

Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of this Committee, it is an honor to be considered for the role of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment.

I am incredibly humbled by this opportunity. Thank you, Senator Scott, for your gracious introduction and unwavering support for the Florida defense communities where I have had the privilege of serving for more than eight years.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump for his trust and confidence in me. I especially want to thank Secretary Hegseth for his laser-focused efforts on behalf of our warfighters.

Three factors motivate me to serve this nation and its men and women in uniform. The first is my faith and trust in Almighty God and the provision of His endless grace in my life. All glory is His.

The second is my family, starting with my beautiful wife, Patty, who has stood by my side through more than anyone should ever ask; my son Tony, also here today, who inspires me with his creativity and perseverance daily; and then my three other children who could not be here today: Michele, Kristen, Robert and their amazing spouses. I am continually impressed by the servant-leaders they have become. And then, of course, I must mention the blessing of four beautiful grandchildren.

The third factor is a deep and abiding love for our great nation. I have spent more than half my life serving our country, with almost a third of that deployed in combat to some far-off land, even as a civilian, in support of our National Defense. I have had the immense privilege of serving tours at the Pentagon, Combatant Commands, Major Commands, and sub-commands, and as I do today, leading at the installation level. I have also served alongside all our Service partners and numerous allies to defend our Nation.

The Department of Defense, under President Trump, is committed to achieving Peace Through Strength. This is our solemn mission. The strength and lethality of our military is built not only on the weapon systems that defend us but also on the readiness of our Service members, and their families, to accomplish this mission.

To that end, and if confirmed, three fundamental principles will guide me - I'm a fighter pilot so I have to keep it simple. The first is to take care of our people, the second is to protect the mission, and the third is to partner for success.

Taking care of our people is more than just quality of life – this, to me, is a

readiness issue. I know firsthand that our warfighters cannot deliver 100% of their effort to the mission if they are required to deal with safety and health challenges in their homes. They cannot wonder if the buildings they work in have functioning plumbing or if the cyber-systems and electricity are going to fail. I am committed to fixing these kinds of issues now to ensure our critical installation assets globally serve as a force enabler, providing a distinct advantage to our warfighters over our adversaries.

The second is protecting the mission. This means addressing a wide range of emerging threats to the Homeland and our energy supply. We cannot reliably provide the energy and fuel the mission requires, and expect to modernize our facilities as well, if we continue to do things the same way we always have. Holding to status quo got us to where we are today, so it is going to take a new mindset and a new collective approach to see different results. Many people believe change is hard. I would submit change is hard because resistance to change is far too easy. We must tackle these incredibly difficult challenges to mission assurance with expanded opportunities to enhance our readiness and resilience, while faithfully stewarding the natural resources entrusted to us.

Third is partnering for success. The DoD exists in over 800 locations around the globe. This means we need to be good community partners, working with both our civic and business leaders to improve the resilience of our military installations inside and outside the fence line. These partnerships promote the value of military installations and strengthen communities and states through collaborative planning and implementation in support of America's military.

I commit that if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to apply these principles to prioritize limited resources to enhance the warfighting capacity and lethality that will deter and, if called upon, defeat our adversaries.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work with this Committee and this Congress to provide our armed forces with the capabilities needed to defend and protect our Homeland. Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.