 continue to be made.

8 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Mr. Caggy, the most
9 important part of the national is a war fighter. I think
10 most of us agree with that. Most of us join this panel to
11 ensure the men and women who put their lives on the line
12 every day are provided with nothing short of the best to
13 dominate their enemy. The junior enlisted service members
14 will be the ones working everyday hands on with the
15 capabilities that you give them. What emphasis will you put
16 on the feedback from these young war fighters?

17 Mr. Caggy: Senator, completely agree with you. The
18 feedback we get from our junior enlisted, our NCOs is really
19 the most important because they're the ones that have to
20 take the capabilities that we give into combat. And if
21 confirmed, I'm fully committed to ensuring that all service
22 members are represented in how we gain feedback on
23 prototypes and experiments, and that the concepts and
24 capabilities that we deliver to them are ready to go for



1 combat.

2 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.

3 Chairman.

4 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Tuberville.

5 Senator King.

6 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and

7 congratulations to all the witnesses.

8 Mr. Berkowitz, I want to ask a question about space
9 launch resiliency. Cape Canaveral is ideally suited to
10 provide the vast majority of the U.S.' launch capacity, but
11 it is important that we have resiliency in our launch
12 infrastructure. A hurricane or some other disruptive event
13 has the potential to derail space launch programs.
14 Obviously, I'm biased toward the Wallops Island facility
15 that's connected to our Navy base on the eastern shore of
16 Virginia, but there's other launch sites as well.

17 So if confirmed, how will you leverage the nation's
18 space capacity outside of Cape Canaveral to diversify our
19 launch infrastructure?

20 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for raising that question,
21 Senator. The United States is currently the world's leader
22 in the international commercial launch services market. And
23 frankly, I would commend the President for his recent
24 executive orders to enhance our overall competitiveness in



1 commercial launch services. If confirmed, I would work to
2 modernize our launch infrastructure, in particular, to make
3 sure that we have the capacity as well as the resilience to
4 meet the department's need, as well as the needs of all of
5 our space sectors.

6 Senator Kaine: That's great. It's outside of the
7 remit of this committee, but I would hope to see a NASA
8 director nominated. There's been some controversy over that
9 position in recent months. And you're right, we have such a
10 capacity in the country that even rocket and space related
11 companies from other nations are now using U.S. launch
12 capacity because they're unable to hit orbits that they
13 can't hit, for example, from New Zealand with Rocket Labs.
14 So that's a big advantage for us.

15 Mr. Rogers, I want to ask you a question. Your
16 position is very important to Virginia, given the number of
17 installations we have in Virginia, and I appreciate
18 colleagues who've already talked to you about the SIOP and
19 about housing. I want to ask you about resiliency. A
20 number of our bases in Virginia have some significant
21 challenges with respect to sea level rise. Those in the
22 Hampton Roads area. Hampton Roads region of the United
23 States is the second most vulnerable to sea level rise after
24 the New Orleans area.



1 There's all kinds of other challenges that extreme
2 weather poses to installations, fires, drought, etc. How
3 will you focus on these resiliency challenges should you be
4 confirmed?

5 Mr. Rogers: Senator King, again, I appreciate the time
6 that you spent with me in your offices. Our installations
7 have to be ready. They have to be reliable. And to your
8 point, they have to be resilient, and resilient in the face
9 of any number of threats. It could be Mother Nature, it
10 could be manmade, it could be nefarious, it could be by
11 accident. I think, if confirmed, the critical component is
12 understanding what the installation plans are. Also
13 speaking to our commanding officers, our senior enlisted,
14 understanding the real risks, and figuring out where those
15 risks are actually impacting our readiness to execute the
16 mission.

17 So, if confirmed, the goal would be to work with the
18 team to ensure what is causing these, and what can we do in
19 terms of courses of action against it, again, with the focus
20 on readiness, regardless of what causes the issue.

21 Senator Kaine: Let me ask one last question of you,
22 Mr. Rogers, about the SIOP, even though it's already been
23 raised. Just the size of the SIOP investment is massive.
24 Thus far, we've completed 45 facility projects totaling \$1.2



1 billion, delivered 277 items of industrial plant equipment
2 valued at nearly \$650 million. But another 38 projects
3 worth \$6.5 billion are currently under contract. The scope
4 of this investment is massive.

5 How do you plan to work with Congress and other
6 stakeholders to make sure that you're advocating
7 appropriately for the resource levels you'll need not only
8 within the Pentagon, but within OMB?

9 Mr. Rogers: Senator, as we discussed, the SIOP program
10 is foundational, understanding all of those costs. My
11 understanding of both from public sources and other
12 discussions is, it's not just the dry docks, it's all the
13 surrounding infrastructure, which is really driving the
14 cost. To be able to support our nuclear navy as a key leg
15 of the triad is absolutely critical. And so, again, it's
16 understanding the facts.

17 So, if confirmed, I'll certainly commit to
18 communicating, obviously, with Congress, with this committee
19 in terms of what are the facts, what is in front of us in
20 terms of required investment, and why are we making those
21 investments.

22 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman Wicker: Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

24 Senator Scott.



1 Senator Scott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First off,
2 congratulations, each of you. This is a great time to
3 serve. We've got a President and a Secretary they're doing
4 a fantastic job, and they're going to support our war
5 fighters and then they're going to refocus the Department of
6 War and fix a lot of problems that should have been fixed in
7 the past.

8 The President has a bold vision to protect our country
9 from threats around the globe with the Golden Dome. It's
10 this kind of groundbreaking thinking that will keep our
11 country safe for generations to come. I trust that each of
12 you share that vision that you will work hard to accomplish
13 President Trump's peace through strength mission, especially
14 as threats around the world continue to grow.

15 Mr. Berkowitz, as President Trump's pick for the
16 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, you will be
17 working with General Guetlein to oversee the Golden Dome
18 Project, one which you rightly point out is critical to our
19 national defense in your opening statement. I'm a business
20 guy. I've always looked at what the competition was doing
21 and figured out how I could do it better. Competition is
22 what makes companies and industries to do better and push
23 each other to do better. It's a key to innovation, and it's
24 a key to a healthy market. I'm a big believer in our space



1 and defense industry is being open to competition so that we
2 get the best product for the best price.

3 So, Mr. Berkowitz, as you know, the Golden Dome system
4 is critical for our national security. Would you agree that
5 we should do what we can to ensure the best products and
6 prices to complete this project are on time and on budget?

7 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for the question, Senator.
8 Yes, I absolutely agree with you that competition's
9 essential in order to get the very best capabilities into
10 the hands of our war fighters.

11 Senator Scott: So, in your background, do you have
12 examples of where you've seen that competition has worked?
13 In your background, have you done a lot of sole source
14 contracts?

15 Mr. Berkowitz: Senator, I've been involved in both
16 competitive and sole source awards. In my experience, there
17 are times when both are appropriate. Competition absolutely
18 drives the various competitors in the industry to hone their
19 offers, and make sure that they're truly providing the very
20 best capabilities. Sole source awards are also effective
21 when there's only one supplier who has the technology or
22 knowhow, or can do it at the lowest cost.

23 Senator Scott: So to that end, should companies be
24 allowed to compete for parts of the Golden Dome Project?



1 Mr. Berkowitz: Absolutely, Senator. I think we should
2 incentivize all companies you know, traditional companies,
3 new entrants, startups, to compete for contracts as part of
4 the Golden Dome for America.

5 Senator Scott: So you wouldn't support a sole source
6 for the Golden Dome?

7 Mr. Berkowitz: Senator, I've been nominated for a
8 policy position, and so consequently, I would not be
9 involved in making acquisition decisions with respect to
10 contracts.

11 Senator Scott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much. Senator King.

13 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was
14 listening attentively as always, as you asked the standard
15 questions at the beginning of this hearing about the
16 witness's willingness to come and communicate with the
17 committee and answer questions. I'm concerned about the
18 October 15th memo from the Secretary, which basically
19 throttles communication between people working at the
20 Pentagon and Congress, including this committee.

21 And I hope that's something we can discuss and
22 consider, because sitting here, these kinds of
23 communications are important. But also, several of the
24 witnesses have mentioned meetings in our offices to discuss



1 policy. That would be prohibited under that October 15th
2 memo. And I think it's something we should discuss.

3 Chairman Wicker: Well, thank you. And it has been
4 suggested that that memo was misconstrued and it may need to
5 be clarified. So thank you for bringing that up.

6 Senator King: That's what I'm suggesting. Also
7 there's some confusion about what organization you all are
8 going to work for. It's the Department of Defense. There's
9 no such thing as the Department of War. I commend to you 10
10 U.S.C 111(a) 1949, which established the name of the
11 department as the Department of Defense. So just want to
12 clarify that confusion. I just want to be sure you know
13 where you're going to work.

14 Mr. Jewell, hypersonics. You are just the right person
15 for this position because hypersonics is a place where we've
16 lost a lot of ground on our adversaries. And I really
17 appreciate your background. One area I hope you will think
18 about is not only the development of hypersonics, but the
19 development of hypersonic defense because we've got these
20 \$12 billion aircraft carriers that could be extremely
21 vulnerable. So I hope that's part of the research and the
22 work that you'll do on hypersonics, not only on the
23 offensive capability, which we need for deterrence, but also
24 defense.



1 Is that something you consider part of your mission?

2 Dr. Jewell: Senator, yes and thank you for the
3 opportunity to discuss in your office the finer points of
4 thermal protection systems for hypersonic systems, which of
5 are, of course, a critical part of both offensive and
6 defensive hypersonics. The defensive hypersonics problem in
7 many ways is more challenging than the offensive problem.
8 And in order to hit a bullet with a bullet, so to speak, one
9 needs greater speed and maneuverability than the target
10 system. And also better custody, sensing, and tracking
11 layers.

12 So those are deep challenges that deserve continued
13 investments. And if confirmed, I will certainly advocate
14 for appropriate funding levels and appropriate areas of
15 emphasis in the 6 1, 6 2, and 6.3 realm.

16 Senator King: I appreciate that. And I want to
17 emphasize a point that I think the Ranking Member made. The
18 administration at the beginning of this year took really
19 significant steps to cut university research of \$7 billion,
20 6,000 agreements. I think it's 4,000 grants, 600
21 institutions caps on indirect costs.

22 You've lived this system. I hope that you can advocate
23 within the administration for the importance of university
24 research. You're a walking example of that importance. So



1 I again, hope that you can be a counterweight to this
2 impulse to cut university research funds.

3 Dr. Jewell: Senator, I'm proud of the work that we've
4 done at the university and indeed that my colleagues do at
5 other universities as well. And we'll seek to strengthen
6 those ties if confirmed.

7 Senator King: Thank you.

8 Mr. Berkowitz, there was some discussion about the dual
9 hat with NRO and the position at the Department of Defense.
10 I think that's a worthwhile discussion, at least to the
11 point of making it a much more closer coordination. We
12 can't afford to be developing parallel space capabilities
13 where there's overlap and the cost involved is enormous, as
14 you know. So I hope you'll consider that. I hope you will
15 continue your provocative thinking on that point.

16 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you, Senator. I frankly just
17 believe that we should be open to all options to improve the
18 efficiency and effectiveness over national security space
19 capabilities.

20 Senator King: Thank you. I'm running out of time.
21 Very quickly, Mr. Rogers. One of the issues on enforcement
22 -- I'm sorry. One of the issues on housing is enforcement
23 of private contracts. We went into privatization in a big
24 way some years ago. We haven't been very good at enforcing



1 those contracts to the detriment of our military families.
2 And I hope that's something you can pay some attention to,
3 is the implementation of the requirements in those contracts
4 for safe and adequate housing for our families,

5 Mr. Rogers: Senator King, the keys to getting anything
6 done in that business arrangement is the contracts.

7 Ensuring that they are stating exactly what is required --

8 Senator King: It's one thing to have the contract,
9 enforcing them, is what I'm concerned about.

10 Mr. Rogers: And then enforcing them, and then being
11 able to be very transparent, communication with the
12 counterparty exactly what's expected, and then enforcing
13 them if it's not met.

14 Senator King: Thank you. Mr. Caggy, I commend your
15 emphasis on speed. I think that's one of the essential
16 elements. And that's a tall order in this world. The word
17 speed in the Pentagon are not usually used in the same
18 sentence. So please pursue that with all due speed. Thank
19 you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman Wicker: Thank you. Senator Budd.

21 Senator Budd: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you
22 all for being here today and for your willingness to serve.

23 Dr. Jewell, I've worked with Senator Peters and several
24 other members to secure more funding for the U.S. Israel



1 collaboration on counter drone and counter tunneling
2 technologies. So if confirmed, how would you expand this
3 emerging technology collaboration and which other critical
4 technologies do you see as potential future areas to work
5 together on?

6 Dr. Jewell: Thank you, Senator. The distributed
7 capability of tunneling or drones, the threat that we face
8 is really something that's of a relatively new nature, I
9 think. It's something that could be wielded against the
10 United States, both by peer and near peer adversaries, and
11 potentially by insurgencies and other smaller, even
12 individual threats.

13 One of the ways, if confirmed that I would seek to
14 enhance our capability, and I think some of the most
15 interesting ideas on these kind of new threats or newly
16 recognized threats, come from small businesses. And so the
17 SBIR and STTR programs, I think can be critical in terms of
18 getting more new ideas in the pipeline to address those
19 kinds of threats.

20 Senator Budd: Thank you.

21 Mr. Berkowitz, if confirmed, you'll be responsible for
22 international engagement on space policy and strategy. How
23 do you plan to work together with Asian allies and partners
24 like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, to ensure that they're



1 building robust space capabilities and that we're
2 integrating with their systems?

3 Mr. Berkowitz: Thank you for raising this important
4 topic, Senator. Allies and international partners with
5 shared values and interests are a U.S. competitive
6 advantage. If confirmed, I would seek to work closely with
7 all stakeholders to explore options for how our allies and
8 partners could contribute to the defense burden, contribute
9 to deterrence and collective security, and in the process
10 align our policies and efforts as well as increase our
11 interoperability.

12 Senator Budd: Thank you. Also, Mr. Berkowitz, in
13 light of China's rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal,
14 what's your assessment of the department's nuclear
15 modernization plan, specifically around missile defense, and
16 where does it fall short?

17 Mr. Berkowitz: Well, Senator, I'm not in the seat, so
18 I don't have access to all the pertinent information. What
19 I can say is that nuclear modernization is a top priority in
20 the department as it must be to ensure a credible and
21 effective deterrent. And if confirmed, I would absolutely
22 work with my counterparts in the department, in the
23 executive branch, and in Congress to assure that we have the
24 space capabilities and missile defense capabilities required



1 to ensure that we can effectively conduct nuclear deterrence
2 and response operations, as well as an effective
3 comprehensive homeland missile defense.

4 Senator Budd: Staying on missile defense, what's your
5 assessment of missile defense of Guam, and how would you
6 enhance protection of the island?

7 Mr. Berkowitz: Senator, that's an excellent question.
8 I've not really been briefed on the Guam defense
9 architecture. I understand that it is indeed a top
10 operational priority in the Indo-Pacific region and a very
11 important program. And so, if confirmed, I would work with
12 all stakeholders to ensure that any issues related to the
13 protection and defense of U.S. forces and the citizens of
14 Guam are addressed to ensure that we have an effective
15 defense.

16 Senator Budd: Thank you.

17 Mr. Rogers also on Guam, how's the Navy investing in
18 energy resilience there?

19 Mr. Rogers: Senator, my understanding the strategic
20 importance of Guam is focusing on not only the troops that
21 will be moved there, but the infrastructure that's required
22 on the island. As I sit here today, I don't have all of the
23 details of exactly what's there, but if confirmed, we'll
24 certainly be working with the team in terms of what is



1 required in Guam to support the troops and the families that
2 would potentially be moved there.

3 Senator Budd: So with what you know now, what's your
4 assessment of SMRs or small module reactors to serve as
5 reliable and resilient energy sources for military
6 installations and do you see that coming anytime soon to
7 somewhere like Camp Lejeune, North Carolina?

8 Mr. Rogers: Senator, SMRs, I think are a great
9 potential and if confirmed, would certainly be pushing hard
10 to work with the teams to understand where we are. I
11 understand multiple services are looking at this, but when
12 we think about our installations, you mentioned Guam, you
13 mentioned the great Camp Lejeune. We need energy and
14 independence, and we need it in kind of contested or
15 challenging environments. SMRs could potentially be that
16 solution for us across these installations. So I look
17 forward to learning where we're at, and hopefully we can
18 push on the timeline.

19 Senator Budd: Thank you all. Chairman.

20 Chairman Wicker: Mr. Rogers, it's not going to be in
21 the next five or six years, though, is it on these SMRs?
22 They take longer than that.

23 Mr. Rogers: Senator, my understanding is there are
24 timelines that are out there. The question is, is there



1 anything that we can do to move that? There is the
2 identification of pilot locations. There's then
3 understanding the regulatory environment. Certainly welcome
4 Congress's help in navigating that. But it's really sitting
5 down with the technical teams and what can we do and what's
6 the right reactor size that can support our installations?

7 Chairman Wicker: It certainly sounds tempting and
8 helpful. I don't think there's one operating on the face of
9 the earth right now. Is that correct?

10 Mr. Rogers: Senator, I believe that to be true.
11 There's multiple different efforts that are underway, and if
12 confirmed, look forward to seeing where we are in that and
13 what does the timelines actually look like.

14 Chairman Wicker: Well, I hope our dreams can be
15 realized there. Senator Blumenthal.

16 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank
17 you all for your service. You've been nominated for some of
18 the most important jobs in the Department of Defense, and I
19 wish you well, and thank you for your willingness to give of
20 yourselves and your family.

21 Mr. Rogers, in 2023, I wrote a bill called the Xavier
22 Sandor Act, it was named after young Sailor who tragically
23 died by suicide. He's from Connecticut while living aboard
24 U.S.S George Washington during extended maintenance, Xavier



1 and too many others endured substandard conditions. While
2 their ships were in maintenance, they had no air
3 conditioning, inadequate meals, disrupted sleep, little
4 access to basic amenities or mental health support. This
5 law expanded the Navy's authority to provide basic allowance
6 for housing to sailors in similar situations.

7 You're probably familiar with the general predicament
8 or plight of sailors in that kind of situation when their
9 vessels are in dry dock or major overhaul. The bill
10 provided that they could move off ship into commercial
11 housing while their vessels were in that condition. I would
12 like your commitment that you will give priority to this
13 kind of implementation of the Xavier Sandors Act. Perhaps
14 meet with Xavier's dad John, who has maintained an active
15 interest in this issue, and would like to know if confirmed
16 how you will ensure full and effective implementation of the
17 Act.

18 Mr. Rogers: Senator, taking care of our troops is
19 obviously our key responsibility. I'm familiar with the Act
20 and the story behind it. Certainly welcome a chance to meet
21 with Xavier's father. More importantly I also saw a recent
22 letter from the CNO on this issue in terms of being able,
23 given the authorities that Congress has been given, that the
24 SEC NAV and commanding officers can decide when they can use



1 BHH for our sailors that are import. And so the key there
2 is working not only with the military, but also the
3 communities in terms of identifying, you know, clean,
4 comfortable and safe living conditions for sailors and
5 marines. Again, it is a readiness and a retention issue.

6 Senator Blumenthal: Well, maybe I can reach out to you
7 once your confirmation process is complete about following
8 up with the Sandor family.

9 Mr. Rogers: Welcome the opportunity, sir.

10 Senator Blumenthal: Let me ask you, I know you've been
11 asked a bunch of questions about specific installations. I
12 want to ask about PFAS and the potential for contamination
13 from military installations or bases from PFAS, which is
14 often involved in the fire retardants or other kinds of
15 operations on our basis. Are you familiar with the efforts
16 to contain and stop PFAS contamination that emanates from
17 base?

18 Mr. Rogers: Senator, I'm aware of a PFAS discussion.
19 I'm also aware of the potential tie and linkage to AFFF the
20 firefighting foam on our installations. So I'm aware of the
21 issue.

22 Senator Blumenthal: Are you thinking about efforts to
23 stop the contamination that often flows from our bases or
24 installation?



1 Mr. Rogers: My understanding Senator, the PFAS task
2 force really focused on replacing anything that's in the
3 AFFF in terms of you know, it's providing anything that has
4 PFAS in terms of existing exposure. If confirmed, would be
5 committed to continuing that effort where the Navy is
6 responsible or the military is responsible on those Navy or
7 Marine Corps installations. And so if confirmed, look
8 forward to working with the team.

9 The most important thing here is that, you know, free
10 clean drinking water for both our military, their families,
11 and the surrounding communities is critical. And so
12 understanding what exposure we have across installations
13 will be step number one.

14 Senator Blumenthal: I'm sure you're familiar with the
15 PACT Act that provides care and benefits for troops who are
16 the victims of either toxic chemicals or other substances,
17 not only in combat abroad, but also on bases and
18 installations all around the country when they're exposed to
19 those kinds of toxic elements. Now, the PAC Act provides
20 some benefits for them without their having to prove that it
21 was directly linked.

22 So I would welcome your cooperation with the VA in
23 trying to mitigate the toxic substances that may cause these
24 kinds of diseases before they occur. I think it's very



1 important, it's cost effective. And I would welcome your
2 focus on that aspect as one who championed the PACT Act for
3 our veterans.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.
6 Senator Kelly.

7 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen,
8 congratulations on your nominations.

9 Mr. Rogers, I want to start with you. I think I might
10 be able to fit in two or three questions. I want to talk
11 about the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. There
12 is a Navy Precision Optical Interferometer there. It's also
13 called NPOI. Have you heard about this?

14 Mr. Rogers: Senator, I have not.

15 Senator Kelly: Well, basically, this was originally
16 built through a partnership between the Naval Research
17 Laboratory, the U.S. Naval Observatory, and the Lowell
18 Observatory. And it was a partnership for more than 30
19 years. That collaboration between the three organizations
20 supported Navy Missions, and also did some valuable civilian
21 astronomical research, some astronomy.

22 But recently the Navy moved to take exclusive control
23 of this Precision Optical Interferometer, effectively ending
24 Lowell's ability to conduct any of their civilian research



1 there. And they've lost access to decades of investment and
2 opportunity, and the situation has led to some significant
3 administrative and legal costs for the observatory.

4 So, if confirmed -- I know you don't have a lot of
5 information here -- I just want to see if you are willing to
6 work with me so the transition at the optical interferometer
7 site protects the Navy's operational needs, but also
8 preserves some of the trust and fairness and accountability
9 with their longstanding research partners like the Lowell
10 Observatory.

11 Mr. Rogers: Senator Kelly, if confirmed, you certainly
12 have my commitment to work and understand this issue and
13 work with you on that.

14 Senator Kelly: Thank you. Thank you.

15 Dr. Jewell, the DOD has identified 14 defense critical
16 technology areas. One of those is called trusted artificial
17 intelligence and autonomy. Do you believe that our ability
18 to integrate autonomous artificial intelligence into
19 electronic warfare, EW systems, will be a critical
20 capability in future conflicts?

21 Dr. Jewell: Senator, yes, I believe that it will. I
22 think the key thing with AI specifically is that the
23 investments that American industry to include Silicon Valley
24 have made in AI dwarf what could be invested by the



1 department or even by the entire federal government. So the
2 key is how to leverage the great strides that have been made
3 in AI, but to leverage them in a way that is both safe and
4 responsible for military use.

5 Senator Kelly: I agree with you. And the amount of
6 money being invested by the private sector, of course, you
7 know, dwarfs what DOD is going to spend in this specific
8 technology. And I agree this is going to be of critical
9 importance. Machine learning algorithms that enable things
10 like adaptive jamming, spectrum sensing, automated signal
11 classification, this is going to give us potentially a
12 decisive edge on the battlefield.

13 But in order to field these capabilities responsibly,
14 we need to be able to test them rigorously and in a
15 realistic operational environment. We have that realistic
16 environment at Fort Huachuca at the electronic proving
17 ground. But we need to be able to protect our ability to
18 conduct this full spectrum testing. And I am very
19 concerned that the proposed cuts to the electronic proving
20 ground could undermine all of that.

21 EPG provides a very unique environment for EW testing,
22 the geography, the federally protected airspace. It allows
23 the military to conduct aggressive offensive jamming tests
24 without interference at very high power. You can't do that



1 in other places. It also has 320 days of great weather
2 every year when there are aircraft involved. No other army
3 test and evaluation command can replicate the situation they
4 have there. So, losing that capability by getting rid of
5 the workforce will set us back in testing and evaluation,
6 and ultimately in our operational readiness.

7 So, if confirmed, will you commit to working with me to
8 prevent unnecessary cuts to the electronic proving ground
9 and preserve our nation's ability to test and field the next
10 generation electronic warfare systems?

11 Dr. Jewell: Senator, within the department, there are
12 of course, a number of unique crown jewel test capabilities,
13 of which you name one. And if confirmed, I will work to
14 maintain our access and ability to test critical
15 technologies, of which, as you rightly mentioned, electronic
16 warfare is one that is most difficult to test in a realistic
17 way.

18 Senator Kelly: Thank you. And Mr. Chairman, thank you
19 for the additional 14 seconds.

20 Chairman Wicker: And thank you very much. And you use
21 them very wisely. This does conclude today's hearing. I
22 want to thank our witnesses. I look forward to speaking to
23 some of the family members in just a moment. For the
24 information of committee members, questions for the record



1 will be due to the committee within two business days at the
2 conclusion of the hearing, which is now.

3 And we are adjourned.

4 [Whereupon, at 11:21 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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