

By kemp on Apr 23, 2025

Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, members of the Senate Armed Services Committee,  
thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Department of Defense  
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

I would like to thank President Trump, the Administration, Secretary Hegseth and his team for their support of my nomination to serve as the next Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy.

I must also thank and acknowledge my family.

My father, retired Navy Commander Michael Sr, my mother Joanne, and my sister Marisa.

My three daughters, Mhairi, Hannah and Iona. Their energy and laughter give my life color. Their successes fill me with immeasurable pride.

And I want to thank my wife, Sarah. I would not be anywhere, much less here, without her.

My entire adult life has been spent in the defense sector and in support of the effort to address the critical needs of our industrial base. From my oath to the Nation as a Tulane NROTC midshipman in August 1991 through ten years of active-duty service as a Naval Cryptologic officer, I had the privilege of serving with dedicated military professionals of every rank and branch. And over the past two decades I have been fortunate enough to work with the defense industrial base from the primes down into the supply chain while tackling myriad business issues.

At this critical time, I see the scale of challenges facing our military while competing with a near peer pacing us in many ways. In my view of the U.S. Defense Industrial Base, we face *constraints in crucial and exquisite capabilities, delivered in uncomfortably limited quantities over long timelines, while experiencing delivery delays and increasing costs*. There are simply not enough weapons or platforms. And our readiness is inadequate.

These are national level challenges that undermine our lethality and security.

Senators, I want this role because I want America to win. I want to contribute to America's future victories. And I want to take part in overcoming these challenges and forging a more

resilient, innovative, and responsive version of the industrial machine that has underpinned our national security since World War II.

This role is critical to Secretary Hegseth's commitment to "Rebuild the Military" by "Revitalizing the defense industrial base".

If confirmed, I will execute the role with three guiding principles:

Prioritization. Productivity. And Production.

First, **Prioritization**: We must focus on the urgent needs of warfighters today, while positioning for the challenges of tomorrow. There are immediate problems in lethality, lower tier supply chains & readiness. And there is the need for long-term transformation flowing from increased private capital, invigorated domestic manufacturing, and secure access to vital materials and minerals.

There is an abundance of analysis on our industrial problems. And, thankfully, an equally abundant set of proposed solutions. All of which outstrip our cash and capabilities to respond. Hard choices await us as a Department and a Nation.

Second, **Productivity**: This office must be a catalyst to increase industrial productivity at every level. If confirmed, I will collaborate across government and industry to target critical investment into the most pressing supply chain gaps and bottlenecks. And I believe we must accelerate adoption of today's digital tools to secure the leap-ahead benefits of AI and quantum. Our goal must be to maximize the productive impact of every defense dollar.

Third, **Production**: The DOD must accelerate and scale industrial base production now in advance of conflict. And we must position industry to surge in fulfillment of future demands. Progress against these objectives will make a measurable difference in our national security.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the outpouring of support in my pursuit of this role -- it has been humbling. What has been equally gratifying is the unabashed commitment of individuals across government and industry committed to "work together to make the industrial base better." We have done this work before, and now we must do it again.

Senators, I respectfully request your support for my confirmation and for the vital tasks that lie ahead: to reawaken the innovative spirit of the American Industrial Base and to ensure that our nation remains a force for peace and stability through strength.