

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of the Armed Services Committee, it is an honor and a privilege to come before you today to be considered for the role of Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy. I spent my formative years in government as national security advisor to a member of this Committee, and it is with great respect, humility, and gratitude that I sit before you today.

With respect to my nomination, I would like first to thank President Trump for his historic vision and leadership. I believe deeply in the President's determination to restore peace through strength, with a real desire for a durable peace on terms that leave Americans better off, but also a recognition that we can only achieve that peace from a position of military strength. It is an extraordinary honor to be part of the President's administration, and I am deeply grateful for the President's confidence in nominating me for this role.

I would also like to thank Secretary Hegseth for his support – and for his clear-eyed, thoughtful, and courageous leadership. Under the Secretary's direction, the Department is rightfully returning to its roots as a warfighting organization, as the President has instructed. It has been a privilege to be part of the Secretary's team, and I am deeply grateful to be considered for this opportunity to continue to support his critical work, at this critical time.

To Under Secretary Colby, as well, I owe my very deep gratitude. The Under Secretary is a brilliant thinker, strategist, and leader. He is also a good and decent man, mentor, and friend. It has been a true honor to support him for many years, and I am honored even more to be considered to serve as his deputy.

Finally, I could not be here at all if not for the love and support of my wife, Megan, who is here with me today. Through countless long hours, late nights, and weekends spent at work, away from her and our loved ones, she has stood behind me every step of the way. I can never thank her enough for her support and the sacrifices that she has made so that I can serve my country.

I would also like to sincerely thank my parents, my sister, and other family and friends who have stood by me for many years and to whom I am forever grateful.

To my parents especially: To my mother, who was born to Puerto Rican migrants in an apartment in Hell's Kitchen and went on to be a social worker and serve on our town's board of education. And to my father, who grew up in a Jewish family in the Bronx and went on to be a teacher. Anything I have accomplished – or will ever accomplish – it will be because of the lessons that they taught me – about being good to others; about hard work, determination, and overcoming adversity; and about the value of serving our fellow Americans.

My family's story – from humble beginnings in New York to this seat in our nation's capital – I have been all around this world, and that story is only possible right here in the United States. For them, and for that, I am incredibly grateful, and it is my sincere honor to be considered for

this opportunity to give back, especially in a period of such historic consequence on the world stage.

Members of the Committee, if you will allow me—

The role of the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy is to support the Under Secretary of War for Policy as he informs and helps to advance the Secretary's priorities, in line with President Trump's commonsense, America First, Peace Through Strength agenda.

With respect to those priorities, Secretary Hegseth has been very clear: The Department is laser-focused on defending the U.S. homeland, strengthening deterrence against China in the Indo-Pacific, increasing burden-sharing with America's allies and partners, and super-charging our nation's defense industrial base.<sup>1</sup> In my view, each of these efforts is critical in its own right. And together, I believe they offer a path for the Department to deliver on President Trump's intent not only to defend our nation's homeland but also to achieve and sustain peace around the world.

They do so first by ensuring that the Joint Force is always ready and able to defend our nation's interests against the most consequential and difficult threats that we face. At the same time, these lines of effort position the Department to work more closely with allies and partners around the world, building on President Trump's historic success at the Hague Summit and making these relationships stronger, more equitable, and more sustainable than they've been in decades, if not longer.

This is good for the United States, of course. But it is also vitally important for our allies and partners, especially in the face of growing coordination among adversaries across regions. Indeed, as President Trump has warned, it is only prudent to expect that our adversaries will conspire against us. We must therefore remain vigilant, including by ensuring that our allies and partners are doing their part for our collective defense, so that together, we can reliably deter aggression across theaters.

In closing—

Under President Trump's leadership, at the direction of Secretary Hegseth, I believe that we have an opportunity to restore peace through strength, not just in this hemisphere but around the world, through a combination of focused, revitalized American military power, and the fuller engagement of our allies and partners. And if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed for this role, you have my fullest and strongest possible commitment to dedicate myself to that end.

Thank you very much again for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4172735/statement-on-the-development-of-the-2025-national-defense-strategy/>