

Stenographic Transcript  
Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MR. HUNG  
CAO TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY;  
MR. MICHAEL F. DODD TO BE ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR CRITICAL  
TECHNOLOGIES; MR. JULES W. HURST III TO BE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR  
MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS; MR. BRENT  
G. INGRAHAM TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
THE ARMY FOR ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS, AND  
TECHNOLOGY: AND MR. WILLIAM J. GILLIS TO  
BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR  
INSTALLATIONS, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Thursday, June 26, 2025

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON COURT REPORTING  
1029 VERMONT AVE, NW  
10TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
(202) 289-2260  
[www.aldersonreporting.com](http://www.aldersonreporting.com)

1 TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MR. HUNG CAO TO BE UNDER  
2 SECRETARY OF THE NAVY; MR. MICHAEL F. DODD TO BE ASSISTANT  
3 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES; MR. JULES W.  
4 HURST III TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR MANPOWER  
5 AND RESERVE AFFAIRS; MR. BRENT G. INGRAHAM TO BE ASSISTANT  
6 SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS, AND  
7 TECHNOLOGY: AND MR. WILLIAM J. GILLIS TO BE ASSISTANT  
8 SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR INSTALLATIONS, ENERGY AND  
9 ENVIRONMENT

10  
11 Thursday, June 26, 2025

12  
13 U.S. Senate  
14 Committee on Armed Services  
15 Washington, D.C.  
16

17 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in  
18 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Roger  
19 Wicker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

20 Committee Members Present: Senators Wicker  
21 [presiding], Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Sullivan,  
22 Scott, Tuberville, Mullin, Budd, Schmitt, Banks, Sheehy,  
23 Reed, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King, and  
24 Kelly.  
25

1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER F. WICKER, U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM MISSISSIPPI

3           Chairman Wicker: All right. This hearing will come to  
4 order. And we do have some business which we will proceed  
5 to in just a moment. But the Speaker of the House has  
6 honored us with his presence today, and I do believe he has  
7 a few words of introduction. And then, Mr. Speaker, you are  
8 welcome to stay for the rest of the morning.

9           [Laughter.]

10          Chairman Wicker: But if you need to attend to other  
11 duties, you are certainly encouraged to go do that with  
12 haste. So, you are now recognized, Mr. Speaker.

1           STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE JOHNSON, SPEAKER OF THE UNITED  
2 STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

3           Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman  
4 Wicker, really appreciate it, and I would love to be with  
5 you all the rest of the day.

6           Chairman Wicker: I know it, I know it.

7           Speaker Johnson: And I want to thank Ranking Member  
8 Reed, and all the members of the committee. It is my honor  
9 to be here, and I came this morning with the privilege of  
10 introducing my former staffer, my trusted friend, and a  
11 great American patriot, Jules W. Hurst III, who sits here to  
12 my left. And he is being considered, of course, for  
13 Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve  
14 Affairs.

15           I wish I had brought a speech for some of the other  
16 distinguished gentlemen sitting at this table because I'm a  
17 fan of all of them, and we're blessed as a nation to have  
18 such highly qualified people willing to serve in these  
19 fateful times that we're in it.

20           It's great to see Jay's wife, Beth, sitting behind me  
21 and their children here today. They have a large brood.  
22 The Hurst family recently grew again, and as Jay and Beth  
23 welcome their fifth child, young George here. He's the  
24 youngest person in attendance. He was just born a few weeks  
25 ago and good-looking kid just like his daddy.

1    Congratulations to the beautiful family.  This has been  
2    quite a month for the Hurst family.

3           Jay joined my congressional office in January of 2022  
4    as a defense fellow, and while he was only on loan for one  
5    year, he instantly became part of our, our family.  He's  
6    like family to us.  He worked long hours.  He engaged with  
7    my constituents and local businesses, and he simplified  
8    complex military issues for our staff.

9           My district is Louisiana's Fourth Congressional  
10   District, and it's one of the most important military  
11   districts in America because we're home to Barksdale Air  
12   Force Base, the home of the B-52s.  We've got the Global  
13   Strike Command there.  Two-thirds of the nuclear triad is  
14   commanded about 15 miles from my driveway.  We also have  
15   Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center, and many  
16   other military assets like Camp Minden, and others.  So,  
17   having a qualified Defense fellow is an essential component  
18   of what we do, and Jay was the best we've ever had.

19           And for those who don't know, Defense fellowships are  
20   only one-year posts.  And despite that, Jay planted deep  
21   roots in my office, and with all of our personnel and  
22   everyone involved.  It was not uncommon for me to return to  
23   the office late after voting on many nights to find Jay  
24   there holding court with interns and staff.  He mentored the  
25   people in and around my group and all my employees about

1 everything; personal responsibility, finances, whatever  
2 advice they may have needed at the time. And he became the  
3 indispensable man for us. And it's this type of man, this  
4 type of leader that Jay is.

5 He enriched our office with great comradery and  
6 valuable insight and willingness to go above and beyond  
7 every single day. And while working in my office and  
8 afterwards, Jay published many scholarly articles on topics  
9 like great power competition, autonomous systems, artificial  
10 intelligence, and warfare in several respected publications.

11 I learned a lot reading what he wrote, and I don't know  
12 how he had time to do it. I'm really not sure because he's  
13 very prolific, but he wrote and he published often. His  
14 commitment to continuing education and his personal capacity  
15 should send a signal to this committee that Jay will bring  
16 the same level of dedication and the relentless quest for  
17 excellence to the U.S. Army.

18 Jay eventually left my office to return to the  
19 Pentagon, but when I was elected Speaker of the House in  
20 October, 2023, I called and begged him to come back. I  
21 needed his counsel and steady hand, and he was willing to do  
22 that. So, he returned to my office and became my  
23 legislative director and a Defense advisor to the Speaker's  
24 Office in some very difficult times, as we all know, with  
25 hot wars burning around the globe. Jay's insight and

1 counsel were invaluable.

2 Before he served with me, he served as an Army officer,  
3 government civilian on the Army staff within the Joint  
4 Special Operations Command Intelligence Brigade at the 75th  
5 Ranger Regiment, and within U.S. Central Command, as both a  
6 military officer and civilian. He deployed to Afghanistan  
7 four times as a senior intelligence officer for Joint  
8 Special Operations Task Force.

9 He also supported the initial standup of Project Maven,  
10 which is the Algorithmic Warfare Cross-Functional Team. I  
11 have a hard time even pronouncing that. Okay, this guy's  
12 really smart. He continues to serve in the Army Reserve as  
13 the FA59 Army strategist.

14 Following the election last year, I had a feeling that  
15 I wouldn't be able to keep him much longer. His talents  
16 were needed, his expertise, his dedication to the men and  
17 women of our armed forces were needed at a higher level, and  
18 they took him. And that's why I wasn't surprised when Jay  
19 was asked to serve on the DOD landing team and to perform  
20 the duties of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and  
21 Readiness.

22 And now, to serve with the blessing of this committee  
23 and the support of the Senate, as Assistant Secretary of the  
24 Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. I have no doubt in  
25 his ability to do an outstanding job serving the men and

1 women of the U.S. Army, and is my great honor and true  
2 privilege to support his nomination today.

3 I want to thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking  
4 Member Reed, and all of you for the privilege of introducing  
5 Jay, and I strongly encourage every member of this committee  
6 to support his confirmation. And let's put Jay to work for  
7 the whole country. Thank you.

8 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You are  
9 you're excused with our blessing, and go in haste.

10 Mr. Johnson: Thank you, sir.

11 Chairman Wicker. And we are here to consider the  
12 nominations of Mr. Hung Cao to be Under Secretary of the  
13 Navy, Mr. Michael F. Dodd to be Assistant Secretary of  
14 Defense for Critical Technologies, Mr. Jules W. Hurst III to  
15 be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve  
16 Affairs.

17 Mr. Brent G. Ingraham to be Assistant Secretary of the  
18 Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, and Mr.  
19 William J. Gillis to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for  
20 Installations, Energy, and Environment. I welcome our  
21 nominees and their families. I'm grateful for their  
22 willingness to serve our nation.

23 The United States faces a very dangerous threat  
24 environment, and we need people like this to step up now  
25 more than ever. Mr. Hung Cao has been nominated to serve as



1 Under Secretary of the Navy. He's a 25-year Navy veteran  
2 with industry experience as Under Secretary. He would play  
3 a critical role in the daily management of the Navy and  
4 Marine Corps, and there will be plenty to keep him busy  
5 revitalizing shipbuilding, improving maintenance to meet 80  
6 percent surge readiness and enhancing the welfare of our  
7 sailors and Marines. His leadership and willingness to  
8 partner with Congress will be essential for a mission-ready  
9 Navy.

10 Mr. Michael Dodd has been nominated for the position of  
11 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Critical Technologies.  
12 If confirmed, Mr. Dodd will be the first individual to hold  
13 this position. Officially, Mr. Dodd brings experience at  
14 the Defense Innovation Unit and in-thought leadership,  
15 particularly in microelectronics. I'm interested to hear  
16 what actions Mr. Dodd believes we should take to make  
17 progress in delivering our most critical technologies to the  
18 battlefield.

19 Mr. Jules Hurst has been nominated as Assistant  
20 Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.  
21 Recent transformations in the Army will leave him to manage  
22 a workforce that is leaner, more agile, and more effective,  
23 while also ensuring soldiers and their families receive the  
24 support they need. Mr. Hurst is a seasoned Army Reserve  
25 officer with experience as a government contractor in civil

1 service at the DOD and in national security roles on Capitol  
2 Hill. I look forward to hearing his plans for strengthening  
3 the force and supporting those who serve.

4 Mr. Brent Ingraham has been nominated to serve as the  
5 Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics,  
6 and Technology. He has devoted nearly two decades of  
7 service to the Department of Defense, including his current  
8 role as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
9 Platform and Weapons Portfolio Management. I look forward  
10 to hearing Mr. Ingraham's plan in his new role to ensure the  
11 Army stays on track.

12 And finally, Mr. Jordan Gillis has been nominated to be  
13 Assistant Secretary of the Army for Energy Installations and  
14 Environment. As a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
15 Sustainment, his experience will be crucial to ensuring the  
16 Department of the Army follows the law in implementing  
17 minimum plant replacement value of 4 percent starting in  
18 2030. I hope to hear today from Mr. Gillis on this issue,  
19 along with many other facilities sustainment concerns.

20 With that, I recognize my colleague, Ranking Member  
21 Reed.

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

3           Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good  
4 morning to our witnesses, and congratulations on your  
5 nominations. Also like to welcome your family who are with  
6 you today, and have been with you throughout your careers.  
7 I'm sure also like to thank the Speaker for his thoughtful  
8 comments.

9           Mr. Cao, you are nominated to the second highest  
10 civilian position in the Department of the Navy. If  
11 confirmed, one of your most important priorities must be  
12 assisting the secretary in growing and maintaining the  
13 fleet. For several years, the department has fallen well  
14 short of its ship building and deployment plans

15           A number of vessels including an aircraft carrier,  
16 multiple destroyers, and the Virginia- and Columbia-class  
17 submarine programs are facing delays of more than a year.  
18 And I'm interested to know how you would address these  
19 programs and their unique challenges, and how you would work  
20 to get them back on schedule and on budget.

21           And Mr. Cao, while I appreciate your distinguished  
22 service in the Navy, I'm concerned about your recent record  
23 of controversial positions. In recent years. You've made a  
24 number of partisan and divisive statements, including  
25 disparaging certain Navy personnel, sharply criticizing U.S.

1 allies, and advocating for the release of convicted January  
2 6th individuals.

3 Mr. Cao, if confirmed, you would represent all military  
4 and civilian personnel in the Department of the Navy,  
5 including those who disagree with these statements. And I  
6 hope you'll take the opportunity today to explain your  
7 position and ensure this committee of your commitment to  
8 uphold the Navy's values which are centered in the  
9 Constitution.

10 Ms. Dodd, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary  
11 of Defense of Critical Technologies. If confirmed, you'll  
12 be responsible for assessing and coordinating the emergency  
13 technologies needed by our military allies and partners as  
14 well as our adversaries. In particular, you'll need to  
15 focus on maintaining our edge over China and Russia in areas  
16 such as artificial intelligence, hypersonics, quantum  
17 computing, and biotechnology.

18 Much of this can only be accomplished by improving the  
19 department's ability to overcome the so-called Valley of  
20 Death, and turn research innovations into acquisition  
21 programs, and ultimately, into real operational  
22 capabilities. Your experience in the Pentagon's innovation  
23 community should serve you very well in this world.

24 Mr. Hurst, you are nominated to be Assistant Secretary  
25 of the Army for Manpower and Reserve affairs. If confirmed,

1 you would serve as the principal civilian officer with  
2 supervision over all Army personnel policies. Indeed, our  
3 Army's greatest asset is its people, and the assistant  
4 secretary should be squarely focused on retaining and  
5 supporting soldiers and their families.

6 Mr. Hurst, you are currently performing the duties of  
7 the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness,  
8 and some of your duties to directed by the Secretary have  
9 been to decrease the workforce. Now, in the Department of  
10 the Army, you'll have to ensure you can operate with a  
11 decreased workforce and make sure that the reductions are  
12 sensible and add to the force and not subtract from them.  
13 Again, your experience, I think, will bode very well, and if  
14 not, you'll be criticized repeatedly by Henry, that's his  
15 new son.

16 Mr. Ingraham, you are nominated to be Assistant  
17 Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and  
18 Technology. If confirmed, you'll oversee research  
19 development, acquisition, program statement, and logistics  
20 activities. While the Army begins a significant  
21 transformation, you'll be responsible for balancing the need  
22 for rigorous management with the imperative to move quickly  
23 and use smart acquisition strategies.

24 To achieve this, it will be necessary to strengthen the  
25 Army's workforce and improve data systems. You have

1 considerable experience in the Pentagon coordinating air  
2 surface, cyber and electronic warfare systems, and I would  
3 ask for your thoughts on how the Army can better develop and  
4 field these platforms.

5 Finally, Mr. Gillis, you are nominated to be Assistant  
6 Secretary of the Army for installations energy and  
7 environment. If confirmed, you'll be responsible for  
8 managing the Army's physical footprint.

9 I'm particularly concerned that the Army recently  
10 reprogrammed more than \$1 billion from its facilities  
11 account to pay for Southwest border operations at the  
12 request of DHS and Customs in Border Patrol. Press reports  
13 indicate that this money was originally intended to improve  
14 enlisted barracks and other infrastructure repairs. In  
15 addition, extreme weather events, of course, the Army  
16 billions of dollars in damage and recovery costs which  
17 compromise soldier readiness.

18 If confirmed, Mr. Gillis, you'll need to be disciplined  
19 in staunchly defending and aligning the Army's budget to the  
20 challenges of the future, including prioritizing soldier  
21 care and readiness above all else.

22 Again, thank you, nominees, look forward to your  
23 testimony. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, Senator Reed:  
25 And now, we'll begin with opening statements. Our witnesses

1 and nominees are asked to limit their opening statements to  
2 no more than five minutes.

3 And Mr. Cao, we will recognize you first for your  
4 opening statement.

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1           STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN HUNG CAO, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF  
2   THE NAVY

3           Mr. Cao:   Good morning, Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member  
4   Reed, Senators of the Armed Service Committee.  I would like  
5   to thank President Trump for trusting me and nominating me  
6   as Under Secretary of Navy.  This is the absolute honor of  
7   my life --

8           Chairman Wicker:  Well, it appears that I missed a step  
9   and Senator Scott wishes to say a few words, something nice  
10  of introduction.



1 STATEMENT OF HON. RICK SCOTT, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

2 Senator Scott: All right, thank you. So sorry.

3 First, an honor to introduce my good friend, Captain Cao,  
4 President Trump's nominee to serve as the Under Secretary of  
5 the Navy. He is supported today by his wife, April, and  
6 their five children, Gabriel, Grace, Claire, Evelyn, and  
7 Liam.

8 As a Navy veteran and the chairman of the Senate Armed  
9 Services Subcommittee on Seapower, I am fully committed to  
10 ensuring the readiness of our sea forces. I can say with  
11 confidence that Hung is supremely qualified to fill this  
12 position. That his skills, character, and expertise will  
13 make him a highly effective Under Secretary of the Navy, as  
14 well as his qualifications for the role.

15 Captain Cao has a drive for public service that comes  
16 from his experience of living the American Dream. Hung and  
17 his family escaped from Vietnam when he was young and came  
18 to United States as refugees. While his parents had hoped  
19 he'd become a doctor, he chose a different path to service  
20 and joined the United States Navy as a special operations  
21 officer in order to serve the country that had given him and  
22 his family so much. The same drive to serve shaped his life  
23 and career in both the public and private sectors.

24 Throughout his career, Captain Cao led large  
25 organizations in the military and in industry with proven

1 success. He brings experience with budgeting, finance, and  
2 operational background in the Navy and in the private  
3 sector. That will be critical as we push for a stronger,  
4 more capable Navy that uses taxpayer dollars efficiently to  
5 meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dangerous  
6 future. This will benefit our work together to support  
7 President Trump and Defense Secretary Hegseth's vision for  
8 our military and our country.

9 I have known Captain Cao to be an inspirational  
10 military leader, a tested manager, an individual of an in  
11 wavering integrity, both in the Navy and private sectors.  
12 He has built successful teams, inspired others, and shown  
13 he's willing to cut through unnecessary bureaucracy and make  
14 the hard decisions that prioritize long term success. His  
15 experience in combat also demonstrates his ability to remain  
16 calm under pressure and deliver tangible results, all  
17 talents critical in the Department of the Navy.

18 Importantly, Captain Cao is also deeply committed to  
19 her service members. He knows that leadership is about  
20 ensuring that the people in his chain of command have the  
21 trust and tools necessary to complete their missions. I  
22 look forward to hearing from Captain Cao about his vision  
23 for the Navy, and his plans to support Secretary Phelan as  
24 they work to fulfill President Trump's vision of Peace  
25 Through Strength.

1 I'm honored to recommend him to the committee and urge  
2 his speedy confirmation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Wicker: Thank you so much, Senator, and I  
4 again apologize for getting out of order there.

5 Mr. Cao, you are now recognized for five minutes.

6 Mr. Cao: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Senators. Thank  
7 you again and thank you for President Trump. I'm joined  
8 today by my beautiful wife of more than 26 years. April is  
9 the mother of our five children, Mitch, a senior at the  
10 United States Naval Academy, Grace, Claire, Evelyn, and  
11 Liam.

12 Like so many military spouses, April endured multiple  
13 moves across the country and overseas. She gave birth to  
14 our first child while I was deployed for the invasion of  
15 Iraq. During my deployments, she was both mother and father  
16 as well as handyman, nurse, teacher, and coach. And like  
17 all military spouses, her heart stopped and she prayed every  
18 time there was a knock at the door or every time the phone  
19 rang. Thank you, honey, for standing by my sides all of  
20 these years as we serve the nation. You are the love of my  
21 life.

22 I would like to give praise and glory to my Lord and  
23 Savior Jesus Christ, without whom I would not be here today.  
24 April 30th of this year marked the 50th anniversary of the  
25 Fall of Saigon when my family and I fled Vietnam. America

1 gave us hope and opportunity and have tried to repay that  
2 debt my entire life. I commissioned as a special operations  
3 officer from the United States Naval Academy as a navy  
4 diver. I led underwater missions across the world as an EOD  
5 technician that defused bombs for our Seal Teams and Special  
6 Forces teams in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia.

7 I spent several tours in the Pentagon writing  
8 requirements and later programming Navy's budget. I saw  
9 firsthand the breakdown of our acquisitions process, which  
10 precludes us from outpacing our enemies. We're facing the  
11 biggest threat since the Cold War.

12 While we're fighting terrorists in the desert, the  
13 Chinese have spread across the globe, but their biggest  
14 objective is to crush the United States. One thing will  
15 stand in their way, our Navy and Marine Corps team. We are  
16 America's 911 force capable of being anywhere at any time as  
17 a carrier strike group or as a Marine Air Ground Task Force.

18 The American people have given President Trump a clear  
19 mandate to protect our nation against all enemies, foreign  
20 and domestic. President Trump has empowered everyone in the  
21 Department of Defense, from Secretary Hegseth down, to  
22 achieve one clear task, Peace Through Strength.

23 If confirmed, I will deliver to the combat commanders  
24 the most lethal Navy and Marine Corps the world has ever  
25 seen. But we have a lot of work to do. Years of neglected

1 mismanagement have resulted in ships that cannot get  
2 underway, aircraft that cannot fly, and submarines that  
3 cannot dive because we chose to defer maintenance as a cost  
4 cutting tool. Military bureaucracy and the acquisitions  
5 process have slowed down the production of not only ships  
6 and submarines, but also bombs, missiles and torpedoes.

7 Recruiting and the retention fell because we chose to  
8 prioritize the individual over unit cohesion. We must  
9 restore the warrior spirit that my generation relied on as  
10 the core of our ethos. We must restore America's fighting  
11 force. Senators, we have a generation eager to serve and  
12 sacrifice for this nation. They grew up in the digital age  
13 where technology evolved at quantum speed. They deserve the  
14 best training and weapons available. Their intrinsic desire  
15 to solve problems using technology should not be stifled by  
16 red tape.

17 I ask this Congress to embrace bold new ideas and be  
18 ready to move out with a purpose. We cannot solve the  
19 problems of tomorrow with the solutions of yesterday. Take  
20 it from this warrior. War must be the last resort, but if  
21 war comes, let be swift and decisive. If confirmed, I will  
22 work with industry to build capacity in ship, aircraft, and  
23 submarine production. And where capacity falls short, our  
24 capabilities in electronic warfare and hypersonic weapons  
25 will overcome.

1           Our military families deserve the dignity of safe and  
2 healthy housing. They deserve responsive medical care. If  
3 confirmed, I will honor the sacrifice of America's sons and  
4 daughters by ensuring they have every tool necessary to be  
5 the deadliest threat to our enemies. And to our enemies and  
6 those who mean to do his harm, you can run but you'll only  
7 die tired. And to my fellow Sailors and Marines, know this,  
8 I'm never above you, never below you, I'm always beside you.  
9 Semper Fi and Hooyah.

10          Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11          [The prepared statement of Mr. Cao follows:]

12          [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, Mr. Cao.

2 We'll proceed in this order for our remaining  
3 witnesses; Mr. Dodd next, then Mr. Hurst, then Mr. Ingraham,  
4 then Mr. Gillet. So, Mr. Dodd, you're now recognized.

1           STATEMENT OF MR. MICHAEL F. DODD, TO BE ASSISTANT  
2           SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES

3           Mr. Dodd: 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           President Trump's nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense  
7           for Critical Technologies. I'm grateful for the opportunity  
8           to potentially continue to serve my country, but I'm also  
9           humbled by the awesome challenges and opportunities we face  
10          as a nation.

11          Chairman Wicker, you have regularly stated that the  
12          United States faces the most dangerous security environments  
13          since World War II. Those of us who have committed our  
14          professional lives to national security know your words are  
15          not hyperbole. When people ask me whether it is really as  
16          bad as people say, I respond, "It's worse than you can  
17          imagine."

18          The People's Republic of China is performing, quite  
19          frankly, the unprecedented. While some talk about the PRC  
20          theft of our intellectual property and investing adversarial  
21          capital into non-traditional companies with compelling  
22          technologies, which are both true, the PRC is also  
23          innovating, testing, producing, and operationalizing  
24          critical technologies at a pace and scale never seen before.

25          They're simultaneously modernizing every prong of



1 combat power; their naval forces, their air forces, their  
2 their missile forces, their nuclear forces, and their  
3 missile defenses, to name just a few. The PRC's military  
4 modernization and buildup is being executed with speed and  
5 purpose. We must be ready.

6 President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have made the  
7 department's mission clear; we will achieve peace through  
8 strength, deter major conflict by maintaining a  
9 technological superiority and a force to fight to win  
10 decisively, we will restore the warrior ethos, rebuild our  
11 military, and reestablish deterrence.

12 The office to which I've been nominated is relatively  
13 new. It is charged quite simply to set the technology  
14 vision for an era of competition. If confirmed, the  
15 department's technology vision will be to dramatically  
16 accelerate technology transition. I will work relentlessly  
17 to ensure the critical technologies our warfighters need are  
18 in their hands as quickly as humanly possible.

19 We will do this by focusing on three strategic  
20 priorities. First, support defense acquisition reform to  
21 deliver state-of-the-art capabilities at speed, relevance,  
22 and scale. The President's executive order to modernize  
23 defense acquisition and spur innovation are consistent with  
24 many of the defense acquisition reforms under consideration  
25 by this committee. I'll coordinate within the department,

1 with the military services, and with this committee to cut  
2 red tape and preserve the technological supremacy of our  
3 warfighters to do business at the speed of business.

4 Second, strengthen department's adoption of critical  
5 technologies in fields like artificial intelligence,  
6 microelectronics quantum science, space-based systems, or  
7 hypersonics. We must close that gap. We will do it not by  
8 slowing down innovation, but creating new innovation on  
9 ramps and leveraging the existing innovation on ramps. We  
10 will identify operational problems to solve, and we will  
11 perform rapid prototyping and fielding. We must enable our  
12 warfighters to access the best technologies, not years from  
13 now, but when they need the most; today, tomorrow.

14 Finally, we'll plan for transition. At the outset of  
15 every technology project, each project will be tied to a  
16 military service or program gap. Our technology development  
17 and transition offices will operate with the understanding  
18 that the military services are our customers. We will serve  
19 the military services priorities we'll support the  
20 warfighters by working with the warfighters.

21 The United States is at an inflection point. Our  
22 ability to shape the future depends on whether we can  
23 harness innovation faster and more effectively than our  
24 adversaries. We must act boldly, decisively, and wisely.  
25 We must take calculated risks but must remain anchored in

1 our values. If entrusted with your support, I will do my  
2 part. We must never lose sight of the fact that at the  
3 heart of our national defense are the service members who  
4 rely on us to equip them for challenges ahead.

5 To close, I would not be here today without the support  
6 of my amazing wife, Melanie, sitting behind me, and who's  
7 also a Navy veteran. My sons, Keegan and Carson, my family,  
8 mentors, colleagues, and the dedicated professionals I've  
9 had the privilege of working alongside throughout my career.  
10 I'm especially grateful to those in the Department of  
11 Defense and the broader national security community who  
12 inspired my commitment to public service.

13 If confirmed, I will give this role my full devotion.  
14 Thank you, again, for your consideration. I welcome your  
15 questions, and look forward to discussing how I can support  
16 the department's mission and serve the American people.

17 [The prepared statement of Mr. Dodd follows:]

18 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, Mr. Dodd.

2 Mr. Hurst, you are recognized.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1           STATEMENT OF MR. JULES W. HURST III, TO BE ASSISTANT  
2           SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

3           Mr. Hurst: Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and  
4           distinguished members of the committee, it's an honor to  
5           appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be  
6           the Assistant Secretary of the Army from Manpower and  
7           Reserve Affairs. I'm grateful to the President, Secretary  
8           Driscoll, Secretary Hegseth, and Speaker Johnson for their  
9           confidence, and I appreciate the opportunity to serve.

10          My family and I, they owe the U.S. military enormous  
11          debt. Like many Americans, military service brought us into  
12          the middle class. It's given us educational opportunities,  
13          and it's given us a sense of purpose that's lasted over  
14          three generations.

15          My grandfathers "Sugar" was raised on a farm in  
16          Louisiana. He served in the Merchant Marine during World  
17          War II. He fought as a U.S. Marine in the Korean War, and  
18          he finished up a 20-year career in the Air Force as a non-  
19          commissioned officer. My father "Sonny", he flew C-130s in  
20          the Air Force and was a foreign area officer.

21          I myself commissioned in the Army through ROTC at the  
22          College of William and Mary, and I've had the privilege of  
23          serving for 17 years as a strategist and military  
24          intelligence officer on and off active duty. On four  
25          occasions, I had the opportunity to deploy to Afghanistan as

1 part of a Special Operations Task Force, and on one of those  
2 deployments, I was lucky enough to meet my wife Elizabeth.  
3 That's another thing. My family and I owe the military.  
4 She has given me five beautiful children who are here today.  
5 And we're very hopeful that at least one of them will  
6 continue on our tradition of service, perhaps more than any  
7 other service.

8 The Army is a people business. We're not platform-  
9 centric. We're soldier-centric. And while it's very  
10 important that we become a customer of choice for industry,  
11 it's equally important we become an employer of choice for  
12 the young men and women of the United States.

13 I believe the Assistant Secretary of the Army for  
14 Manpower Reserve Affairs should be laser focused on this  
15 task. We're in a war for talent, and it's a where we need  
16 to win. To win this contest, we need to engage in a process  
17 of continuous improvement.

18 Our soldiers, civilians, and their families deserve  
19 world-class services and talent management practices. The  
20 army must continue to modernize its mechanisms for  
21 recruiting and hiring personnel, better match talents with  
22 assignments, and continue to improve support for military  
23 families, spouses, and their children.

24 At the same time, the Army must also prioritize  
25 realistic training. We need our CTCs and our home station

1 training to reflect modern battlefield threats like those  
2 seen in Ukraine. We need to improve our practices for  
3 building and sustaining readiness, and we need to prepare to  
4 conduct a national mobilization if our deterrence ever  
5 fails.

6 If confirmed, I commit to working to improve talent  
7 management within the army, quality of service and quality  
8 of life for soldiers and civilians and for preparing our  
9 army to adapt to the changing character of warfare.

10 Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

11 [The prepared statement of Mr. Hurst follows:]

12 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.

2 Now, Mr. Ingraham, your opening statement, sir.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25



1           STATEMENT OF MR. BRENT G. INGRAHAM, TO BE ASSISTANT  
2   SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS, AND  
3   TECHNOLOGY

4           Mr. Ingraham:   Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed,  
5   distinguished members of the committee, good morning.  I'm  
6   honored by the opportunity to appear here today as the  
7   nominee service assistant Secretary of the Army for  
8   Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology.

9           I'm extremely grateful for the trust and confidence  
10   placed in me by President Trump, Secretary Hegseth, and  
11   Secretary Driscoll by nominating me for this critical role.  
12   I'd like to begin by thanking the committee for considering  
13   my nomination, but more importantly, the bipartisan support  
14   you've shown the Department of Defense.

15          Very thankful for the support of my family; my wife,  
16   Melanie, my children, Kyler, Amanda that are here with me  
17   today.  Very thankful to the colleagues, and friends, and  
18   mentors that have guided me through my career.  And last,  
19   but not least, to my parents who are watching from Vermont.

20          Protect those that protect us.  It's the motto of the  
21   mind resistant, ambush protected vehicle program where I  
22   first served in the government, where I first encountered  
23   the deep patriotism, passion, and professionalism that  
24   drives our department's acquisition workforce.

25          Those words have been the North Star that has guided me

1 throughout my career that drive me to ensure that our  
2 warfighters always have a technological advantage on the  
3 battlefield with the tools they need to execute the mission  
4 and return home safely to their families.

5 I've had the privilege to work at multiple levels of  
6 our national security establishment at field commands,  
7 executing critical acquisition programs overseas at combat  
8 commands and at the Pentagon, including my current position  
9 of performing the duties of the Deputy Under Secretary of  
10 Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment.

11 These experiences along my training experiences in  
12 engineering, the automotive industry, shaped and molded me  
13 to lead key department missions, spearhead significant  
14 interagency efforts, work hand in hand with industry to  
15 deliver lifesaving equipment, and collaborate on complex  
16 multinational efforts with our allies and partners.

17 Secretary Hegseth has charged the Department of Defense  
18 to match capabilities to threats in increasing lethality  
19 across the spectrum of military operations. I am driven to  
20 ensure our soldiers have the capabilities in hand that will  
21 allow them to achieve overmatch against any adversary. I'll  
22 ensure the Army is employing all modern acquisition tools  
23 Congress has provided in order to cut red tape and  
24 accelerate the pace of delivery of lethal effective  
25 operational capabilities.

1       We're in the middle of a transformation in the way wars  
2   are fought and equipped. The convergence of artificial  
3   intelligence, robotics automation, and new manufacturing  
4   methods enabled by these technological revolutions. The  
5   intersection of R&D and acquisition coming together to  
6   rapidly field innovative new systems is more important now  
7   than ever with the many threats we face.

8       A rapidly evolving the acquisition enterprise must  
9   provide the speed and flexibility our soldiers need to have  
10   decisive advantage today and in the future. I look to  
11   strengthen rapid acquisition to deliver capabilities from  
12   the factory floor to the frontline even faster.

13       If confirmed, it'll be my job to enable and equip the  
14   Army's transformation by delivering the tools that underpin  
15   the Army's force modernization plan and ensure our soldiers  
16   never have to experience a fair fight. One of my top  
17   priority is to work with the DOD and industry to revive the  
18   defense industrial base, which is an essential enabler of  
19   our ability to deliver state-of-the-art capabilities as  
20   speed and scale.

21       We must secure our domestic supply chains away from  
22   adversaries, establish flexible and resilient manufacturing  
23   capabilities, and maintain a robust sub-tier supply base.  
24   We must attract the most capable and innovative companies  
25   while increasing competition, adapt commercial technology,

1 demand modular and open systems, and utilize modern software  
2 acquisition authorities to allow for faster integration. We  
3 must look closely with industry to unleash the power of  
4 American innovation, but we must hold them accountable on  
5 delivering the capabilities while being good stewards for  
6 the American taxpayer.

7 Finally, none of this is possible without the skilled  
8 and mission-oriented defense acquisition workforce. The  
9 cadre of Army acquisition professionals is a national  
10 strategic asset. Our focus on recruiting, retaining, and  
11 training the right talent, just like our frontline forces,  
12 rely on their professionalism and technical acumen both  
13 before and during conflict where the factory floor can be  
14 just as significant as the battlefield.

15 Our soldiers operate where the rubber meets the road,  
16 where it all comes down to the individual men and women  
17 serving this nation, their bravery, patriotism, and courage.  
18 They deserve the very best equipment, training, and support  
19 to do the hard jobs that our nation demands of them. If  
20 confirmed, my guiding light will be what it's always been;  
21 to protect those that protect us.

22 I look forward to your questions today, and if  
23 confirmed to working with Congress and particularly this  
24 committee to support the United States Army. Thank you.

25 [The prepared statement of Mr. Ingraham follows:]

[ COMMITTEE INSERT ]

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, sir.

2 Now, Mr. Gillis, your opening statement.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1           STATEMENT OF HONORABLE WILLIAM J. GILLIS, TO BE  
2   ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR INSTALLATIONS, ENERGY  
3   AND ENVIRONMENT

4           Mr. Gillis:   Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed  
5   distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the  
6   opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's  
7   nominee to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Army for  
8   Installations, Energy and Environment.

9           First, I want to thank the President for providing me  
10   with this opportunity, and also thank Secretary Driscoll for  
11   his support and trust.   This is indeed a high honor and  
12   distinct privilege.

13          I have a number of friends and colleagues in attendance  
14   today.   I thank them for their support, but I would be  
15   especially remiss if I did not recognize my wife, Leigh  
16   Anne, and my daughter Anne Bedford, who was born when I was  
17   in Iraq, who are here with me today, and my son, Thomas, and  
18   my mom who are watching remotely.   I thank them for their  
19   love and support without which I would not be here.

20          For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to be in the  
21   U.S. Army and follow the tradition on both sides of my  
22   family.   That includes Captain Thomas Bedford of Virginia in  
23   the Revolution, Brigadier General John Moulder Wilson, a  
24   Medal of Honor winner in the Civil War, Lieutenant Colonel  
25   George Gilson, World War I, my grandfathers, both of whom

1 were retired colonels and combat veterans of World War II in  
2 Korea.

3 To that end, 30 years ago this summer, I can't believe  
4 that math is right, I was an ROTC cadet intern at the  
5 Pentagon in the Army Secretariat. But for that experience,  
6 I would not have known that there are appointees who carry  
7 out the principle of civilian control of the military. I'm  
8 grateful for the opportunity to have one of those roles and  
9 to increase Army lethality, and improve the lives of  
10 soldiers and families.

11 Since that internship, I've wanted to return to the  
12 Pentagon along the way as an active-duty field artillery  
13 officer, and also having served in the Guard and Reserve in  
14 peace time and in combat. I learned the importance of  
15 taking care of soldiers and families. I've seen enough  
16 former installations and empty places of the past to know  
17 that the Army as an institution is nothing without its  
18 people.

19 And the IE&E portfolio has a direct impact on them.  
20 The IE&E mission set is unique at the same time. It is  
21 broad and deep and enterprise-wide, but also deeply personal  
22 to a family trying to get a work order completed in housing  
23 or to a member of Congress advocating for an issue  
24 particular to their installation. I appreciate that and it  
25 draws me to the mission.



1           My decade-plus of experience in the private sector as a  
2           management consultant for electric utilities, as well as my  
3           previous service as the principal deputy assistant Secretary  
4           of the Army for IE&E and as the Assistant Secretary for  
5           Sustainment, at a time when sustainment included the ASD  
6           EI&E portfolio, make me uniquely qualified for this role.

7           We are facing many of the same challenges now that I  
8           worked on personally five or more years ago, including  
9           competing priorities every budget cycle. My preliminary  
10          focus areas, if confirmed, and pending input from the  
11          Secretary, will be improving soldier and family quality of  
12          life, achieving a clean audit opinion, and enhancing  
13          installation energy resilience.

14          I think that as important as the "what" is the "how"  
15          and so I'll share two guiding principles. One, driving  
16          value for money. This includes evaluating MILCON and using  
17          our authorities to leverage other people's money, such as  
18          Energy Savings Performance Contracts. And then two,  
19          achieving results. We have to make sure that our actions  
20          and our return on investment have demonstrable results.

21          These range from those directly in support of Army  
22          priorities like warfighting and delivering combat-ready  
23          formations, to those specifically related to our  
24          environmental commitments around former Army properties. If  
25          confirmed, I'll commit to being as innovative as I can, as

1 efficiency-minded, and results driven as possible.

2 I've worked with many of you on this committee as well  
3 as your colleagues in the full Senate and the House. I've  
4 worked with your personal staff, the professional staff of  
5 this committee, and others as I've done before. I commit to  
6 partnering with you for the betterment of the Army.

7 If confirmed, it will be my honor to advance the  
8 mission of the Army in support of this great nation and in  
9 support of the men and women who serve, both military and  
10 civilian, their families, and the American people.

11 Thank you, again, for allowing me to be here today. I  
12 look forward to your questions.

13 [The prepared statement of Mr. Gillis follows:]

14 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, Mr. Gillis, and  
2 thank you for mentioning the fact that as an ROTC cadet you  
3 learned in the Pentagon, the almost sacred principle of, of  
4 civilian control of the military. It's a tradition that  
5 goes back to George Washington, and it's part of the great  
6 foundation of our free society and the separation of power.  
7 So, thank you for mentioning that.

8 I now move to a series of standard questions that this  
9 committee poses to all civilian nominees. And I guess, I  
10 ask you to answer simultaneously yes or no, and we'll watch  
11 the head nods.

12 Chairman Wicker: Have you adhered to applicable laws  
13 and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

14 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

15 Chairman Wicker: Have you assumed any duties or taken  
16 any actions that would appear to presume the outcome of the  
17 confirmation process?

18 [Witnesses answer in the negative.]

19 Chairman Wicker: Exercising our legislative and  
20 oversight responsibilities makes it important that this  
21 committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate  
22 committees of Congress receive testimony, briefings,  
23 reports, records, and other information from the executive  
24 branch on a timely basis.

25 Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify

1 before this committee when requested?

2 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

3 Chairman Wicker: Do you agree to provide records,  
4 documents, and electronic communications in a timely manner  
5 when requested by this committee, its subcommittees, or  
6 other appropriate committees of Congress, and to consult  
7 with the requester regarding the basis for any good faith,  
8 delay, or denial in providing such records?

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

14 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

15 Chairman Wicker: Will you cooperate in providing  
16 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional  
17 requests?

18 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

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

21 [Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

22 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much. And now, I  
23 guess the timekeeper can start the clock because these  
24 questions will be coming on during my five minutes.

25 First question is about reconciliation. Much of the

1 funding in the Defense Reconciliation Bill is unspecific  
2 because of House and Senate rules and will technically be at  
3 the discretion of the department, though the Congress will  
4 write specific recommendations for the funding items.

5 A quick yes or no, which has received affirmative  
6 answer from each witness who has come before us this year.  
7 A quick yes or no question to each of you. Do you commit to  
8 follow the Congress's spending recommendations in the  
9 defense reconciliation unequivocally? Mr. Hurst?

10 Mr. Hurst: Yes, Chairman.

11 Chairman Wicker: Mr. Cao?

12 Mr. Cao: Yes, Chairman.

13 Chairman Wicker: Mr. Dodd?

14 Mr. Dodd: Yes, Chairman.

15 Chairman Wicker: Mr. Ingraham?

16 Mr. Ingraham: Yes, Chairman.

17 Chairman Wicker: And Mr. Gillis?

18 Mr. Gillis: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very, very much.

20 Now, Mr. Cao, let me explore with you. I understand  
21 from our previous conversation that you have read over the  
22 FoRGED Act, which I helped to author. Is that correct?

23 Mr. Cao: Yes, Chairman.

24 Chairman Wicker: And I hope you're enthusiastic about  
25 it. Let me ask you, of course the idea is to make

1 acquisition more modern flexible and, and effective for our  
2 warfighters. The FoRGED Act is designed to ensure that the  
3 program manager cannot be overruled by low level career  
4 bureaucrats. If confirmed, you would oversee FoRGED Act  
5 reforms, which are proposed to improve naval acquisition.  
6 How would you align authorities to get our acquisition  
7 programs back on track?

8 Mr. Cao: Thank you for that question, Chairman. We  
9 need acquisition reform. I mean, the way the military has  
10 been working is not working. And that's why we are falling  
11 short on ship and submarine production. And if confirmed, I  
12 plan to oversee this and make sure that we are on track and  
13 that we don't have any impediments on acquisitions in  
14 shipbuilding.

15 Chairman Wicker: Let me give you an example. The  
16 technical warrant holders in charge of design and  
17 engineering led to numerous change orders on the  
18 Constellation-class frigate that reportedly reduced its  
19 design commonality with the parent ship, which started out  
20 at 85 percent down to just 15 percent in common. This is  
21 not untypical. Can we count on you to combat this and to  
22 get us back to where we need to be?

23 Mr. Cao: Yes, Chairman. Just like we discussed in  
24 your office, there is ways for us to keep those tech warrant  
25 holders accountable.

1 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much. Now, Mr.  
2 Gillis, we have placed in the NDAA and in the Fiscal Year  
3 2025 NDAA a provision that would require the department to  
4 budget the commercial industry standard minimum 4 percent  
5 plant replacement value by the year 2030. We want to get to  
6 4 percent by 2030 by starting the budgeting now and ramping  
7 up to 2030. Do you understand that?

8 Mr. Gillis: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do.

9 Chairman Wicker: Okay. We've led the charge on this,  
10 and there's so many needs out there that all five of you  
11 have outlined that this gets ignored over time. So, the  
12 reason that we put this in on a bipartisan, bicameral basis  
13 is that a change needs to be made, and we need to pay  
14 attention to the failing facilities that our servicemen  
15 need.

16 So, if confirmed, will you ensure that this law is  
17 enforced? And will you commit to this committee to report  
18 to Congress if there are those in the department that are  
19 knowingly refusing to follow the law or not following the  
20 law for whatever reason?

21 Mr. Gillis: Mr. Chairman, I welcome that guidance in  
22 the NDAA. As you know, it's a knife fight for budget in the  
23 Pentagon every day. And that gives me, as the advocate for  
24 Army installations, ammunition that helps me in that fight.  
25 So, yes, sir.

1 Chairman Wicker: And that's exactly how it's intended.

2 Thank you very much. Senator Reed:

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

4 And gentlemen, thank you for your testimony.

5 Mr. Dodd, the administration is in the process of  
6 reducing personnel in the Department of Defense allowing  
7 early retirements, many times not evaluating the need for  
8 the individual to simply wanting to clear a space based on  
9 these current challenges. How do you plan to ensure the  
10 department has the needed technical skills and sufficient  
11 personnel to do what you are going to do, which is a  
12 revolution, if you will, in terms of the way we do business?

13 Mr. Dodd: Thank you, Senator Reed for your question,  
14 and I appreciate the time to sit with you and your office  
15 and the staff.

16 There's a couple things to kind of weigh in here. So,  
17 as the department is going through a workforce optimization  
18 effort, if confirmed, the critical technologies portfolio I  
19 would have some unique hiring authorities to actually  
20 identify and onboard some of the most technical experts in  
21 certain topic areas to represent the department in those  
22 topic areas. Additionally, with my work currently in the  
23 Defense Innovation Unit and the engagement with over 50  
24 tier-one research universities, I would expect that  
25 engagement to continue and that collaboration to continue at



1 scale as well.

2 Senator Reed: Thank you very much. Mr. Ingraham are  
3 going to be one of the key drivers of the Army  
4 Transformation Initiative that is becoming one of the -- if  
5 not one of the most important elements of the new Army  
6 approach. And the Army has acknowledged its own need to  
7 become a better customer, and which comes down to  
8 requirements in many cases. So, what are you going to do to  
9 make the Army a better customer with regard to requirements?

10 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, I think we have an incredible  
11 opportunity to implement ATI, the Army Transformation  
12 Initiative, to optimize and be more efficient with how we  
13 think about capabilities required on the battlefield. We  
14 need to get after aligning not only resources, but our  
15 acquisition authorities to the right requirements.

16 And so, implementing things like configuration steering  
17 boards will give us a great opportunity to ensure that we  
18 are aligning those capabilities and ensuring we are  
19 absolutely getting the right capability in the soldier's  
20 hands fast. Along with the transformation and contact  
21 capabilities that the Army is actually employing, it allows  
22 us to get the capabilities quicker into the hands of the  
23 soldiers faster so that we can ensure that as we're going  
24 through the requirements process, we're delivering the right  
25 capabilities.

1           Senator Reed:    And related to this is the sense of  
2   right to repair all the new equipment the Army buys.  I  
3   presume that's going to be written, hopefully it's written  
4   in every contract because I can't see contractors going by  
5   submarines to the Philippines to replace a screw on a  
6   machine.  So, is that part of your mandate also?

7           Mr. Ingraham:  Senator, absolutely.  We need right to  
8   repair on every capability.  And so, ensuring we get the  
9   right data rights in intellectual property in written in the  
10  contract up front, is absolutely critical.

11          Senator Reed:  Thank you.

12          Mr. Gillis, you are committed to addressing the  
13  shortfall in housing and barracks.  That's the quality-of-  
14  life issue, probably the most central one in most of the  
15  family's lives.  However, as I indicated my opening  
16  statement, the Army just submitted a reprogramming request  
17  to divert \$1.1 billion of FSRM funding to send it to the  
18  border.  How are you going to deal with the housing crisis  
19  when the money is going elsewhere?

20          Mr. Gillis:  Ranking Member Reed, I share your concern  
21  and focus on, on housing and quality of life initiatives.  I  
22  was not part of those budget decisions, but I can assure you  
23  that going forward, I will advocate unequivocally to be sure  
24  that we fund FSRM and MILCON to meet the requirements that  
25  we have.

1           Senator Reed: Thank you very much. And Mr. Cao, the  
2   secretary has shown great vision and purpose in getting  
3   after this shipbuilding issue, particularly submarines,  
4   which I encourage him. And you I hope you will be sharing  
5   his activities, his attention, and in a way, passion for  
6   getting our ships back on time and on schedule.

7           Mr. Cao: I will, Ranking Member Reed, but also, we  
8   need sailors to go on those ships. We need munitions, and  
9   we need the right maintenance for them, too.

10          Senator Reed: Thank you very much. My time is  
11   expiring. Mr. Hurst, I will send you some questions in  
12   written form.

13          [The information referred to follows:]

14          [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Senator Reed: Congratulations. I'm impressed with  
2 your performance to date, and your family. Thank you.

3 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Reed.

4 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 First of all, let me say thank you to all of you for  
6 your previous service, also, your offer to serve once again.  
7 And I also want to thank you and your families. It's  
8 sometimes forgotten that when you go on deployment or when  
9 you offer your service, the families also participate in  
10 that, and that when you're away they're without you. And we  
11 appreciate what it takes for that family to hang together  
12 and what it means to the entire family. So, we thank all of  
13 you as well for the offer of your spouse or your family  
14 member here to participate in service to this country. So,  
15 thank you-all, Mr. Cao, Mr. Dodd, and Mr. Ingraham.

16 I've heard from 28 senior DOD officials in hearings  
17 over the past two years, including the Secretary of Defense,  
18 every service chief and eight combatant commanders that  
19 sharing the 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz band would have extremely  
20 deleterious and costly effects on our warfighting  
21 capabilities. The Department of the Navy alone estimates  
22 that relocating their systems to different spectrum Band  
23 would cost them \$250 billion. Secretary Hegseth has said  
24 that he would go to the mat when necessary for spectrum  
25 capabilities, he believes are an absolute requirement for

1 the DOD and men and women in uniform.

2 Just simply, because I want to make it very clear to  
3 everybody listening in, how critical this is, if confirmed  
4 Mr. Cao, Mr. Dodd, and Mr. Ingraham, will you fight to  
5 defend the Department of Defense's access to the use and  
6 maneuver within the electromagnetic spectrum at home and  
7 abroad? Mr. Cao?

8 Mr. Cao: Yes, Senator.

9 Senator Rounds: Mr. Dodd?

10 Mr. Dodd: Yes, Senator.

11 Senator Rounds: Mr. Ingraham?

12 Mr. Ingraham: Yes, Senator.

13 Senator Rounds: Thank you. I cannot overemphasize how  
14 critical it is with the use of spectrum and the need to  
15 protect our young men and women. There are parts of this,  
16 which are used in our radar systems and in our  
17 communications. Literally, if we lose that, people die.  
18 And it is critical that we allow for the Department of  
19 Defense to have access to that portion of the spectrum for  
20 their needed defensive capabilities.

21 Mr. Dodd, trusted artificial intelligence and assured  
22 access to the electromagnetic spectrum are both foundational  
23 to our ability to compete with China in future conflicts.  
24 How will you drive integration of AI into operational  
25 systems, and what barriers to transition do you believe

1 require the most urgent attention?

2 Mr. Dodd: Senator, thank you for the question. I  
3 think initially I would look to utilize some of the existing  
4 tools and authorities, if confirmed, that would exist inside  
5 of critical technologies. Section 217 clearly outlines the  
6 efforts within critical technologies to create those  
7 technology roadmaps with the services, with the unified  
8 combatant commands, and influence and advocate an engagement  
9 with the services when they get into the program, objective  
10 memorandum, or cycle for budgeting against those technology  
11 requirements. So, they getting heavily involved in there.

12 And the impediments which I think we're going to hear  
13 several times today, is this acquisition reform and the  
14 ability to utilize other transaction authorities and  
15 existing statutory authorities so that we can identify and  
16 acquire technologies at speed, relevance, and scale.

17 Senator Rounds: And I think what you've indicated in  
18 terms of the challenge with regard to acquisitions is  
19 probably one of the most important things that we're going  
20 to have to do.

21 I'm going to go to that next, but I, I just want to  
22 just -- no question that artificial intelligence is here.  
23 It's here to stay. It's not going away. And it will either  
24 be used on us or we will use it to our advantage. Fair  
25 statement?

1 Mr. Dodd: Senator, absolutely?

2 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Mr. Ingraham, the time it  
3 takes for the Army acquisition programs to reach operational  
4 use is simply incompatible with the pace of modern conflict.  
5 What reforms would you pursue to compress acquisition  
6 timelines, reduce risk aversion in procurement, and better  
7 leverage private sector innovation?

8 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, I agree. We can always do  
9 better when it comes to acquisition. So, a number of the  
10 acquisition reforms in fully the implementation of the  
11 adapted acquisition framework that allows all the  
12 authorities that if Congress has provided to fully utilize  
13 all of the resources we have.

14 That starts with reducing barriers to entry as we bring  
15 in a new entrance into the acquisition system, ensuring that  
16 we are providing really clear requirements, but not overly  
17 burdensome requirements, and quickly getting those  
18 capabilities into the hands of the warfighter that will  
19 allow us to continually refine through things like open  
20 architectures that will allow us to make sure the right  
21 capability is delivered as fast as possible.

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

23 Chairman Wicker. Thank you very much, Senator Rounds.  
24 Senator Hirono.

25 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to

1 each of you.

2 So, I start with asking the following two, I consider  
3 foundational questions of every nominee for before any of  
4 the committees on which I sit to ensure the fitness of the  
5 nominee to serve. So, I'll start with a response from Mr.  
6 Hurst, and we'll just go right down the line.

7 Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made  
8 unwanted requests for sexual favors, or committed any verbal  
9 or physical harassment, or assault of a sexual nature?

10 Mr. Hurst: No, Senator.

11 Mr. Cao: No, Senator.

12 Mr. Dodd: No, Senator.

13 Mr. Ingraham: No, Senator.

14 Mr. Gillis: No, Senator.

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

17 Mr. Hurst: No, Senator.

18 Mr. Cao: No, Senator.

19 Mr. Dodd: No, Senator.

20 Mr. Ingraham: No, Senator.

21 Mr. Gillis: No, Senator.

22 Senator Hirono: For Dr. Gillis. Dr. Gillis, the lack  
23 of affordable housing remains a perennial, basically, and a  
24 persistent problem in Hawaii where housing costs are  
25 extremely high. And affordability of housing is a huge



1 challenge, and I believe that the DOD can play a bigger role  
2 in helping to address this issue by basically creating  
3 housing for the personnel. So, some 50 percent of 40  
4 percent of military personnel currently live off base. So,  
5 would you, would you deem this to be an issue that you would  
6 like to do something about, to alleviate the housing  
7 shortage by creating housing for your personnel? How do you  
8 go about doing that?

9 Mr. Gillis: Senator, first, I can't take the promotion  
10 to Doctor. I am merely, an honorable or former assistant  
11 secretary. But to your question, I absolutely agree. And  
12 if confirmed, I would commit to looking at what the balance  
13 is between on installation housing and if we can bring more  
14 soldiers and families onto installations would take measures  
15 to do that. Certainly.

16 Senator Hirono: So, would you commit to working with  
17 the Hawaii delegation to address the issue of more housing  
18 provided by the Navy for your personnel?

19 Mr. Gillis: Senator, I do. Not just on housing, but  
20 with Army land leases in Hawaii. It was on a trip to Hawaii  
21 where I got to sit next to you at the ribbon cutting at the  
22 Schofield generating station that I really learned to  
23 appreciate the importance of Hawaii to Army operations. So,  
24 I do commit to work with you and your staff.

25 Senator Hirono: Yes, needless to say. And I know that

1 you acknowledge the importance of all of our leases,  
2 particularly Pahakuloa.

3 For Mr. Cao, the Navy is currently building a critical  
4 new dry dock at Pearl Harbor to support Virginia-class  
5 submarine maintenance. And I know that maintenance of our  
6 ships is a priority for you. And this construction project  
7 is the largest in DOD history at nearly \$4.5 billion. But  
8 it has faced significant cost overruns, including in, in the  
9 first year of construction, a cost increase of \$834 million  
10 in just one year. How do you plan to ensure dry dock  
11 construction remains on time and on budget? And will you  
12 consider this construction to be a critical priority for  
13 you? Should you be confirmed?

14 Mr. Cao: Senator, thank you very much for that  
15 question. It is near and dear my heart. The workforce in  
16 Hawaii is unmatched right now of all the public shipyards  
17 that we have. And so, you have my commitment that, if  
18 confirmed, I will go in and look at the cost overruns and  
19 keep the cost overrun under control.

20 Senator Hirono: I was at the opening really, of this  
21 construction. And I had said in my remarks that I hope that  
22 this project can come in on time, on budget. And before I  
23 could practically blink, there was a \$800 million increase.  
24 So, this is going to require, I would say, oversight from  
25 you to make sure that things are on time and on budget.

1           For Mr. Gillis, Army installations in Hawaii have a  
2   number of infrastructure-related problems from fragile  
3   electrical grids and water systems to aging barracks and  
4   other facility related maintenance issues. And we know that  
5   50 percent of Army facilities in Hawaii categorized as  
6   failed or failing with a backlog cost to repair of \$5.6  
7   billion. So, these issues negatively impact military  
8   readiness and quality of life for our soldiers and their  
9   families. So, what will you do in terms of the  
10   infrastructure needs in Hawaii to prioritize these needs?

11           Mr. Gillis: Senator, I agree with you about the  
12   importance of this issue. I think that this is what is  
13   beginning to be a good news story. And if you could just  
14   spot me a few seconds, Mr. Chairman. For instance, the Army  
15   is working to privatize the electric infrastructure in  
16   Hawaii in partnership with HELCO, with Hawaii Electric --

17           Senator Hirono: In Kalaeloa, I know.

18           Mr. Gillis: Exactly right. And I think that that  
19   approach is a good way forward to get folks whose core  
20   business it is to maintain and plan for the improvements  
21   necessary for that infrastructure.

22           Senator Hirono: I will hold you to -- especially the  
23   Kalaeloa, formerly Barbers Point. I will hold you to making  
24   sure that we get that project done. Thank you, Mr.  
25   Chairman.

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

3 Senator Mullin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank  
4 you to all of you guys for stepping up and willing to serve  
5 in these capacities. Is challenging times, and a lot of  
6 changes for the better. And unfortunately, a lot of roles  
7 you guys are stepping in, change isn't exactly easy. It's  
8 tough.

9 So, with that Mr. Cao, can you explain to me why you're  
10 taking on this role and responsibility?

11 Mr. Cao: Thank you for that question, Senator. I came  
12 to this country with nothing, as a refugee. And we grew up  
13 in Africa, actually. And in 1979, when the Shah of Iran was  
14 overthrown, the Marines brought us into the embassy and  
15 stood watch over us in case they had to do an evacuation.  
16 And the look in their eyes that night that said, "Nothing's  
17 going to hurt you. Not tonight. Not on my watch." I want  
18 to be like those heroes. So, I've dedicated my entire life  
19 to serving in the military.

20 Right now, my son is a senior at the Naval Academy. In  
21 11 months, he will be commissioned as an officer. I don't  
22 want him to go to war the way I did, where we used our body  
23 armors to put between the doors to protect us. We were  
24 lucky enough to have body armor. That's not going to happen  
25 to my son, and that's not going to happen to any American

1 sons and daughters. Not in my watch, sir.

2 Senator Mullin: Thank you. We have real issues going  
3 on with shipbuilding. We're behind. We can't seem to get  
4 anything out of dry dock, much less get something out of  
5 from conception to delivery. How do we fix this?

6 Mr. Cao: Senator, I've been studying this issue, and I  
7 have 10 different levers that I want to provide to you and  
8 the President in order to get shipbuilding going. But we  
9 also have to remember that we need to maintain those ships,  
10 and we need to man those ships, and we need weapons to go on  
11 those ships. So, it's a four-prong problem that we need to  
12 address.

13 And if confirmed, I will look into all these issues,  
14 present all the solutions to the commander-in-chief, and the  
15 Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Navy, as well as  
16 this body.

17 Senator Mullin: Should we be trying to refit the  
18 current platforms, or we should we be trying to embrace new  
19 technology and new platforms and maybe rethink the way we're  
20 having naval warfare to begin with?

21 Mr. Cao: Senator, absolutely. We need to rethink  
22 naval warfare. We need to use what we already have because  
23 the wars is -- could be any day. I mean, we live every day  
24 as if it's September 10th, 2001. So, we need to be ready  
25 for what happens tomorrow. And that means we need to

1 maintain our ships. We need to have the electronic warfare  
2 systems on board to fight off any hypersonic weapons. We  
3 also need to accelerate shipbuilding as well.

4 Senator Mullin: Thank you.

5 Mr. Gillis, United States has an abundant amount of  
6 natural gas, and same thing with Oklahoma. And when we  
7 start talking about Army installations, how do we become  
8 energy resilient if we have burdensome regulations that  
9 prevent us from moving forward?

10 Mr. Gillis: Senator Mullin, I think you're exactly  
11 right. The more we can bring onsite generation and onsite  
12 power sources to Army installations, the more resilient they  
13 are. We've got at least one use case where we're currently  
14 extracting natural gas on an installation for that purpose.  
15 And I think that's a great use case and would like to be  
16 able to see it expanded, and would love to work with you to  
17 make sure that we have the authorities to do that.

18 Senator Mullin: What type of legislation do you need?  
19 We've looked in this before. I mean, we just talked about  
20 the -- in McAllister, the munition depot, there is a  
21 tremendous amount of resources under the ground. And you  
22 look at the paperwork that it takes to do it, it's nearly  
23 impossible. So, what do you -- how can we help you be  
24 successful in this?

25 Mr. Gillis: Senator, appreciate that offer. And if

1 confirmed, I will take you up on that, and we'll have the  
2 team look deeply into that issue and let you know exactly  
3 how we could use some help.

4 Senator Mullin: Thank you, Chairman. I'm going to  
5 yield back some time.

6 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, Senator.  
7 Senator Kaine.

8 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 And to my colleagues and those who are here, I've been  
10 in the Senate now coming up on 13 years, and the best part  
11 of the job is being on this committee by far, when  
12 everything else is not going well. Being on this committee  
13 is the best part of the job. It's the best part of the job  
14 because my colleagues are rock solid. We have plenty of  
15 disagreements, but we work very, very closely together.

16 The week after the 4th of July, we'll mark up the  
17 defense bill. We sit around the table. We're the only  
18 committee that does this. We sit around the table until  
19 every last member has offered every last amendment, and  
20 there's nothing left to offer. And then we end up with the  
21 bill that even if you lose an amendment or two, everybody  
22 has their fingerprints on it.

23 We usually voted out 25 to 2, or 26 to 2. My  
24 colleagues are good. The staff is fantastic. But the  
25 important part of it is the mission, it's our troops.

1 Virginia, I'm going to make a claim, and other Senators will  
2 challenge me in a virtuous competition, but I'm going to  
3 claim we are the most pro-military state in this country.  
4 About 1 out of 10 Virginians is a veteran. Then there's  
5 active, then there's Guard, then there's Reserve, then  
6 there's DOD civilians, then there's DOD contractors and  
7 military families like mine. It's such serious stuff. It's  
8 such serious stuff.

9 I was very, very disturbed yesterday -- and this is not  
10 going to be a question for any of you. This is really just  
11 for this gathering. I was so disturbed yesterday when the  
12 commander-in-chief of the greatest nation on this planet  
13 posted a music video, "Bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran.  
14 Went to a mosque, going to throw some rocks, time to turn  
15 around into a parking lot." Music video with bombers flying  
16 behind residential buildings. Had another line in it about  
17 sending the Ayatollah home in a box.

18 I mean, is this the way we ought to treat war in this  
19 country? I mean, is it just a big joke? 40,000 troops are  
20 deployed in the Middle East right now. They're all on high  
21 alert because of what's going on in the Middle East. I've  
22 got people all over Virginia who are worried about, are they  
23 going to get deployed? Are their kids going to get  
24 deployed? Are we going to be in a third war in the Middle  
25 East in the last 20 years? And we've got a commander-in-



1 chief putting up stuff like this.

2 When I came to the Senate, I served first under a  
3 Democratic President, then under President Trump, then under  
4 a Democratic President, then again, under President Trump.  
5 And I came with the view that war was too serious an issue  
6 to be left to one person. I deeply believe what the Framers  
7 of our Constitution believe that the matter is so serious  
8 and so consequential that it shouldn't be left to one  
9 person. That we should only be at war if Congress has a  
10 serious and deliberative process about that. And I have a  
11 resolution that will likely be voted on to that effect in  
12 the next couple of days.

13 But I just wanted to begin with this. Let's take this  
14 seriously. I think the committee takes it seriously. I  
15 think the American public takes it seriously. I know  
16 Virginians who are in the military or whose family are in  
17 the military, take it seriously. It's not a joke. It's not  
18 a joke.

19 Secretary Gillis, let me ask you this. We had the  
20 person that is currently serving as acting in the position  
21 for which you've been nominated before us in the Readiness  
22 Subcommittee yesterday. Senator Sullivan and Hirono held a  
23 hearing and I asked them about UAS issues. We've got major  
24 challenges with incursions on our bases, Army bases and  
25 others. We had an incursion at the base, the Langley Base

1 19 months ago. We still haven't gotten good answers for it.

2 The Army is playing kind of a lead role in this. They  
3 are the executive agent, and NORTHCOM is the lead  
4 synchronizer in the kind of all stakeholder group as we're  
5 trying to figure out how to stop UAS incursions on our  
6 bases. Talk to me about how you would prioritize this.  
7 Should you be confirmed?

8 Mr. Gillis: Senator, I watched that hearing with great  
9 interest, and I thought that Dr. Waksman did a great job.  
10 And I'll reiterate a few points. I mean, first there's the  
11 technological piece. We have to figure out whether it's  
12 kinetic or non-kinetic, and how we balance the security and  
13 installation with the safety of the adjacent public.

14 And then there's the authorities piece. So, having  
15 looked into this a little bit before when I was in the seat,  
16 we've got to coordinate and be sure that we have the right  
17 authorities with respect to the FAA and the FCC so that we  
18 can take the actions that we need to take.

19 But I agree with you. That is a very important and  
20 alarming issue, and commit to looking into that and  
21 continuing to drive the Army's efforts.

22 Senator Kaine: Thank you. I yield back.

23 Chairman Wicker: It is an issue that needs that needs  
24 a good bit of attention. Senator King.

25 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1        Mr. Cao, thank you for taking on this challenge and for  
2        your inspiring story. You demonstrate to this committee and  
3        to this country the value that immigrants and refugees can  
4        play in the future of our country. And you're a walking  
5        statement of that fact.

6        I want to just emphasize something that you mentioned  
7        in your opening statement, and that is maintenance. It's  
8        the most boring topic of all. But you, as you correctly  
9        point out, one of our major problems is availability. We  
10       all talked about AI.

11       I did a little AI work this morning. The average  
12       availability of Navy ships is in the range of 60 percent.  
13       It depends on which ship, but some are below 50, some are in  
14       the range of 65 or 70, but generally between 50 and 60  
15       percent. The availability of carnival cruise line ships is  
16       91 percent. If Carnival cruise line ships were available 60  
17       percent of the time, they'd be out of business.

18       I hope that you'll carry through on what you suggest in  
19       your opening testimony and really get after this issue of  
20       maintenance and availability. I challenge you to come back  
21       to this committee in a couple of years and tell us we're  
22       benchmarking against Carnival cruise lines.

23       Mr. Cao: Thank you for that, Senator. Yes, we are a  
24       maritime nation. We depend on the seas for trade, and right  
25       now, we're deficit in not just commercial ships. I think

1 there's less than 80 flagged U.S. ships. There's less than  
2 129 military seal command ships. And our fleet is you know,  
3 less than 400 ships right now and/or actually it's less than  
4 300 ships. And we need a stronger Navy in order to maintain  
5 the freedom of seas.

6 Senator King: I agree with that. We're not building  
7 enough ships, but we're also not keeping the ships that we  
8 have in service. I take it you agree with that?

9 Mr. Cao: Yes, Senator. The operational availability  
10 is pretty horrid on a lot of ships.

11 Senator King: I look forward to tracking that with you  
12 as time goes on.

13 Mr. Dodd, you have, I think, one of the most important  
14 jobs in the Pentagon, which is technology. The adaptation  
15 of new technology is what wins wars. Genghis Kahn was able  
16 to conquer the world because of his utilization of the  
17 stirrup, which enabled his archers to shoot from horseback.  
18 And it was that technology that enabled him. The long bow  
19 with the Battle of Agincourt enabled 6,000 British troops to  
20 defeat an army of 20,000 French.

21 I'm worried. And you mentioned several technologies in  
22 your testimony, but we've basically been slow on several  
23 technologies. We've been slow on drones, on hypersonics,  
24 and particularly on directed energy, which you didn't  
25 mention. But in the age of drones, directed energy can be

1 more important than ever. The prior administration woefully  
2 underfunded the development of directed energy. I hope  
3 that's something that you will pursue in your new position.

4 Mr. Dodd: Senator, thank you for raising that very  
5 important issue. And if confirmed, directed energy would be  
6 a technology area in the Critical Technologies portfolio.  
7 I'm a staunch advocate and believer in utilizing many  
8 faster, cheaper platforms.

9 And certainly, in the counter-UAS domain, directed  
10 energy will play a critical role in that. High performance  
11 microwaves are making some significant advances. Those  
12 platforms have already been prototyped. They're being  
13 tested currently. So, we are excited to again, if  
14 confirmed, see the growth and scaling of directed energy  
15 platforms.

16 Senator King: Well, I point out in the Red Sea today,  
17 we're shooting down \$20,000 Yemeni and Iranian drones with  
18 \$4 million missiles. That's unsustainable. And a shot from  
19 a directed energy is about 75 cents. So, this is urgent,  
20 and I hope it is pursued not only systematically, but also  
21 with some urgency.

22 Mr. Dodd: Senator, I fully commit to pursuing directed  
23 energy platforms, if confirmed.

24 Senator King: Thank you.

25 Mr. Ingraham, logistics, acquisition, and technology.

1 One of the hidden issues there is industrial base, and  
2 everybody that comes before this committee talks about  
3 rebuilding the industrial base. And part of that is  
4 workforce. The industrial base can't grow and support what  
5 we need with the limited workforce that we have now. So, I  
6 hope that will be a significant part because you can't do  
7 acquisition if you don't have people to acquire the products  
8 from.

9 Is industrial base part of what you view as your  
10 mission?

11 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, absolutely. The industrial  
12 base is absolutely critical, and ensuring that we have a  
13 strong industrial base is fundamental to acquisitions, as  
14 you mentioned. I think a number of key things, if  
15 confirmed, I would want to make sure we're doing is first  
16 understanding where those critical gaps are in our  
17 industrial base. We've got to map that industrial base,  
18 starting right from the mine all the way to the factory  
19 floor to where we see in the value stream. We need to  
20 ensure we're adding some resilience and some strength to our  
21 investment.

22 Senator King: I would suggest that one important  
23 provision here, one important initiative is a steady demand  
24 signal. We can expect our private sector contractors to  
25 make major investments unless they know they're going to be

1 able to sell their products. So, multi-year contracting and  
2 a steady demand signal is important. They're not going to  
3 invest if it's going to be turned off and on, and they don't  
4 know if they're going to have the business a year or two  
5 later. So, I hope you'll consider that as well.

6 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, absolutely. Multi-year  
7 procurements has been critical, especially in the munition  
8 space where we're ensuring that we drive that constant  
9 demand signal.

10 Senator King: And it saves the taxpayers' money.

11 Mr. Ingraham: Absolutely.

12 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator King. Senator  
14 Banks.

15 Senator Banks: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Mr. Dodd, great to see you here today. Congratulations  
17 on your important nomination. Once you're confirmed, you're  
18 going to be in charge of a number of critical technology  
19 areas, including hypersonics that you're going to help  
20 oversee. America still has not deployed a hypersonics  
21 weapon, and our adversaries are already ahead of us in this  
22 important area. We need to get these weapons out of the lab  
23 and into the field. Can you tell us today how you're going  
24 to help do that?

25 Mr. Dodd: Senator, thank you for that extremely

1 important question, and your compelling work in this topic,  
2 especially with Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division,  
3 and their development of the hypersonic technologies. As  
4 you referenced, the United States currently is behind our  
5 adversaries, most notably China, in this technology domain.

6 There are a couple of underway efforts, in my sister  
7 organization, if confirmed, in Science and Technology, the  
8 Joint Hypersonics Transition Office, and in the Mission  
9 Capabilities Office would be the MACH-TB program, which you  
10 have been a staunch advocate for in the testing and  
11 evaluating on a much more rapid time and scale, and that is  
12 needed.

13 And so, for us to catch up in hypersonics, is  
14 utilization of those programs in furthering the testing and  
15 deployment of hypersonic technologies.

16 Senator Banks: Can you explain the MACH-TB program to  
17 the committee and talk about why it's so important?

18 Mr. Dodd: Yes, Senator, thank you for that. So, the  
19 MACH-TB program, again, would reside in the Mission  
20 Capabilities portfolio. But it is the rapid testing and  
21 evaluating of the hypersonic technologies and reducing the  
22 cost by which we're looking to deploy these technologies as  
23 well.

24 Senator Banks: And what else can we do when it comes  
25 to research and development for hypersonics? I mean, what



1 else is out there that we're not doing that we can't be  
2 doing that you're going to push for?

3 Mr. Dodd: Thank you, Senator, for the question. I  
4 think the additional efforts, if confirmed, are going to be  
5 to get in and utilize some of the existing authorities and  
6 successes that exist currently in the Critical Technology  
7 portfolio in hypersonic.

8 So, the utilization of the other transaction authority,  
9 the ability to identify, vet, procure get on contract, and  
10 deploy those technologies at speed, relevance, and scale.

11 Senator Banks: Okay. Another area that you're going  
12 to help oversee is microelectronics. Places like Naval  
13 Surface Warfare Center Crane that you've already mentioned  
14 in Indiana are critical to making sure that the DOD has  
15 secure access to safe and reliable microelectronics. How  
16 can we further strengthen our secure microelectronic supply  
17 chain at the DOD?

18 Mr. Dodd: Again, thank you for that question, Senator  
19 Banks. Also, Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division is  
20 an anchor mission partner in the trusted assured  
21 microelectronics at Microelectronics Commons. Not widely  
22 known, but scary by some accounts, as much as 10 percent of  
23 microelectronics in the United States are counterfeit,  
24 corrupt, or malicious. Both of those programs address the  
25 gap in our security in identifying and deploying trusted

1 assured microelectronics into all of our systems. Again,  
2 foundational in everything that we have.

3 Senator Banks: Mr. Cao, Naval Surface Warfare Center  
4 Crane that we've just been talking about for the last three  
5 minutes is the crown jewel of Indiana's defense industry and  
6 our defense assets. I hope that you'll take some time to  
7 come visit after you're confirmed. It would be very  
8 important to have us host you as the Under Secretary of the  
9 Navy. As you may know, Crane has a key role in Navy  
10 hypersonics and in the Navy's new Nuclear Sea Launch Cruise  
11 Missile, also known as SLCM-N.

12 Mr. Cao, how important are these programs to turn in  
13 conflict with China?

14 Mr. Cao: Thank you for that question, Senator. CPS or  
15 Conventional Promise Strike is extremely important. I moved  
16 that budget line when I was in the Navy from OUSD(AT&L) to  
17 the Navy in 2017, and we still have not developed CPS. It  
18 was supposed to be developed within the fit up. So, that is  
19 extremely critical.

20 As for the SLCM-N, again, we need every piece of that  
21 nuclear tryout to be operational. And so, yes, sir, I would  
22 love to visit Crane, Indiana.

23 Senator Banks: Thank you. We're looking forward to  
24 hosting you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

25 Chairman Wicker: Thank you. Senator Schmitt, you're

1 now recognized, and also you hold the gavel.

2 Senator Schmitt: Oh, wow.

3 Chairman Wicker: I have to leave for another hearing.

4 Senator Schmitt: [Presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
5 Thank you all for being here.

6 Mr. Cao, I wanted to ask you as relates to the Navy. I  
7 was thrilled obviously to see that the Air Force and  
8 President Trump announced the F-47 is moving forward, the  
9 next generation fighter that I think is particularly  
10 important as we continue to pivot to China, the Indo-  
11 Pacific, it can go further, go faster, bigger payloads.

12 There's a lot of reasons why it's a very important  
13 platform for us, which gets us into the Navy with the  
14 potential F/A-XX next gen fighter that would be carrier-  
15 based. How do you view that? Why is that important, and  
16 what advantages can we gain from having a next gen fighter  
17 on those carriers?

18 Mr. Cao: Thank you for that question, Senator. The  
19 carrier is 99,000 tons of American diplomacy. It can be  
20 anywhere at any time. With the Air Wing on board, it's the  
21 seventh largest air force in the world. And so, we  
22 absolutely need a sixth-generation aircraft to be on those  
23 aircraft carriers in order to push our American diplomacy  
24 and secure the sea for allies and our friends.

25 Senator Schmitt: As you see it right now, what are

1 some of the challenges that might exist that the Navy might  
2 need to overcome? I mean, there is some money in here to  
3 move forward in the in the reconciliation bill, but what  
4 challenges we need to overcome to make sure that that  
5 happens?

6 Mr. Cao: Senator, again, it's the bureaucracy, it's  
7 the tech warrant holders, as Chairman Wicker had mentioned,  
8 it's a lot of people that are saying no. The one person  
9 should only say no, and that should be the Secretary of the  
10 Navy. And along the way, each person can take, assume the  
11 risk and move out or they push it up to the next level. But  
12 we need to move out, and we need sixth-generation aircraft.

13 Senator Schmitt: Well, I agree. So, look forward to  
14 working with you to help maybe cut through some of that  
15 bureaucratic "no" we hear right now, and make sure that we  
16 actually get this thing done.

17 Mr. Hurst, I wanted to ask you as it relates to  
18 military base defense. Anybody who watched anything related  
19 to what the Ukrainians and that drone attack in Russia can  
20 understand, and we've heard about it a lot in open and  
21 classified settings for sure. But I think that really  
22 brings home the capabilities that are out there that exist,  
23 which then leads to sort of our defense of that.

24 How are you looking at the evolution of installation  
25 security in the modern era given the potential risk from

1 drone strikes?

2 Mr. Husrt: Well, Senator, thank you for that question.  
3 I think the proliferation of small, unmanned aerial systems  
4 has democratized airpower that anybody can afford it now.  
5 And I think it's a key readiness issue that we quickly field  
6 commercial technologies that are ready to counter that. We  
7 include this in our training exercises, and we work with the  
8 FAA and other authorities that allow us to fully utilize  
9 capabilities to stop these threats.

10 Senator Schmitt: It's my view that the commercial  
11 sector's already sort of -- they've already produced a lot  
12 of these tools that can be used. And kind of getting back  
13 to some of the cultural shift, I think that needs to happen.  
14 Oftentimes, the private sector's been asked, or they just do  
15 it, create a solution, but sort of the government  
16 procurement folks or the requirements that are put in place,  
17 especially as it relates to drones, I mean, they're outdated  
18 in six months. Right?

19 But as far as relates to drone defense, a lot of that  
20 technology's already out there. And I think, unfortunately,  
21 the Air Force has been really flatfooted on this. I think  
22 as relates to -- you know, we've got of course, Fort Leonard  
23 Wood in Missouri, the Army. We've got Whiteman, which has  
24 clearly been in the news, given what happened over the  
25 weekend with the B-2s.

1           This is one of those things that we have got to be  
2 nimble with. And so, the private sector, I've met with some  
3 of them. They have the capabilities, they have the ability  
4 to detect, disarm, and if ultimately, take down these sort  
5 of drone strikes and even mass drone strikes or swarms. But  
6 we're still kind of -- I feel like we're a little bit stuck  
7 in this bureaucratic maze.

8           What do you think can be done to cut through that?  
9 Because I think everyone recognizes the capabilities and the  
10 problems, but we're still here. You know, we're still here.

11          Mr. Husrt: Senator, I think this is an issue that I  
12 would own, if confirmed, with several other people in this  
13 panel. But one thing I think the department could explore  
14 is contracting for things as a service to get a jumpstart in  
15 this and test out things faster.

16          Senator Schmitt: Okay. I look forward to working with  
17 that. Thank you. Senator Kelly.

18          Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ingraham  
19 -- actually to all five of you, congratulations on your  
20 nominations. And thank you for your service and your future  
21 service.

22          Mr. Ingraham, thank you for meeting with me earlier  
23 this week. I want to follow-up on our discussion about  
24 electronic warfare. As the Assistant Secretary for  
25 Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, you'll be responsible

1 for the entire research, development, and acquisition  
2 lifecycle of Army platforms and warfare systems. And I  
3 appreciate you sharing with me your experience in  
4 Afghanistan about how important it's for our service members  
5 to get the best equipment possible. That is critical within  
6 the acquisition cycle.

7 Can you tell me how important you think it is in the  
8 developmental testing and evaluation, how important is  
9 developmental testing and evaluation?

10 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, I appreciate the question and  
11 absolutely enjoyed the time and the discussions we were able  
12 to have in your office beforehand.

13 Development testing is absolutely critical. As you  
14 stated, we started talking a lot about electronic warfare,  
15 especially in the electronic warfare space. We need to  
16 ensure that our capabilities that can be the most effective  
17 in an electromagnetic spectrum that the operators can't see.  
18 Our soldiers aren't going to be able to see the electronic  
19 warfare effects that are being placed against them. And so,  
20 having that capability to counter those electronic warfare  
21 methods will be critical.

22 Senator Kelly: Yeah, I would argue that we're doing a  
23 disservice to our service members to turn over systems to  
24 them before it's gone through a complete DT evaluation cycle  
25 because you're not going to figure out problems with the

1 systems without doing that.

2         So, I'm concerned about proposed cuts that would  
3 disproportionately affect the electronic proving ground.  
4 The Electronic Proving Ground at Fort Huachuca provides the  
5 unique capability to execute electronic warfare  
6 developmental testing without the interference due to  
7 geography. It sits in a bowl with mountains, basically on  
8 all sides. It also benefits from an ideal climate, 320  
9 flying days per year. It's federally protected airspace,  
10 which further minimizes the interference. So, it allows  
11 some very aggressive offensive EW jamming tests to really  
12 flush out the systems in a developmental test program, other  
13 army tests and evaluation commands.

14         So, Army Electronic Proving Grounds simply cannot  
15 provide the same kind of environment. So, that would lead  
16 us without the ability to fully test our capabilities and  
17 train our soldiers and pilots how to use them and counter  
18 our adversaries.

19         And what I'm getting at is the cuts that are proposed  
20 for the Electronic Proving Ground, it's going to have some  
21 long-term consequences if the staff at EPG is significantly  
22 reduced. Normally, when we want to look at an organization  
23 and make some cuts because we think there's too much  
24 overhead involved.

25         I think the appropriate thing to do is look at the



1 entire organization at EPG. The folks that they're looking  
2 at eliminating are the ones that are actually doing the  
3 work, the developmental testing work that is key to making  
4 sure our electronic warfare systems are going to work  
5 effectively in a real-world environment.

6 So, if confirmed, would you be willing to work with me  
7 on trying to prevent these unnecessary cuts at EPG?

8 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, if confirmed, absolutely look  
9 forward to working with you on this. We have an incredible  
10 opportunity to take the lessons learned from modern warfare,  
11 especially as we see what's happening in Ukraine, in Israel  
12 right now, where electronic warfare is a critical factor on  
13 the battlefield in ensuring our systems can operate in that  
14 environment.

15 Senator Kelly: Yeah, I would say, especially in the  
16 Western Pacific, I mean, we're seeing it in Ukraine right  
17 now, but especially in the Western Pacific, in a conflict  
18 with China who controls and can operate in a contested EW  
19 environment. It's going to be the key to air superiority,  
20 and it's going to be the key to success in fighting our  
21 adversaries. So, thank you for your willingness to do that.

22 Mr. Chairman, I'm going to submit a question for the  
23 record for Mr. Hurst here. It has to do with training our  
24 healthcare workforce within the military and how we can help  
25 them transition to careers once they leave their service.

1 Thank you.

2 [The information referred to follows:]

3 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Senator Schmitt: Without objection.

2 Senator King.

3 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I ask  
4 my question, I want to comment, the four best behaved  
5 children in the world are sitting right here. I'm so  
6 impressed. Whose children are they?

7 Mr. Hurst: Those are mine, Senator.

8 Senator King: You just earned my vote.

9 [Laughter.]

10 Mr. Husrt: I thank my wife.

11 Senator King: Mr. Ingraham, what I want to touch on is  
12 when we're purchasing platforms, when we're doing  
13 acquisition, we should be acquiring the IP along with the  
14 platform so that we can repair, so that we can maintain, it  
15 would accelerate the maintenance process. For example, I  
16 believe every ship should have a 3D printer. Every depot  
17 should have a 3D printer, every hanger, so that we cannot --  
18 you know the famous saying, "For want of a nail, the shoe  
19 was lost," and on from there.

20 So, I hope that that can be something that will be part  
21 of our routine acquisition process. We not only buy the  
22 product, but we buy the rights to repair that product and  
23 the IP for how to build those parts, which we can now do. I  
24 hope that's something that's you'll follow-up on.

25 Mr. Ingraham: Senator, absolutely. The right to

1 repair is critical in any one of our platforms. And so,  
2 ensuring we get the right data rights and the right in  
3 intellectual property up front in the contracts is actually  
4 critical.

5 And I absolutely agree that additive manufacturing 3D  
6 printers is critical as we think about forward, especially  
7 at the tip of the spear in the front line. I can tell you  
8 in a past role inside the Department of Defense, I purchased  
9 the first 3D metal printer and implemented it at the Naval  
10 Surface Warfare Dahlgren, where we were able to print a  
11 number of capabilities that we used very extensively in  
12 Afghanistan and Iraq.

13 Senator King: So, that it's not only a savings of  
14 money for the taxpayer, but perhaps more importantly, it's a  
15 savings of time and could be a savings of lives in  
16 particular situations. So, I commend you for that and hope  
17 that that gospel of right to repair and purchasing the IP  
18 will be consistent throughout the acquisition process at the  
19 Pentagon. Spread the word, please. Thank you.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Senator King.

22 I'd like to thank our witnesses for your testimony here  
23 today. And for information, the members' questions for the  
24 record will be due to the committee within two business days  
25 of the conclusion of this hearing. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:08 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]