

OPENING STATEMENT OF ERIK RAVEN
Nominee for Under Secretary of the Navy

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of this Committee, it is my pleasure to appear before you this morning.

First, I wish to thank President Biden, Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks, and Secretary Del Toro. I am honored to receive the nomination to serve as the Under Secretary of the Navy, and I am grateful for this opportunity to continue to serve our Nation.

Senator Tester, thank you for those kind words of introduction, and all of your support. If confirmed to this position, I look forward to continuing our conversations on your plans to make Montana into a center of naval power.

Finally, to my wife, Ann, and our son, Edward: I could not be here without your support. We have tackled the ups and downs of my work in public service together, as a family. As I hope to embark on this new challenge, I am thankful for your willingness to take this journey with me.

Mr. Chairman, the partnership of the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps constitutes the world's greatest naval military force. Together, their exquisite capabilities deter aggression, deepen our ties with allies and partners, and – when necessary – respond to crises around the globe. We are a maritime nation, and the capabilities of our naval forces are directly related to the security, prosperity, and the future of the United States.

If confirmed to be Under Secretary of the Navy, I would be responsible for assisting the Secretary of the Navy in carrying out his duty to recruit, train, and equip the Navy and Marine Corps to meet the security challenges of our era. To carry out these tasks, first and foremost I would be an advocate for the Department of the Navy – especially for the 620,000 Sailors and Marines and the 220,000 civilians who serve side-by-side today.

I believe that people must be the top priority for the Department of the Navy. This means recruiting the right talent for the challenges that lay ahead. It means growing new generations of leaders to secure and instill excellence at all levels. And it means ensuring fair treatment for all who serve.

I also believe that modernization of the Navy and Marine Corps is a strategic imperative. I wish to leverage my 15 years of experience on the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to maximize the power of every dollar that Congress provides. This means identifying the capabilities that are needed, setting a plan for acquiring them, and working with partners in industry to deliver them efficiently. The need to modernize applies not only to major platforms and breakthrough technologies like hypersonic missiles and artificial intelligence. It also applies to the facilities and infrastructure that generate readiness for Navy and Marine Corps forces.

I appreciate the hard work and leadership of this Committee across these many issues. You have worked to provide the Department of the Navy with the direction and tools to address their challenges, and have pushed the Department to show results. If confirmed, I will work with this Committee in partnership to achieve what is needed,

Mr. Chairman, I place great importance on partnerships. I view the position of Under Secretary of the Navy as a means to build key partnerships across many groups. Service members and civilians; the Department and industry; bases and communities; and of course, across the joint force.

This brings me back to where I began: the Navy and Marine Corps, together, constitute the world's greatest naval force. I would be honored to help lead the Department of the Navy to continue this history of excellence.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to appear before the Committee, and I look forward to your questions.