Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Emil Michael
Nominee to be Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering

Duties and Qualifications

Section 133a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) shall be appointed from civilian life from among persons who have an extensive technology, science, or engineering background and experience with managing complex or advanced technological programs.

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering?

The Under Secretary serves as the Principal Staff Assistant (PSA) and advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for all matters regarding the Department of Defense (DoD) Research and Engineering (R&E) Enterprise, technology development, technology transition, developmental prototyping, experimentation, and developmental testing activities and programs, and, most importantly, unifying defense R&E efforts across DoD.

From many of the duties assigned, chief among them is that the Under Secretary serves as the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of DoD with the mission of advancing technological innovation. The CTO provides technical leadership and oversight, establishes strategic priorities, issues guidance, and acts as the senior responsible official for the supervision of all programs and activities pertaining to the R&E Enterprise across DoD. The USD(R&E) also establishes policies and strategic technical guidance to ensure that all programs receive an objective viewpoint as to their technical feasibility and the tradeoffs among different technology approaches and leads defense research, engineering, developmental prototyping and experimentation, developmental test and evaluation, and microelectronics activities across DoD Components.

What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform these duties?

If confirmed, I would bring my decades of leadership across many different technology businesses and management of large and complex organizations, including my time Chief Business Officer at Uber, to ensure that the United States has the most technologically sophisticated and affordable arsenal of defense systems in the history of the world. I have been involved with over fifty different technology companies during my career and have learned the hard tradeoffs that have to be made to bring new ideas to fruition based on advancements in state-of-the-art innovations.

Conflicts of Interest

Federal ethics laws, to include 18 U.S.C. §208, prohibit government employees from participating in matters where they, or certain family members or organizations with which they have certain relationships, have a financial interest.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, including investments, business ties, family relationships, or other connections that could be perceived as influencing your decision making?

Yes, I agree.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, that if a conflict of interest arises, you will recuse yourself from participating in any relevant decisions regarding that specific matter?

I will comply with all recusal requirements under 18 U.S.C. § 208.

Do you commit, without qualification, if confirmed, to decision-making on the merits and exclusively in the public interest, without regard to private gain or personal benefit?

Yes, I agree.

Relationships

Please describe your understanding of the relationships and areas of collaboration between the USD(R&E) and the following officials and organizations:

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment

Prior to 2017, the duties and roles of the USD(R&E) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) were combined under the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics. While the present organizational structure charges two Under Secretaries with important missions independent of one another, the two offices must work closely together to ensure that DoD is able to rapidly insert the latest technologies into the next generation of weapons systems while ensuring that the projects are feasible, and the timelines and costs are predictable. If confirmed, I am committed to working in close collaboration with USD(A&S) to ensure that DoD makes real progress on all of its priorities.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

The USD(R&E) supports policy development in multiple spheres, including on matters of missile defense; for joint research and engineering programs with our Allies; for program

and technology protection plans in consultation with the Defense Technology Security Administration (DTSA); and in the development of the roadmaps for the critical technology areas, which need to be informed by various policy and strategy directorates. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to ensure we maintain and expand collaborative relationships across the two organizations.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Critical to the Department's success in developing technology superiority is building a culture of innovation in its people. The USD(R&E) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) must work closely together to make sure that DoD makes the best use of its hiring flexibilities and is recruiting a workforce that is ready to implement the Secretary's priorities of restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding our military, and reestablishing deterrence. In particular, the recruitment and retention of research and engineering talent in a world of increasing private sector options is a key priority I intend to work on closely with the USD (P&R).

The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation

Under the USD(R&E) resides the responsibility for developmental test oversight and policy, as well as the Test Resource Management Center which oversees the test capability development and test capacity of the entire test and evaluation (T&E) ecosystem of the Department. If confirmed, I would work with the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation to enhance the effectiveness, suitability, and survivability of DoD systems. I would communicate frequently with the Director to discuss strategic T&E policy and review the status of current collaboration efforts. There is a lot that can be done in collaboration between the USD(R&E) and the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation to smooth and speed up the transition of weapon systems from developmental testing to operational testing. If confirmed, I would look forward to strengthening our T&E ecosystem alongside the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation.

The Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency

The USD(R&E) works closely through the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (USD(I&S)) to communicate the intelligence needs of the DoD R&E Enterprise to the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and also to the wider Intelligence Community, in order to make informed technology development decisions. As our adversaries have greater capability to intrude in our systems and in our work product, collaboration with the USD (I&S) is vital to the retaining the value we are creating across the R&E Enterprise.

The Director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is a Defense Agency under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(R&E). I am committed to ensuring that DAPRA, one of the crown jewels of DoD, continues to have the support it needs to conduct the breakthrough research, but that it also is focused on missions that most align with a rapidly changing world and is a beacon of excellence within the R&E Enterprise.

The Director of the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU)

The Director, DIU, is now a PSA to the Secretary and has a mandate for accelerating the adoption of commercial technology throughout the DoD. Until recently, the Director, DIU, directly reported to the USD(R&E). As such, I understand the working relationships between the DIU and the Office of the USD(R&E) are collaborative and, if confirmed, I would strive to continue this constructive collaboration to ensure that relevant technologies, whether commercially or government derived, can successfully transition from research and development, to prototype, to fielded into the hands of our warfighters.

The Director of the Office of Strategic Capital (OSC)

The Director of the Office of Strategic Capital (OSC) is a direct report to the USD(R&E). OSC develops and implements strategies and partnerships to accelerate and scale private investment in critical technologies needed for national security with new tools for the Department through Federal financing. While there are currently many Federal financing programs across the Government, before the OSC none existed to address technology investment shortfall issues at DoD. OSC works within the Federal Government to ensure that DoD leverages U.S. advantages in private capital markets to achieve national security priorities. I will do everything possible to support and, potentially expand, the mission of the Director of OSC.

The Director of the Defense Microelectronics Activity

The Defense Microelectronics Activity (DMEA) is critical, organizational element of the Department providing reliable microelectronics products and solutions to DoD. The DMEA was part of OUSD(R&E) until January 2021, when DMEA was transferred and placed under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(A&S). If confirmed, I will work closely with the USD(A&S) and the Director of the DMEA to co-develop and expand assurance techniques for microelectronics and to collaboratively ensure DMEA's role in the Department's organic manufacturing industrial base is aligned to both sustainment and research objectives.

The Administrator of the Defense Technical Information Center

The Administrator of the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) is a direct report to the USD(R&E). On behalf of OUSD(R&E), the DTIC administers science and technology (S&T) policy, captures the results of research into a central repository of knowledge, and delivers that knowledge to the community. DTIC reaches across Military Service and Defense Agency silos to connect people and activities. On behalf of the OUSD(R&E), DTIC operates information analysis centers that manage research and development contracts supporting research and analysis services to DoD. If confirmed, would look for opportunities to increase the value that DTIC could provide to DoD.

The Director of the Test Resource Management Center

The Director of the Test Resource Management Center (TRMC) is a direct report to the USD(R&E). The TRMC is charged with oversight of the Department's testing and range facilities, as well as certifying the sufficiency of DoD Components' budgeted investments in test infrastructure, maintenance, and upgrades. If confirmed, I look forward to providing direction to ensure the TRMC is able to accomplish its departmental roles and responsibilities supporting DoD needs.

The Director of the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office

Trusted artificial intelligence and autonomy (TAI&A) is one of the DoD Critical Technology Areas under the OUSD(R&E). Therefore, the Director of the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office (CDAO) and the USD(R&E) should work closely on areas of overlapping interest, to ensure deconfliction of efforts, and to take mutually reinforcing positions.

The Director of the Defense Digital Service

The Defense Digital Service (DDS), now under the Director, CDAO, offers a software engineering and a product management approach to solving problems across DoD. If confirmed, I would seek to leverage the expertise the DDS offers to further advance the modernization priorities of Department.

The Director of the Space Development Agency

The Director of the Space Development Agency (SDA) is developing critical space architecture that will support missile defense capabilities; therefore, the SDA and the OUSD(R&E) should have a collaborative relationship that ensures interoperability between all phases of the missile defense kill chain.

The Director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA)

The Director of MDA is a direct report to the USD(R&E). Areas of collaboration include a heavy emphasis on advanced capabilities to include directed energy, hypersonic defense and various special access programs. Additionally, the USD(R&E) chairs the Missile Defense Executive Board.

The Service Acquisition Executives

Service Acquisition Executives lead development, procurement, and fielding of materiel solutions for the Military Services. The USD(R&E), through their relationships with the Joint Staff and Combatant Commands, can align technology development to joint requirements to inform S&T and prototyping investments. Portfolio leads from the Critical Technology Areas also work across the Military Services with the Service Acquisition Executives to support transition of critical technologies from the respective roadmaps. The USD(R&E) must continue to work closely with the Military Services to integrate roadmaps and leverage prototyping and experimentation investments for joint applications.

The Service Science and Technology Executives

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Science & Technology, who reports directly to the USD(R&E), chairs the S&T Executive Committee composed of the S&T Executives from the Military Services and Defense Agencies with equity in the S&T Enterprise. This committee provides a forum to unify and coordinate S&T strategies, budgets, and execution decisions. In coordination with the Military Services' and Defense Agencies' S&T Executives via the S&T Executive Committee, the OUSD(R&E) oversees, coordinates, and aligns investments to maximize the Department's resources, avoid unnecessary duplication, and create the future capabilities required by the Nation.

The Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC)

The USD(R&E) serves as a Statutory Advisor to the JROC. I understand that in this role the USD(R&E) advises the Joint Staff on the status of technology development to shape requirements development (e.g., capability portfolio management review) and to conduct mission analysis to provide oversight to relevant working groups. Additionally, the Joint Staff and the USD(R&E) partner to operationalize the Joint Warfighting Concept through multi-year experimentation campaigns. If confirmed, I would seek to continue these important avenues of collaboration and ensure that the viewpoint of the CTO on the feasibility of requirements is represented.

The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States

It is my understanding that the USD(R&E) provides expert technical subject matter expertise, especially on critical technology areas, in support of the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), who represents the Secretary before the Committee in the review of foreign investments for national security considerations. If confirmed, I will ensure my organization continues to provide this objective and timely expert technical advice associated with each foreign investment related to U.S. critical technology, defense critical infrastructure, and sensitive data, and the corresponding risk to national security and U.S. technological advantage.

The Defense Science Board (DSB)

The Defense Science Board (DSB) is a Federal Advisory Committee tasked with providing independent advice and recommendations on matters supporting the DoD's scientific and technical enterprise. The DSB is supported through the OUSD(R&E), which helps ensure compliance with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, "the Sunshine Act," and DoD policies and procedures. The DSB focuses on specific tasks in response to the USD(R&E) or from the Secretary of Defense and is an extremely valuable source of independent advice for the Department. If confirmed I will fully support DSB as it engages its important mission.

The Defense Innovation Board

The Defense Innovation Board (DIB), previously under OUSD(R&E) and now under DIU, brings together experts from outside the government, offering fresh perspectives and innovative ideas that the DoD can draw upon. The DIB advises on projects and initiatives related to defense innovation and also shares information and best practices to promote a more innovative culture within DoD.

Federally Funded Research and Development Centers

The USD(R&E) is charged with the oversight of the Department's 10 Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs). I understand the FFRDCs were established to assist DoD in meeting long-term strategic needs in engineering, research and development, or in other analytic areas essential to the Department's mission and operations. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the FFRDCs fully address the most important challenges that DoD faces.

The Commanding General of Army Combat Capabilities Development Command

The Army Combat Capabilities Development Command executes the majority of the Army's S&T enterprise investments, along with the Army Corps of Engineers Research and Development Center and the Space and Missile Defense Command Technical Center.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Commanding General, Army Combat Capabilities Development Command to collaborate on DoD S&T priorities with the Army.

The Chief of Naval Research

The Chief of Naval Research is responsible for ensuring the Navy's S&T enterprise investments are unified and coordinated to meet Navy's capabilities needed for the future. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Research to collaborate on DoD S&T priorities with the Navy.

The Commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory

The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) is the primary scientific research and development center for the Department of the Air Force and the Space Force. AFRL plays an integral role in leading the discovery, development, and integration of affordable warfighting technologies for our air, space, and cyberspace force. AFRL is an integral partner with OUSD(R&E) to ensure our military remains at the cutting edge of weapons technology. If confirmed I will work closely with the Commander of the AFRL to collaborate DoD S&T with Air Force S&T.

The Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

The USD(R&E) works with the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy on topics of interest to both the White House and across the Federal Government. Also, it is my understanding that the Office of Science and Technology Policy establishes committees to work on issues including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and workforce development, research security, and other matters as they arise. These committees are composed of experts from each of the Federal science funding agencies and work on reports and memoranda that advance the Administration's scientific agenda.

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering

What is your vision for the Office of the USD(R&E)?

It is critical that the Department innovates more quickly and with more efficiency. If confirmed, I would look for opportunities to implement, as appropriate, best practices that I've used in the private sector to drive innovation at speed and with efficiency throughout the organization. I would seek to impact a culture that can be overly risk averse. To benefit from an innovative culture, it must be understood that there is knowledge to be gained from experimental failures and without such failures, the pace of

innovation will necessarily be slow. I am committed to working with Congress to develop newer, higher quality and more efficient systems for the warfighter.

If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you make regarding changes to the organization, management, and resourcing of the Office of the USD(R&E) so as better to execute its duties and responsibilities?

If confirmed, one of my first actions will be to review the organization for how to foster an innovative culture that can move with speed while being efficient. I will work to ensure that our priorities are aligned with the Administration's policies and that our resources have a clear strategy against which to operate. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the OUSD(R&E)'s budget including its plans for the FY 2026 budget submission.

Are there other assets, including staffing and resources that you believe the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering requires to optimize mission accomplishment?

A thorough review of the staffing and resources within the OUSD(R&E) is critical to ensure that the Department is aligned with the President's and Secretary Hegseth's national security priorities. Before taking decisive actions, I will want to thoroughly examine the organization's programs, budget, and authorities and solicit feedback from key stakeholders. Undoubtedly, the OUSD(R&E) can play a role in speeding up, reducing costs, and improving the performance of the innovation ecosystem. As the percentage of any system that is reliant on both new software and hardware technologies has increased dramatically in the last decade, the need for the OUSD(R&E) to be an effective voice on feasibility, cost and fostering an innovation ecosystem is more critical than ever.

What is your understanding of the role of the USD(R&E) in advising and supporting acquisition programs for the Department of Defense?

As someone from the business community, I believe I can bring a unique perspective. My understanding is that research and engineering can play a key role in improving the acquisition outcomes, particularly by providing unbiased and deep expertise to identify technical risk early on in acquisition programs. Recognizing that we are in a competitive race, I would work with my counterparts to evaluate whether the value provided by each step in the process is sufficient to justify burden on innovators and the cost and schedule impacts. If confirmed, I would work closely with my counterparts to bring best practices from the private sector and to be relentlessly clear-eyed about the tradeoffs that must be made between schedule, capability and cost.

If confirmed, how would you ensure effective collaboration between your office, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, and the Services?

These are critical relationships and in this age of great power competition the stakes are too high to get it wrong. The statute that established the USD(R&E) gave it the mission of advancing technology and innovation, including by supervising technology transition. Helping to overcome the so-called valley of death is a core statutory responsibility that I am enthusiastic about. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these relationships are functioning effectively to drive the innovation ecosystem.

Major Challenges and Priorities

What are the major challenges that confront the next USD(R&E), in your view?

The USD(R&E) plays a key role in revitalizing the defense industrial base, creating competition, and building a modern and lethal arsenal. As the Department's CTO, the USD(R&E) also helps to secure our supply chains, prevent intellectual property theft and cyber-intrusions, and develop President Trump's Golden Dome air and missile defense system to protect our homeland. Further, the culture of the R&E Enterprise must evolve to one that delivers the best capabilities at a pace that exceeds that of our adversaries. This must include the reduction of duplicative efforts and re-focusing on key priorities that are clear and understandable to everyone at DoD.

If confirmed, what would you do to address each of these challenges?

The challenges of revitalizing the industrial base and building a modern and lethal arsenal requires matching the appropriate DoD investment or development mechanism to each opportunity. For example, the OSC seeks to address industrial base and supply chain issues through long-term investments in companies with tremendous up-side for DoD, while development and transition tools like prototyping, experimentation and the Accelerate the Procurement and Fielding of Innovative Technologies (APFIT) program address the challenge of building modern and lethal capabilities while increasing the size of the defense industrial base, creating competition and opportunities for new and non-traditional defense contractors. Keystone initiatives like the President's Golden Dome air and missile defense system will require the systems engineers across the Department to collaborate on architecture and software, in collaboration with the development and acquisition communities.

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish that you believe should be addressed by the USD(R&E)? What recommendations would you make regarding those priorities?

Capitalizing on technology leaps that arise once in a generation is the key broad priority for the USD(R&E). For example, learning how to leverage and safely deploy artificial intelligence capabilities to the maximum extent while leveraging private sector innovation and investments; ensuring the military fully benefits from the revolution of quantum computing; and pioneering novel and advanced domestically developed materials. If confirmed, I would assess the Department's efforts in these pivotal technologies to ensure the Department is able to take the lead over our near-peer adversaries.

In your view, what technologies do you consider the highest priorities for DOD to develop, based on their ability to contribute to the Department's mission in the short- and longer-terms?

If confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on the Global Research Watch Programs and on the most recent horizon scans across the U.S. and adversaries' technology landscapes to inform my priorities. The USD(R&E) must balance addressing short-term capability gaps with the need to invest in long-term strategies to meet the missions of the future, while being fully informed on the threat perspective and armed with the most relevant intelligence reports. Without being read-in at the necessary levels, it is difficult to forecast technology priorities beyond highlighting artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, quantum computing, directed energy, and hypersonic capabilities.

If confirmed, how would you connect your technology strategies and plans with the efforts of other military services and combatant commands?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the OUSD(R&E)'s technology strategies and fostering strong working relationships with the Military Services and the Combatant Commands. The relationship between the OUSD(R&E) and the Military Services and the Combatant Commands is critical to ensuring that the United States maintains a technological advantage over our adversaries and the warfighter has the capabilities needed to deter and defeat our adversaries. The combatant commands are the first place to understand the needs of the warfighter and with the enormous R&E capabilities that the Services have, these relationships are key to the success of the USD(R&E).

What scientific fields do you consider the most important for shaping and developing new technologies, concepts, and capabilities that will be the most relevant for future warfighting and defense missions?

Prior to being briefed on the important work already occurring in the S&T and engineering portfolios, I am reticent to name a single scientific field as the most critical. As the nominee to be the DoD CTO, if confirmed, I would be the champion for every

critical field across the S&T and engineering enterprise that is contributing to rebuilding our military and reestablishing deterrence. However, across any of these fields, innovation is the most relevant concept that will contribute contributing to our future warfighting and defense missions. Central to technological innovation is speed. Innovation does not stop at the invention of new weapons and defense systems but also in improving them reducing their cost over time. Innovation requires leadership that is willing to take bets on things that do not work but has the discipline to stop them with haste. Finally, innovation means focusing investments in S&T to the concepts that are aligned with our Peace through Strength Mission. Time and speed must be driving factors in all our decisions, particularly as a sophisticated near-peer, China, accelerates their research and engineering at a faster rate due to lower labor costs and shortcuts through intellectual property theft.

In your view, are there any technology areas that should be added or removed from the current list of DOD's modernization priorities? If so, please explain your rationale.

It is my understanding that there are currently 14 Critical Technology Areas identified by the Department as vital to maintaining U.S. national security. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the work being done in all 14 Critical Technology Areas and ensuring the Department's resources are focused on our most critical challenges with the right amount of weight behind each area.

Based on your experience, are there enduring technology areas that might not be considered emerging (for example, energetic materials, or corrosion control) that the Department should remain focused on as categories outside of the modernization priorities? How should the Department make investment decisions to balance the needs between these emerging and enduring technology areas?

The DoD should constantly review and update its modernization priorities to ensure it is responsive to the needs of the warfighter and is addressing critical threats, capabilities, and opportunities. For example, outside of the 14 Critical Technology Areas, the OUSD(R&E) also focuses on research in munitions; energetics; alternative positioning, navigation, and timing capabilities; counter-unmanned systems; nuclear modernization; autonomous systems; and advanced materials. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department allocates its resources in an appropriate manner to address the threats from our adversaries.

Chief Technology Officer

If confirmed as USD(R&E), you would serve as the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of the Department of Defense. What do you perceive to be the current role of the CTO of the Department of Defense?

From my understanding, the CTO serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for all matters regarding advancing technological innovation. The CTO provides technical leadership and oversight, establishes strategic priorities, issues guidance, and acts as the senior responsible official for the supervision of all programs and activities pertaining to the R&E Enterprise across DoD.

Based on your experience, how do you think this differs from a CTO role in industry? Are there aspects that you think should be integrated into the USD(R&E) role? Please provide details on your response.

I have been fortunate enough to have formative experiences in the private sector throughout my career. I am a firm believer that bringing best practices from the private sector into the Department is a top priority because, if adopted effectively, they will streamline operation and allocate resources more appropriately. In industry, the CTO role does not advise multiple separate entities and is focused on one entity and commonly has all the engineers developing a product in their organization. The CTO of DoD advises many different organizations with different systems, therefore broad expertise and an understanding of how others build things is most critical. The key practice that is relevant is that the CTO in private industry makes hard tradeoffs consistently. The choice of feasibility, capability and speed is a constant decision framework. I believe that the CTO of DoD could bring that practice to DoD, and it would drive important culture change.

Should the role of the CTO be modified in other ways to enhance its effectiveness?

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing how the role of CTO is currently supporting the mission of advancing technology and innovation. I look forward to advising Secretary Hegseth on how the CTO role can be modified, if necessary, to best support the mission.

Given the growing role of information technology and software in military capabilities, what do you understand to be the differences in roles, responsibilities, and authorities between the DOD Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the CTO?

The DoD CIO and the DoD CTO must work closely together. The CIO ensures that the department has a solid information technology (IT) foundation upon which the CTO can build, while the CTO's insights help the CIO anticipate future challenges and strategic opportunities. While the two offices focus on seemingly separate efforts, their collaboration is key as they are essential for ensuring that DoD can effectively leverage

the power of information technology and maintain its technological edge given the increasing value of data and of systems that can interoperate.

Do you believe the position of USD(R&E) currently possesses adequate authorities to exercise the responsibilities of a CTO? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, one of my first actions will be to review the organization. I will work to ensure that our priorities are aligned with the Administration's policies and that we have the appropriate resources and tools to appropriately address our critical threats. OUSD(R&E) authorities will be a part of that review. I look forward to working with the Committee to ensure that the Department has the appropriate tools to carry out our mission.

Investment in Science and Technology

If confirmed, what metrics would you use to assess the suitability of the portfolio of investments made under the defense science and technology (S&T) program, to include the magnitude and diversity of the investments?

The Department's S&T investments can and should align to key operational challenges and opportunities faced by the Joint Force, and if confirmed, I will assess the DoD S&T portfolios to see if the research areas are well mapped to address capability shortfalls and stay ahead of the threats. Such challenges and opportunities are driven both by top-level strategic guidance as well as by direct interaction and collaboration with the Military Services, the Combatant Commands, Allies, and partners. Science and technology often takes a longer view than other investments, addressing future military needs through deliberate, targeted investment. Since there is uncertainty about which technologies could provide revolutionary capabilities in the future, robust S&T investments must ensure our Nation is able to exploit emerging technology areas, informing new asymmetric warfighting capabilities and reduce risk of technological surprise by potential adversaries. An important metric would be comparison in capability to our adversaries, but also the degree to which DoD has advanced new technologies that don't exist elsewhere and doing so at a predictable cost and timeframe.

In your view, should the Secretary of Defense's Defense Planning Guidance include guidance for the science and technology programs of the Military Departments? Please explain your answer.

Yes, maintaining robust investment in S&T is vital to our Nation's future security. S&T can be used to rapidly mature advanced technology in response to operational need, but it is also the foundation of future military concepts. Thus, there should be guidance in the Defense Planning Guidance to ensure minimum levels of funding for that security.

Do you believe that the Defense Planning Guidance should include guidance on minimum investment levels for the research and testing infrastructure of the Military Departments? Please explain your answer.

As noted by Secretary Hegseth, it is President Trump's priority to achieve peace through strength. If confirmed, I understand it would be my role to make recommendations to the Secretary on the budgets for research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E), and that would include participating in the development of the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) that influences the budgets of the Military Departments. I will work with the requisite stakeholders to ensure the Military Department budgets are sufficient to accomplish RDT&E missions for the entire DoD.

What role should the USD(R&E) play in the detailed development and coordination of Military Department and Defense Agency/Field Activity S&T investment strategies, programs, and budgets, in your view?

The USD(R&E) should play a critical role in the development and coordination of S&T investment strategies, programs, and budgets for the Military Departments and the Defense Agency/Field Activities maximizing return on investments for joint applications.

What role should the USD(R&E) play in the development and coordination of Military Department research and test infrastructure investment strategies, programs, and budgets, in your view?

The USD(R&E) is responsible for ensuring the priorities of the President's National Security Strategy and Secretary of Defense's National Defense Strategy are reflected in RDT&E strategies, programs, and budgets. In general, the USD(R&E) focuses on cross-cutting investments that go beyond a single Military Department. The USD(R&E) serves as an accelerator to use innovative contracting vehicles and relationships with private industry and academia to develop, test, and field new capabilities in coordination with the Combatant Commanders.

What S&T areas, if any, do you consider underfunded by the DOD?

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the OUSD(R&E)'s budget, including its plans for the FY 2026 budget submission, to understand what, if any, S&T areas may need additional funding.

In your judgment, will the lack of funding in these areas affect the Department's ability to meet the threats of the future? Please explain your answer.

In general, the Department should seek to fully fund critical S&T areas to meet current and future threats. As mentioned above, if, confirmed I would look forward to reviewing

the Department's S&T budget plans to understand what, if any, S&T areas may need additional resources.

If confirmed, what factors would you consider in assessing whether the Department's S&T investment strategy strikes the appropriate balance between funding innovative, disruptive technologies and addressing near-term operational needs and military requirements?

Balancing near-term and long-term investments is a persistent, multifaceted challenge that demands addressing immediate warfighting needs while also maintaining long term technical superiority over adversaries. Key to this task is aligning investments in critical technology and capabilities with warfighter needs that are derived from our national strategy. This involves balancing multiple lines of effort, including modernizing existing systems, developing new emerging technologies, and ensuring a robust, vibrant national security industrial base. Short term investments should include transitioning impactful capability to operational use, while long term investments should involve higher risk, high reward activities that have the potential for revolutionary leaps in capability. An important enabler for striking this balance between incremental vs. disruptive progress is continual risk assessment and adaptive budget processes to keep pace with ever-evolving adversaries. I would coordinate closely with the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, and Services to ensure our investments are aligned to Warfighter needs. The Department must also possess transparent, effective accounting systems to track spending, such as the Transition Tracking Action Group.

The Department's S&T activities form the basis of new technology components and system capabilities. High fidelity models and wargaming can provide insight into the effectiveness of innovative disruptive technologies vs. near-term systems to meet operational needs. A collective informed decision can then be made to balance near-term needs vs the potential of a disruptive capability. In collaboration with other elements of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, especially the USD(A&S), I will support forming new pathways to get the most promising and relevant component technologies into integrating prototypes for rapid transition to operating forces while ensuring our developmental technologies always have an eye toward the next fight and the next challenge.

If confirmed, how would you ensure the Department's leadership is aware of successful efforts resulting from investments in science and technology programs and organizations in supporting defense missions?

If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to ensure the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other senior leaders are made aware of successful efforts resulting from S&T

investments, including by promoting their participation in engagements such as R&E's experimentation program. Additionally, I will communicate success stories up the chain of command and throughout the senior leadership.

In your view, what are the critical legacy technology areas where DOD has needs that may not be met by industry or academia and we should be maintaining steady, sustaining investments to ensure warfighting capability?

This is an important question which is probably best answered after I have been fully informed. In my preparation for this hearing, I have seen multiple examples of "dual use" technologies where the Department benefits from the economies of scale and performance improvement pace that is driven by demanding civilian commercial competition. The Critical Technology Areas have a mix of suppliers ranging from existing companies with established commercial markets to new companies with yet-to-be established emerging commercial markets. Maintaining investments to ensure competitive opportunities to those with established commercial markets has the desired effect of increasing resilience if a portion of them have U.S.-based supply chains. Likewise, maintaining steady investments to ensure competitive opportunities to those with emerging commercial markets has the desired effect of increasing diversity by adding multiple reliable suppliers for DoD to access.

Basic Research

Given the continuing nature of basic research and the broad implications and applications of discovery-focused and innovation-focused sciences, what criteria would you use to measure the success of DOD basic research programs and investments, if confirmed?

Basic research programs have played a unique and critical role in exploring new scientific directions for revolutionary technology development in support of the DoD mission and continue to do so. For example, in the near-term, success includes generating a talented workforce that is able to continue developing solutions for DoD, and the emergence of technologies into production by DoD and the private sector. The velocity of basic research maturing into usable technology is a key measure that allows for more long-term investment because of the confidence it builds in the choices that lead to the start of new investments. Longer-term success involves technologies taken from the laboratories into programs of record and dual-use technologies acquired by the Department. New and well-integrated approaches to evaluate the potential impact of discovery-focused basic research programs are needed to facilitate the planning of transition efforts, accelerate innovation, but also better assess the DoD-relevant scientific innovations versus those of our pacing competitors.

What concerns do you have, if any, about current levels of funding for Department of Defense basic research? How would you plan to address those concerns, if confirmed?

DoD basic research programs have benefitted from consistent budgetary support over the last decade, but near-peer competitors, especially China, are increasing their investments in basic research more quickly than DoD while experiencing lower labor costs and benefitting from intellectual property theft. It is vital to have strong support for basic research in the Department, because otherwise there is a significant risk that China and other nations will be in the lead in fields critical to DoD in the future, but it is incumbent on the R&E Enterprise to be efficient in using its budget to produce more than it has in the past.

Research Security and Program Protection Planning

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD's basic and applied research programs are executed in a manner consistent with National Security Decision Directive 189 and National Security Presidential Memorandum 33?

It is my understanding that National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 189 has been executed through previous USD(R&E) memoranda and broadly defines fundamental research at the Department as basic and applied research performed at universities, or basic research performed at defense labs and in industry. National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM) 33 directs review of all fundamental research projects to protect against foreign government interference and exploitation. If confirmed, I would continue to carry out these NSPMs unless modified or superseded by new directives promulgated by the President.

What efforts would you make, if confirmed, to enable the Department to benefit from open innovation in fundamental research, while protecting such research from undue foreign interference?

Fundamental research is critical to the Department in generating the science behind the next great warfighter capabilities. If confirmed, I would seek to balance open inquiry against the Department's research security needs as currently described in NSPM 33 and other relevant statues and directives.

If confirmed, what are your ideas for working with the academic community to limit undue foreign influence on university research programs, and limit unwanted foreign access to research expertise and results, without creating an undue burden on the open and collaborative nature of the research community?

I believe that the academic community, DoD, and the science funding agencies should work collaboratively to solve the problem of undue foreign influence on university research programs in an efficient and implementable way. If confirmed, I will work with the Office of Science and Technology Policy and other interested science funding agencies to implement consistent policies and procedures for our research community. Consistent training, awareness, and education to and by the institutions are critical to limit undue foreign influence in university research programs that supports the Department.

In your view, what steps could the USD(R&E) put in place to ensure that regulations pertaining to Department-funded university research are consistently applied and monitored by DOD and ensuring they are well understood by the university community?

If confirmed, I would prioritize promulgating and implementing clear, consistent policies across the Department with exceptions made speedily if proven to be needed. Finally, I believe the Department should work with university leaders to clearly explain what the Department wants and also to learn from them where burdens can be reduced without reducing effectiveness.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to protect U.S. research and intellectual property from undue foreign influence, without unjustly singling out researchers from certain nations?

Intellectual property generated by industry and the results of U.S. funded research is the bedrock of our economic and national security. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department's due diligence reviews for small businesses and university research are conducted based on a clear set of objective criteria in alignment with statute and this Administration's priorities.

In your opinion, are there ways to better coordinate and streamline the research security guidance to universities and the Program Protection Planning carried out by the government? For example, are there data sharing systems to improve visibility for academia, industry and the government?

A holistic approach to research security and program protection, to include improving and streamlining information sharing, is vital to rapidly and securely fielding capabilities to our warfighters. If confirmed, I will pursue digital modernization opportunities to improve visibility of relevant information such as adversaries' problematic behavior, potential mitigating actions, and security posture best practices while reducing administrative burden to academia, industry, and program offices.

Expanding the DOD Academic Research Base

If confirmed, what steps would you take increase DOD engagement with universities participating in the Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research?

My understanding is that the Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research works to increase research capacity at universities that have not worked with the Department much in the past. If confirmed, I would make sure that the Department is engaging with these universities as much as possible to help researchers there better align with DoD research priorities and better understand how to work with the Department. The Department's research efforts can only benefit from having more universities to work with. Based on what I know about the program, I would intend to be very supportive.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to increase the funding for and quality of fundamental research at defense laboratories?

If confirmed, I will ensure a balanced research portfolio to include looking for opportunities for collaboration with academia and industry, increasing scientific integrity, and actively engaging with our Allies.

Science and Technology Activities of Civilian Agencies

Do you believe that Department of Defense and other national security missions benefit from robust funding for scientific research in civilian agencies? Please explain your answer.

I believe that national security in general, and the Department specifically, absolutely benefit from robust funding at civilian science agencies. At the same time, DoD should not ignore private sector innovations either. The DoD must apply a broad sense of non-duplication.

If confirmed, how would you work with other federal agencies and the Office of Science and Technology Policy to improve coordination of research activities and harmonization of research funding decisions?

It is critical that Federal research agencies coordinate their research activities. There are limited resources for research and the pace of technological development is constantly increasing. Coordination is key to making sure we develop new technologies efficiently and quickly. This coordination should happen across the Federal agencies, from the leadership level on strategic issues down to the programmatic level on more tactical, project-by-project level decisions. If confirmed, I would want to have regular meetings

with my counterparts at other Federal agencies and ensure that those that work within the OUSD(R&E) does the same. Within the OUSD(R&E), technology transition portfolio managers throughout the innovation ecosystem can work to harmonize funding for critical technologies across their research and acquisition lifespan.

Technology Strategy

What weaknesses, if any, do perceive in the current defense S&T strategic planning process?

Each Military Service carries out its S&T planning to address its specific needs. This is necessary, but there is a risk that needs that are common across the Military Services are not adequately prioritized by each Military Service. The OUSD(R&E) is crucial to ensuring that the individual Military Service plans take in to account Joint needs and new technology opportunities. The oversight of Military Service S&T planning and fostering of collaboration between the Military Services on technology development in areas of common interest is a critical role that the OUSD(R&E) must fulfill to ensure a strategy that results in a robust, truly Joint S&T Enterprise. Further, cooperation with the various S&T organizations could help to limit 'requirements creep' and any capability falling through the cracks of various organizations.

What do you believe to be the key attributes of a good technology strategic plan and how could these attributes be carried through effectively to the DOD programming and budgeting purposes?

Very little technology development has an impact in a vacuum. Good strategic planning must incorporate the many stakeholders involved in research, qualification, acquisition, fielding, and sustainment. Strategic planning for groundbreaking technology must also identify connections to Military Services and program offices to influence requirements rather than just respond to them. Moreover, a good technology strategic plan should balance technology push for global competitiveness with requirements pull, both addressing future warfighter needs. The plan should include near-, mid-, and far-term capability goals and technology objectives, and integrated across the department to ensure meaningful and cost-efficient progress. Lastly, an effective technology strategic plan should provide clear development metrics, identify where defense fits into the larger commercial investments in dual use technologies, and define a timeline for technology insertion into the acquisition process.

If confirmed, how would you ensure reliance on technology strategic plans as foundational elements of the budget, planning, and programming process?

The OUSD(R&E) maintains senior officials for technology areas deemed critical to national defense, who are responsible for ensuring that science, technology, engineering, prototyping, and demonstration investments are effectively leveraged and fully aligned with DoD's priorities. If confirmed, I will assess if the Critical Technology Areas are well aligned with the National Defense Strategy. I will ensure that senior officials, as well as other staff within the OUSD(R&E), collaborate closely with the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), and the Military Services to ensure that technology strategic plans are foundational elements of the budget, planning, and programming process. There, however, must be an acknowledgement that the validity of any strategic plan has been reduced in time. As such, these plans must have elements that can be revisited in shorter timeframes if the situation demands.

Technology Transition

How would you assess the effectiveness of current transition processes and systems?

The current technology transition process is challenged. The primary challenge is the availability of funding in the year of execution or lack of clarity that the capability is on the path to becoming a funded program. As technologies mature and are proven funding must be available to support transition. The current PPBE process does not provide flexibility for accelerated fielding and DoD must improve the visibility in gives to the suppliers on their chances of succeeding within DoD.

In your view, what challenges exist in technology transition in DOD?

The pace of change in technology development and on the battlefield has become much faster than the pace of change of requirements. The Department is too slow to develop the demand signal for a new capability to be relevant. If confirmed, I will attempt to help make the OUSD(R&E) a driver of future requirements to ensure we are investing in and fielding the right things at the right time.

What would you do, if confirmed, to address each of these challenges?

The USD(R&E) can leverage the Accelerate the Procurement and Fielding of Innovative Technologies (APFIT) program to address the problem of the mismatch between the pace of budgeting and the pace of development; the APFIT program is successfully enabling innovative companies to bridge funding timelines and get technology into production up to two years sooner. The Department can also continue improve the relevance of its technology development cycles through leveraging multi-service collaboration and operational experimentation with the Combatant Commands.

As compared to other technologies, do you believe that a different methodology is needed to transition software capabilities from research to operational use?

I was excited to see that Secretary Hegseth recently signed a memorandum recognizing that today's reality is "software-defined warfare" and directing all DoD Components to broadly modernize their approach to software acquisition. I look forward to bringing my experience from the private sector to support the Secretary in driving software modernization across the research and engineering portfolio.

What are your views as to whether DOD's approach to and processes for funding technology transition must be changed? What sort of changes, if any, would you recommend, if confirmed?

An important challenge is the traditional budget process for emerging solutions. This has historically posed significant challenges for small businesses and other innovative businesses that desire to work with DoD. The APFIT program provides a model which has been successful at bridging the gap. Flexibility in funding is critical to accelerate prototyping, transition, and fielding, but also DoD must endeavor to make decisions faster and communicate more clearly to ensure that indecision fatigue does not set in with aspiring vendors.

Commercial Technologies

What steps would you take to make appropriate use of commercial technologies for the benefit of DOD institutions and the warfighter?

We must utilize the strength and innovation of the U.S. commercial sector, particularly dual-use technology, to bolster DoD and improve Warfighter lethality. In my role as USD(R&E), if confirmed, I will advocate for the Department to fully leverage U.S. industry. There are programs in OUSD(R&E), such as Technology Readiness Experimentation (T-REX), that inform DIU procurement of commercial technologies for the Warfighter.

What do you believe to be the most significant barriers to Program Executive Offices or prime contractor adoption and transition of new technologies, including but not limited to commercial technologies, into acquisition programs? What should be done to address such barriers, in your view?

It is my understanding that Program Executive Offices face many barriers when adopting and transitioning new technologies into acquisition programs. Such barriers include the misalignment of technology development throughout the community with acquisition requirements, a lack of program plans that include insertion points, and a lack of funding

to incorporate technology transitions. If confirmed, I will work with USD(A&S) and DIU to remove these barriers, so technology adoption and transition is easier for the Program Executive Offices.

In your view, would there be benefit to the Department's establishment of a comparative testing program for domestic commercial technologies—perhaps a program modeled on the successful Foreign Comparative Testing program?

The Foreign Comparative Testing (FCT) program has done an excellent job at determining procurement alternatives for current and emerging requirements, capitalizing on partner and ally investments and expertise in many warfighting capability areas. FCT authorities that allow follow-on procurement without additional competition could be applied to current defense innovation acceleration efforts to enable similar benefits domestically.

What do you see as the test and evaluation needs for non-developmental or commercial items to ensure they can still meet the technical requirements and human factors needs of environments often more complex and demanding than commercial settings?

It is vital that the Department continues to integrate existing commercial and non-developmental capabilities to meet technical requirements in efforts to achieve cost effectiveness, resilience, and drive rapid innovation. However, commercial technologies often are not designed, in the first instance, to operate under contested, high-stress, and complex environments – including adversary electronic warfare and cyber capabilities. In my role as USD(R&E), if confirmed, I will ensure that technology readiness experimentation evaluates commercial technologies to measure readiness for the modern battlefield. I look forward to working with industry, particularly nontraditional defense contractors, to implement these processes. I believe that many commercial technology providers will work with DoD to adapt their technologies for dual use if the process is simplified and streamlined.

Systems Engineering and Prototyping

Does the Department of Defense have sufficient systems engineering expertise in its current workforce and contractor base?

Without having experience with this workforce and contractor base, I would want to fully assess the capabilities of these groups, if confirmed. Regardless, in order to address emerging challenges, we need to continuously enhance this expertise. The OUSD(R&E) leads a number of initiatives to upskill the systems engineering workforce. These efforts focus on equipping individuals with the necessary skills to perform critical acquisition

tasks, such as systems engineering, digital engineering, production, quality assurance, manufacturing, information technology, agile software development, and testing. It is also important that we enable new contractors to compete for DoD business so that we have a more robust ecosystem.

What changes, if any, do you believe should be made in the Department's systems engineering organizations and practices?

Engineering serves as the foundation for technology development, transition, acquisition, and sustainment. Studies of DoD acquisition outcomes have shown that implementing rigorous foundational engineering activities early in the capability life cycle leads to improved cost, schedule, and performance results. To achieve this, the Department must prioritize modular open systems architecture, digital engineering, and workforce training to deliver capabilities to the warfighter. By doing so, it can effectively identify, mitigate, and prevent potential challenges in development, manufacturing, deployment, and sustainment.

What role does prototyping play in efforts to increase the success of the Department's acquisition efforts?

The development of advanced prototypes, coupled with rigorous experimentation in representative environments, has rapidly fielded warfighting capability. When coupled with appropriate, timely resource planning, prototyping and experimentation has enabled the Department to bring operational capabilities to the force two to five years faster than traditional acquisition pathways. If confirmed as the USD(R&E), I will explore seek to exploit the full potential of this approach with the Military Services and acquisition leaders.

If confirmed, how would you work to increase the breadth and scope of systems engineering projects and prototyping efforts undertaken by the Department and its contractor base?

Mission engineering processes provide the approach for systems analysis across complex operational environments. This approach defines breadth and scope of system engineering projects and prototyping efforts to fill critical warfighting gaps. These gaps are shared across the development community, academia, and industry for common understanding. This approach aligns a common threat, mission thread, and systems-of-systems architectures across the community. Shared development results in comprehensive solutions for acquisition.

What are your views on the maturity and availability of digital twin or model-based systems engineering tools in the commercial space, and their potential applicability for DOD needs. Please explain your answer.

Industry has seen notable progress in digital twin and model-based systems engineering tools. These technologies demonstrate the ability to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance system availability. DoD must overcome barriers to scalability, complexity, security, and interoperability to fully realize the benefits of these tools. To this end, the OUSD(R&E) must continue to improve policy, guidance, and digital standards consistent with commercial best practices in this field.

Venture Capital and private equity

In your view, what role should venture capital and private equity firms play in the Department's investments in developing technologies, including in the Small Business Innovation Research program?

Venture capital (VC) and private equity investment in defense technologies could play an even bigger role in the revitalization of the defense industrial base, particularly for small businesses seeking to gain entry and provide innovative solutions to meet evolving warfighter demands, delivering breakthrough, war-winning capabilities. Programs such as Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) provide opportunities for small businesses – many of which are VC-backed – to be a part of these revitalization efforts. If confirmed, I would pursue opportunities within the Defense SBIR/STTR programs that allows for small businesses to leverage critical defense VC investment, increasing the ability to rapidly develop and field critical capabilities at scale.

What advantages and disadvantages do you see in the use of venture capital and private equity strategies?

Through programs at the Office of Strategic Capital, DoD leverages one of the U.S. strengths by leveraging the investment acumen and skillsets of successful and experienced fund managers who act as a force multiplier to surface, foster, and develop new critical technologies, components, and production processes vital to national and economic security. Such strategies can involve risk, particularly given investments in emerging technology companies, but funds can mitigate that risk by taking a portfolio approach while programs, such as SBIR/STTR, provide opportunities to fuse Government research and development funding with private capital from defense venture and private equity firms. Technology transition programs focused on bridging innovative solutions developed through the SBIR/STTR programs can benefit from contracting with venture-backed small businesses. With the Department's strategic efforts to acquire dual-

use technologies in lieu of home-grown solutions, firms backed by private VC demonstrate strong commercial demand, which provides a level of both cost and technical risk mitigation when the Government is assessing investment of finite sources towards a particular solution or capability.

One disadvantage of VC and private equity strategies is that investors may need to see returns on a shorter timeframe, which may not be conducive for certain research projects. However, with clearer communication and changes that enable funding in earlier intervals, we could improve the effectiveness.

Should the Department decide to use venture capital and private equity strategies, what steps do you believe should be taken to ensure that Department funds are invested in technologies and companies that properly reflect national defense priorities, avoid the potential for conflicts of interest by industry partners, and to ensure that the Department's investments are not diluted?

The DoD National Defense Science and Technology Strategy specifies 14 Critical Technology Areas vital to national security. Within that framework and consistent with statute, the OSC Investment Strategy further identifies and prioritizes integrated strategies for maintaining and enhancing competitive advantage. Investments can fail to reap synergies that might otherwise be available through coordination, both within OSC's portfolio and with the adjacent efforts of interagency partners and the private sector.

A foundational component of OSC's activities with VC and private equity funds is the requirement for participating funds to invest a significant portion of its portfolio in the DoD Critical Technology Areas. OSC, though its own authorities and interagency partnerships, embraces these target areas for investment and implements programs aligned with DoD needs. Furthermore, OSC's initial program invest in the funds (rather than competing with industry as a direct venture or private equity investor), which alleviates inherent conflicts. OSC's mandate could be further extended to back-up financing to even further extend its purview.

How can the Department leverage other innovative financing strategies, like loans, loan guarantees, equity or reinsurance to help support the technology development strategies of the Department?

Capital markets are a major source of strength for the United States in the global competition for technological advantage. DoD can leverage the advantage provided by capital markets through financial instruments like loans and loan guarantees, equity, and re-insurance, all of which have been used as part of proven strategies to attract and scale private capital in support of national security priorities, including the development of critical technologies, their components, and the ability to grow and scale production.

When paired with DoD's expertise with promising critical technologies, supply chains, and broader industrial base requirements, these tools enable efficient investments that deliver unprecedented value to DoD and the taxpayer.

What other strategies do you intend to employ, if confirmed, to ensure that the nation's most innovative companies work on the Department's research and engineering programs?

OSC works with the private sector to strengthen technological advantages in the United States. By aligning Government and private sector incentives around technology areas vital to national security and economic security, DoD uses the power of the market and economic competition to attract the capital required for critical technology investment through organizations like OSC and programming like the SBIR/STTR Strategic Funding Increase.

Beneficial Ownership Concerns

What concerns do you have regarding foreign beneficial ownership of DOD contractors and subcontractors, especially those with venture capital or private equity funding?

My expectation is that all DoD contractors and subcontractors, regardless of ownership and regardless of funding mechanism, work towards DoD's goals and objectives. Malign foreign influence, intellectual property escape, and poor cybersecurity are concerning issues that are also applicable to the entire defense industrial base.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure continuous monitoring and assessment of the beneficial ownership of DOD contractors and subcontractors?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the USD(A&S) to ensure appropriate reporting of DoD contractor ownership and any subcontractors that would risk our supply chain.

Operational Energy and Energy Resilience

The Department defines operational energy as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. Today, DOD energy requirements are projected to increase geometrically due to technological advances in weapons systems and distributed operations over longer operating distances.

If confirmed, how would you lead the Department in harnessing innovations in operational energy in order to reduce contested logistics vulnerabilities for warfighters?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the USD(A&S), the Joint Staff, the Military Services, the Combatant Commands, the S&T community, and industry to pursue opportunities to reduce the military's energy logistics vulnerabilities both domestically and abroad. I will support resilient, secure, and innovative energy solutions, including advanced power generation and storage, microgrids, and nuclear power, as well as advances to reduce operational energy needs to increase military capabilities while reducing logistics burdens associated with providing energy to the warfighter.

International Research Cooperation

In your view, how should increased globalization of defense technology affect the Department of Defense's research and technology development and investment strategy?

If confirmed, I would seek to increase opportunities for industry to provide commercial solutions to the hardest defense problems. I would also engage with our Allies and partners to leverage their technological capabilities to complement and protect the Department's strategic investments in technology maturation and capability delivery. The OUSD(R&E) investment strategy should focus on reestablishing deterrence and maintaining strategic advantage while preventing critical technologies from falling into the hands of global adversaries or competitors.

What do you perceive to be the most significant obstacles to effective international research and development cooperation, and, if confirmed, how would you address those obstacles?

From my perspective, the most significant obstacles to effective international research and development cooperation are conflicting priorities. If confirmed, I would increase awareness across the DoD Components' international science and technology activities to promote transparency and accountability across the Department as well as ensuring the DoD Research and Engineering Enterprise pursues international collaboration, both government-to-government and with industry, in support of the Secretary's strategic priorities and to deliver capabilities at the speed of relevance. Finally, I intend to work with the DoD Components to identify funding that will be used specifically to pursue international cooperation with Allies and partners that bring an equitable investment to collaborative activities.

How would increased international technology cooperation and procurement of foreign goods and services affect our domestic defense industrial base, in your opinion?

If confirmed, I would work with the DoD Components to consider acquisition and sustainment pathways early in the co-development process. This will allow the U.S. defense industrial base to leverage the industrial bases of trusted Allies and partners to meet DoD procurement and production demands, potentially leading to a more competitive and innovative ecosystem.

What best practices should govern Departmental monitoring and assessment of the research capabilities of our global partners and competitors, and of the global commercial sector?

While other parts of DoD and the U.S. national security community writ large provide critical functions of monitoring and assessing the research capabilities of global partners and competitors, if confirmed, I would also leverage the opportunities and insights offered by regionally embedded personnel exchanges and in-country stationed DoD technical experts. These individuals provide valuable insights into allied and partner capabilities and investments, which in turn can inform best practices for pursuing collaborative activities with those countries. Another example is expanding joint experimentations and demonstrations. If confirmed, I will encourage more opportunities to include allied and partner participation in DoD experimentations and demonstrations to assess and evaluate their capabilities.

Test and Evaluation

What are your views on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Department of Defense's developmental test and evaluation activities?

Thorough testing in an operationally realistic environment is critical for informing acquisition decision making, identifying programmatic opportunities to apply additional engineering and risk mitigation resources, and ensuring operational readiness. I believe that DoD still has work to do to align its test activities with the new Adaptive Acquisition Framework and to ensure that test and evaluation processes are properly structured to assess software-intensive systems, new capabilities such as artificial intelligence-enabled autonomous systems, and to leverage new systems engineering approaches such as digital engineering.

What modifications would you recommend to the test and evaluation processes in the Department to more efficiently and quickly develop and deliver operationally effective and suitable technologies to the warfighter?

If confirmed, I look forward to improving the Department's use of digital ecosystems across the capability lifecycle from science and technology work through systems delivery and sustainment while providing data-driven decision making through a

campaign of learning, all focused on delivering operationally effective and suitable technologies to the warfighter.

What role do you believe OSD should play in developmental test and what type of organizational structure and staffing is required to effectuate this role?

Per section 133a of title 10, U.S. Code, the USD(R&E) is responsible for establishing policies on and supervising developmental testing activities and programs across the Department. If confirmed, I will review the existing organizational structure and staffing and from that determine what, if any, changes are needed to maintain an effective developmental test and evaluation role across the Department.

What are your views with respect to the Test Resources Management Center and in particular with respect to ensuring the services budget appropriately funding for Major Range Test Facility Bases such as the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Test Site?

I support the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2025, which gives the TRMC additional authorities to oversee the support infrastructure on the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, which encompasses the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Test Site. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Director of the TRMC and the Secretary of the Army to ensure these facilities are adequately maintained and upgraded consistent with Secretary Hegseth's priorities.

Do you believe the Office of the Test Resource Management Center (TRMC) has sufficient resources and authority to manage the test and evaluation infrastructure of the Department? If not, what changes would you recommend?

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the TRMC to understand its current resources and authorities and to determine if those are sufficient to manage the T&E infrastructure for the Department.

Do you believe the Department has sufficient test and evaluation infrastructure to support the needs of both research and development and acquisition? If not, how would you ensure DOD has sufficient test and evaluation infrastructure?

As I understand it, the Department faces big challenges in meeting the projected demand for testing new technologies like hypersonic weapons. If confirmed, I will need to verify that the Department's current and planned T&E infrastructure will be sufficient to meet projected demand. I would work with the requisite stakeholders to determine sufficiency of current T&E infrastructure and make any necessary adjustments.

Small Business Issues

The Department of Defense has the largest Small Business Innovation and Research Program (SBIR) government wide. In 2025, the SBIR program will be up for renewal.

What recommendations do you have to improve the Department's use of the Small Business Innovation Research programs in order to develop and field new, advanced capabilities?

The SBIR/STTR programs are important tools to grow the small business ecosystem that is critical to Department's modernization efforts. These programs have delivered numerous technologies and capabilities that have been adopted by warfighters and commercial entities. It is essential that the programs are executed in a manner that prioritizes Departmental needs, ensures merit-based selection procedures, and decreases barriers to entry to ensure a robust defense industrial base. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the SBIR and STTR programs to build on existing improvement initiatives and ensuring robust delivery of critical capabilities expeditiously and consistent with the demands of the Department.

If confirmed, how would you work to ensure that the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is an integral part of DOD modernization strategies and activities?

The DoD invests over $3B each fiscal year through the SBIR/STTR programs in innovative technologies to meet critical needs of the warfighter and grow and modernize the defense industrial base while ensuring responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress, the Service Acquisition Executives, and all other parties of interest to ensure that the SBIR/STTR programs are fulfilling their missions of developing and delivering innovation, consistent with the Department's modernization strategies and Critical Technology Areas.

If confirmed, how might you modify the SBIR program to improve the transition of S&T capabilities into acquisition programs?

Many game-changing technologies adopted by DoD came from small innovative businesses. The SBIR and STTR programs are important tools to support the small business ecosystem. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing these programs and driving efficiencies. I will work closely with Congress and with my counterpart, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, to make appropriate improvements to the SBIR program.

If confirmed, how might you modify the SBIR program to improve its ability to attract new entrants into the defense ecosystem, such as small startup companies, as participants?

Small business concerns, including nontraditional defense contractors, may require additional assistance to understand Government-specific processes and procedures such as proposal submission requirements, pre-award activities, cybersecurity rules and practices, and foreign disclosure requirements. If confirmed, I would work with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and the Director of the DoD Office of Small Business Programs to review ways to increase opportunities to educate small business concerns, ensuring the Department is making a concentrated effort to educate small businesses on how to do business with DoD.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve DOD's consideration of intellectual property rights as an incentive for small business to engage with the Department?

Many game-changing technologies adopted by DoD came from small innovative businesses. The SBIR and STTR programs are important tools to support the small business ecosystem. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing these programs and working with my counterpart, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, on ways to improve how the Department incentivizes small business to engage with intellectual property rights.

What emphasis would you place, if confirmed, on participation by the acquisition community in setting research priorities for the SBIR program and in incorporating new technologies and methods into existing programs of record?

Many game-changing technologies adopted by DoD came from small innovative businesses. The SBIR program is an important tool to support the small business ecosystem. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this program and working with my counterpart, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, to involve the acquisition community in setting research priorities for the program and incorporating new technologies and methods into existing programs of record.

The 2022 reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation and Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) place several due diligence requirements on all participating agencies, required a certain number of "open topic" solicitations, and set minimum performance standards for experienced SBIR firms.

As Congress focuses on reauthorization of SBIR and STTR in 2025, in your view, are there authorities that could be expanded to incentivize the number of new entrants into the SBIR program?

The SBIR program is an important tool to support the small business ecosystem. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this program and exploring how the Department

can incentivize new entrants into the SBIR program and improve its effectiveness. Current authorities lack a clear definition of open topics, so I believe a clearer definition is needed to ensure consistency of open topic generation across the Department. Additionally, I would like to see the Department have a delegation of authority for setting threshold amounts for Sequential Phase II awards to more effectively take innovative solutions across the valley of death, scale production or operational testing, and reach program transition or commercialization.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve existing risk management processes to ensure intellectual property and technology do not end up with adversaries?

If confirmed, I will review the current policies and data captured by the Defense SBIR/STTR Program Office with regards to due diligence and explore how to work with different stakeholders to improve existing risk management to ensure intellectual property and technology do not end up in the hands of adversaries.

In what ways can the Department balance the desire for new entrants into the defense space with the need for veteran SBIR providers that have a successful track record for delivering needed technology solutions to the Department?

If confirmed, I will work with the Defense SBIR/STTR Program Office to review the current ratio of new entrants to existing awardees and commit to ensure that policies are in place to meet the needs of the Warfighter.

How can we better collect and align data on SBIR between the DOD components and that collected and presented by the Small Business Administration to ensure consistent analysis of outcomes?

If confirmed, I would explore opportunities to improve data collection.

Defense Laboratories

What is your overall assessment of the technical capabilities and quality of Defense laboratories relative to their peers at the Department of Energy, and in Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), industry, and academia—both foreign and domestic?

Defense laboratories and FFRDCs can play a critical role in national security by conducting specialized research and developing technologies not easily replicable elsewhere. Comparing them to other sectors, including the foreign sector, requires careful consideration of their distinct missions, strengths, and limitations.

In your view, are there specific or unique capabilities the defense laboratories provide the Department that industry would not be capable of providing?

The defense laboratories have world-class scientists and engineers capable of leading the development of technologies critical to the distinctive needs of the military fighting force. With quality scientists and engineers and unique laboratories and testing facilities, the defense laboratories are capable of tackling high risk technical challenges that may be in some cases beyond what industry and academia can achieve on their own. In addition, as leaders in technology development, the defense laboratories and test centers focus on the needs of the warfighter as their top priority.

What do you believe to be the most effective management and human resources approaches for personnel at these Defense laboratory facilities?

An innovative and empowered workforce requires a flexible and progressive human resources system. My understanding is that the Department's Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory (STRL) Personnel Demonstration Program (Lab Demo), managed by the OUSD(R&E), may meet this need. The OUSD(R&E) collaborates with the STRLs to leverage congressional workforce authorities and to develop new personnel flexibilities to enable them to recruit, retain and cultivate a quality and optimized DoD Laboratory workforce.

If confirmed, what specific steps, if any, would you take to improve the quality, technical capabilities, and mission performance of the Defense laboratories?

If confirmed, I would seek to review the defense laboratories and identify ways to improve quality, technical capability and mission performance across the enterprise.

Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs)

In your opinion, what role do the FFRDCs play in the defense research ecosystem? How would you characterize the value of such organizations to DOD?

It is my understanding that FFRDCs can be an important part of the DoD S&T ecosystem. At their best, FFRDCs can provide objective technical expertise, long-term vision, and a unique ability to bridge the gap between research and operational implementation.

If confirmed, what suggestions would you make to better utilize FFRDCs across the Department?

If confirmed, I will review the current policies and use of the FFRDCs to explore how the Department might more efficiently and effectively use the FFRDCs.

In your opinion, how do the UARCs differ in role and purpose from FFRDCs, defense labs, and defense contract research organizations?

UARCs are university-based research institutions focused on long-term research with broad national security implications. The FFRDCs are objective advisors that provide technical expertise and analysis to address specific complex challenges, the defense laboratories conduct research, development, and testing directly tied to the specific needs of the Military Services, and defense contract research organizations are private companies that primarily engage in research and development driven by commercial interests.

In your opinion looking across the full landscape of current UARCs, do you see any major technical discipline or research capability gaps that are not being currently addressed and would therefore benefit from a dedicated UARC? Are there any UARCs that in your opinion have outlived their useful purpose?

While I cannot currently make definitive pronouncements about specific UARCs outliving their purpose, if confirmed, I will review the current policies, UARC strategic alignment, and potential for adaptation.

How do the UARCs help with STEM and workforce development that supports DOD?

Given proper direction, UARCs can promote appropriate STEM education, workforce development, and knowledge transfer that directly benefit DoD.

If confirmed, what suggestions would you make to better utilize UARCs across the Department?

If confirmed, I will review the current policies and use of the UARCs to explore how the Department might more efficiently and effectively use them.

Workforce Issues

What is your perception of the particular workforce challenges confronting the DOD research enterprise?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the research enterprise's particular workforce challenge and finding ways to appropriately address those challenges.

How would you work with the personnel policy and management communities in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Military Departments to enhance the human resources flexibilities available to DOD labs, test ranges, and other research and engineering components of the DOD with a view to improving productivity, performance, and mission accomplishment?

It is my understanding that the OUSD(R&E) executes oversight of Lab Demo, the STRL personnel system. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to assess their needs to continue supporting their human capital requirements across the research enterprise.

How would you work with the DOD lab, test range, and other research and engineering components of the DOD to maximize utilization of human resources flexibilities currently in place or newly authorized?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about existing and potential human resource flexibilities relevant to these components.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to increase the recruiting and retention of scientists, engineers, software coders, and other technical positions across the Department's research enterprise?

Recruiting and retaining top scientists and engineers is a priority for the Department's research efforts. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about ways to increase the recruiting of key technical positions across the research enterprise.

Are there "health metrics" that the DOD is or could be using to help ensure that the DOD research enterprise workforce is adequately sized for all of the tasks assigned to it?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning about ways to analyze and appropriately size DoD research enterprise workforce to ensure that it is capable of carrying out the priorities of the President and the Secretary of Defense.

Are there additional workforce hiring or retention authorities that you would recommend to ensure the DOD research enterprise can attract and retain world-class scientists, engineers, and other technical professionals who are also highly sought after by industry?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about existing and potentially new hiring and retention authorities.

Space Issues

What is your understanding of the relationship between the Office of the USD(R&E) and the Space Force? How can the USD(R&E) best support space research and engineering, without duplicating functions properly assigned to the Space Force?

The Nation is at a tipping point of maintaining or losing its advantage in the space domain. Given limitations in vital technical skills and the flexibility the United States must maintain for expanded maneuvering in space, the OUSD(R&E) and the U.S. Space Force must work synergistically to meet the needs of the Commander, U.S. Space Command. This means investing in research efforts that lead to joint material and non-material solutions that can be supported by operators from any Military Service. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the OUSD(R&E) maintains a strong relationship with the U.S. Space Force.

Missile Defense Agency

If confirmed, what steps would you take to expedite the Missile Defense Agency's shift in focus to research and development?

My understanding is that MDA is prioritizing a greater focus on research and development with increased emphasis on nontraditional defense contractors. Specifically, MDA has stood-up an Advanced Capability Program Executive Office focused on rapidly developing critical missile defense technologies and capabilities.

If confirmed, I plan on reviewing the Department's approach to research and development, the utilization of prototyping, artificial intelligence in weapon system development, and expanding the technological advantages available to the Department and the warfighter. The Department must invest in critical technology areas vital to maintaining the U.S. national security and must develop and apply 21st century technologies and accelerate transitioning key technologies to the Military Services and the Combatant Commands to maintain the U.S. technology advantage.

What are your views with respect to divestiture of management responsibilities for existing weapon systems to the Military Departments?

If confirmed, I look forward to understanding how the MDA and the Military Departments work together on managing, operating and sustaining the Nation's missile defense capabilities.

Should specific missile defense systems be transferred to the Military Departments, in your view?

It is my understanding the Department has examined this issue over the last several Administrations. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding how the MDA and the Military Departments work together on managing, operating and sustaining the Nation's missile defense capabilities.

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

What adjustments would you expect to make, if confirmed, in the current style of DARPA research program management and investment strategy?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about DARPA's program management and investment strategy.

What is the appropriate relationship between DARPA and the Military Service S&T programs and laboratories?

It is my current understanding that DARPA executes its high-risk model because of the existence of the Military Service S&T organizations that diligently pursue more evolutionary requirements-driven research. While the Military Service laboratories frequently provide the "Plan A" baseline for program advancements, DARPA offers a disruptive "Plan B," that if successful, creates leap-ahead capabilities, accelerated timelines, and/or dramatically reduced costs. Sometimes DARPA proves that a new technological vector is possible but needs the Military Service laboratories to carry out the maturation and system application work necessary to scale the new technology. The key to making these handoffs effective is ensuring that the Military Services don't get stuck in "sunk cost" or "not invented here" thinking that would keep them from embracing DARPA-created disruption and that the Military Services have the budget flexibility to be able to quickly pivot to new DARPA-driven opportunities.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to improve DARPA's effectiveness in transitioning successful programs and innovations to the Services?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about DARPA's approach to, and record of, transition to the Services.

Office of Strategic Capital

What is your understanding of the role and function of the OSC?

It is my understanding that the OSC's role is to attract and scale private capital investment in critical technologies and critical components in the supply chain to support American national and economic security. The OSC leverages the inherent competitive advantage of U.S. capital markets through loans and loan guarantees to motivate capital

markets to support investments in areas that have been deemed critical by DoD. These priorities include production and component-level technologies critical to national security that adversaries are also currently prioritizing.

How does OSC play a role in accomplishing the Department's core missions and functions?

The United States is in a technological-economic competition with global adversaries such as China. That competition requires critical component and production-level inputs that feed into both defense and commercial capabilities that advance U.S. national security in this competition. I understand DoD has historically provided grants for research and development and contracts for capabilities; however, the OSC uses Federal credit to incentivize capital markets to make investments into those component and production-level critical technologies that are critical for present and future national security. These direct investments address a "missing middle" segment of the current market and increase competitiveness and resiliency in the U.S. industrial base and supply chains.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education

Do you agree with the premise that the Department of Defense specifically, and the nation as a whole, are facing a crisis in STEM education?

I agree that as a Nation, the United States generally lags in many areas compared to peer adversaries and other advanced economies in preparing our youth for postsecondary studies and careers in STEM. I believe that it is a national security imperative that our Nation, DoD, and U.S. industry and academia have enduring access to STEM talent.

In your view, how have deficiencies in STEM education affected the Department's ability to execute its missions?

The ability to meet the national security mission and to ensure that the Warfighters have the technologies they need to complete their mission depends on the research and technology innovations that the scientists and engineers conduct at DoD research laboratories, engineering centers, and other defense agencies, as well as in industry and academia. Deficiencies in STEM education will lead to a short supply of talented candidates equipped to support national security missions.

What role do you think the Department should play in supporting STEM education writ large, and also for service members and their dependents?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the role that the Department plays in STEM education. Clearly, the Department relies on talented scientists and engineers in the public and private sectors to carry out its mission.

What role should the Department play in other K-12 STEM educational activities?

If confirmed, I would want to understand the current role that the Department plays in K-12 STEM educational activities and make assessments guided by direction provided by the Secretary of Defense.

Manufacturing

What role should DOD play in investing in manufacturing innovation and ensuring that the resultant innovations are adopted into defense industry and the organic industrial base?

The DoD's role in manufacturing innovation dates back to the Second World War. Today, the United States faces a more diverse range of adversaries, notably China, where the government has for decades subsidized the growth of Chinese manufacturing. The United States must routinely and effectively deploy advanced manufacturing solutions if the domestic industrial base is to outpace that of China's in economic or armed conflict. My sense is that DoD should accelerate the development and adoption of advanced innovative technologies and processes for manufacturing and sustainment applications across the DoD enterprise.

What is your assessment of the performance and impacts of the DOD Manufacturing Technology program, including the Manufacturing Institutes? How are these institutes linked with the research and testing organizations in the Department?

I'm aware of the Manufacturing Technology Program, including the Manufacturing Innovation Institutes (MIIs) and I look forward to learning more, if confirmed. My understanding is that they both play a vital role in supporting innovation and the translation of technology breakthroughs into products. The public-private partnerships created by the MIIs provide an opportunity for the Department to leverage industry, academia, and State and local entities in a unique way that infuses the commercial and defense industrial bases with advanced manufacturing capabilities.

Microelectronics

If confirmed, specifically what steps would you take to ensure that the Department of Defense has assured access to the microelectronics it requires for defense systems?

I understand the OUSD(R&E) manages the Trusted and Assured Microelectronics Program (T&AM) program and the Microelectronics Commons Program. Initiatives under the T&AM program include accelerating access to the most advanced microelectronics technologies from domestic foundries, development of methods to verify and validate the integrity of microelectronics procured for DoD missions, and promoting technology refresh on DoD platforms through prototype and demonstrations of improvements in capabilities derived from incorporating advanced microelectronics into systems. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the on-going efforts within the OUSD(R&E) and with interagency partners to ensure that DoD has access to the microelectronics it requires for defense systems.

What is your assessment of the Department of Defense's microelectronics needs, to include both legacy, state-of-the-practice, and state-of-the-art?

It is my understanding the Department has the need for a variety of microelectronics including legacy, state-of-the-practice, and state-of-the-art. Some of these needs are specific to DoD, such as radiation-hardened microelectronics, and others are needs shared with the commercial sector. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the Department has access to the many types of microelectronics it requires for defense systems.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the nation has an effective microelectronics research enterprise?

Microelectronics has been designated as a Critical Technology Area under the OUSD(R&E) which constructs research and technology roadmaps with reference to microelectronics research activities at other agencies. I would consider assessments of the microelectronics workforce, infrastructure, and industrial base capabilities are conducted and updated to identify gaps and opportunities that can be addressed with DoD research initiatives.

What role should the Department of Defense play in supporting the commercial microelectronics industry?

The DoD relies on a robust microelectronics industrial base to manufacture the components needed to ensure that DoD systems deliver the capabilities needed by the warfighter. Research and development to accelerate DoD adoption of the most advanced microelectronics technologies supports the commercial microelectronics industry to the benefit of both defense and economic security. In addition, if confirmed I will support technology transfer of the results of DoD microelectronics research and development to the commercial electronics industry.

What role should the Department of Defense play in working with the interagency regarding domestic production of microelectronics?

The DoD and the rest of the U.G. Government, collectively, can help aggregate demand for microelectronics supported through onshore full lifecycle capabilities. Communication and collaboration across the U.S. Government is key to identifying critical needs that are shared across agencies and prioritizing domestic production. Interagency engagement is a key element of the OUSD(R&E)'s mandate to construct research and development roadmaps and perform industrial base assessments of capabilities. I look forward to engaging across the U.S. Government to ensure DoD's needs are met.

How can the Department of Defense reduce or mitigate its dependence on foreign sources of microelectronics for its systems and programs?

Onshoring of both advanced microelectronics manufacturing and the supply chains that support the industrial base will reduce DoD reliance on foreign sources. I look forward to learning more about the OUSD(R&E)'s efforts under the T&AM program to promote domestic manufacturing of advanced microelectronics.

Sexual Harassment

If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination, or other harassment from an employee of the Office of the USD(R&E) or an employee of an organization over which the USD(R&E) exercises authority, direction, and control?

I have always conducted myself with integrity and professionalism in every role I have held. I stand by my track record as a business leader who has successfully led major innovation efforts and worked with teams across industries and governments to solve complex problems. I will state categorically that sexual assault and harassment have no place in our country's military and Defense Department. If confirmed, I commit to upholding all appropriate standards of conduct in the Under Secretary's office and will also familiarize myself with the Department's resources in instances of alleged misconduct, including at the Office of the Inspector General, and any tools from human resources and victim advocates, where appropriate.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive

timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual

Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.