

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF
LT GEN DOUGLAS A. SCHIESS
SASC NOMINATION HEARING TO SERVE AS THE CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS
14 JULY 2026

Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, and the distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as the next Chief of Space Operations of the United States Space Force. I am grateful for the confidence placed in me by the President, Secretary of War, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Secretary of the Air Force.

To begin, I would like to recognize the most important people in my life, my family. My wife Debbie and I will celebrate 36 years of marriage next month. Debbie is a passionate, tireless advocate for military members and their families. For decades, she has selflessly put her own career ambitions aside to serve our community. She has been by my side for every step of my 34-year journey—from second lieutenant through 18 moves, endless operational shifts, and a year-long Middle East deployment. She is the foundation of our family. Over the years, many military leaders have remarked that Debbie is the real reason I have been asked to continue serving—and I wholeheartedly concur. I know, if I am confirmed, she will do everything she can to advocate for and serve our families. Also, today we are joined by our daughters Kaitlyn and Kendra, our son-in-law Matthew, and Kaitlyn's fiancé Noah. Kaitlyn and Kendra endured multiple moves and attended several different schools, including going to multiple high schools. Kaitlyn has completed the curriculum for a Doctor of Theology and is finishing her dissertation, and Kendra recently graduated with a Juris Doctor and will be taking her BAR exam soon. Both of our daughters continue to make us proud for their many accomplishments, but more importantly, for the incredible women they are. Both of our mothers, Vickie and Eleanor, will be watching online today, and we are thankful for their support. I unequivocally know that no military member serves alone. The demands of military service are borne by spouses, children, parents, and loved ones who move, sacrifice, wait, support, and endure. I am deeply

thankful for the support my family has given me throughout my career. Their love and resilience make service possible.

I would like to thank the second Chief of Space Operations, General Chance Saltzman, and his wife Jennifer. They have worked tirelessly for the last four years to transform our Space Force into the warfighting service it is today. Debbie and I have had the privilege of working for and with them for many years, and we are thankful for their 35 years of dedicated service to our nation, our military, and their families. We wish them the very best in their well-deserved retirement.

I would also like to acknowledge the uniformed and civilian Guardians, families, and mission partners who secure our nation's interests in, from, and to space. The United States Space Force was created because the President and Congress recognized that space is a warfighting domain. Our way of life, our economy, and our national security all depend on our ability to achieve space superiority. The Space Force must organize, train and equip forces for several related but distinct purposes: we must defend our nation's space capabilities so that the Joint Force can project power; we must protect the Joint Force from space-enabled attack; and we must deliver the capabilities that the Joint Force needs to prosecute the full range of its missions.

The President has directed that the Department of War maintain a favorable balance of military power in the Pacific. U.S. space capabilities are foundational to this pursuit. The threat China poses is real. The People's Liberation Army has rapidly expanded its space capabilities and is fielding systems designed both to exploit space for the full range of military missions and to deny U.S. ability to use space capabilities. Albeit not at the same scale as China, Russia continues to field and employ capabilities, including systems that threaten satellites, ground

infrastructure, and the electromagnetic links that connect our forces. Other actors also are learning that space capabilities can be disrupted, degraded, or destroyed. The result is a domain that is increasingly contested and vital to modern warfare. Our purpose is not confrontation, but deterrence, ensuring no adversary believes aggression against the United States will succeed.

As I speak, Guardians are standing watch for the Nation. They provide missile attack warning, enable precision strike, and connect forces across the globe. They protect and defend the space domain. They develop, acquire, and field war winning capabilities. They support national decision-making. They operate in a domain where mission failure can have strategic consequences for U.S. national security and our way of life.

If confirmed, it will be the honor of my professional career to lead the Guardians of the United States Space Force, and I promise to lead the Space Force into its next chapter, building on the legacy of our past leaders. I will work tirelessly to ensure our Guardians are ready, our capabilities are resilient, our partnerships are strong, and our service is worthy of the trust placed in us by the American people. Thank you for your support of the United States Space Force, and for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.