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STATEMENT OF TONYA PARRAN WILKERSON
NOMINEE TO BE
UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY
BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Wicker and distinguished Members of the Committee – it is an honor to appear before you as the nominee for Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security. I am honored by the trust and confidence that President Biden and Secretary Austin have placed in me, and their support for my nomination. I thank this committee and I appreciate your consideration of my nomination.

I want to thank former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, the Honorable Ronald Moultrie for his kind introduction. I admire your leadership of OUSD(I&S), you made a real difference for the mission and the workforce. Thank you for being such a great role model.

I thank God for blessing me with an incredible family, who have supported me throughout my career. To my husband Kevin, I thank you for being my biggest supporter and believing in my aspirations. To my children Kenadi and Kevin Jr., you have sacrificed as I have pursued a life-long career in public service - thank you for your unwavering support. I am incredibly proud of you and your accomplishments. You inspire me to be better every day. To my parents, Ralph and Eleanora, siblings, Ramona, Samantha, Ralph Jr. and nephew Juwan, his wife Courtney and daughter Cree – thank you for being there for me every step of the way! Dad – a special thank you for your service in the United States Marine Corps and for modeling what it means to serve our country. Mom - thank you for always being there and filling the gap as I balance home and work. Thank you to my in-laws, especially my mother-in-law Belinda who is no longer with us and my entire family – you all have given me your full support and I could not have accomplished what I have in my professional career without each one of you. To my colleagues, thank you for your dedication to the mission and investment in the development of future leaders.

Mr. Chairman and Committee members, the mission of the U.S. Department of Defense is vital to keeping Americans safe and to advancing our interests abroad. For more than 35 years, I have had the privilege of working with the civilian and military workforce of the Intelligence Community and the Department of Defense. My path to this hearing room today started with my high-school principal introducing me to a Central Intelligence Agency officer looking to identify STEM talent to participate in an Undergraduate Scholar Program. With that, I headed off to Virginia Tech to study engineering and spent my summers working at the CIA primarily in support of the National Reconnaissance Office mission. I felt a tremendous sense of pride to be serving alongside exceptionally talented intelligence professionals. As a student, I was drawn to the national security mission. From that time to today, my “why” remains the people and the mission. It is what motivates me to pursue this opportunity.

This Committee has long supported our nation’s Intelligence Community and the essential missions conducted within the Defense Intelligence and Security Enterprises. If confirmed, I

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look forward to having a close working relationship with this committee and with Congress as a whole.

I believe my more than three decades of government service, across multiple Defense Intelligence Enterprise and Intelligence Community agencies, uniquely prepares me for this position. I have served in multiple senior roles, building and leading teams to tackle a wide range of intelligence issues. I have partnered effectively across agencies and with allied partners. I have focused on improving efficiency in Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution processes. I also personally directed operations for NRO Mission Ground Stations. I understand the National Defense Strategy and the outcomes required to support the Department's priorities.

Our key challenge remains the PRC and its coercive behavior. If confirmed, my priorities will include:

- Delivering information at the scale and speed to provide decision advantage over competitors, paced to the global challenge of the PRC;
- Enhancing the security and counterintelligence focus across the Department;
- Recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce with diverse experiences, expertise and backgrounds required to address national security challenges; and
- Leveraging interagency and international coalitions & partnerships.

If confirmed, I will strive to accomplish these and other priorities as determined by the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Defense. I look forward to supporting Secretary Austin, Deputy Secretary Hicks and DNI Haines in ensuring that the Defense Intelligence Enterprise remains tightly linked with the national intelligence enterprise, and partnered strongly with the Defense Security Enterprise.

Thank you for your time today and your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.