

STATEMENT OF DERRICK M. ANDERSON
TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW
INTENSITY CONFLICT

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished Members of the Armed Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the Assistant Secretary of War for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. It's an exceptional personal honor to be considered for this role.

I'd like to begin by expressing my deep gratitude for the trust and confidence that President Trump has placed in me to once again serve our great Nation. I'd also like to express my gratitude to Vice President Vance, Secretary of War Hegseth, and Under Secretary Colby for their support and confidence.

I have very much appreciated my engagements with you and your staffs over the last weeks, and if confirmed, I look forward to deepening this relationship. Specifically, to Senator Cotton, a fellow member of "The Old Guard," thank you for the years of mentorship—I'm sincerely blessed to have your support and truly appreciate the introduction.

To my friends and family who have joined me here today, to include those who were unable to make it but supported me throughout my life and career—thank you. To my Mom and Grandma, I cannot thank you enough for the love, support, and inspiration that you have given me to allow me the opportunities I have today. I don't think that any of us could've predicted some 40-years ago, as we drove across the hills of West Virginia to Virginia, that we would be sitting here today. To my fellow Green Beret and Grandfather, thank you for pushing me at every juncture in my career—De Oppresso Liber. And most importantly, to my fiancé Maggie who is sitting behind me—an accomplished attorney and Army reservist in her own right—you have sacrificed so much for me to pursue my dreams. You continue to be my rock and best friend—thank you sweetheart.

Lastly, I want to thank the men and women of the United States military, past and present, whose courage and dedication inspire all of us every day.

My commitment to this role is rooted in my family's long lineage of military service. My Father served in the Army as an MP and my stepbrother in Afghanistan as a U.S. Marine. Two of my uncles served as a U.S. Marines and two of my great-uncles

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served as Army infantrymen in Vietnam—including my Uncle Blub, who earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

9/11 changed the trajectory of my life. I joined ROTC at Virginia Tech and became the first person in my family to earn a college degree. As an Infantry officer, I earned my Ranger tab and immediately deployed to Iraq for 15-months as part of “the Surge.” Following my time at the 3rd Infantry Regiment “The Old Guard,” where I led over 150 funerals in Arlington National Cemetery, I earned my Green Beret—leading two Special Forces ODAs and two Companies as an XO over the course of five deployments, including Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, and Afghanistan. Following my time on active duty, I earned a law degree from Georgetown University, clerked for two federal judges, and worked at one of the nation’s top law firms—all while serving in the National Guard.

If confirmed, I will be the Secretary of War’s principal civilian advisor for special operations and low-intensity conflict matters. I believe my background makes me qualified because I understand from various points of view, what the special operations community requires to be successful. It also helps that many of my colleagues I grew up with in the SOF community continue to serve. While I remain accountable to the President, Secretary, and Congress, my SOF brothers and sisters have my number—they will also 100% hold me accountable.

Terrorists and nefarious actors did not wake up on January 21st and say, “America is now focused on XYZ, so we’ll leave them alone.” This is why the Special Operations Enterprise must be flexible, agile, and resource cognizant. While we are no longer at war in the traditional sense in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, we must build our irregular warfare capabilities to deter, prevent, and be prepared for the next conflict. As such, SOCOM and ASW SO/LIC have a unique task—to ensure that we find, fix, and finish those entities who choose to target the United States so that we as a country can focus on our long-term threats.

Lastly, I recognize the importance of working closely with Congress. It is the honor of my life to be given the opportunity to earn your trust and continue my service to our great nation. I look forward to responding to your questions and discussing how we can work together to support the service members, civilians,

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and families who make up the United States Special Operations community.
Thank you.