

**Opening Statement of U.S. Senator Jack Reed  
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee**

**Room SDG-50  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Thursday, July 30, 2015**

**To receive testimony on the nomination of  
Admiral John M. Richardson  
to be Chief of Naval Operations.  
(As Prepared for Delivery)**

I want to join Senator McCain in welcoming Admiral Richardson to this confirmation hearing regarding his nomination to be the Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Richardson, welcome to the Armed Services Committee and thank you for your many years of exemplary service to our nation, and for your willingness to continue to serve. We are mindful that families also serve, so we should extend our thanks to your family for their dedication and support, which is so critical to any official's success.

Admiral Richardson has an exemplary record of service and is highly qualified for the position to which he has been nominated. He has most recently been serving as the Director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and has had numerous senior positions of responsibility before that.

Admiral Richardson, as Chief of Naval Operations, you will be tasked with recruiting and retaining a quality force, and ensuring that force contains the necessary structure and readiness levels to meet our nation's current challenges and the posture to respond to tomorrow's crises and contingencies. The Navy has enough problems affording to buy all the ships it needs, but now you will also be facing the recapitalization of the ballistic missile submarine fleet that was built in the 1980s. Adding to that series of mountains is the mountain of additional fiscal challenge due to sequestration. If you are confirmed, Admiral Richardson, you will face these daunting challenges. I intend to support your confirmation and look forward to early action by the Senate to confirm you.

Thank you again for your service to our nation.