

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

POSTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

Tuesday, June 6, 2017

Washington, D.C.

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HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
THE POSTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 AND
THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Tuesday, June 6, 2017

U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:39 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John McCain, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators McCain [presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Perdue, Cruz, Graham, Sasse, Strange, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN McCAIN, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM ARIZONA

3 Chairman McCain: Good morning.

4 This committee meets today to consider the posture of
5 the Air Force in the context of our review and oversight of
6 the fiscal year 2018 defense budget request.

7 I welcome our witnesses: Secretary of the Air Force
8 Heather Wilson and Chief of Staff of the Air Force General
9 David Goldfein.

10 This committee honors the outstanding men and women of
11 the United States Air Force. On this anniversary of D-Day,
12 we recognize the service and sacrifice of all generations of
13 our armed forces, and we are guided by their example.

14 Hearings like this are an opportunity to reflect on
15 whether we are meeting the highest constitutional
16 responsibility, to ensure that our armed forces have the
17 resources they need to provide for the common defense. The
18 simple answer is that in recent years, we have not. With
19 growing threats around the world, we have asked our men and
20 women in uniform to do more and more, but we have not given
21 them what they need. America's airmen and our other service
22 members have paid the price.

23 The Budget Control Act and sequestration remain the law
24 of the land. The military buildup we need and that the
25 President promised remains illegal. And there is still no

1 serious progress being made to change that. The self-
2 inflicted wounds of these budget cuts have produced the
3 smallest, oldest, and least ready Air Force in our history.
4 Currently the force is short 1,500 pilots and 3,400
5 maintainers. I repeat currently the Air Force is short
6 1,500 pilots and 3,400 maintainers.

7 This is a full-blown crisis, and if left unresolved, it
8 will call into question the Air Force's ability to
9 accomplish its mission. Americans become Air Force pilots
10 because they love to fly high-performance aircraft and they
11 become maintainers to work on those aircraft. If budgets do
12 not allow these service members to do their jobs and perform
13 the mission they love, they will vote with their feet, and
14 there is no retention bonus high enough to win a bidding war
15 with the commercial airlines.

16 At the same time, America's adversaries are developing
17 and fielding new warfighting technologies: fifth generation
18 fighters, advanced air defense systems, and sophisticated
19 space, cyber, and electronic warfare capabilities. Taken
20 together, these advances are eroding America's military
21 technological advantage. The skies that America has
22 dominated are once again becoming contested airspace.

23 To meet this challenge, the Air Force is committed to
24 an ambitious set of modernization initiatives: F-35A
25 fighters, B-21 bombers, KC-46A tankers, JSTARS, Compass

1 Call, AWACS, and a new trainer aircraft, not to mention a
2 modernized nuclear force. But there is simply no way all of
3 these important yet expensive modernization programs will
4 fit into the projected Air Force budget.

5 Unfortunately, the President's fiscal year 2018 budget
6 request does not sufficiently address the problems. It is
7 only -- and I repeat -- only -- a 3 percent increase over
8 President Obama's defense plan, which explains why the Air
9 Force has identified a detailed list of unfunded
10 requirements totaling \$10.7 billion. The budget calls for
11 46 F-35A's, far fewer than the 80 needed each year to put a
12 dent in the Air Force's fighter capacity shortfall. The Air
13 Force is expected to be almost 500 fighters short in fiscal
14 year 2018, and that shortfall will grow to nearly 1,000 by
15 fiscal year 2032 on the current program of record.

16 Money alone will not address these problems. The Air
17 Force must use its new acquisition authorities and avoid the
18 mistakes of its many past acquisition failures.

19 For example, while the F-35 is finally approaching the
20 end of its long and arduous system design and demonstration
21 phase, I remain concerned about the program's ability to
22 finish on its latest -- I emphasize "latest" -- delayed
23 schedule and within its already massive budget. I am
24 particularly concerned with the affordability and execution
25 of the plan for block 4 follow-on modernization.

1 Similarly, the B-21 will provide a much needed
2 modernization of our aging bomber force. But this committee
3 and the American people deserve to know more about how the
4 Air Force intends to use the \$2 billion in research and
5 development funding for this program, as requested for the
6 coming fiscal year.

7 Modernization of the nuclear triad, to include a
8 replacement for the air-launched cruise missile, is critical
9 and has bipartisan support in Congress. Modernization is
10 not cheap but it is affordable. And the reality is the
11 costs of not modernizing our nuclear triad are far greater.

12 On the KC-46, while I am glad that taxpayers will not
13 foot the bill for the repeated delays, thanks to the use of
14 fixed price contracts, I am concerned these delays will
15 affect the scheduled introduction of this critical
16 capability.

17 Finally, we must confront challenges in the information
18 domain. Despite some growth in this budget request, space
19 program budgets are at 30-year lows and decision-making is
20 fragmented across more than 60 -- I repeat -- 60 -- offices
21 in the Department of Defense. Questions also remain about
22 the Air Force's commitment to the national cyber mission.
23 Last year, of the 127 Air Force officers that completed
24 cyber basic training, not one -- not one -- was retained on
25 the Cyber Mission Force. And when it comes to the

1 development of information technology, all of the military
2 services continue with one costly failure after another, as
3 seen recently in the Air Force's new Air Operations Center
4 program. As the information domain of warfare becomes more
5 important than ever, there is growing evidence to suggest
6 that the Air Force and the Department of Defense are not
7 organized to succeed in this vital national mission.

8 Restoring readiness, recapitalizing our combat aircraft
9 fleet, and reinvesting in modernization will require strong
10 personal leadership, accountability, and a frank assessment
11 of the Air Force's true warfighting requirements, not simply
12 what insufficient funding can accomplish. This committee
13 expects you, Secretary Wilson, and you, General Goldfein, to
14 provide the leadership our airmen deserve.

15 Senator Reed?

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE
2 ISLAND

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
4 Let me join you in welcoming Secretary Wilson and General
5 Goldfein. Thank you and welcome to the committee, and we
6 are eager to hear your testimony on the plans and programs
7 of the Department of the Air Force in our review of the
8 fiscal year 2018 annual authorization request.

9 We certainly are grateful to the men and women of the
10 Air Force for their truly professional service and to their
11 families for their continued support.

12 Over the past 15 years, Air Force personnel and
13 equipment have played a key role in supporting our national
14 security goals in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere around
15 the world. During this lengthy period, we have relied
16 heavily on Air Force strike aircraft to take on important
17 ground targets, Air Force manned aircraft and unmanned
18 aerial vehicles to provide intelligence, surveillance, and
19 reconnaissance support, and Air Force tankers and cargo
20 aircraft to support coalition air operations.

21 Our witnesses this morning face huge challenges as they
22 strive to balance the need to support ongoing operations and
23 sustain readiness with the need to modernize and keep the
24 technological edge in the three critical domains of air,
25 space, and cyberspace. The Air Force has produced a budget

1 that, even with proposed budget increases, reflects tough
2 decisions.

3 The budget increases the Air Force is proposing in
4 fiscal year 2018 would seek to increase readiness, address
5 shortfalls in munitions, address shortfalls in pilots and
6 maintenance personnel, and modernize our strategic deterrent
7 capability.

8 In addition, the Air Force faces a continuing challenge
9 in managing the costs and progress of its major acquisition
10 programs, including the Joint Strike Fighter, the most
11 expensive DOD acquisition program in history, and a new
12 tanker and a new bomber.

13 After considerable discussion within the Department and
14 between the Department and Congress, the Air Force last year
15 laid out a number of plans to improve the shortfalls within
16 the remotely piloted aircraft, RPA, operator community.
17 This was an area where Chairman McCain and I pressed the
18 Department to live up to previous commitments to fully
19 support RPA operations and avoid overstressing RPA crews and
20 their families. And I would ask that the witnesses give us
21 an update on the progress the Air Force is making on these
22 plans.

23 Due to ongoing operations, primarily in CENTCOM, the
24 Defense Department has been striving to catch up with the
25 demand for munitions both for our forces and for coalition

1 partners. I am pleased to see that the Air Force budget
2 starts on a path to make up lost ground on our munitions
3 inventories.

4 I am also pleased that this budget request does not
5 resurrect painful battles from previous years such as
6 retiring the A-10 aircraft, retiring either the U-2 or the
7 Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft or retiring other
8 high-demand, low-density aircraft before replacements have
9 been fielded.

10 In this request, the administration is asking for an
11 increase in the Department of Defense top line of roughly
12 \$54 billion above the total budget for fiscal year 2018
13 prescribed by the Budget Control Act. Of that total, the
14 Air Force budget would constitute an increase of roughly \$15
15 billion. However, I must point out, as the chairman has,
16 unless Congress can achieve a broad and bipartisan agreement
17 to repeal or modify the BCA, any approval of the \$15 billion
18 increase for the Air Force will trigger sequestration of a
19 similar amount.

20 The President's budget ignores this problem by making
21 cuts of roughly \$54 billion in non-defense discretionary as
22 a way of balancing the increases for defense. From my
23 perspective, this is an untenable position, particularly as
24 the budget reduces programs that contribute to national
25 security, such as State Department operations.

1 Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you and
2 other members on resolving the difficult position the
3 Defense Department and all federal agencies are placed in
4 due to the BCA and sequestration. We simply cannot continue
5 down this path.

6 Secretary Wilson, General Goldfein, thank you again for
7 appearing before our committee, and I look forward to your
8 testimony.

9 Chairman McCain: Secretary Wilson?

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. HEATHER A. WILSON, SECRETARY OF THE
2 AIR FORCE

3 Ms. Wilson: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I would ask
4 that our written statement be put into the record.

5 Chairman McCain: Without objection.

6 Ms. Wilson: Rather than go through the written
7 testimony in detail, I would just like to summarize a few
8 things and highlight a few things for the committee, and
9 then ask the Chief to say a few things as well.

10 The first is this. The Air Force is too small for what
11 the Nation expects of it. The fiscal year 2017 budget began
12 to arrest that decline and to restore the readiness of the
13 force, but there is a lot more that needs to be done.

14 So what does the fiscal year 2018 budget do? What are
15 the big outlines of that budget? Well, there are hundreds
16 of programs in there, but there are two major themes.

17 The first is to continue to restore the readiness of
18 the force. For the Air Force, readiness is first and
19 foremost about people and their training, but also about
20 munitions. And those two things are highlighted in the
21 fiscal year 2018 budget. We have proposed to increase the
22 end strength of the Air Force in this budget for active,
23 Guard, Reserve, and civilians.

24 The second major theme in this budget is to continue
25 the modernization, to make the force more lethal. The top

1 three priorities in that are fighters, tankers, and bombers.
2 But it is not limited to that. Over the next 5 to 10 years,
3 the Air Force will be modernizing across the board in order
4 to meet the threats that we see arrayed against us.

5 The third thing that I would like to highlight is the
6 Air Force role in space. My role, in addition to being
7 Secretary of the Air Force, is the principal advisor to the
8 Secretary of Defense with respect to space for all of the
9 Department of Defense. It is a responsibility that I take
10 quite seriously. The Air Force has served as the leader for
11 space for 54 years. We provided GPS for the world and
12 transformed not only the way we fight, but the way all of
13 you probably navigate yourselves around this city. We do
14 missile and nuclear detonation warning. We do weather,
15 secure command and control, communications. All of those
16 are Air Force missions.

17 When the Chief and I were young officers, space was a
18 benign place. In fact, we always thought of it as a benign
19 place up until actually quite recently. Our adversaries
20 know how heavily we depend upon it and that we are
21 vulnerable. We must expect that war of any kind will extend
22 into space in any future conflict, and we have to change the
23 way in which we think and prepare for that eventuality.

24 The budget proposal for fiscal year 2018 has a 20
25 percent increase for Air Force space. It does several

1 things that the Air Force is trying to do in concert with
2 the Army, the Navy, and other government agencies. We need
3 situational awareness, not just keeping a catalog of what is
4 up there, but really knowing what is up there and how it is
5 moving in near real time.

6 Secure command, control, and communications. We are
7 moving towards an integrated battle management control
8 system, which is funded in this year's budget where the
9 Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and other government agencies
10 will be able to have a clear site picture and be able to
11 operate in space. No one-off science experiments anymore in
12 the control of satellites. It has to be integrated for a
13 common picture.

14 Assured access to space is also something we are
15 continuing in this budget. Competition is reducing the cost
16 of launch services. Currently we have got two providers for
17 medium and heavily launch: SpaceX, the Falcon 9, which we
18 will be sending in the next Air Force payload up into space
19 in August, and emerging small satellites have other launch
20 capabilities that are very interesting to us, including
21 Orbital ATK and others.

22 We need to be able to defend ourselves in space, not
23 just systems but also strategies and tactics, anti-jamming,
24 GPS. We now have initial capability for the National Space
25 Defense Center that is funded in this budget with new

1 capabilities. Last year, they did exercises that led to the
2 top 40 user needs across all of the services. And we are
3 changing the way in which we train for space, training to
4 prevail in space and not just operate in a benign
5 environment.

6 As the Air Force Secretary, I am also looking at how we
7 organize the Department of Defense for space so that we
8 integrate it, normalize it, and elevate it as part of the
9 joint warfighting team. That means not just operations but
10 also policy development and acquisition strategies.

11 So this budget does not get us all -- you know, we are
12 not going to recover readiness in a single year. We are not
13 going to modernize in a single year either. But this
14 proposed budget for the next year continues recovering
15 readiness and continues to modernize to make the force more
16 lethal.

17 With that, I would like the Chief to add some things.

18 [The prepared statement of Ms. Wilson and General
19 Goldfein follows:]

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL DAVID L. GOLDFEIN, CHIEF OF STAFF
2 OF THE AIR FORCE

3 General Goldfein: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

4 Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, members of the
5 committee, it is an honor to be here.

6 It is an honor also to rejoin with Secretary Wilson
7 some 40 years after we started together at the Air Force
8 Academy, and I want to thank Secretary Mattis for
9 recommending her to the President, for nominating her, for
10 this committee confirming her. And it ought not go without
11 notice that 24 hours after she became our Secretary of the
12 Air Force, she was sitting beside me and two of our space
13 warriors testifying before Senator Fischer and the Space
14 Subcommittee. That gives a new meaning to the word "fights
15 on." So, Madam Secretary, it is an honor to serve with you
16 and be on your wing once again.

17 So building on Secretary Wilson's opening statement, I
18 would like to spend just a few moments, because I know you
19 are eager to get to questions, and briefly describe the
20 missions our airmen are performing today to defend the
21 homeland, to own the high ground, and to project power with
22 allies and partners, because it is a rather diverse set of
23 missions. And to understand the Air Force, you actually
24 have to look through two lenses. The first lens is that
25 which we do here in the homeland to defend the homeland and

1 to project power abroad, and the second lens is that which
2 we do when we are deployed and based forward to contribute
3 to global campaigns.

4 And for the Air Force, it begins with the nuclear
5 enterprise. And side by side with the United States Navy,
6 we are responsible for two of the three legs of the nuclear
7 triad. And on our worst day as a Nation, our responsibility
8 is to ensure that the President is where he needs to be when
9 he needs to be there, and he stays connected through nuclear
10 command and control to the nuclear enterprise. For an
11 airman, that remains job one.

12 And to produce a common operational picture so that the
13 President can make those decisions, very often, as the
14 Secretary mentioned, that information comes to us from
15 space. And it is your United States Air Force that is
16 responsible for flying 12 constellations in space from
17 everything from precision navigation and timing to early
18 warning to the protected and unprotected communications that
19 we all rely on. We have been the stewards of space since
20 1954, and as you heard from the Secretary, we joined a long
21 line of Secretary-Chief teams who take on this
22 responsibility.

23 Someone has to turn the 1's and 0's into decision
24 quality information, and that lies heavily on the United
25 States Air Force. 35,000 airmen that take the sensing that

1 we do from the six domains, air, land, sea, space, cyber,
2 and undersea, and turns that into a common operational
3 picture and decision quality information for leaders to make
4 decisions.

5 Like our sister services, we are contributing cyber
6 talent and building cyber mission teams to support the
7 combatant commander, Admiral Rogers, in his responsibility
8 to defend the Nation in cyber and to execute cyber
9 capabilities. If you heard jet noise this morning driving
10 here to work, it was probably two F-16's from the Air
11 National Guard that scrambled this morning from Andrews Air
12 Force Base to protect our critical infrastructure just as we
13 do at bases around the United States as part of Operation
14 Noble Eagle. Those missions I just described are only what
15 your Air Force does here in the homeland to protect the
16 homeland and contribute to global campaigns.

17 Now I will shift to that second lens, which is what we
18 do when we are based abroad and deployed, and it begins with
19 air superiority, freedom from attack, and freedom to
20 maneuver. And we are proud of our track record that a
21 soldier, sailor, airman, or marine on the ground has not
22 been attacked from the air since 1953, and under our watch,
23 we will continue that record. For an airman it is nothing
24 short of a moral obligation. When a soldier, sailor,
25 airman, or marine on the ground or at sea hears jet noise,

1 we never want them to look up. We want them to know it us.

2 And once we gain and maintain air superiority, we
3 operate on a series of bases across the globe, and every 2
4 and a half minutes, an aircraft takes off or lands
5 delivering critical supplies or equipment somewhere where it
6 is required, whether for humanitarian relief operations or
7 in combat support. And very often those locations are not
8 secure, and we use our air commandoes, our special forces,
9 to secure those locations so that we can operate.

10 I cannot give you a better example of holding targets
11 at risk for the President than two B-2's that took off out
12 of Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri, flew 32 hours
13 roundtrip, 16 air refuelings, dropped 80 munitions on two
14 training camps in Libya, 10 seconds from their planned time
15 over target.

16 And then finally, in the fight against ISIS, it is your
17 Air Force that is leading the campaign when it comes to
18 taking out the enemy. And whether you want to talk about
19 command and control or personnel recovery or tanking or the
20 strikes that occur, it is your Air Force that continues to
21 lead the way over there working under General Townsend and
22 the joint task force and General Nicholson to take the fight
23 against the enemy.

24 Every mission I just described for you is a growth area
25 to the Secretary's point about being too small for the

1 missions that we are being asked to perform. Every mission
2 I described for you is a no-fail mission, and every mission
3 I described for you, our adversaries are investing to take
4 away our advantages.

5 26 years of continual combat since Operation Desert
6 Storm has taken a toll. As the Secretary mentioned, the
7 fiscal year 2017 budget stopped the bleeding after years of
8 budget instability. And this budget request begins to set
9 the table for recovering and rebuilding our force. The
10 Secretary said it right. We did not get here overnight, and
11 we are not going to recover overnight. But with your help,
12 with the help of this committee, we will give our airmen and
13 their families the quality of service and the quality of
14 life they deserve.

15 Thank you, and we look forward to your questions.

16 Chairman McCain: Thank you, General. Thank you, Madam
17 Secretary.

18 The way we read it, there is a 3 percent increase in
19 defense spending in this budget over former President
20 Obama's number. Do you think that is sufficient, General?

21 General Goldfein: Chairman, I would say it is a good
22 start.

23 Chairman McCain: Good start. So if we do 3 percent
24 per year for the next 10 years, that is a great start.

25 General Goldfein: No, sir, not at all. What this one

1 does is it is arresting the decline that we have seen over
2 the years. It is only a start to where we need to get to
3 with stable budgets that we can plan for.

4 Chairman McCain: So we need more than 3 percent in the
5 future. Is that correct?

6 General Goldfein: Sir, it is not only correct, not
7 only do we need 3 percent, we need more than budgets that
8 give us only 1 year of spending in which the first third of
9 that year is unexecutable because of continuing resolutions.

10 Chairman McCain: When do you project the Air Force to
11 achieve full spectrum readiness?

12 General Goldfein: Sir, we have said before and it is
13 continual to say that it is going to take us approximately 8
14 years to be able to get to full spectrum readiness with
15 stable budgets.

16 Chairman McCain: How many fighter aircraft do you need
17 to fulfill a national military strategy?

18 General Goldfein: 1,900 is the total number of combat
19 coded aircraft required.

20 Chairman McCain: And how many do we have now?

21 General Goldfein: We have right now -- let me get that
22 answer for you to make sure I have it exactly right.

23 Chairman McCain: Take a guess.

24 General Goldfein: Right now, we are down to about --
25 total number of fighters -- we have just short of about

1 1,500.

2 Chairman McCain: 1,500 fighters short.

3 How many bombers do you need to fulfill the national
4 military strategy?

5 General Goldfein: We predict approximately 175 is what
6 we are going to need.

7 Chairman McCain: And how many do we have now?

8 General Goldfein: Right now, in terms of B-52's, we
9 have 76. We have 20 B-2's, and we have 62 B-1's. While I
10 do not have the total number of fighters exactly, you know,
11 just to give you a rundown of the number we actually have on
12 hand, we have --

13 Chairman McCain: Before you go on, you state the Air
14 Force will be 1,500 pilots short by the end of this fiscal
15 year, 1,300 of them fighter pilots. Those numbers seem to
16 be getting worse and not better.

17 General Goldfein: They are.

18 So we are taking two approaches, Chairman, on this.
19 First of all, there is a national approach because the
20 reality is the Nation currently does not produce the number
21 of pilots required to service military and commercial
22 aviation requirements. I recently hosted a meeting with
23 CEOs from the major airlines, the regional airlines, and the
24 major industry representatives, and we talked about how we
25 could partner together to find win-win solutions to increase

1 the supply of pilots to service those both.

2 Chairman McCain: So this shortfall came as a surprise
3 to you?

4 General Goldfein: No, sir. We projected this
5 shortfall some years ago. However, what did come not as a
6 surprise but something that was not within our control is
7 the fact that the airlines project that they are going to
8 require 4,500 pilots a year for the next 10 years.

9 Chairman McCain: I knew it. Why were you surprised?

10 General Goldfein: Well, sir, I will tell you. I would
11 not say we were surprised. I will say that the numbers that
12 they were going to require we had not seen coming.

13 Chairman McCain: Secretary Wilson, the planned
14 delivery date for the KC-46 continues to slip. When will
15 the first aircraft be delivered, and when will the 18th be
16 delivered?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there is a meeting this morning
18 in the Pentagon about the risk on the schedule. We think
19 that there is some risk particularly in the testing
20 schedule, and Boeing does not agree with that risk. The
21 meeting is actually going on right now. We did an
22 independent assessment on timing, and we may see a couple of
23 months' slip is what I am hearing informally. But as soon
24 as we get the readout from that meeting, we will let you
25 know.

1 Chairman McCain: All of this comes as a surprise?

2 It is understandable to keep the B-21 specific
3 warfighting capabilities classified, but it is difficult to
4 understand why you should keep other aspects of the program
5 under the veil of secrecy. Do the American people not
6 deserve to understand more about what their dollars are
7 being spent on such as \$2 billion in R&D money requested in
8 this year's budget?

9 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we are very open with the
10 appropriate committees in the Congress about exactly what we
11 are doing and what we are spending it on.

12 Chairman McCain: That is not true, Madam Secretary.
13 That is simply not true. The American people need to know
14 if we are going to spend \$2 billion on what? On R&D?

15 Does the Air Force plan on releasing any further
16 details on the program? If so, when will you do so?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there is always a balance between
18 not telling our enemies what we are doing and making sure we
19 are forthcoming with the representatives of the American
20 people.

21 Chairman McCain: I totally agree with you. But I have
22 never seen anything like this one.

23 What is the long-term plan for how long you will keep
24 fourth generation fighter aircraft in your combat aircraft
25 inventory and how the Air Force will keep them relevant in

1 today's threat environment?

2 General Goldfein: Chairman, we are going to keep
3 fourth gen aircraft into the 2040s. And so what you will
4 see in this budget, in addition to buying fifth gen
5 aircraft, is actually modernizing our fourth gen.

6 And here is what we found. When we talk about the
7 fighter inventory, what we have found and continue to
8 develop is the ability to actually fly these aircraft
9 together in a complementary fashion. So the fourth gen
10 actually makes fifth gen better, and fifth gen actually
11 makes fourth gen better.

12 Chairman McCain: Can you tell me a program that has
13 been on time and on schedule in the last 20 years?

14 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

15 Actually when you take a look at -- and you called it
16 on the F-35. The reality of the F-35 program is when you
17 make a decision to do three things at once, which is to
18 develop new technology, procure that technology
19 simultaneously, and make it an international program with a
20 number of international partners, those three things in
21 concert actually I believe is what contributed most to the
22 cost growth and the time frame it has taken us to bring that
23 to bear.

24 Chairman McCain: So we had never learned that lesson
25 before?

1 General Goldfein: I do not think we have learned it to
2 the level of this program. Especially I do not think that
3 in the new age of the cybersecurity environment that we live
4 in, I think that we are learning every day what it means in
5 the business of information and sharing infusion and the
6 challenges that gives it. And it goes to a point that you
7 made about information technology and just how do we go
8 about procuring it.

9 Chairman McCain: Well, I can assure you it has been a
10 source of great frustration on this committee because it was
11 obvious to us exactly what was happening, and it happened.

12 Senator Reed?

13 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

14 Thank you, Madam Secretary, General Goldfein.

15 Let me go back to the RPA issue. There has been for
16 the last several years great stress on the RPA community.
17 Secretary Carter tried to address that by moving from 65
18 missions down to 60. Can you give me an update -- and then,
19 Madam Secretary, you might join in -- of where we are and
20 what are you doing to ensure we have a very adequate RPA
21 capability?

22 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, Senator. So that is
23 probably the most important decision that we have made in
24 this business was when we stopped the exponential growth of
25 combat lines and caps because, as you remember, just about

1 the time we started trying to get the weapon system healthy,
2 we would have three more caps added. And who can blame the
3 soldier, sailor, airman, or marine on the ground who wants
4 to have someone overhead who is telling them what is behind
5 the town, what is behind the village, what is behind the
6 hill before they go it?

7 So when we actually stopped the growth at 60 caps, that
8 allowed us to actually start building the force to a healthy
9 weapon system. And as you may recall, the first target we
10 were shooting at was a 10-to-1 crew ratio. That begins to
11 get to a healthy force, and we will achieve that this year.

12 The other thing that we have done is we have built the
13 instructor cadre force up so that we can actually increase
14 the influx in the pipeline that is bringing the crews in
15 that we need for the future.

16 We are also standing up two bases now. One we have
17 just announced. The preferred alternative is Shaw Air Force
18 Base to actually do a mission there, and then we are going
19 to stand up another base that can expand the enterprise so
20 that you actually can get the mission synergy that happens
21 when you actually combine an RPA squadron with another
22 mission that it actually supports when it flies.

23 So all those things are in the works. And so my report
24 to you is we are on glide slope for the plan that we laid
25 out for you. There is work ahead that needs to be come. I

1 am not declaring victory, but we have made some significant
2 progress.

3 Senator Reed: One element that was mentioned was not
4 requiring that the lead pilot at least be a commissioned
5 officer, but to look at a warrant officer or an NCO. When I
6 was at Nellis last year, I saw a lot of very experienced
7 non-commissioned officers who could switch seats pretty
8 quickly. Is that being considered?

9 General Goldfein: It is. The first three have
10 graduated. Our second class is going through right of
11 enlisted operators. Because the MQ-19 was the most
12 stressed, we chose the RQ-4 as the weapon system to begin
13 this program. So now we are laying these individuals into
14 each of our training classes, and then we will continue to
15 grow the force accordingly.

16 Senator Reed: Madam Secretary, any comments?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, the only thing I would add is
18 that the fiscal year 2018 budget does continue to fund the
19 get well plan for the RPA pilots, and we now have about
20 2,200 RPA pilots, including that first group of enlisted
21 operators.

22 Senator Reed: Thank you, ma'am.

23 Again, General Goldfein, retention is one of the
24 critical issues. The chairman has mentioned it. You have
25 mentioned it. The Secretary has mentioned it. Last year,

1 we looked at this issue and we discovered -- at least our
2 insights were anyone who wanted a bonus got the maximum
3 bonus. So the bonus was seen as sort of like they owe me
4 this, rather than this is something that is going to affect
5 my decision to stay or go.

6 And in fact, we asked you to go ahead and start
7 allocating bonuses based on critical needs, not just
8 everyone gets one. And we assumed that the bonus could be
9 the most obvious and most immediate way to enhance
10 retention. You seemed to -- well, I will not put words in
11 your mouth.

12 But, one, tell us where we are with the bonus issue.
13 Also tell us what types of arrangements you think you can
14 make with the airlines to get additional pilots.

15 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. So, first, what we are
16 focused on is a combination and a balance between quality of
17 service and quality of life. The aviation bonus goes in the
18 quality of life category. And so we really appreciate this
19 committee and Congress' support to allow us to up the number
20 from \$25,000 to \$35,000.

21 But we tiered that based on a business case analysis
22 that looks at how long does it take to actually train that
23 pilot in that particular career field, what is the cost
24 associated with that, and what is our projections for
25 retention. And based on that model and weighting, we have

1 now come up with a tiered approach that now pays against
2 that particular model.

3 We are in our first year of that. I expect we will get
4 an assessment of its impact and whether it is having the
5 desired impact, and that we may come back to this committee
6 for additions in terms of authorizations.

7 But we are looking at a number of areas. You know,
8 retention comes down to this balance because pilots --
9 Chairman, I think you said it in your opening statement.
10 Pilots join to fly high-performance aircraft. Maintainers
11 join to maintain high-performance aircraft. And when we do
12 not have the readiness that allows them to do that, that is
13 going to have a direct relation to readiness. And I would
14 submit to you it has a direct relation on morale because
15 morale and readiness are absolutely inextricably linked.

16 So we are taking an approach where this is about 100
17 swings of the axe at the trunk of this tree, and we are not
18 going to swing. It is not swinging until we continue to see
19 the retention numbers go up. So this is about revitalizing
20 the health of our squadrons to make sure that where we do
21 our fighting from, which is in squadrons, our squadrons are
22 healthy. This is making sure that we have the right support
23 structure in those squadrons so the pilots are able to do
24 the flying. This is about making sure that pilots have a
25 balance in terms of what they are doing. Let me give you a

1 vignette.

2 So I just came from Shaw Air Force Base. A young F-16
3 pilot at Shaw Air Force Base in a 4-and-a-half-year-tour --
4 this is what that tour looks like today on this smaller
5 force: 1 year deployed to the desert, 1 year remote to
6 Korea, four 2-week deployments to support Red Flag or other
7 high-end training, four 1-week deployments that do weapons
8 systems kinds of specific training, 6 weeks to squadron
9 officer school. That 4-and-a-half-year assignment will
10 allow that pilot 18 months total at home in 4 and a half
11 years. So the Secretary and I are looking at a number of
12 things that we can do to bring them more balance in addition
13 to the financial piece that the Congress has authorized.

14 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

16 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 We have done a lot of talking about the size of our Air
18 Force, and it seems like it might be a good idea to put it
19 in a perspective. Do you happen to know what the size of
20 our Air Force was during the Desert Storm related to what
21 that size is today? Either one of you.

22 Ms. Wilson: Senator, it is about 30 percent smaller
23 than it was in Desert Storm.

24 Senator Inhofe: 30 percent smaller than it was in
25 Desert Storm.

1 Ms. Wilson: Yes, sir.

2 Senator Inhofe: Would you say we are in a much greater
3 threatened position today than we were during --

4 Ms. Wilson: We have the same level of tasking today as
5 we did during Desert Storm, and we have 55 squadrons rather
6 than --

7 Senator Inhofe: You know, I think it is important to
8 have people like you and the uniforms particularly to be
9 talking about this because the American people do not know
10 that. You have heard me say this before. But that is a
11 very frustrating thing when you go back and you are talking
12 to real people who are listening to false reports from the
13 media assuming that we have this great, superior power that
14 we have historically had perhaps in some times of our
15 history but do not have today.

16 I had a hearing in the subcommittee I chair on
17 readiness. We had the four Vices there. And it was the
18 Vice Chief of the Air Force, General Wilson -- no relation I
19 guess -- who made the statement, after we talked about it
20 for a while, are we in the same situation, a similar
21 situation, that we were facing back in the late 1980s when
22 we had a hollow force? And I was very proud of him because
23 he said, yes, we are, and he went into some of the details
24 as to what we were back at that time compared to where we
25 are today.

1 General Goldfein, what are your thoughts about that?

2 General Goldfein: Sir, I absolutely align with that
3 statement. I think it is important too for us to have a
4 common understanding and a definition of what constitutes a
5 hollow force because that term gets thrown around a lot. I
6 actually went back and Senator McCain actually, sir, you
7 gave a definition of this in 1993. And I think it actually
8 captures it still for today. You said readiness is not a
9 matter of funding operations and maintenance at the proper
10 level. It is not a matter of funding adequate numbers of
11 high quality personnel. It is not a matter of funding
12 superior weapons and munitions or funding strategic mobility
13 and prepositioning or funding high operations tempos or
14 funding realistic levels of training at every level of
15 combat. Readiness is all of these things and more. A force
16 begins to go hollow the moment it loses overall mix of
17 combat capabilities in any one critical area. That
18 definition in 1993 applies today.

19 And so when we talk about the hollow force, we got to
20 talk about holistically all of those things that go into
21 producing a ready force. And it is training and it is
22 personnel and it is equipment. And they all have to come
23 together.

24 Senator Reed: That is good, General Goldfein.

25 You know, I think again that is something we need to

1 talk about. And while you say it is difficult to define
2 what a hollow force is, the general public does know about a
3 hollow force. They knew the conditions that we faced back
4 in the late 1980s and how similar they are today.

5 Just for a minute, I want to touch on the BRAC
6 recommendations. The budget, it is my understanding, is
7 looking toward the years what -- 2021 to be looking at a
8 possible BRAC and making preparations before that time?

9 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I think you will see from
10 the Secretary of Defense a request for a BRAC, I believe in
11 2021 is what you will see coming in from the Secretary.

12 You know, from our perspective, we tend to focus on the
13 "C," closure, but I will tell you for the Air Force, it is
14 as much about the "R," realignment. And we have got some
15 great examples of how we have been able to, with the help of
16 Congress and this committee, realign forces in order to
17 become more combat-capable and more lethal. And so for me,
18 it is as much about realignment as it is about closure.

19 Senator Inhofe: Yes, but you have to keep in mind that
20 one of the facts is that there has not been a BRAC round yet
21 -- and I have been involved in these BRAC rounds since 1987
22 -- where they have not lost money the first 3 years or so.
23 And this is one of the big problems.

24 This is at a time that is different than most times in
25 the past. We really cannot afford to be paying for

1 something that we do not need. And the second thing is we
2 do not know, once we start rebuilding, what our needs are
3 going to be. And I am sure that that probably came to their
4 attention when they were making that decision not to do
5 something until that time.

6 Ms. Wilson: Senator, if I could just add.

7 Senator Inhofe: Yes, of course.

8 Ms. Wilson: with respect to base realignment and
9 closure, one of the things that I think we really need to do
10 is look at infrastructure based on the needs of the
11 warfighter. And for the Air Force, that is less about
12 square footage and concrete than it is airspace and
13 capabilities to be able to train as we will fight not only
14 today but into the future. And some of the language with
15 respect to base closure restricts us from doing some of that
16 analysis. And I think we need to do that analysis to be
17 able to tell where we have excess capacity and of what kind.

18 Senator Inhofe: Well, my time has expired, but for the
19 record, General Goldfein, you said -- I looked it up in your
20 written statement. It was not there. But you said for
21 every mission that I have described to you in your opening
22 statement, you said our adversaries are advancing. I would
23 kind of like to have in a written statement of where we are
24 relative to our adversaries out there, something that you
25 probably would not want to talk about here anyway.

1 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

2 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Gillibrand?

4 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Secretary Wilson, during your confirmation hearing, I
6 asked you for your attention on continuing contamination
7 issues with water supplies across the U.S. The Air Force,
8 including the Air National Guard, is dealing with
9 contamination as a result of perfluorinated chemicals, PFCs,
10 expelled by firefighting units on these bases. There are
11 two known sites in New York, one at the 106th on Gabreski
12 and one of the 105th in Newburgh. Until recently
13 coordination seemed to be moving forward at Gabreski, though
14 not in Newburgh, though I understand that cooperation has
15 now ceased.

16 My staff was briefed that all mitigation work and
17 negotiations on cooperative agreements has ceased because
18 the Air Force is assessing whether it has the authorities to
19 pay for any mitigation or cleanup on non-federal land. Are
20 you aware of this issue? And my staff was told that there
21 should be a determination by early summer.

22 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I am aware that the Defense
23 Department is looking at this across all of the services and
24 all of our installations. I think the Air Force was a
25 little bit out in front of others in saying, all right, do

1 we have a problem, do we have an issue at any of our bases.
2 So we have done more assessment than perhaps the other
3 services had. I know that the Office of the Secretary of
4 Defense is looking at this both with respect to particular
5 bases but also more generally with respect to how we move
6 forward on any cleanup.

7 Senator Gillibrand: And can I have your commitment
8 that you will work with my staff to make sure that if you do
9 need additional authorities, we put that in the NDAA so that
10 you have the authorities you need?

11 Ms. Wilson: Yes.

12 Senator Gillibrand: And will you commit with my office
13 to work with the relevant local authorities to address any
14 adverse consequences resulting from the negotiations that
15 were ongoing at Gabreski?

16 Ms. Wilson: We will. I would say that this has now
17 become something that the Office of the Secretary of
18 Defense, Installations and Environment folks are also
19 involved in, as well as their general counsel. So we are
20 just one piece of the force on that.

21 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

22 General Goldfein, I watched the news last night about a
23 leaked memorandum concerning breaches by Russia into our
24 electoral infrastructure. And the nature of that was about
25 a hack into a vendor who does perhaps voter registration.

1 I have been talking a lot about the role of our
2 military and particularly the role of our National Guard and
3 how we increase our cyber capabilities by using the National
4 Guard specifically since you are going to have experts
5 within the National Guard who work in the cyber field as
6 part of their day jobs. Can you imagine any function where
7 we can use the National Guard particularly to serve as a
8 conduit between State, local, and the Federal Government, as
9 well as the private sector because of their unique
10 abilities? And one such area is perhaps a way to work with
11 the States to certify that our elections are cyber-protected
12 because, obviously, the best cyber personnel we have -- many
13 of them are within the armed services as part of the Guard.

14 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. As a matter of fact,
15 you will see that as we are building up our 39 cyber mission
16 teams, a significant part of that is from our Guard and
17 Reserve. There are title authorities that we have got to
18 work our way through in terms of when you are serving in a
19 Title 10 status, active duty, or Title 32 status, working in
20 the States. But what we have found, especially in the cyber
21 business, is where we can really leverage industry and
22 especially young men and women who are working in the cyber
23 business in a civilian capacity that can then also do part-
24 time work with the military in the Guard and Reserve is a
25 powerful combination. And so we are leveraging that very

1 heavily.

2 Senator Gillibrand: If you need any additional
3 authorities or have any concerns about retention, keeping
4 the best people at Cyber Command, please advise this
5 committee because we would like to make sure you have access
6 to all the cyber warriors you need for all of these
7 functions moving forward.

8 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

9 Senator Gillibrand: Are there any obstacles that you
10 see now for having the cyber force that you need?

11 General Goldfein: No. I think our biggest challenge
12 is that we have got to balance the talent between that which
13 serves under Admiral Rogers and his responsibilities as the
14 CYBERCOM Commander, that which we require to be able to
15 protect our cyber vulnerabilities, ensure that we can
16 operate to do the missions I described for you in our
17 opening statement, and that which has to serve the combatant
18 commanders who have got cyber equities built into their
19 campaign plans.

20 We are building this force right now at the same time,
21 and so we are having to now, as we build this capability,
22 ensure that we fill all three of those bins simultaneously.
23 So it is just going to take some time, and we are looking
24 for all kinds of creative ways to build as fast as we can.

25 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

3 Senator Wicker: General, we might as well settle this
4 on the record. How do you pronounce your last name?

5 General Goldfein: Sir, "feen" is fine.

6 [Laughter.]

7 Senator Wicker: General Goldfein then. We are 1,500
8 pilots short; by the end of this calendar year, 1,300 of
9 those fighter pilots, 3,000 maintainers short. I was a
10 little unclear about how many aircraft short we are going to
11 be.

12 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I would like to clear the
13 record too. I said 1,500. I actually did the math wrong.
14 Part of my philosophy degree. It is 2,031 is the current
15 number of aircraft that we have on the inventory.

16 The number of aircraft we need relative to all of the
17 missions that we perform -- and this is beyond fighters and
18 bombers. This is big wing command and control. This is
19 intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance. This is across
20 all of those. This is Joint Stars. This is Compass Call.
21 All of the mission we perform -- those are the areas where
22 we have got to recapitalize and modernize for the future to
23 ensure that we have all of those mission areas covered.

24 Senator Wicker: Well, what figure would that be? We
25 have 2,031 current. How many do we need?

1 General Goldfein: 1,900 combat coded fighters is what
2 we require. We are projecting 175 bombers. We are working
3 right now a bomber road map that lays out the combination --
4 one of the things that we are working hard on is that we
5 have in the past rolled out plans after we have done all of
6 our planning without actually including Congress in the
7 dialogue. And so we are in the process right now of
8 actually socializing our bomber road map that achieves the
9 175 total that we need.

10 Senator Wicker: Okay. Well, if you get your budget
11 request this year, how many pilots short are we going to be
12 and maintainers short are we going to be at the end of next
13 year, at the end of 5 years?

14 General Goldfein: So if there is no change, right now
15 we are projecting that we will be 1,300 fighter pilots alone
16 short by the end of this year. That is just fighter pilots.

17 Senator Wicker: But you are asking for a budget number
18 that would improve that. Are you not?

19 General Goldfein: We are.

20 Senator Wicker: And so if you get your numbers, how
21 are we going to look in 5 years?

22 General Goldfein: Well, our hope, based on all the
23 things that we are doing -- that is why I described it as it
24 is not one thing that we are doing. It is 100 things that
25 we are going after that go after both quality of service and

1 quality of life because we are not going to buy our way out
2 of this with money. There is no way we are going to ever be
3 able to --

4 Senator Wicker: You cannot give us that number of how
5 you hope to look in 5 years?

6 General Goldfein: Yes.

7 Senator Wicker: Are you still going to be 1,500 pilots
8 short in 5 years?

9 General Goldfein: I hope that we are not, and I say
10 "hope" --

11 Senator Wicker: Can you do that based on your budget
12 request?

13 General Goldfein: We can definitely get started, but
14 we do not know yet, for instance, pilot bonus is a classic
15 example --

16 Chairman McCain: What does "get started" mean,
17 General?

18 General Goldfein: Sir, what it means is that we put in
19 place those measures that start moving forward on increasing
20 quality of service and quality of life across the pilot
21 force. So the budget has the aircraft bonus in it this
22 year. We are going to have to assess to see how that works
23 relative to how many we retain.

24 Senator Wicker: Suffice it to say, it is hard for you
25 to give us specific numbers to project.

1 Let me do this. I think Senator Inhofe mentioned the
2 general public. Help the general public understand what we
3 are not getting done now because of these shortfalls. What
4 can we not do? Help the taxpayer understand why this is
5 crucial to us.

6 Ms. Wilson: Sir, one of the things that happened after
7 sequester and ISIS reared its ugly head in Iraq and Syria,
8 the Air Force and the rest of the services did what they
9 should do. They surged to the fight. That means we have
10 pilots in the desert fighting and putting, you know, 26,00
11 airstrikes on the ISIS target since 2014. 26,000. That is
12 more airstrikes than we did in Operation Desert Storm -- or
13 rather, Iraqi Freedom. So they are in the fight, but that
14 is not a high-end, near-peer kind of fight.

15 What we are most worried about is that those crews,
16 when they come back, are not ready for some of the potential
17 high-end conflicts that we might face where there is
18 integrated air defense and where we do have to fight in
19 order to own the airspace over any potential adversary.
20 That is where the risk is. And it is not that we would not
21 surge to that fight, but the losses would be higher and it
22 would be a harder fight.

23 Senator Wicker: Are our allies and our adversaries
24 having this same problem with pilot shortages?

25 Ms. Wilson: Yes.

1 Senator Wicker: Specifically Britain? Specifically
2 Russia, China?

3 Ms. Wilson: The airlines are a global industry, and we
4 are seeing it in the other services in the United States,
5 and we are also seeing a shortage globally of pilots. The
6 Chief mentioned the number of pilots that are being hired
7 annually by the airlines. It is actually higher than the
8 airlines themselves predicted. So they were predicting
9 about 3,200. I think last year they hired 4,500 or
10 something like that. So it was higher than they initially
11 projected. There is a demand for pilots and it is a global
12 demand.

13 General Goldfein: Sir, just to be clear because you
14 had said allies and adversaries. We do see that our allies
15 are facing -- as an international air chief, I have
16 discussions with all of my allies to talk about what --
17 because this movie is coming to a theater near them. But I
18 cannot say that for our adversaries. We have seen no
19 indications of a slowdown for adversaries.

20 Senator Wicker: Thank you.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Blumenthal?

22 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 I do not want to put you on the spot now, but in terms
24 of our allies, if you could provide some numbers as to how
25 they are seeing the same kind of challenges, that would be

1 very helpful. And if you could also provide in writing,
2 after this hearing, a rundown or summary of what they are
3 doing, if they are doing anything different than ourselves,
4 but exactly what they are doing.

5 We have seen this problem coming, as you well know. I
6 asked about it at the Airland Subcommittee -- Lieutenant
7 General Nowland was testifying in March. I asked about it
8 last year. I was going to send a letter asking for more
9 detailed information, and I decided not to do so on the
10 assurance that this kind of information would be
11 forthcoming. But if you could provide that kind of
12 information, General Goldfein or Madam Secretary, I would
13 appreciate it.

14 [The information follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Blumenthal: I want to focus on the UH-1N Huey,
2 whose average fleet is about 40 years old and continues to
3 operate under a waiver to protect our ICBM fleet and the
4 National Capital Region. Earlier this year, the Air Force
5 announced that the anticipated request for proposal for the
6 Huey replacement would be delayed from February to July,
7 which in turn will delay the delivery of the first
8 operational helicopter by a year to the second quarter of
9 fiscal year 2021.

10 I discussed my frustration with this delay when
11 STRATCOM Commander General Hyten came before this committee
12 in April, and I will be understated. He was critical of the
13 Air Force's inability to quickly procure a helicopter
14 desperately needed to fulfill STRATCOM's requirements.

15 I led a bipartisan letter to Secretary Mattis urging
16 him to do everything in his power to expedite the fielding of
17 new helicopters, but I have received as yet no response. I
18 understand he has a lot of challenges and responsibilities.
19 I am not being critical of him.

20 But the plain fact is that an existing military
21 aircraft already in the inventory is well suited for these
22 missions, and I hope that after much delay, this acquisition
23 process will proceed with a medium lift helicopter that
24 meets General Hyten's needs.

25 So let me ask you, Madam Secretary. As you know,

1 during your confirmation process, you committed in writing
2 to me -- I am quoting -- if confirmed, I will ensure the Air
3 Force remains committed to delivering a UH-1N replacement
4 with needed capabilities on schedule and within budget. Now
5 that you are confirmed, what actions specifically -- and I
6 put the emphasis on the word "specifically" -- are you
7 taking to fulfill this commitment?

8 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I have been briefed on the UH-1N
9 program. Initially the strategy was to try to buy something
10 that is just coming down the line and get more of them that
11 are coming down the line that are being bought for other
12 purposes. Apparently none of the potential airframes could
13 do that without some kind of a modification, and each of
14 them had different kinds of modifications. So the Air Force
15 took a step back, and the July RFP, as I understand it, is
16 on track to be released.

17 Senator Blumenthal: That is on track now.

18 Ms. Wilson: That is what I have been told.

19 Senator Blumenthal: And there will be no slippage in
20 that schedule.

21 Ms. Wilson: That is what I have been told as of this
22 last week.

23 Senator Blumenthal: Let me turn to, if I may --

24 Chairman McCain: Does that mean you will ascertain
25 that it will be done on time?

1 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I have been told that the RFP is
2 supposed to be released in July, and I have no reason to
3 question what I have been told.

4 Senator Blumenthal: If there is any slippage, will you
5 commit to reporting to this committee as soon as there is
6 any indication -- I mean, any indication -- that that
7 schedule may at all be delayed again?

8 Ms. Wilson: Yes.

9 Senator Blumenthal: The combat rescue helicopter. As
10 you know, the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters, the most
11 deployed Department of Defense rotary wing asset, has been
12 responsible for saving 12,000 lives -- 12,000 lives. The
13 high operational tempo in Iraq and Afghanistan for these
14 helicopters performing personnel recovery and combat search
15 and rescue missions means that the current aircraft are
16 nearing the end of their useful life with declining
17 readiness rates. It is an essential program. We have to be
18 sure that it remains on track. The program successfully
19 reached its critical design review just last week,
20 finalizing the build plan for the Sikorsky-made helicopter
21 and paving the way to begin building the first test
22 helicopters.

23 Let me ask you, General Goldfein. This program is
24 critical. It is lifesaving. It is essential to readiness.
25 This year's budget requests just \$354.5 million for the

1 combat rescue helicopter program. That is \$100 million
2 lower. It is a \$100 million decrease from what was
3 anticipated last year. For a program that is so critical,
4 how do you justify such a reduction in funding?

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. As we do with all of the
6 programs, we look at how fast we can bring on that
7 capability and how do we sustain that capability over time.
8 And you said it exactly right. When it comes to combat
9 rescue, we are the service that is responsible for fighting
10 our way to a point of injury and actually providing critical
11 combat care in that golden hour and being able to bring
12 folks out. And the combat rescue helicopter is an
13 absolutely critical component of that. So the \$100 million
14 shortfall that you referred to is a disconnect that we
15 continue to watch and ensure that we look at as we spread
16 the program out over time.

17 Senator Blumenthal: Well, General, I apologize. I do
18 not mean to interrupt you but my time is expiring.

19 And I just want to say the word "disconnect" is one of
20 the all-time euphemisms that I have heard in this room. It
21 is a -- forgive me. I mean no disrespect to you. It is a
22 disservice to the men and women who need that helicopter and
23 who will be looking up. They are going to be looking up to
24 see when those helicopters are arriving to save them from
25 serious injury during that golden hour. This decrease is a

1 disservice to our men and women in uniform.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman McCain: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Thank you to both of you for your service to our
5 country.

6 With regard to the B-21 program, there have been
7 conflicting reports and testimony from the Air Force about
8 how many B-21's the service intends to buy. When is the
9 correct date that we will start talking about the actual
10 number? We have had reports from the generals which say 80
11 to 100. 100 is the minimum. We will start with 100 and go
12 from there. 165 seems like the more realistic number.

13 Last year, we had an amendment that became part of the
14 NDAA that directed a force mix study to refine what this
15 should look like, and the report deadline has passed. Why
16 is it that the service says it needs exactly 1,763 F-35's
17 but has not produced a precise number of B-21 that it will
18 require? Secretary Wilson?

19 Ms. Wilson: Senator, it is my understanding that it is
20 100 B-21's. There was some confusion, and I think the Air
21 Force actually corrected this yesterday in the newspaper
22 about what the total number of bombers would be, and I
23 believe that number is actually 165.

24 Senator Rounds: It is 165 or is it 100?

25 Ms. Wilson: 100 B-21's, 165 total bombers in the Air

1 Force.

2 One caveat I would make is that there is a national
3 security strategy review that is currently underway, and one
4 of the reasons why you do not have a 5-year defense plan in
5 the formal submission is because that national security
6 strategy, which will drive our force structure, is underway.

7 General Goldfein: And, Senator, I will just second
8 that to say that in the bomber mix in the road map that we
9 are socializing now with Congress, it is 165 total bombers.
10 And of those 165 bombers, it is 100 B-21's.

11 And we do that based on our assessment of combatant
12 commander requirements and targets that they require us to
13 hold at risk in their operational war plans, not only the
14 geographic combatant commanders, but also General Hyten in
15 his responsibility for the nuclear enterprise. So we do our
16 troop-to-task, if you will, assessment based on supporting
17 combatant commander requirements and objectives that they
18 are being given to be able to hit.

19 Senator Rounds: General Goldfein, at what date in the
20 future is this determined to be the day that we are shooting
21 for? At what point in time are we talking about this being
22 the goal, to have 165?

23 General Goldfein: In terms of the total numbers that
24 we will buy to?

25 Senator Rounds: Yes. In other words, the B-21 we all

1 know is not coming on line for a number of years yet. Are
2 we talking about the year 2030, 2035, 2040? What is the
3 number that we are shooting at for having 165 bombers of all
4 sorts?

5 General Goldfein: Between the 2020 and 2030 time
6 frame. But the way we will manage that, because remember,
7 right now we have B-52's, B-2's, B-1's, and B-21's that will
8 come on board -- as the B-21 comes on board, then what we
9 are socializing is then how do we then reduce the existing
10 infrastructure so that we can keep the bomber force at a
11 stable platform.

12 We are also working to ensure that as we look at what
13 bases that we look at for bomber force structure, that the
14 bases that actually have current bomber capabilities will
15 retain bomber force structure for the future. So all of
16 that is coming together to ensure that we have a solid
17 bomber road map going forward.

18 Senator Rounds: Is there any question but that bomber
19 number 100 is going to be less costly per copy than bomber
20 number 25?

21 General Goldfein: Well, we amortize those over time.
22 So what we learned in the B-2 was, of course, when we did
23 our cost projections and then we stopped the buy at 21
24 aircraft, all of those costs were borne by 21 aircraft. We
25 never want to go down that path again. So 100 aircraft is

1 going to have those costs amortized over time. If we buy
2 130 aircraft, it is going to be lower cost over time because
3 you amortize over the cost of the fleet. So for us, we
4 think the sweet spot is at least 100 bombers when it comes
5 to the B-21.

6 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

7 I am just curious. When we talk about space, I think
8 we began a discussion here on it, but I just want to get
9 into this a little bit more and I think it is very important
10 that we emphasize how critical it is, not only air, land,
11 and sea, but we do have the domains of cyber and space. And
12 you have already had some questions here about cyber and
13 your commitment with cyber.

14 Let me get into space just a little bit. I think it is
15 critical that you share with this committee and the American
16 people how serious the threats are to our ability to operate
17 in space and how quickly we need to begin the process of
18 strengthening our defenses for our products or our
19 equipment, which is in space now and in the future. Could
20 you elaborate on that, please?

21 Ms. Wilson: Sir, I was on the House Permanent Select
22 Committee on Intelligence in 2007 when the Chinese
23 demonstrated the ability to launch a missile into space and
24 destroy a satellite. They targeted and destroyed and
25 created all kinds of debris from one of their old weather

1 satellites. I think that got people's attention.

2 But that is not the only thing that is going on with
3 respect to threats to our space capabilities. There are
4 threats from space itself and threats from the ground.
5 There is also the issue of trying to jam space-based assets
6 that the United States relies upon. So we have to assume
7 that because we are so dependent on space, that our
8 adversaries know that and they are developing capabilities
9 to deny us the high ground in that way. And we have to plan
10 for that eventuality.

11 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

12 General Goldfein: Sir, where the Secretary and I are
13 focused is in four key areas relative to moving forward on
14 this migration or evolution of space as a benign domain to a
15 warfighting domain where we have the responsibility for
16 gaining and maintaining space superiority, much like I
17 talked about air superiority previously.

18 And the four key areas that we are focused on are,
19 first, how do we ensure that we have got good, solid
20 strategy and policy that comes to us that then we can then
21 build good concept of operations, which we are right now in
22 the process of finalizing in joint publications to speak to
23 the language of joint warfighting as we normalize space as a
24 joint warfighting domain.

25 From those concept of operations comes solid

1 requirements as the joint chief that you would look at for
2 space, and as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, I am
3 responsible for requirements to be able to ensure that we
4 build solid requirements and we hold those firm.

5 From solid requirements, then we look at how we acquire
6 and how we ensure that we have acquisition authority that
7 acquires at a pace that outpaces the enemy.

8 And finally, as the Secretary mentioned before, it is
9 how do we organize, train, equip, and present ready forces
10 to be able to fight and win in space if a war extends there.

11 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono?

13 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 General, the Eagle Vision system, which provides
15 unclassified imagery, has proven to be very valuable in
16 military operations and exercises with our allies, as well
17 as in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions.

18 Senator Graham and I have been strong proponents of
19 this system, and as you know, we have a unit in the Hawaii
20 Air National Guard, which has proven very useful in mil-to-
21 mil exercises and HADR missions.

22 So I want to commend you for including Eagle Vision in
23 your budget request at a level which will allow program
24 stability and the necessary resources to maintain important
25 capabilities such as SAR, synthetic aperture radar. I think

1 this is a very good investment which will continue to
2 produce significant dividends. So, again, I thank you for
3 your attention to Eagle Vision.

4 Secretary Wilson, I am very concerned about stability
5 in the Asia-Pacific area even as we see all kinds of
6 conflagrations in the Middle East, as well as in Africa and
7 other parts. So peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific is
8 essential and is important for the United States to project
9 strength and reassure our allies, particularly in light of
10 the actions of China and North Korea.

11 Do you envision an expanded role for the Guard and
12 Reserve components in future Asia-Pacific missions? And
13 what additional assets does the Air Force envision directing
14 to the Asia-Pacific area of operations?

15 Ms. Wilson: Well, Senator, of course, we organize,
16 train, and equip forces for the combatant commanders, and we
17 also have tens of thousands of airmen who are stationed
18 forward permanently and others that rotate through the Asia-
19 Pacific theater. We also announced yesterday that as we
20 bring KC-46's to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, that the
21 KC-135's that are there are going to move up to Fairford to
22 support the air bridge with tankers across the Pacific. So
23 it is an important theater for us. We support the combatant
24 commanders' requirements for warfighting and their operating
25 plans.

1 Senator Hirono: So are you saying that we are doing
2 enough to make sure that enough resources are going toward
3 the Asia-Pacific theater?

4 General Goldfein: Ma'am, I will just offer to you that
5 the rebalance to the Pacific has actually been more about
6 what we have taken risk in elsewhere to be able to maintain
7 a steady presence in the Pacific region. If you take a look
8 historically over time, the Air Force component has actually
9 not changed significantly. We have kept forces on Guam,
10 forces on the peninsula, forces in Japan, forces in Hawaii
11 and Alaska.

12 So what has happened is we have actually taken forces,
13 as we have gotten smaller over time, from the European
14 theater primarily, here in the homeland, but we have kept
15 our forces in the Pacific relatively stable. So I would
16 offer to you that my projection, based on the size of the
17 force we have and the global responsibilities we have -- you
18 will see that the Pacific laydown will probably remain
19 relatively unchanged.

20 Senator Hirono: I thank you for that because I think
21 that the Asia-Pacific area of the world needs to remain as
22 stable as we can, especially as we know with North Korea
23 doing what it is doing and China's continuing buildup of
24 their military.

25 I know that the budget challenges -- you often have to

1 weigh readiness, modernization, and additional capabilities
2 versus military construction, MILCON. This is for you,
3 General. What impact does limited MILCON funding have on
4 the capability to fulfill your mission requirements, and
5 what is the Air Force doing to mitigate mission impact
6 resulting from reduced MILCON funding?

7 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. As we have focused on
8 the current fight and combat operations, we have taken risks
9 in MILCON. And the challenge for a service that fights from
10 its base -- I mean, go back to that Whiteman example I gave
11 you with the B-2 strike. We had to fight Whiteman before we
12 fought the B-2, meaning we project power from our bases.

13 So our focus on MILCON, really our priorities, has been
14 first and foremost combatant commander critical needs. The
15 second priority has been new mission beddown. So those
16 bases that are getting KC-46's, F-35's -- that is part of
17 that program. So we focus MILCON efforts there. And the
18 third that we have gone to is what we call worst first, and
19 that is where we compete MILCON projects and there is
20 actually very little money that we are able to put towards
21 those when we look at all the other competing priorities.
22 So for an Air Force, the impact is our being able to project
23 power from those bases.

24 One good news story, though, I will tell you is
25 investments we have made in the European Reconstruction

1 Initiative, ERI, because it has become very clear to the
2 combatant commander that our ability to push forward forces
3 quickly is going to be based on our access and the bases we
4 can operate on. So we do have a fair amount of investment
5 to ERI that is helpful.

6 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst?

9 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Secretary Wilson and General
10 Goldfein, for being in front of us today.

11 General, SOCOM proved that a low-cost but highly lethal
12 platform is an incredible asset to our current battlefield.
13 And the Combat Dragon 2 program took retired OV-10's and
14 outfitted them with commercial off-the-shelf technology.
15 And they flew 120 combat missions and employed 63 advanced
16 precision kill weapon systems in an 82-day deployment.

17 And as the Air Force conducts its testing this summer
18 on light attack aircraft, how are you leveraging the
19 previous experiences that SOCOM has had?

20 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. Having been involved
21 personally in both Combat Dragon 1 and Combat Dragon 2, we
22 are calling this, to a certain extent, Combat Dragon 3. And
23 so we are leveraging all of the experience and all of the
24 lessons we learned from that.

25 What is important about this particular experiment,

1 which aligns exactly with some of the additional authorities
2 that Congress has given to the service chief and the service
3 secretary, is it allows us to actually go out to industry
4 and ask what do you have that is shovel ready, that there is
5 not a lot of development costs that we could actually put
6 into the fight and acquire, if we chose to very quickly.

7 But equally important to that is what kind of a network
8 will they be able to connect to. So as we look at the fight
9 against violent extremism that extends from the Philippines
10 to Nigeria and everywhere in between, how do we actually
11 network this capability so that we can actually then produce
12 the combat value we need? That is the next step of the
13 Combat Dragon series. It is not only to look at the
14 platform. It is actually to look at the network it rides
15 on.

16 And so we are hopeful that when we see what industry
17 comes forward in the first phase of this that we are going
18 to hold this summer in New Mexico, that we will be able to
19 go on to a follow-on phase, which will be a combat
20 demonstration.

21 Senator Ernst: That is very good to hear.

22 We know that we have seen successes in that program
23 already. So if you were funded, then would you be able to
24 move forward much faster in some of those trials then and
25 actually see this platform through fruition sooner because

1 of those proven successes?

2 General Goldfein: Ma'am, actually we got the money in.
3 It actually does not cost us that much, quite frankly, to
4 run an experiment because for very few dollars that we have
5 been able to put forward in the budget, we have got a
6 partnership now with industry who have chosen to come in and
7 show us what they have. So actually we do not need
8 additional funding for the experiment. The question will be
9 really, okay, what have we learned from the experiment and
10 then what do want to go forward from there. That is the
11 time when we will be definitely coming back to Congress.

12 Senator Ernst: Very good. I think it is a great
13 example of taking what we already have and fitting it
14 towards the wave of the future with the technology. And so
15 if we have already proven that -- and I am sure you will see
16 the same level of success in your experimentation, but we
17 need to move quickly on that. And I appreciate the fact
18 that you do have knowledge of that.

19 Secretary, we continue to see life support systems
20 grounding entire fleets of our advanced fighters due to
21 physiological episodes. And we saw with the F-22 not too
22 long ago, and today we are seeing that in the T-45's and
23 F-18's.

24 Surprisingly, despite multiple sensors in the
25 generating systems, we do not monitor the oxygen level right

1 before inhalation or right when the pilot exhales. It is my
2 understanding that the same applies to the F-35.

3 Would monitoring what exactly pilots are inhaling and
4 exhaling not be important?

5 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I will probably take that for the
6 record. The aircraft that I am most familiar with most
7 recently that had the problem was the Navy F-18. And I will
8 ask the Chief whether he is aware of any problems that we
9 have had recently with Air Force aircraft. But as to what
10 the F-35 actually uses on inhalation and exhalation, I will
11 have to get back to you.

12 [The information follows:]

13 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Ernst: Okay.

2 General, do you want to address that?

3 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. We actually have a
4 little bit of history with the F-22 as well. And what we
5 learned in the F-22 was that what we train to, which was to
6 understand the indications of hypoxia, which is having less
7 oxygen than you would normally need at altitude -- we
8 learned in that system -- the way it works is actually the
9 pilots were getting too much oxygen. And what we did not
10 know at the time that we learned through that study was that
11 too much oxygen will actually give you some of the same
12 symptoms.

13 So we went back and we retrofitted that in terms of how
14 we operate. So now we are looking at what we learned from
15 that particular test and series and applying that to what --
16 we are helping the Navy with what they are doing with their
17 F-18's. And we are just now beginning to look at the F-35
18 from the same lens.

19 Senator Ernst: Very good. I think monitoring
20 throughout the system is important, but actually what they
21 are taking in and exhaling is probably pretty smart to do as
22 well. So I appreciate it.

23 Thank you both for being here today.

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 Chairman McCain: Senator Peters?

1 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 And thank you to both our witnesses here today.

3 Secretary Wilson, during your confirmation, we
4 discussed the Air Force strategic basing plan for the F-35A,
5 basing operations 5 and 6. And I understand that site
6 survey teams are visiting the five candidate bases of the
7 summer, and we are expecting a decision on the preferred and
8 reasonable alternatives due sometime later this year.

9 You, as you always have, stressed the need for
10 readiness. And the Air Force has successfully used the
11 active associate unit model to provide for increased
12 training opportunities and share equipment and knowledge
13 between the active, Guard, and Reserve components.

14 Does the Air Force intend for all Air Guard units
15 receiving F-35's to become an active associate unit and host
16 active duty airmen at these bases that you are aware of?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I do not think that that was one
18 of the requirements.

19 I would also tell you that, yes, there are site surveys
20 going on. I intentionally do not ask about the status of
21 those surveys until they are ready to fully brief me on
22 their analysis. So I keep my hands off until the analysis
23 is ready, and then it is presented to me as a whole.

24 Senator Peters: So that was not a requirement to your
25 knowledge, but certainly that is something that would be a

1 positive. Is that correct, General?

2 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. We first start off in the
3 basing process determining what will be the lead at that
4 base. So, therefore, when we talk about ops 5 and 6 or 7,
5 we first say this is going to be an Air National Guard base.
6 This is going to be an active. This is going to be a
7 Reserve.

8 We have a separate process that takes a look at the
9 values of associations. And so we look at every base to
10 determine where we can actually get value from an
11 association, whether that be a classic or an active
12 association or reserve association. So we actually do not
13 start down the path in the beginning. We establish a lead
14 for that base, which service will be lead or which component
15 will be lead, and then we look at it from a purpose of an
16 association.

17 Senator Peters: If I could follow up as part of some
18 of the criteria, it is my understanding that close proximity
19 to large airspace in this decision is very important, those
20 that have advanced threat emitters. Is that accurate that
21 that is going to be a significant factor as you are
22 evaluating potential sites?

23 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, it is.

24 Senator Peters: And does the Air Force consider
25 support or opposition in an installation's community as part

1 of that process, the impact of potential lawsuits and others
2 that could delay the basing process? I would assume you are
3 looking for an active and vibrant community that is very
4 excited about the basing. Would that be an accurate
5 assessment?

6 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And, you know, the
7 community involvement relative to an increasingly deployed
8 force because families of these airmen live in the
9 communities, and it is the communities that wrap their arms
10 around them and take care of them. It is the schools that
11 the kids go to. All of that plays in when we are taking a
12 look at particular bases.

13 Senator Peters: Thank you.

14 Secretary Wilson, the 110th attack wing of the Michigan
15 Air National Guard flies the MQ Reaper, as you are aware.
16 And while the aircraft they fly can be anywhere in the
17 world, we are very proud that the pilots are sitting in
18 Battle Creek, Michigan.

19 Their base currently has only one ground control
20 station despite having space for three, and this limits the
21 number of combat air patrols that the pilots and operators
22 at the 110th can contribute to. If there is ever a
23 technical issue, for example, with any of their existing
24 consoles, the wing is unable to fly at all or they may have
25 to reallocate their pilots somewhere else at additional

1 expense. And given the demand for persistent ISR coverage,
2 as well as strike capabilities, installations hosting RPA
3 wings should hopefully have the equipment necessary to
4 contribute to the flight.

5 Secretary Wilson, in response to a question for the
6 record that I submitted during your confirmation hearing,
7 you said that, if confirmed, you would review this high-
8 demand program to ensure that we are using the resources we
9 have to accomplish the mission expected of us cost
10 effectively. To date, have you been able to review
11 allocation of resources for RPA missions at places like
12 Battle Creek but certainly other places around the country
13 as well? And what is the Air Force's plan to ensure that
14 the RPA mission is properly resourced?

15 Ms. Wilson: Senator, the fiscal year 2018 budget does
16 fund what we call the RPA get well plan. The hardest part,
17 as I understand it, for the RPA mission is the people part,
18 and it is making sure that we do not take on more. There is
19 an insatiable demand for intelligence, surveillance, and
20 reconnaissance, and the decision to say we just cannot keep
21 exponentially expanding this without getting the people
22 trained and getting this right has been part of that get
23 well plan. So the people part appears to be the long pole
24 in the tent.

25 Senator Peters: Thank you.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Perdue?

2 Senator Perdue: Thank you, Chairman.

3 Thank you both.

4 I want to make one comment for the record. It is
5 awfully reassuring, Mr. Chairman, that 40 years later we
6 have two people leading our Air Force who are esteemed
7 graduates of our beloved Air Force Academy. So
8 congratulations to you both. Thank you for being here and
9 for your careers.

10 I have two quick questions. Madam Secretary, I do not
11 have time. We could spend all day talking about this. The
12 budget is the number one concern here. I am concerned that
13 we are not funding you at the level to where you can meet
14 the missions that you need to meet to protect our country
15 and fulfill the missions that the General laid out earlier.

16 Today we are in a different world than we were just 10
17 years ago. China is spending in equivalent dollars \$826
18 billion on their military. To put it in perspective, we
19 spend about \$600 billion in this budget. The Air Force gets
20 about 20 percent, a little more than 20 percent of that
21 budget, as I understand it today. The threats today are
22 probably more dangerous than anytime in my lifetime
23 especially.

24 And what I am concerned about is we are putting
25 arbitrary constraints on you guys, and we have not had a

1 bottoms-up look at this thing since 2011 when Secretary
2 Gates at that point did a 5-year analysis, and for 2016, his
3 estimate was a little over \$100 billion more than we
4 actually spent in 2016. In 2016, we spent 3.1 percent of
5 our GDP on our military. That is 100 basis points less than
6 our 30-year average. That is about \$200 billion. So I can
7 triangulate around this \$200 billion number a number of
8 different ways.

9 My question to you today is, Madam Secretary, if we do
10 not remove this Budget Control Act limit, what will that
11 mean to the Air Force this year, and what will it mean to us
12 over the next 5 years?

13 Ms. Wilson: Senator, if the Budget Control Act limit
14 is not fixed, if we have to go through sequester, that will
15 be a \$15 billion cut.

16 Senator Perdue: 5-0 or 1-5?

17 Ms. Wilson: 1-5 billion.

18 Senator Perdue: And what would that mean to end
19 strength, readiness, capacity --

20 Ms. Wilson: That would mean we would go through pretty
21 much what we did after sequester in the 2013 time frame. We
22 would have to stop flying hours. We would have to ground --

23 Senator Perdue: Sorry to interrupt. We are only
24 flying about 150 hours a year right now for a pilot.
25 Correct?

1 Ms. Wilson: It would be devastating.

2 Senator Perdue: And that is devastating.

3 So here is the question. If that were to happen, can
4 you fulfill your mission that was laid out earlier so
5 articulately by the General in terms of the mission of the
6 Air Force today?

7 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we are too small for what the
8 Nation expects of us now, and sequester would further --

9 Senator Perdue: Thank you. That is the answer I was
10 looking for.

11 I want to move on to space. General, you made a
12 comment after -- well, let me first put a little background
13 in here. You mentioned, Secretary, that China 10 years ago
14 and just again in 2014 has demonstrated a capability, but
15 Russia is also demonstrating capabilities today. In an
16 unclassified environment, the GAO mentioned earlier this
17 year that they have identified 60 stakeholder organizations
18 that get involved in the decision-making process in our
19 space programs.

20 General, you made a comment and I agree with you 100
21 percent. That is no way to run a railroad. 60 voices
22 cannot and will not produce a coherent acquisition strategy.

23 Would you elaborate on that and help us understand what
24 that should look like?

25 We had the Rumsfeld Commission as early as 2001 called

1 this out, and here we are 16 years later still debating just
2 the institutional organization and the organization itself.
3 And we have a person that now is Chief of the Air Force
4 telling us that this is no way to run a railroad. I agree.

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. Without walking it back
6 through those four lines of effort where we are focused
7 where the Secretary and I are moving forward, this really
8 comes down to a discussion about acquisition and acquisition
9 authority and really decision authority. And so when you
10 look at the 60 different folks that are in the organization
11 now that each can say no or slow down the progress, the
12 challenge we face is really one of decision authority. How
13 do we actually ensure that we can make decisions, have the
14 accountability in the process so we can move forward and
15 acquire a capability at a pace that is faster than our
16 adversaries.

17 Senator Perdue: Sir, is this a little bit like the
18 cyber development that we are going through as a military?
19 Is this something we should look at organizationally from
20 the military standpoint in terms of space and cyber? Madam
21 Secretary, you may want to jump in on that as well.

22 Ms. Wilson: Senator, actually in the last National
23 Defense Authorization Act, this committee and the Congress
24 gave instructions to the Department of Defense to move
25 decision authority back to the Air Force. We are trying to

1 move forward with that.

2 In addition, there was a number of work done on
3 organization before I arrived. I am taking a hard scrub
4 brush to that as to how we organize ourselves better both
5 for operations and for policy and acquisition so that we can
6 get rapid decisions. There are a lot of people who have to
7 have insight, but that does not mean that everybody gets a
8 veto. So we will be looking at that over the spring and
9 summer here to make decisions to make sure the right people
10 are aware but the decision authority is clear and fast.

11 Senator Perdue: Thank you.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman McCain: Senator Warren?

14 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 And thank you to our witnesses for being here.

16 I want to quickly ask about the importance of our non-
17 military agencies and programs to the Air Force mission.
18 General Goldfein, would a significant reduction in funding
19 to the State Department and other non-defense security
20 agencies and programs make the Air Force job of defending
21 America easier or harder?

22 General Goldfein: Ma'am, I will align with the
23 Secretary of Defense who has clearly stated it would make it
24 harder.

25 Senator Warren: Yes. Thank you. I agree. In fact, I

1 have asked every combatant commander that same question, and
2 to a person, they have all given me essentially the same
3 answer.

4 So what I ask about now is about cyber defenses. We
5 need to be completely sure that our aircraft and our other
6 critical systems cannot be hacked by an adversary and that
7 they are going to work when we really need them. Secretary
8 Wilson and General Goldfein, in your 2018 budget request,
9 you highlight the importance of improving the cyber
10 resiliency of both new and existing weapons systems, making
11 sure that the Air Force systems can stay operational or can
12 bounce back quickly even in the face of aggressive cyber
13 attacks.

14 That said, a few months ago, in the Airspace and Cyber
15 Conference, General Pawlikowski, the Commander of the Air
16 Force Materiel Command, said it would take 5- to 7 years for
17 the Air Force to become fully cyber secure in part because
18 the budget process had not yet made it a priority. And
19 right now, the new Cyber Resiliency Office for Weapons
20 Systems, CROWS, as only five full-time people.

21 I know the Pentagon is a big bureaucracy. I know it
22 does not always move as quickly as you would like. But I
23 would like to ask how does the Air Force's fiscal year 2018
24 budget prioritize securing vulnerabilities in existing
25 weapons systems, and what can we do right now this year to

1 make this a priority?

2 Ms. Wilson: Senator, let me start out by saying in
3 this year's budget, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed
4 a look at how we organize ourselves with respect to cyber
5 and set up cyber defense teams. The Air Force is
6 responsible for 39 of those. This year, we will reach the
7 full 39 and that is funded in the budget.

8 Beyond that, there is the responsibility to try to make
9 sure that our systems are secure, both our communications
10 systems but also our weapons systems. And that has to be
11 built into every element of procurement that we are
12 pursuing. As I understand it, it is not done by a
13 particular center. It is done in every single acquisitions
14 system, and it is a huge challenge.

15 I would also say that it is a rapidly evolving target
16 space. And so trying to maintain cybersecurity both for our
17 systems and more broadly is one of the greatest challenges
18 that we face as a Nation.

19 Senator Warren: So I appreciate what you are saying
20 here and the importance of changes in our acquisition
21 system. So let me just switch over to that immediately.

22 General Goldfein, what kind of changes do you believe
23 we need to make to our acquisition systems in order to
24 execute on your vision of multi-domain command and control?

25 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

1 Currently when we look at weapons systems procurement,
2 I would offer that we are coming out of the industrial age
3 where you think about the weapon system and the munition and
4 the sensor, and then you figure out how to connect it. I
5 think we are getting into an age where victory is going to
6 go to those who actually can connect together capabilities
7 in the future in new ways of doing business.

8 So what that means is you have got to focus on the
9 highway before you focus on the truck. And so getting the
10 network right, having common system architecture, having a
11 common set of standards so that what we procure not only in
12 the Air Force but in the Army, the Navy, and the Marine
13 Corps -- it is going to be how we connect these things up
14 that is going to matter most in the future.

15 For the Air Force of the future, it is going to be old
16 and new, manned and unmanned. It is going to be
17 conventional and unconventional. We are going to have parts
18 that are exquisite that penetrate and those that stand off.
19 It is going to have all of the above. And the challenge for
20 us in the future to move forward is how do we connect them.

21 Senator Warren: So I applaud your vision here. I am
22 just asking in my few remaining seconds about how we need to
23 change our acquisition system so we can accomplish that
24 vision. And I see the Secretary shaking her head. She is
25 very much there on the vision. Do we need to make changes

1 in the acquisition system to get there?

2 Ms. Wilson: I would say two things.

3 One is we need to take full advantage of the
4 authorities which you have given us and sometimes take some
5 risk, calculated risk, to do things quickly. And we are
6 actually doing a scrub of our existing acquisition
7 authorities and what we are not taking advantage of and
8 where we should push the envelope this summer.

9 The second thing is -- and I will just give you an
10 example. The integrated battle management command and
11 control system for space is in this year's budget. That
12 came out of an experiment authorized by the Congress last
13 year on space. It is a common architecture for all kinds of
14 space systems. And it says if you cannot hook into that
15 common architecture for the common picture for command and
16 control, you are not going to build the next satellite
17 system. We are not doing one-off stovepipes. It has to be
18 integrated and drive that through. And we are actually
19 driving that through a very rapid acquisition system.

20 Senator Warren: Thank you very much. And I want to
21 see if I can get you up to Massachusetts to talk to our
22 CROWS folks up there too.

23 Ms. Wilson: You bet you.

24 Senator Warren: Okay, good. Thank you.

25 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 And, Madam Secretary, General Goldfein, good to see you
3 both. It is always impressive to me to hear about just how
4 broad the mission set is for the Air Force. Please pass on
5 our compliments to the professionalism in the service of the
6 men and women you are leading.

7 I wanted to provide one example of that
8 professionalism. In the last 2 months in Alaska, the F-22
9 pilots, Guard and active, and the KC-135 pilots have done
10 missions to intercept Russian Bear bomber runs at America's
11 sovereign airspace five times in the last 2 months. Five
12 intercepts, different ones.

13 General Goldfein, what are the Russians up to, and in
14 your discussions and the tank and the Joint Chiefs, what
15 should be our response?

16 General Goldfein: Sir, we are seeing an increase in
17 Russian activity when it comes to long-range aviation.

18 Senator Sullivan: Are they testing our NORAD
19 capabilities? I mean, what are they doing? What do we see
20 them trying to do right now. That is a lot of intercepts in
21 a 2-month period.

22 General Goldfein: It is. It is a combination of
23 things that we are seeing relative to them reaching out with
24 advancements in aviation that they have invested in. And we
25 are also seeing this as much in the Pacific theater as well.

1 We see that not only from Russia but also from China. So we
2 have seen long-range aviation increases.

3 I will just give one example. I was talking to my
4 counterpart in Japan, and he was telling me that Japan for
5 this year will actually -- they will actually exceed over
6 1,000 intercepts this year, which is more than they have
7 ever had in their history.

8 Senator Sullivan: And are we learning something from
9 our perspective on the intercepts of the Chinese or Russian
10 bomber flights?

11 General Goldfein: We learn something on every
12 particular intercept. Yes, sir.

13 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another question. Last
14 year's NDAA provided the Air Force guidance with the KC-46
15 OCONUS beddown. As you are looking to make that decision,
16 some of the guidance talked about the ability to support
17 multiple combatant commanders in their different warfighting
18 capabilities. And your training area is collocated with
19 other Air Force assets like fifth generation fighters, part
20 of an air bridge to the Asia-Pacific. Are you familiar with
21 that provision of the NDAA?

22 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I am.

23 Senator Sullivan: Are you, Madam Secretary?

24 Ms. Wilson: Yes, sir.

25 Senator Sullivan: What are the three key lessons that

1 we have learned in the ongoing development and deployment of
2 the F-35?

3 General Goldfein: I would say overall the most
4 important lesson we have learned is the importance of
5 information fusion and how we can take an aircraft and be
6 able to sense both what it can do on the aircraft with what
7 it does off the aircraft to able to then be the quarterback
8 for a formation.

9 And very quickly let me just give you a sense of what I
10 saw when I went to Red Flag recently and saw the F-35's
11 debut.

12 I flew the F-117. In the first generation of stealth,
13 we actually had a switch in the cockpit called the stealth
14 switch. And we flipped the switch. All the antennas would
15 stow. All the emissions would stop, and we would close off
16 the world.

17 The F-35 actually connects into the network before the
18 pilot climbs the ladder. And in Nellis Air Force Base, we
19 have a cyber protection team, cyber mission teams that are
20 engaged in a cyber war that are doing this on a cyber range,
21 and the impacts are being fed to the cockpit and on the
22 displays of the F-35 pilot.

23 We had space activities and actually space capabilities
24 taking place in the middle of the campaign, and the impacts
25 of those were actually on the displays and on the helmet of

1 the F-35. He is calling audibles for the formation at 2
2 o'clock in the morning based on the impacts of the space and
3 cyber wars before he even crosses into enemy territory. It
4 is about the fusion of capability of information that the
5 F-35 brings.

6 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there is one other thing that I
7 think is going to be -- sometimes when you have vastly new
8 capabilities, the people who are using those capabilities,
9 the pilots that are out there, start to think of new ways of
10 doing things. So I think we are only at the beginning of
11 the innovation that we are going to see in the way in which
12 we fight with these new tools. So I think it is just
13 starting. It will change the way we fight.

14 The night before I was sworn in, we had dinner at the
15 Chief's house, at Air House, with the head of the Israeli
16 Air Force. And the Israelis still fly. The chief of staff
17 still flies. We do not let our Chief of Staff still fly.
18 He said something. As soon as he met me, he said I have had
19 seven sorties in the F-35, and he said this is a game
20 changer. There is nothing like it. This is an air chief
21 who has flown the F-16, the F-15, the F-4 and done all of
22 those in combat as an Israeli in the Middle East, and he
23 said there is nothing like this in the world. This changes
24 the game.

25 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

3 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Thank you both for being here and for your service to
5 this country.

6 Secretary Wilson, as I know you are aware, we have had
7 issues in Portsmouth, New Hampshire with the water because
8 of perfluorinated compounds, PFCs, that have gotten into the
9 drinking water for the City of Portsmouth because of the
10 former Air Force base at Pease. And the levels there are 12
11 and a half times higher than what as the provisional health
12 advisory from the EPA. We have more than 1,500 Granite
13 Staters who have lived and worked around the air base who
14 have learned that their blood contains elevated levels of
15 these chemicals. And I very much appreciate the Air Force's
16 efforts to date to try and help address the pollution from
17 the operations there at Pease.

18 And you provided funding to ATSDR, which is the federal
19 agency that conducted a feasibility assessment on the health
20 study for those exposed to the contaminated water. But my
21 understanding is that the Air Force has said it is not able
22 to fund a follow-on health study. Can you talk about why
23 that is and what can be done to address this, which is a
24 continuing threat to people in the sea coast region?

25 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I am familiar somewhat with this

1 issue. I think the question is whether the Air Force is the
2 right entity to do -- and whether we even have the
3 authorities to do a human health study on a civilian
4 population around the base. I think the general counsel's
5 offices, both in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, as
6 well as the Air Force, are taking a look at that. And then
7 we are happy to work with you and others on what is the best
8 way to do a human health study. That is not our core
9 competency, honestly.

10 Senator Shaheen: No. I certainly understand that the
11 Air Force would not be doing the study itself. But I also
12 understand that the Navy funded ATSDR to do a study at Camp
13 Lejeune, a similar kind of health study. And I just
14 wondered what is the difference between the Navy's ability
15 to do that and the Air Force's. Is that just willingness?
16 Is there some other issue there?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we heard from your staff. In
18 fact, we got from your staff the tip with respect to Camp
19 Lejeune, and we have asked the general counsel to talk to
20 the Marine Corps and Navy general counsel, find out how they
21 did that and see if we can find you an answer.

22 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. I very much
23 appreciate that, and I know the people in New Hampshire do
24 as well.

25 General Goldfein, I want to follow up on the comments

1 about the KC-46 because I understand that Senator McCain
2 earlier raised his concerns about where we are with the
3 program and some of the delays. But one of the other
4 challenges with getting this new refueling tanker out are
5 the changes that need to be made at some of the bases to
6 address the beddowns, the sustainment, restoration, and
7 modernization. Can you talk about those challenges as well?

8 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. So right now in the
9 2018 budget, we have funded new mission MILCON to make sure
10 that we are meeting our responsibilities for the beddown
11 because, as you know, you have to have some of that
12 completed before the weapon system actually arrives. This
13 morning, we are actually performing -- our acquisition lead
14 is actually doing a schedule review with the company on
15 where we are relative to the schedule. As of this time, we
16 still believe that we are going to be able to absorb the
17 delays at McConnell and Altus and that we will be back on
18 track by the time we actually then arrive at Pease Air Force
19 Base. So the 2018 budget has MILCON in it.

20 Senator Shaheen: Great. Thank you very much.

21 Secretary Wilson, there has been a lot of news in the
22 last 2 days about what is happening in Qatar in the Middle
23 East and the Arab countries who have expressed their concern
24 about the way Qatar is operating a number of things with
25 respect to Iran and Saudi Arabia. I wonder if you are

1 concerned at all about our air base there and the operations
2 that we need to continue to perform out of Qatar and the
3 challenges that we are seeing.

4 Ms. Wilson: Senator, the air operations at Al Udeid
5 are continuing without interruption. Of course, the Air
6 Force and the Department of Defense has a number of backup
7 plans and those kinds of things. But it is our hope that
8 this resolves itself with or without the assistance of the
9 American Secretary of State. So from our perspective, it is
10 largely at this point a diplomatic issue and our air
11 operations continue unabated.

12 Senator Shaheen: So there has been no threat that we
13 have to remove our air base there.

14 Ms. Wilson: No.

15 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

17 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 I want to thank both of you for being here, Dr. Wilson
19 and General Goldfein.

20 I want to return to an issue I have discussed with both
21 of you before, which is the future of the 122nd fighter wing
22 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. We have put this to bed it seems
23 about three times, but it keeps coming up. I was just with
24 our adjutant general and wing commander in Fort Wayne last
25 week, and I can tell you they are doing an incredible job in

1 their A-10 mission.

2 Prior to the A-10 retirement ban, the Air Force was
3 planning to bring F-16's from Hill Air Force Base to Fort
4 Wayne. We would have been starting that mission conversion
5 this year. Just yesterday, there was an article about those
6 Hill F-16's now on their way to Holloman Air Force Base in
7 New Mexico. I understand that given current conditions.

8 But when that decision process began, General Mark
9 Welsh who was then the Air Force Chief of Staff, asked for a
10 meeting with me in my office, and he made a rock solid
11 commitment that the Air Force would be maintaining a manned
12 air combat mission in Fort Wayne.

13 General Goldfein, you and I met less than a month
14 later, just prior to your confirmation hearing, and you told
15 me you would honor General Welsh's commitment.

16 Dr. Wilson, you and I discussed the same issue in a
17 meeting in your confirmation hearing March of this year, in
18 which you said that if a commitment has been made, we will
19 stand by it.

20 I want to make sure that this commitment to maintaining
21 a manned air combat mission at Fort Wayne will be kept. Dr.
22 Wilson?

23 Ms. Wilson: Senator, the A-10 is at Fort Wayne and we
24 have no intention of removing it. It is there for the
25 foreseeable future, and they will have that manned combat

1 mission. We have no intention of changing that.

2 Senator Donnelly: We have been promised a follow-on
3 mission once the A-10 -- if and when it leaves.

4 Ms. Wilson: Senator, our intention is not -- we made
5 the decision to keep the A-10's. So we are keeping the
6 A-10's and we have no intention of taking that away from the
7 Guard.

8 Senator Donnelly: General Goldfein?

9 General Goldfein: Sir, I agree with the Secretary.
10 The reality is we need that wing flying the A-10 right now.
11 And so we made a decision in this budget to keep the A-10.

12 Senator Donnelly: Well, my question is how long does
13 right now last.

14 Ms. Wilson: This does not have the 5-year budget in
15 it, but we are keeping the A-10's for the foreseeable
16 future, which is 5 or 10 years at least.

17 Senator Donnelly: Let me ask you something else.

18 One of the things I have been working on is mental
19 health and mental health services for our service members.
20 I appreciate the commitment both of you have made to improve
21 the mental health and the resiliency of our airmen and
22 military families. The Jacob Sexton Act, which is
23 legislation that was passed, provides for a robust annual
24 mental health assessment for every service member. The Air
25 Force has said in the past that the Sexton Act requirements

1 would be fully implemented by October of 2017. Are we still
2 on track to meet that target?

3 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we are on track to meet that
4 target. But in my view it is more than that. Every morning
5 when the Chief and I start the morning --

6 Senator Donnelly: And the Sexton Act there is more
7 than that too, but I was just trying to find out about that
8 in particular.

9 Ms. Wilson: The thing to me that is heartbreaking
10 about this is how many mornings we come in and the status
11 report includes a suicide, active, Guard, and Reserve. And
12 they come up in our morning reports. And somehow we have to
13 get to that "we man" culture that says we try to take care
14 of each other and identify problems and get people help when
15 they need it.

16 Chairman McCain: Could I interrupt? Madam Secretary,
17 section 702 of the Defense Authorization Act required it.
18 So are you going to implement the law or are you going to
19 have meetings and talk about it?

20 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we are implementing the law.

21 Chairman McCain: All right. Thanks.

22 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 General Goldfein?

24 General Goldfein: Sir, one of the things that we are
25 looking at is the Special Operations Command has a very

1 successful program called Preservation of the Force and
2 Family, POTFF for an acronym. What they have asked is an
3 important question, and the question is, if we would take an
4 aircraft off the line at a certain point for scheduled
5 maintenance, check it, pull panels, make sure it is good,
6 get it back on the line, and then later do depot
7 maintenance, which is a heavier look, if we would do that
8 for machines, what would it look like if we did that for
9 people?

10 And so now we are following their lead on a program
11 that looks at how do we take airmen off the line at a
12 certain point and make sure we pull panels, if you will, and
13 take a look at how they are doing, how they are doing
14 financially, how are they doing with their career, how they
15 are doing at home, how are they doing spiritually. Once it
16 is scheduled maintenance, the stigma goes away because
17 everyone is doing it. And then we do a later time and we
18 pull them off for depot maintenance, which is a deeper look.

19 So we have three bases now that we have started this.
20 We call it Task Force True North. We are moving out on
21 this, and we are going to look at that across the entire Air
22 Force because I think SOCOM has got the model for success.

23 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 And I would just like to say that I kind of felt like I
25 got half an answer on the A-10's because there is a

1 commitment for an ongoing manned mission. And as long as I
2 am here, I will make sure that commitment is kept.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman McCain: Thank you also, Senator Donnelly.
5 Twice I have kind of heard, well, yes, we see the law but we
6 are not implementing it. I have to tell you, Madam
7 Secretary and General, we are going to have to start
8 imposing some penalties if you do not carry out the law.
9 That is our job. That is our job, not to give you an option
10 as to whether we are going to do something or not. If it
11 had been entirely up to you, the A-10 would be down in the
12 bone yard in Tucson. So we are going to be looking at
13 provisions that we put in the bill in the last 2 years,
14 which are reform provisions, and frankly, we are going to
15 have to impose some penalty if you do not carry out the law.
16 It is sort of a fundamental.

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we will carry out the law.

18 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman McCain: But so far you have not. Anyway, we
20 will give you a list of those that we have mandated, and
21 unfortunately, then if you do not get it done, we are going
22 to have to add it to the bill that there is going to be some
23 kind of penalty for not doing it. We take our jobs very
24 seriously and we take the Constitution very seriously.

25 Senator Graham?

1 Senator Graham: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Madam Secretary, how many political appointments are
3 available to the Department of the Air Force?

4 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there are I believe six that are
5 confirmable, in addition to me.

6 Senator Graham: Are all of them moving forward? Are
7 there names to fill these slots?

8 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there are two that we are still,
9 I believe, interviewing for, but the other ones -- we have a
10 preferred nominee that is in some point in the process.

11 Senator Graham: This is June. When do you think they
12 will get to the committee?

13 Ms. Wilson: Sir, I do not know.

14 Senator Graham: Does this impede your ability to do
15 your job?

16 Ms. Wilson: It is becoming difficult, yes.

17 Senator Graham: Where is the problem? At the White
18 House?

19 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I am not really sure.

20 Senator Graham: Could you let us know?

21 Ms. Wilson: Yes, sir.

22 Senator Graham: This committee -- the chairman has
23 decided, I think, to mark up the 640 versus 603. From the
24 Air Force point of view, could you use some of that money?

25 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we have a list of unfunded

1 requirements.

2 Senator Graham: How much is that?

3 Ms. Wilson: Senator, it is a little more than \$10
4 billion.

5 Senator Graham: I think all the unfunded requirements
6 are \$30 billion. So 603 plus 30 is 633. So we are not far
7 off. So if you had \$10 billion more on top of what the
8 White House requested, that would be a good thing. Is that
9 right, General?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. It absolutely would be a
11 good thing.

12 Senator Graham: In terms of threats, from 2011 until
13 today when sequestration first kicked in, how would you
14 describe the threats to the Nation in terms of more or less?

15 General Goldfein: Sir, absolutely more, and I think
16 the framework that the Secretary and the Chairman have laid
17 out, which you are familiar with, the Four Plus One, China,
18 Russia, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism -- I can
19 say that in each one of those areas, the threat has
20 increased.

21 Senator Graham: In terms of the ability to deal with
22 those threats, sequestration is the law of the land. It
23 kicks back in this year. What would happen to the Air
24 Force's ability to deal with these threats if we went back
25 to sequestration levels?

1 General Goldfein: Sir, I want to be very clear and it
2 is what all the Joint Chiefs have testified before. We will
3 be unable to execute the Defense Strategic Guidance under
4 sequester.

5 Senator Graham: Do you agree with that, Madam
6 Secretary?

7 Ms. Wilson: Senator, yes, I do.

8 Senator Graham: From the Air Force's point of view,
9 who is our greatest foe? Maybe you can name a couple. And
10 does the budget this committee is proposing -- does it give
11 you the resources adequately to deal with those foes?

12 Ms. Wilson: Senator, when we look at the world and the
13 threats we face, there is China, North Korea, Russia, Iran,
14 and violent extremism that we principally focus on. And all
15 of those threats are growing in different ways. I would say
16 that this budget builds --

17 Senator Graham: Let us just talk about the air threat,
18 from a nation state air threat.

19 Ms. Wilson: China is very rapidly modernizing its air
20 force. North Korea, as you well know, is seeking to have an
21 intercontinental ballistic missile capability and the
22 ability to deliver a nuclear device. I think that concerns
23 us all. Iran also is developing its missile capability and
24 sponsoring terrorist organizations. And the Russians are
25 also modernizing their military.

1 Senator Graham: General, what advice would you give
2 the Congress in terms of this dilemma? Is it better for us
3 to allow the ICBM to be developed with a warhead on top that
4 could reach America and have a missile defense system to
5 deal with the threat with the assurance that if you ever
6 launch toward us, we will destroy North Korea? Or is it
7 better from a homeland security perspective not to allow
8 them to have that capability to begin with?

9 General Goldfein: Sir, I would align with current
10 policy which stated that it is better not to allow them to
11 have it.

12 Senator Graham: And that means, as a last option,
13 military force if diplomacy fails?

14 General Goldfein: Well, sir, my responsibility is to
15 provide the President options and to ensure that he has the
16 options to do what he needs to do.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator King?

18 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Madam Secretary -- did you have a follow-up question,
20 Senator?

21 Senator Graham: No.

22 Senator King: I want to follow up on Senator Shaheen's
23 questions. I am concerned about Al Udeid. In the last 24
24 hours, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt have cut off
25 diplomatic relations with Qatar. Have you been in touch

1 with any officials of those countries or in Qatar directly
2 since that has taken place to guarantee, if you will, the
3 continued viability of our operations at Al Udeid?

4 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I am going to ask the Chief to
5 follow up on this as well.

6 I have not personally been in touch with them, but we
7 have information from Al Udeid, as well as the combatant
8 commander there, and I know the Chief has talked directly.

9 Senator King: General?

10 General Goldfein: Sir, so I have talked directly to
11 the commander there who has assured me that --

12 Senator King: Our commander.

13 General Goldfein: Our commander, our air commander,
14 who lives at Al Udeid. And you may know that I lived there
15 for 2 years from 2011 to 2013 as the Air Component
16 Commander. So I am very familiar with the Qataris and the
17 region, having spent 2 years traveling the region.

18 And what I will tell you is that he assured me that
19 they are working right now through the ambassador and the
20 country team, that this is a diplomatic lead effort, and now
21 militarily there is no impact to our operations. I will
22 tell you that we always build alternative contingencies to
23 be able to continue operations.

24 And then I will just share with you -- again, this is
25 in diplomatic lanes, but the military element to it -- as

1 the region works this out and the GCC countries work this
2 out -- one of my responsibilities as the Air Component
3 Commander was to be the area defense commander and to build
4 a collective defense of the Arabian Gulf.

5 Senator King: And that is what worries me is the split
6 creates a new reality that we have not seen before.

7 General Goldfein: We spent 2 years -- and it has been
8 built on since then -- talking to the countries in the
9 region to ensure they understood that individually, when it
10 comes to countering Iranian behavior and especially Iranian
11 missile threats -- you know, from the UAE to Iran is about a
12 5- to 7-minute time of flight. And so we worked together to
13 ensure that the nations understood that collectively they
14 actually had what they need to defend themselves.

15 Senator King: I do not mean to interrupt you, but I
16 want to get to some other subjects. But I think the point
17 is they have understood it in the past. The question is do
18 they understand now and what are the implications of what
19 happened yesterday --

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. That is the point, that
21 militarily they need to work through this to ensure they can
22 maintain a collective defense.

23 Senator King: General, let me go to the pilot
24 shortage. I met with younger pilots, mid-career pilots, and
25 they do not point to budget issues. They point to quality

1 of life issues, and particularly as they get on in their
2 careers, they end up flying desks more than they fly
3 airplanes. What is the bottleneck? If you had to identify
4 three factors to address, what are they, one, two, three?

5 General Goldfein: I want to thank you and Senator
6 Cotton for both taking the time to talk to these pilots.

7 Number one, I get asked all the time -- when I am home,
8 I am not home. As soon as I get back from a deployment, I
9 am going to go remote again or I am going to go something
10 else. So just the time at home. So we are working on ways
11 that we can create space in the calendar, just a basic
12 scheduling.

13 Number two is to get them airborne because pilots who
14 do not fly are not going to stay and get them the flying
15 hours.

16 Senator King: And part of the problem there is we do
17 not have enough maintainers. Right?

18 General Goldfein: Exactly.

19 Senator King: It is a shortage of a shortage.

20 General Goldfein: And that is why in this budget you
21 will see us going after personnel as our number one
22 readiness issue to ensure that we have the critical skills
23 to get the aircraft in the air to get them flying.

24 And the number three part of this is to remove what I
25 would call a series of things that are just irritating over

1 time. As we have gotten smaller, the workload and the
2 burden --

3 Senator King: Paperwork --

4 General Goldfein: -- has come to the smaller force.
5 And I am sure you heard this loud and clear. So we are
6 putting civilians into squadrons to take on some of that
7 workload. We are looking at building healthy squadrons. We
8 are looking at all those things that go into building a
9 healthy atmosphere so we can get at this because it is just
10 as much about quality of service as quality of life.

11 Senator King: Is any one person in your organization
12 in charge of this retention issue?

13 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. Lieutenant General Chris
14 Nowland, who is my A-3, is overall in charge. He has got
15 the lead within the Air Force. I have got the lead within
16 the Joint Chiefs because this affects all of the services,
17 and my commander for Air Mobility Command that actually
18 works with the civilian airlines every day because he has
19 the civilian reserve air fleet -- he has got the lead for
20 working with industry. So we are working it from a national
21 level, internal to the Air Force, and across the joint team.

22 Senator King: Well, I appreciate that, and I hope that
23 General Nowland wakes up every morning saying how are we
24 going to solve this problem because we have got to solve it.
25 And this is not a budget issue really. This is an

1 organizational issue.

2 Finally, I am out of time. I just want to say we have
3 talked a little bit about the F-35 and the B-21. If what
4 happened to the F-35 happens to the B-21, I am going to find
5 you. We have got to see that that does not happen. We have
6 got to learn those lessons. The country cannot afford
7 either the time or the money in order to field the B-21
8 efficiently and cost effectively.

9 General Goldfein: Sir, you can be assured I am the
10 chief requirements officer for the B-21, and I expect to be
11 held fully accountable.

12 Senator King: Thank you.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

15 Senator Cotton: Thank you and welcome, Secretary
16 Wilson. Congratulations. General Goldfein, good to see you
17 again.

18 I want to build upon what Senator King was speaking
19 about on pilot retention. As you know but as some members
20 of the committee and the public may not know, Senator King,
21 my ranking member on the Airland Power Subcommittee recently
22 held a roundtable breakfast with several company grade
23 officers, a few young majors as well who are pilots,
24 unfortunately, some of whom have decided to leave the
25 service already and go to the airlines. As Senator King

1 says, this cannot be only a monetary issue. This committee
2 offered \$35,000 in bonuses last year. I suspect we could
3 double or even triple that at some serious expense without
4 increasing retention numbers that much because although
5 these pilots found the bonuses were nice to have, when you
6 amortize that out over the years of commitment they are
7 taking on and some of the other, as you call them,
8 irritants, General Goldfein, it simply did not make sense.
9 Not only can the airlines in the long run probably pay them
10 more, but they can give them a lot more stability as well.
11 You can go to an airline and predict exactly which 10 or 12
12 days a month that you are going to be flying the way you
13 cannot in the Air Force.

14 I want to commend you on your efforts to try to
15 eliminate a lot of those non-essential duties that are an
16 irritant for our young pilots so they can get back to focus
17 on flying. I want to commend you for your focus on pushing
18 command authorities back down to the squadron level. I know
19 your push to add civilians to the squadrons to alleviate
20 some of this additional administrative workload has really
21 made a difference in the morale and those pilots appreciate
22 it.

23 Senator King mentioned flight time. That is flight
24 time in the short term of being able to get in the cockpit
25 and fly. But we also heard an opinion on the long term as

1 well that many of these young men and women join the Air
2 Force because they want to fly. They do not want to sit at
3 desks. They do not want to be PowerPoint warriors. And to
4 put a fine point on it, they do not want to be Chief of
5 Staff of the Air Force. They respect you. They admire what
6 you have accomplished in your career, but they look back at
7 what Captain or Major Goldfein was doing and saying I want
8 to do that for most of my career or all of my career. And
9 they say they are simply not allowed to. The Air Force
10 forces them to move on and up.

11 They suggested we take a look at what is called a
12 tactical track to allow officers who want to spend their
13 career when they are at the peak of their skills to remain
14 flying F-15's or F-16's or B-2's or what have you. Is this
15 something the Air Force has under consideration?

16 General Goldfein: Sir, we are looking at it.

17 But I also want to make sure that we are clear. If you
18 put a piece of paper in front of Captain Goldfein and said,
19 listen, Captain, if you want to stay flying and never do
20 anything else, all you got to do is sign here and you will
21 never make it past lieutenant colonel, I would have signed
22 it in a second. That is exactly what our young captains
23 feel like. But then we give them a leadership position and
24 they understand what it feels like to actually lead young
25 men and women into combat. And hopefully we hook them. And

1 so there are some things in a career that we want them to
2 do. While we are looking at different tracks, what I do not
3 to do is to have young officers who have not had the chance
4 to actually show what they are made of relative to
5 leadership, opportunities, much like I am sure you
6 experienced as you were leading soldiers -- once you do it
7 and you realize the fact that you can actually have an
8 impact on people's lives, I want to make sure that we do not
9 close doors to those young officers who may find that they
10 actually can be great chiefs of staff some day.

11 Senator Cotton: Captain Goldfein was a pretty good
12 pilot. Was he not?

13 General Goldfein: He was the best pilot in the Air
14 Force.

15 [Laughter.]

16 Senator Cotton: It is funny. You know, those captains
17 and majors said they are the best pilots, and the colonels
18 and the generals are over the hill.

19 General Goldfein: Boy, if we do not have that today,
20 then we got bigger problems.

21 Senator Cotton: But Captain Goldfein made that
22 decision at a different time in the Air Force in its size
23 and funding. We are facing, as we have heard from Senator
24 McCain, Senator Reed, Senator Wicker, Senator King,
25 something of a crisis in fighter pilot retention. And maybe

1 we might lose one or two candidates for chief of staff of
2 the Air Force in 2035, but I think that we have to consider
3 this option for 900 or 1,100 pilots short, however many
4 pilots we are short.

5 General Goldfein: Absolutely. And we are continuing
6 to look at that.

7 Beyond this, if I can just take 30 seconds, the other
8 part of this is the life in the squadron and this idea of
9 service and making sure that we do not ever lose the fact
10 because we have had a lot of discussions here about all the
11 different issues. And the Secretary and I are committed to
12 swinging away at this. But there is a big part of this that
13 is also the reason that you joined the Army and I joined the
14 Air Force, which was to serve, to be part of something
15 bigger than ourselves, to be able to make a difference in
16 the world, to be a better version of ourselves. All that
17 still occurs, and we want to make sure that we capture that
18 in our young airmen we have today as we go forward.

19 Senator Cotton: I understand. The Army and Air Force
20 are different institutions, though. In the Army, it is the
21 junior enlisted who are at the tip of the spear. They are
22 driving vehicles. They are manning the crew-served weapons.
23 Senior enlisted and officers are controlling the element.
24 In the Air Force, it is your officers that are at the tip of
25 the spear. It is Captain Goldfein who is out flying

1 missions in combat and getting shot down in combat. It is
2 something that we have to take into account when we look at
3 the way the two services organize their affairs.

4 One final point. A lot of issues with the level of
5 online training. I know this is something both of you have
6 looked at. But for the record, I just want to say that our
7 pilots who are flying missions need to get the kind of basic
8 training in critical issues like sexual harassment, sexual
9 assault prevention. We heard reports of some of our pilots,
10 though getting mandatory online training, things like
11 preventing human trafficking, which is a very important and
12 noble goal but maybe better suited for law enforcement or
13 intelligence and so forth. So I hope you will take a
14 careful look at all of the training requirements we are
15 putting on pilots who need to get more time in the cockpit
16 or more time with their families.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Kaine?

18 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 And thank you to the witnesses.

20 Just a point to follow up on a question or comment that
21 Senator Graham made, this question about the pace of
22 appointments. The President tweeted the other day that the
23 hollowness was because of Democratic obstruction. And I
24 very much was offended by that. The President has forwarded
25 to us by my counting about 20 percent of the nominations

1 that are the Senate-confirmable positions. 80 percent there
2 has not been a nominee forwarded to us in June. And
3 certainly on the committees that I serve that are national
4 security committees, the Armed Services and the Foreign
5 Relations Committee, the pace of the chair, once the
6 nominations are here from the White House, has been to move
7 them through committee pretty quickly. And I am not aware
8 of things slowing down on the floor on these positions. And
9 so I will just make that as a statement for the record. I
10 think the facts will bear that out.

11 There has been some good testimony about the pilot
12 issue, shortages of pilots, a great discussion with Senator
13 Cotton. You mentioned the numbers on maintainers. The
14 numbers on maintainers are maybe even more challenging.
15 Could you each describe what you are doing to try to deal
16 with that shortage?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, this budget also includes an
18 increase in maintainers. One of the reasons that we cannot
19 recover in a single year, no matter how much money you put
20 at it, is because readiness requires not just an avionics
21 tech who has got 1 year of experience, but you got to have
22 those mid-level NCOs, the supervisors, the experts on the
23 job, and there is only so much you can accelerate
24 experience. So one of the things that is a real concern on
25 the retention side is trying to keep those maintainers so

1 that you have got a balanced force across all of the
2 different ranks. And it is a real challenge if you have a
3 very young force without that hands-on skill and that
4 experience to know how to fix this problem right now. So it
5 is a challenge.

6 Senator Kaine: And if I am correct, the maintainer
7 workforce is an interesting mixture of active, Guard, and
8 Reserve, some civilians in that workforce. So it is an
9 interesting human resources issue. But you have some
10 breadth of talent from the different posts to pull from in
11 meeting maintainer needs. Correct?

12 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And one of the things
13 that we are doing is we have shifted to civilian and
14 contract maintenance for all those flying operations that
15 are actually not deployable to combat. So for our training
16 -- our training is primarily civilian contract maintenance.
17 So we freed up the blue suit, if you will, to take on that
18 deployable piece of it.

19 The challenge we find, though, is that in the smaller
20 force -- I will give you one vignette. When I started
21 flying airplanes, I would walk out to the airplane. I would
22 meet a dedicated and assistant crew chief at the airplane.
23 We would walk around the airplane. I would strap it on. We
24 would go. I would get to the end of the runway, and a
25 different set of crew chiefs would be there to what we call

1 last chance or end of runway. They would pull the pins.
2 They would arm the bombs. They would make sure we were good
3 to go, and we would take off, fly to a destination and there
4 would be a different maintenance crew that would be there.

5 Here is what it looks like today in many places. You
6 taxi slow because the crew chief, the one crew chief has got
7 to get in the bread van and drive to the end of the runway
8 and be that same crew chief that pulls the pins and arms the
9 bombs. And on our worst day, you fly slow because that crew
10 chief has got to jump on a C-17 with his toolkit and get to
11 the destination to meet you when you arrive.

12 The problem is it masks the problem because if you were
13 to go to the data and said did you taxi on time, yes. Did
14 you take off? Did you make your mission? Did you recover?
15 Yes. The issue is we did it on the back of that smaller
16 force, and that is what we cannot sustain as the threats go
17 up and the demand signal goes up.

18 Senator Kaine: A very good answer. That is
19 informative.

20 Let me ask you a question about one item that is in
21 this budget that I thought was interesting. I do not really
22 have an opinion about it. But your budget proposes to move
23 10,000 civilian acquisition personnel from the O&M account
24 to the research, development, test, and evaluation account.
25 I just thought that was interesting, and could you describe

1 a little bit your thinking in terms of moving that amount of
2 personnel? That is a big move.

3 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I do not think their jobs are
4 changing. It is just a question of --

5 Senator Kaine: Right. How will they be managed and
6 where they fit.

7 Ms. Wilson: -- where they fit and what the real work
8 is they are doing. And the finance people felt that they
9 were better accounted for as research, development, test,
10 and evaluation rather than the O&M side.

11 Senator Kaine: And so is this just sort of where they
12 are accounted for in the budget, not only are their jobs not
13 changing, but sort of the chain of command and the
14 reporting? How they report will not change either?

15 Ms. Wilson: That is correct, that it is really just an
16 accounting change.

17 Senator Kaine: If that is not correct, I would love it
18 if you could provide additional written response, but if it
19 is correct, you do not need to provide an additional answer.

20 The last thing is we are dealing with the new fifth
21 generation aircraft, not only the Air Force, but the Navy
22 and Marines as well. Their training range is off the coast
23 in Virginia and North Carolina. Do you have make changes to
24 allow those ranges to be fully utilized by fifth generation
25 aircraft?

1 General Goldfein: We do with some, and that is that
2 the ranges that we have to train relative to certain
3 scenarios and the threat laydown of emissions that allows us
4 to actually collect on emissions and then fight against an
5 adversary scenario -- all those are investments that you
6 have to make.

7 Interesting, though. So when I grew up flying
8 airplanes, you would go to the airplane for your advanced
9 work and you would go to the simulator for your basic work.
10 So you do emergency procedures, you know, basic capabilities
11 in the simulator to prepare you for the high-end training in
12 the aircraft. In fifth generation, we are seeing a bit of a
13 reversal. To be able to actually train up with all of your
14 capabilities against an adversary with all of their
15 capabilities, very often we can replicate that the best in
16 the virtual world. And so now what we are looking at is how
17 do you combine virtual capabilities with live and
18 constructive, which would be computer generated, to actually
19 get to the highest level of training. So you are going to
20 see in this budget a fairly significant investment in
21 virtual and simulation to be able to get our physical ranges
22 connected with our simulators as we go forward.

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Heinrich?

24 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Thank you both for being here and thank you for your

1 service.

2 General Goldfein, just quickly. I think you may have
3 answered this briefly. But can you tell me a little bit
4 about the KC-46, the delay? And for States like North
5 Carolina and Seymour Johnson for our planning purposes, what
6 are we looking at? Is that 18-month delay real? Could we
7 go further? Just some idea for planning purposes.

8 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. So right now this
9 morning, our service acquisition executive is actually
10 holding a schedule review and looking at exactly where we
11 are. We think that there may be a couple months now that we
12 are looking at for delay. It is combination of the
13 contractor not anticipating some of the challenges with FAA
14 certification, a little bit in the testing and getting the
15 data points that are required go into that.

16 Our best estimate right now is that we are going to be
17 able to absorb the delays at McConnell and Altus and that we
18 will be back on track by the time we get to Pease in terms
19 of delivery schedule. And if that changes, we will report
20 immediately.

21 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

22 Secretary Wilson, I think the chairman touched on
23 military health care reform. Can you talk a little bit
24 about how the component model is actually going to drive
25 efficiencies, maybe break down stovepipes? How does it

1 work?

2 Ms. Wilson: Senator, all of this is being implemented
3 now, and the services are looking at what kinds of pieces
4 stay with the services and how do we combine this to provide
5 more efficiency and honestly reduce some of the overhead in
6 each of the services to run a military health care system.
7 So all of the implementation is moving forward with the
8 Office of the Surgeon General and the Defense Health Care
9 Administration.

10 There is a lot of pieces to this. There is a lot of
11 contracting that is going on and a lot of decisions about
12 how do we move forward to this new, more integrated system.
13 So there is a lot of work that is going on.

14 Senator Tillis: I have another question just on the
15 business side of your responsibilities. It has to do with
16 the audit. How are we doing for 2017?

17 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I actually checked on that
18 yesterday. We will declare audit readiness at the end of
19 this fiscal year. Fiscal year 2018 will be the first fully
20 audited year. So all of that data will be subject to audit.
21 I think as you understand probably better than most, we
22 expect in the first year we are going to have audit
23 findings. We are going to find problems. That is why you
24 do an audit.

25 Senator Tillis: That is great.

1 Ms. Wilson: So that is good. And then we start to
2 routinely respond to those and improve our financial systems
3 and its management.

4 Senator Tillis: Talk a little bit on -- now that you
5 have been around for ages, a little bit on initiatives with
6 respect to acquisition reform. I do not know, when you and
7 I met in our office, if I brought in my 680-page prop of the
8 next generation handgun, which actually started in the Air
9 Force and then found its way across the lines of service.
10 But what specific actions are you trying to take -- either
11 General Goldfein or Secretary Wilson -- that give me some
12 hope that we are going to find a way to right-size
13 acquisition processes to the mission requirement?

14 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we are trying to look at -- and
15 this summer, at the end of June, we have kind of a retreat
16 with all of the senior offices in the Air Force, as well as
17 the senior civilians in the Air Force. And with the senior
18 civilians, I have asked them to take a whole half-day chunk
19 of time and let us look at what are the authorities we are
20 currently using. Where are we doing this to ourselves, not
21 driven by statute or regulation, but what can we do
22 ourselves? Let us look at the processes and look at where
23 we can take advantage of new authorities that have been
24 given to us and how we will systematically do that for every
25 procurement.

1 There are some procurements that are more complex than
2 others, and there are some areas where I found that we are
3 being very aggressive in using authorities, particularly
4 special authorities for special situations. How do we then
5 use that and roll that back into the regular way in which we
6 do business? And we will be doing a half-day retreat on
7 that in late June.

8 Senator Tillis: General Goldfein?

9 General Goldfein: Yes. Just to build on the
10 Secretary's point, one of the areas that the Secretary and I
11 have talked a lot about and we are looking at is how do we
12 acquire information technology. And it may be that we ought
13 not ever put two acronyms in the same sentence, IT and RFP,
14 because the reality is if you try to acquire information
15 technology as a weapons system or as a platform, it is
16 already too slow because whether we want to talk about the
17 cybersecurity issues we talked about earlier or the fact
18 that it just changes at such a fast pace, we are looking at
19 a holistic view on how do we acquire information technology
20 because it is so central to our future as we look at
21 networking together capabilities.

22 Senator Tillis: And to your spend.

23 General Goldfein: Absolutely.

24 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 Chairman McCain: Senator Heinrich?

1 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 Secretary Wilson, General Goldfein, welcome to both of
3 you.

4 On Friday, I was very pleased to see that the
5 environmental assessment was completed and found no
6 significant impact for the two additional F-16 squadrons to
7 operate at Holloman Air Force Base. And I think this is
8 another testament both to the quality of the range and the
9 airspace near Holloman, as well as the support for the
10 military in the Alamogordo area.

11 Like you have both said, there is no quick fix to the
12 pilot shortage we have. But I will certainly work with my
13 colleagues to ensure that you have the budget and resources
14 to help train more pilots. And if the Air Force identifies
15 any unfunded requirements as it relates to solving this
16 problem, please seek our help because we are very serious
17 about meeting your needs in this front.

18 To both of you, in addition to pilots, we obviously
19 have the shortage of maintainers for both F-16's and F-35's.
20 You have heard about that from some of my colleagues this
21 morning. I think we lose roughly 6,000 maintainers a year
22 just due to retirements and separations.

23 So I want to ask how much do you rely on the National
24 Guard to help fill in some of that challenge in terms of the
25 gap there? And how can we strengthen that partnership? For

1 either of you.

2 General Goldfein: Sir, I will be really clear. We
3 could not perform our mission of the United States Air Force
4 without the Air National Guard in any of the areas where we
5 have actually -- because the way we have organized, you
6 know, we are one Air Force with three components. You can
7 go onto a C-17 and walk up into the cockpit and say, okay,
8 who is Guard, who is active, who is Reserve, and all three
9 hands will go up.

10 So in terms of maintenance specifically, one of the
11 things that the Air National Guard brings us is the
12 experience level of having worked on one platform for the
13 majority of their career. So I cannot tell you the number
14 of times I go and I will find an Air National Guard crew
15 chief and they can redesign the thing for you because they
16 have been working all this time.

17 So in this budget, you will see that we are looking at
18 putting in a second shift of maintenance at the Air National
19 Guard locations to then be able to bring more pilots into
20 the Air National Guard so they can experience a young pilot
21 more in the Air National Guard where I have that volume of
22 experience there. So we rely very heavily on them.

23 Senator Heinrich: Well, I know there is a very active
24 interest in the Air Guard in New Mexico in playing a strong
25 role with regard to maintainers. And if we can help

1 facilitate that, please do not be shy.

2 Obviously, we are seeing an increased amount of
3 competition in space from Russia and China, as well as other
4 threats in space. For either of you, do you believe that
5 our satellite launch capabilities are responsive and
6 resilient enough to meet these increasing threats?

7 Ms. Wilson: Senator, we had a huge problem in this
8 country in the 1990s with access to space, and the country
9 at that time made a significant investment in space
10 capability and the ability to launch. And it paid off and
11 is showing results. The benefit now is that we are seeing
12 competition and it is bringing the price down for access to
13 space.

14 One of the things that is in this budget -- we faced a
15 potential gap in weather coverage from satellites. And one
16 of the things that is in this budget is using the
17 Operationally Responsive Space force to do that satellite
18 and get that satellite up as a gap-filler in coverage for
19 weather.

20 Senator Heinrich: I am very glad that you brought up
21 Operationally Responsive Space, and I was incredibly pleased
22 to see that this year's budget request included a
23 significant increase in funds for ORS. Can you talk a
24 little more about the Air Force's plans for the future of
25 that program and how the office's rapid acquisition

1 authorities can contribute to the Air Force's mission in
2 space as we move forward?

3 Ms. Wilson: Senator, that office, as well as a couple
4 of others, particularly with respect to space, have
5 demonstrated the ability to rapidly acquire things and get
6 things up and on orbit. And I think this weather satellite
7 is a good example of where it is filling a gap. By being
8 able to move quickly to look at an opportunity and fill a
9 gap, we are able to serve the needs of the warfighter.

10 Senator Heinrich: I am very excited about the
11 prospects for Operationally Responsive Space.

12 I also just want to take my last few seconds here and
13 say I think there is the next generation of launch companies
14 that are looking at small payloads, whether it is Virgin
15 Gallactic or Vulcan Aerospace or Orbital ATK. I really
16 encourage you to look at some of those ideas too. I think
17 the more distributed, the more responsive, the more flexible
18 and the quicker we can field some of these things, the
19 quicker we will be able to meet some of the gaps we have
20 with our adversaries.

21 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I would say we have a couple of
22 things here. One is this is the model of the X-37, which
23 will be going up again. It is a reusable vehicle and it
24 will be going up again on top of a SpaceX launcher in
25 August. And I think the Chief has a cube sat as well. So

1 they are getting smaller, able to be put on multiple
2 different platforms, and there are some very exciting things
3 happening in commercial space that bring the opportunity for
4 assured access to space at a very competitive price.

5 Senator Heinrich: Fantastic.

6 Thank you, Chairman.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Cruz?

8 Senator Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Secretary Wilson, General Goldfein, welcome. Good
10 afternoon. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your
11 testimony today.

12 I wanted to start by talking about the F-35. A number
13 of military leaders have commented on the advantages of
14 fifth generation fighters and the transformative impact that
15 they are having on our fleet. In January, the Red Flag
16 exercises -- my understandings were that the performance of
17 the F-35 was exceptional and there have been reports of kill
18 ratios in the order of 20 to 1.

19 Can you explain to the committee the F-35's performance
20 at Red Flag and also the impact it is having both on our
21 ability to defend ourselves and our allies?

22 General Goldfein: Yes, thanks, Senator. Let me just
23 describe for you the mission that I witnessed out there at
24 Red Flag on F-35's debut.

25 So the first thing is that the mission commander, who

1 is a mission commander check ride -- he is leading 100
2 aircraft into conflict, and it is what we call Big Dollar
3 Night, which means that we put up the most adversary
4 defenses we could both on the ground and in the air against
5 him. He has got 100 aircraft. Before he climbs the ladder,
6 the F-35 is already connected into the network and it is
7 actually getting information fed to it on what is going on
8 in the cyber war that is taken on with a full cyber mission
9 team and a cyber protection team that are fighting in the
10 cyber domain and actually taking out nodes that the mission
11 commander, the F-35 pilot has assigned to the cyber teams
12 there to take out.

13 While he is flying to the tanker to get gas, the space
14 war is raging, and he is getting fed information into the
15 cockpit on what is going on in the space war relative to
16 actual techniques that are going on at 2 o'clock in the
17 morning on the Nellis range. He is calling audibles for the
18 formation as the quarterback as he goes in to take out enemy
19 targets. In the middle of the fight, he gets information
20 fed to him that he has got a high-value convoy that he has
21 to go find, fix, and finish and assess in the middle of the
22 fight while he is taking out targets. And he does that
23 through his means available.

24 While that is going on, he is told an F-16 was shot
25 down and he has to coordinate an entire combat search and

1 rescue in the middle of the fight. And while that is going
2 on, he has got to do a special ops insertion.

3 The fusion of information that allows him to be able to
4 quarterback that formation and operate on a completely
5 different level than we have enjoyed before is the
6 networking capability that the F-35 brings. So we are no
7 longer talking about F-35 versus J-20. We are talking about
8 F-35 in a family of systems as the quarterback that can
9 actually call audibles and move the formation as we go into
10 conflict. That is the game changer that it brings.

11 Senator Cruz: Last week, I had the opportunity to fly
12 an F-35 simulator, and I will say the technology on the
13 plane is remarkable, so much so that in the simulator I was
14 able to land on a carrier which I could promise you I lack
15 the skills to do remotely, which means it truly is made
16 idiot-proof and that I did not crash into the carrier and
17 kill a bunch of people in the simulator. So let me commend
18 you on that.

19 The Air Force's budget submission for fiscal year 2018
20 would purchase 46 F-35A's, which is two less than fiscal
21 year 2016 and one fewer than was enacted in the 2017 budget.
22 But it appears that the Air Force believes that you require
23 60 F-35's based on an additional 14 that are listed in your
24 unfunded requirements list. Can the both of you tell the
25 committee if you think 46 F-35's is an accurate number and

1 what you believe is necessary to meet our defense needs?

2 General Goldfein: Sir, this is purely a function of
3 resources available, given all the other competing
4 priorities across all the other mission sets that we
5 perform, not the least of which is a safe, secure, reliable
6 nuclear deterrent, everything we are doing in space,
7 everything we are doing in cyber. So 46 is essentially all
8 we could get to in this particular budget, which is why you
9 have seen us lean forward on the unfunded priority list with
10 the additional ones.

11 And while not part of your question, if I could just
12 take one minute, just to honestly say thank you for your
13 work on moving forward on the NASA strategic plan. It is
14 really important to us because we partner with them on so
15 many things in space. So thank you for that.

16 Ms. Wilson: Senator, I would say that the Air Force's
17 objective is to try to get to 60 F-35's steady state
18 production for the buy, and we are budget constrained.

19 Senator Cruz: Thank you.

20 Let me ask one more on the topic General Goldfein just
21 raised, which is space. And the Air Force is seeking a 20
22 percent increase for space systems, totaling \$7.7 billion in
23 the 2018 budget. Do both of you feel that a 20 percent
24 increase is sufficient, given the rapidly growing threats in
25 space and the dependence that so many of our systems have on

1 maintaining our capabilities in space?

2 Ms. Wilson: Senator, there are some items on the
3 unfunded requirements list that are related to space,
4 particularly space defense requirements. I think it is
5 about \$200 million. This budget is a significant increase
6 in space. As you mentioned, it is about a 20 percent
7 increase, and there are a lot of innovative new things in
8 there, particularly secure, command, control, and
9 communications, some additional things with ability to
10 defend systems in space. So I think there is a lot of
11 progress here, but there is no question there is much more
12 to be done.

13 Senator Cruz: And let me ask both of you to elaborate.
14 This is a topic we have discussed in classified hearings as
15 well. Just elaborate, to the extent you can in this open
16 hearing, on the magnitude of the threats we face in space
17 and what the impact could be if we are not prepared to deal
18 with them.

19 Ms. Wilson: Senator, you are right, that this is
20 difficult to talk about in an open hearing. But we are all
21 familiar with the test that the Chinese did in 2007 to show
22 that they could launch a telephone pole, if you will, and
23 destroy a weather satellite that was one of their dead
24 weather satellites. But the ability to launch and intercept
25 an orbiting satellite -- they demonstrated it for the world

1 to see and put a lot of debris into space as a result. So
2 the Chinese clearly have that capability. The capability is
3 not just kinetic and from the ground, though. We are
4 vulnerable with respect to jamming satellites, with respect
5 to trying to disconnect satellites and communications
6 systems, as well as other kinds of threats.

7 So we are very heavily dependent on space, and our
8 adversaries know it. It is no longer a benign environment.
9 We are going to have to fight for it.

10 Senator Cruz: General?

11 General Goldfein: And, sir, I would just add that this
12 is the primary focus for the Secretary and I as we look at
13 this change from treating space historically as a benign
14 domain from which you sense, monitor, and report to a domain
15 from which we have to be prepared to fight and win and gain
16 and maintain space superiority if a war extends into space
17 or starts in space. And I align with General John Hyten who
18 has said there is no such thing as war in space. There is
19 just war. But if it extends into space, we have got to be
20 ready. So our focus is on making that shift not in terms of
21 how we acquire but actually perhaps most importantly, the
22 culture required for a warfighting element that actually
23 treats space as a warfighting domain.

24 Senator Cruz: Thank you very much.

25 And with that, this hearing is concluded.

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[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]