

Michael T. Powers  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
Confirmation Hearing – Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller  
Opening Statement

Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished members of the Committee, good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller. It is an honor to be considered for this role, and I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence placed in me by President Trump.

I would like to begin by acknowledging my family and their support. My wife, Colleen, we've been married for 46 years, and she too has had a long federal civilian career - 25 years as a contract specialist for DoD. And our children, Brian, Connor, Neil, and Megan; for their unwavering support as we moved around the world from military installation to military installation, and during my absences when I volunteered to deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan. Their sacrifices enabled me to grow professionally and develop a depth and breadth of financial management experience – skills and experience that I will bring to this job.

I also want to thank the men and women who wear the uniforms of the United States, past and present, whose courage and dedication should inspire all of us every day. They have inspired me. And I would be remiss if I didn't also express my appreciation for our civilian workforce and their families, without whom we could not do the job demanded of us either.

My relationship with the Department of Defense started early. I was born at a US Army Hospital in France. Both of my brothers were also born at Army Hospitals overseas. We were a DoD family, led by the example set by my father who quit high school to join the Air Force during the Korean war, eventually retiring as an Army Master Sergeant near the end of the Viet Nam war. I did not start out looking to spend most of my life working as a civilian for DoD, but when fate intervened, it seemed like the natural thing to do.

I have spent 38 years in the Federal civilian service – eight years primarily in Budget, 30 years in and around Audit, and then another eight years after I retired, as a contractor supporting audit. The vast majority of that experience was in DoD and it was earned at every command echelon and management level in audit and budget – from Installations, Divisions, Corps, Major Commands, and to the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Comptroller, and the OSD Comptroller, including

two deployments – to Iraq to manage the \$18 billion Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Program budget, and to Afghanistan to manage the \$21 billion Afghan National Security Forces Program budget - and lastly to my second tour at the US Army Comptroller office, where I was the Army’s Principal Deputy for Financial Management and Comptroller, and served as the Acting Comptroller and Chief Financial Officer for the Army – responsible for the Army’s entire \$177 billion budget at the time.

These experiences have prepared me for this moment – to reform and improve the DoD budget process, to support robust budgets that deliver capability and lethality fulfilling the President’s goal of Peace through Strength, and to deliver the first clean audit opinion on the Department of Defense’s Consolidated Financial Statements. I believe the depth and breadth of my experience has given me the tools to be successful as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller, and, if confirmed, I look forward to applying these tools to address any challenge presented.

These are big jobs, but we can get big jobs done.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for its consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

MICHAEL T. POWERS