

**Opening Statement of Dr. Maurice Todd,
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of War (Readiness)**

Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, it is an honor and privilege to appear before you as the President's nominee for the Assistant Secretary of War for Readiness.

I want to thank the President for this opportunity. I am honored by the President's nomination and his trust. I am grateful for the time many of you have spent with me in recent weeks and thankful for the Committee's attention to my nomination. I also thank Secretary Hegseth and Under Secretary Tata for their support.

In contemplating the duties that the Assistant Secretary of War for Readiness would entail, should I be confirmed, I recalled President George Washington's words in his First Annual Address to Congress in 1790:

“To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.”

Now, more than 200 years later, these words continue to ring true, capturing President Trump's directive to achieve peace through strength. Further, as Secretary Hegseth and the Department work to restore the warrior ethos through a refocus on lethality, meritocracy, and accountability, if confirmed for this position, I will be laser-focused on ensuring that the Total Force is ready to deter, and if called upon, to prevail against the most dangerous threats to American interests.

To that end, if confirmed, I will dedicate my full attention to the following responsibilities:

- I will assess the readiness of the Total Force to execute the Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance, inform Department strategic planning and resourcing, and support congressional reporting requirements;
- I will help enhance readiness data analytics capabilities to provide the President and the Secretary with decision advantage critical to global operations;
- I will align military training and exercise investments with our national priorities to effectively build greater lethality and execute all domain warfare;
- I will protect our warfighters and readiness by promoting the highest safety and occupational health standards.

Working collaboratively across the Department, a focus on these efforts will reinvigorate our warfighting capabilities and competitive advantages to ensure we can achieve strategic objectives across threats and time horizons.

If confirmed, I look forward to bringing over 40 years of experience in international security affairs focused on the defense of our country and the safety of the American people. As a former Army Field Artillery Officer, Army Aviator, Foreign Area Officer, Planner, Intelligence Officer, Strategist, and veteran of the First Gulf War; to a wide range of senior civilian positions, spanning all Geographic Combatant

Commands; I intimately understand the many dimensions of our nation's readiness, the importance of deterring our enemies, and the preparation required to prevail in conflict. I plan to bring this extensive experience, commitment, and passion to the role of Assistant Secretary of War for Readiness. Inspired by the honorable service of our Service Members and civilians, I will apply my full devotion as a public servant of the American people. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your questions.