HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
THE UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND AND
UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND
IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 AND
THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Thursday, February 15, 2018

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in
Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.
Inhofe, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe
[presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis,
Sullivan, Perdue, Sasse, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen,
Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Warren, and
Peters.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator Inhofe: We will call the meeting to order.

We are going to receive testimony from two of my favorite people. General Lori Robinson -- I have to say that I taught her everything she knows from when she was the wing commander at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. And Kurt Tidd, Commander for the U.S. Southern Command.

I think there is a lot of overlap -- we have talked. All three of us have talked about this -- between the north and the south command. And I think that is one reason that Senator McCain would want to have these meetings together.

The new National Defense Strategy, the NDS, identifies protecting the homeland, sustaining American advantages in the western hemisphere as key priorities even as the DOD focuses on the rising challenge of great power competitors. As we have seen from increasing economic and military efforts by China and by Russia to gain a foothold in the Americas, the boundaries between great power competition and unconventional threats are increasingly blurred. I think that is one reason when General Dunford made the observation that we are losing our qualitative and quantitative edge on China and Russia.

General Robinson, you are tasked with addressing the missile and nuclear threats that we face, and while I am
encouraged by recent efforts to bolster our homeland missile
defense system, more needs to be done to address the
ballistic and cruise missile threats. I think particularly
recently we have observed others gaining talents that we
were not convinced that they already had.

And, Admiral Tidd, in SOUTHCOM, you are on the front
lines combating illicit networks, smuggling drugs, people,
weapons, and money and destabilize every country along the
way. You also face involvement in external actors that
present unique challenges in the theater and lack sufficient
resources.

I think that we have a lot in common, and for that
reason, we are having these together. And we look forward
to your testimony. And I appreciate the time that each one
of you spent in our office talking about the challenges you
guys have.

Senator Reed?
STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND

Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me join you in welcoming our witnesses: General Robinson and Admiral Tidd. Thank you for your extraordinary service to the nation. Please convey our thanks to the men and women in your commands who, as we all know, do the job every day for us. Thank you.

General Robinson, your mission is to protect the homeland to deter and defeat attacks on the United States and support civil authorities in mitigating the effects of attacks and natural disasters. We saw this demonstrated in DOD’s support to the States and territories affected by hurricanes, wildfires, and floods in this past year, and we thank you for that.

You are also dual-hatted as the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, NORAD, which brings unique responsibilities and partnering opportunities with Canada to deter and defend against threats to our nation.

You are also responsible for the operation of our homeland ballistic missile defense system. We look forward to hearing about your priorities for further improvements to the ground-based missile defense system. This is particularly important in light of the growing threat from North Korea.
Lastly, your relationship with the military leadership in Mexico, along with your collaboration with Admiral Tidd and other federal agencies, is crucial to promoting security along our southern border. A number of problems at the border originate in the SOUTHCOM area of operations and efforts to address those problems require a whole-of-government approach.

Admiral Tidd, you are on the front lines of a significant threat facing our nation, the opioid crisis. In 2016, we saw 64,000 deaths from drug overdoses, an increase from 52,000 in 2015. What has made the crisis worse is that more and more Americans addicted to opioids are turning to other dangerous drugs that are flowing into our borders from Central and South America and Asia. The flow of heroin and cocaine and other drugs like fentanyl into the country is exacerbating this crisis. Cocaine production in Colombia is up, as we spoke in our office, and is destabilizing the countries of the Northern Triangle as it works our way to our border and destroys lives here.

I was very encouraged to hear that SOUTHCOM held an opioid conference last week which brought all the government stakeholders together to work on this problem. Because it is important to recognize, while our military has an important role to play in the fight against narcotics in this country, we will only win against this threat with
adequate resources for domestic agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Department of Health and Human Services. Admiral Tidd, I look forward to hearing from you about the outcome of the conference and about SOUTHCOM’s effort to counter the flow of narcotics into the United States.

In addition, China and Russia have been increasingly active in Central and South America, committing millions of dollars of investment and partnering with Latin American militaries. Admiral Tidd, as you noted in your written statement, China has pledged $500 billion in trade with Latin American countries and $250 billion in Chinese direct investment over the next 10 years. Increased economic cooperation and the continued provision of financing and loans that appear to have no strings attached provide ample opportunity for China to expand its influence over key regional partners and promote unfair business practices and labor practices. I am concerned because of the cuts to our State Department and USAID, we are not doing everything we can to position ourselves as a partner of choice for our neighbors in the region. Admiral Tidd, I would like to hear from you on how China and Russia are investing in Central and South America and how they pose a national security threat to the United States.
Finally, we are all observing the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. We would like your perspectives on how much longer the regime can survive and how the crisis will affect neighboring countries. I am especially concerned about Colombia, which is already struggling to implement its disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process and is ill-equipped to deal with a long-term refugee problem in the border region.

General Robinson, Admiral Tidd, again thank you for your service.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

We will go ahead and hear opening statements by both of our witnesses and try to confine them to 5 minutes, if you can. And your entire statement will be made a part of the record. Let us start with you, General Robinson.

General Robinson, I just found out that your husband was best friends and a fellow F-16 pilot with my best friend, Charles Sublett, in Oklahoma, and I was not aware of this. I do not know how that went unnoticed.
STATEMENT OF GENERAL LORI J. ROBINSON, USAF,
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND AND NORTH AMERICAN
AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

General Robinson: Well, sir, you know, when you bring
him to the witness table, he has to tell the truth, noting
but the truth.

Senator Inhofe: I will share that was Charles.

General Robinson: Yes, sir, please do. Please do.

First of all, I would really like to say -- we know
that he is a figure here -- to Senator McCain and his family
and that I know all of our thoughts and prayers are with
him. And so I just wanted to extend that. I think that is
incredibly important.

You know, Senator Inhofe, Senator Reed, all the
distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to join
you today. David and I are honored to join you today to
testify alongside my friend, my shipmate, more importantly,
my wingman, Kurt Tidd. He and I do things arm in arm.

2017 was a challenging year. NORTHCOM and NORAD
addressed proactive actions by our adversaries while
simultaneously providing defense support to civil
authorities during an historic series of natural disasters
that required significant military capabilities and military
manpower.

However, I will say that those challenges were
definitely handled by a team of absolute professionals. And
I cannot tell you, sir, how much I am proud to represent all
of them here today.

In my 21 months as the Commander of NORAD and U.S.
Northern Command, I have been so impressed by the dedication
and vigilance shown by the soldiers, sailors, airmen,
marines, coast guardsmen, civilians, Americans, and
Canadians who stand ready to defend our nations and our
fellow citizens.

Looking forward, I see no reason to believe that the
threats to our homeland will decrease. Our adversaries
continue to extend their operational reach and are
developing new capabilities to range targets in North
America and in Canada.

Our preparation for these threats relies on a
dependable budget. We appreciate all that this committee
has done to help reach the 2-year budget agreement. In
2018, National Defense Strategy recognizes a return to great
power competition and lays out a long-term strategy for
addressing provocative behavior by China and Russia.

In NORAD and U.S. Northern Command, we understand the
urgency of keeping pace with these evolving threats. We
also recognize that North Korea represents the most
immediate threat to our homeland and therefore remains
NORTHCOM’s highest priority. In the past year, Kim Jong-un
has demonstrated several successful ICBM tests. We continue
to watch their developments closely and are prepared to
defend the United States. And I want to assure this
committee today that I am confident that I can defend the
United States.

While I am confident that we can defeat this threat
today, it is critical that we continue to improve the
ballistic missile defense enterprise with emphasis on the
development of improved sensor networks, combined with
interceptor capability and capacity and reliability. We
continue to work with the Missile Defense Agency, the
intelligence community, and other combatant commands to
ensure our collaborative effort in outpacing the threat.

Russia continues to modernize its long-range bombers
and its submarines and has developed new cruise missiles
with the capability to hold targets at risk at ranges that
we have not seen before. To defend against advanced cruise
missiles, it is important that we continue to make prudent
and savvy investments in advanced sensors and defensive
weapon systems. The strategic advancements in Russian
submarine fleets to demonstrate their capability to threaten
our homeland for the years to come. The threats are the
most serious. However, we remain vigilant against the
adapting threat of terrorism, as well as unpredictable
natural disasters.
As we review the 2017 hurricane response and prepare for the 2018 season, we are working with our mission partners to include the active, guard, reserve forces to incorporate the lessons learned to ensure that we provide our best support to lead federal agencies.

With respect to Canada, we are building interoperability across domains with a tri-command framework that is comprised of NORTHCOM, NORAD, and the Canadian Joint Operations Command. This arrangement allows further planning integration while preserving our ability to conduct unilateral missions.

With respect to Mexico, our military-to-military relationship with the Mexican secretariats of national defense, SEDENA and SEMAR, is unbelievably strong. We focus on illuminating the pathways used to transit illicit goods with my partner here, Admiral Tidd, with our interagency partners, SOUTHCOM and SOCOM. Theater security cooperation is an essential part of strengthening continental defense and builds relationships essential for future cooperation.

And by the way, this year we have the 60th anniversary of NORAD. Throughout its long history, this binational command has seen several evolutions in the air domain, and we are proud of that. The men and women of United States Northern Command and NORAD stand united in a common purpose ready to face the threats of the United States and Canada.
today, and we are evolving to face the threats of tomorrow. I need all of you to know that we have the watch, but I also need you to know while, Senators, today you are going to ask about me and about our capabilities and the things that we need -- I want you to know that we could not do it without our families. If it was not for our families and our steadfast things that keep us grounded, we would not be able to be where we are today. So I want to say thank you to my husband, who is here today representing all the families of United States NORAD and Northern Command, because without them, we would not have the standard.

So, Senator, back to you.

[The prepared statement of General Robinson follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, General Robinson.

Admiral Tidd?
STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL KURT W. TIDD, USN, COMMANDER,
UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

Admiral Tidd: Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and members of this committee, thank you for this opportunity to address you today. And I join my colleague and partner, General Robinson, in extending our very best, warmest wishes to Senator McCain and to his family, and he is in our thoughts and prayers today.

Also in our thoughts and prayers are the victims and family members of yesterday’s tragedy in Parkland, Florida. As you probably know, some of our Southern Command teammates have children who were present during the incident but were, fortunately, unharmed. We greatly appreciate the first responders, the faculty members, and other students whose actions no doubt saved lives.

Now, as I said, I am here with my good friend and my teammate, General Lori Robinson. We are products of the intentions of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation that led to an emphasis on jointness. This is not the first time that we have appeared together. This is not the first time that we have worked together. In fact, our partnership goes back over a decade. So I would just like to say that it is absolutely very much appropriate and fitting that we have the opportunity to talk to you today about the western hemisphere security challenges.
I look forward to discussing how our two commands work together and to ensure that there is an absolutely seamless defense of our homeland.

Over the past year, SOUTHCOM has focused on building a regional security network of principled, inclusive partnerships. Partners throughout Latin America and the Caribbean are working with each other and with us on a range of shared challenges.

These challenges manifest themselves in our hemisphere in several concerning ways. Criminal and extremist networks continue to threaten regional stability and our national security. We know of specific cases of individuals who were involved in plots to attack our homeland or our partners. Fortunately, they were stopped but this remains a significant, persistent concern.

Competitors like China and Russia seek to exploit the perception that we are disengaging from the Americas, and as they succeed in their efforts comes an increased ability for them to interfere with our security relationships and to hold our interests at risk. These challenges are less overt and sometimes more insidious than in other theaters. They are manageable with modest investment, sufficient attention, and early engagement. For SOUTHCOM, that involves tools that strengthen relationships and build capacity.

Now, we are not talking about brigade combat teams or
aircraft carriers in our theater. We are talking about small teams of general purpose and special operations forces to maintain critical training engagements. We are talking about medium endurance ships with embarked helicopters and particularly those that are interoperable with our partners and with enough awareness to buy down risk against problems early and stop threats at their source before they become more costly.

We appreciate the attention of Congress to this region and thank this committee for its support to the mission and the men and women of SOUTHCOM and to our families.

I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Tidd follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Okay, Admiral, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

You just said in your opening statement, General Robinson, that I can defend the United States today. And I know that is true. You and I have talked about this. But at what level of risk?

You know, when General Milley said -- this is a quote. Before this committee, he said the most important of many challenges we face is consistent, sustained, predictable funding over time. Now, we corrected that a little bit with our 2018 budget. So it is kind of predictable between now until the year 2020, but then it becomes unpredictable again.

So I would like to have both of you just very briefly tell us at what level of risk are we able to do what we have to do today that you can tie directly to the unpredictability of the budget.

General Robinson: So, sir, I will start and then I will turn it over to the Admiral.

To me, predictability is everything. As a consumer of readiness, as the one that has to use the things that the service chiefs have to organize, train, and equip for, for me what is important is to understand what I have got out there for capabilities. So I am telling you today I can defend the United States of America when it comes to
1 ballistic missile defense, given what we have done from a
2 funding perspective but as importantly what we did with the
3 ATR and adding capability, capacity in Alaska and what we
4 continue to do with discriminating radars. So all of those
5 things I am comfortable for. But we have to allow the
6 services to be able to plan because they are the ones that
7 provide us that readiness.
8
9 Senator Inhofe: Admiral?
10 Admiral Tidd: Sir, as you and I have discussed,
11 anything that challenges the services’ ability to provide
12 the forces that we request to be able to effectively secure
13 the southern approaches to the United States is a challenge.
14 Budget unpredictability has probably been the single
15 greatest impact on their ability to provide those forces.
16
17 The challenge that we have, when it comes to awareness
18 of what is going on in the environment -- we have already
19 discussed our ISR requirement. We receive about 8 percent
20 of what we have asked for. I am very appreciative of the
21 fact that about half of that has been provided as a direct
22 result of creative contract ISR capabilities that the
23 Congress has so generously funded. But that still is an
24 enormous challenge.
25
26 Senator Inhofe: Yes, not just for you but for all
27 commands. We hear that all the time, and that is one that
28 we really need to be direct.
Senator Reed brought up China. I actually read your statement. Now, you did not cover it in your abbreviated message this morning, but you made a statement in there that caught my eye. You said that China in particular is increasing aggressive and courting IMET students from the region to attend their military school. I have never heard that before. Now, I know in Africa, the IMET program is singularly one of the really truly great programs we have. Once we get them in with us, they are there for life, and we see evidence of this all the time. I was not aware that China is actually trying to move into that.

Could you kind of share that?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I have long felt that the IMET program is probably our single greatest long-term investment, value for the dollar that we put into it. And I would just highlight that it is an investment that sometimes may take 2 decades or more to pay off, but when it pays off, it pays off with relationships with strategic partners that are absolutely critical. It creates the personal contacts that many of the military leaders from across the region that I work with on a day-to-day basis have participated in the IMET program, have studied at our war colleges, gone to our service schools.

China watches that very closely. They have recognized the value of that strategic investment. And so they
basically have taken a leaf out of our book and they are
very lavishly funding to bring senior military officers from
a variety of key countries around our region to China for
very lavishly expensed, all-expense-paid trips for them, for
their families to be able to live a very high lifestyle in
the countries.

There is still a recognition from our partners that the
greatest value comes from studying in the United States. We
believe our country sells itself, and when people come here,
they get to know who we are, who our country really is, the
values that we truly represent. We think that is a very,
very important --

Senator Inhofe: Yes. We have always said once we get
them over here, we have got them forever. And that has been
my experience particularly in Africa because they are there.
And so it is very disturbing to me to hear that statement or
observation that you made that they are actually going after
the same individuals that we have already had. This is
disturbing. It has given us something new to address, and I
appreciate that very much.

Senator Reed?

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

Let me concur. IMET is absolutely critical. In a way
I have personal connections. Two of my classmates from West
Point later went on to become chief of service in the
Philippines and in Thailand. And they have been staunch
defenders of their countries but also our relationship. I
think the President of Costa Rica was a West Point graduate,
at least one of them.

That program is funded by the State Department.

Correct?

Admiral Tidd: Yes, Senator, that is correct.

Senator Reed: And it is another example of,
particularly in both of your commands, where whole-of-
government -- without funding State, there is no IMET. And
so when we see some of these proposed cuts to State, it will
play out in fewer opportunities for students to go to
American war colleges, American military academies, et
cetera. Is that accurate?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I would agree completely.

Senator Reed: In fact, again both of you represent in
critical ways the need for not just the Department of
Defense but Department of State, Homeland Security -- Coast
Guard cutters are part of your intercept plan for narcotics.

In fact, what percentage of the destination of cargos that
you knew were en route can you intercept?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, the challenge that we face
right now is about 25 percent of vessels that we know that
are transporting illicit materials -- we can intercept about
25 percent.
Senator Reed: So a quarter. So if we could invest more in the Coast Guard, presumably we could intercept more than 25 percent of the ships.

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I believe security in our theater is a team sport. It requires the efforts of many departments and agencies.

Senator Reed: Again, I think both you and General Robinson illustrate so dramatically how we have to get adequate funding for every significant national security component whether they are in the Defense Department or outside the Defense Department.

General Robinson, when you say you can defend the nation against missile attack, you are referring to a limited missile attack by a country such as North Korea. Correct?

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Reed: You are not making a generalized statement.

General Robinson: No, sir.

Senator Reed: Thank you. I just want to make that clear for the record.

General Robinson: I will defer all that to General Hyten.

Senator Reed: In that issue you raised in your testimony, there is the constant tension between capacity
and capability.

General Robinson: Yes.

Senator Reed: We are investing lots of dollars in increased capacity. That is going to take a while, 5, 6, 7, or 8 years to get some of these new fields up. But at the immediate moment, we have real issues of capability whether we can effectively take down through sensors, through shot doctrine, through the kill vehicle anything coming at us. Particularly, unfortunately, the offense in this game seems to have an advantage if they can deploy decoys or multiple-stage rockets.

So can you comment now about this issue of where we should be focusing and how we should do it?

General Robinson: Yes. So, sir, I have to tell you I am completely comfortable with where we are. The fact that in the above threshold reprogramming that we added capacity and then the redesigned kill vehicles -- and I think it is 2022 when we will have those. But at the same time, we are looking at discriminating radar. So in 2019, we are going to add the long-range discriminating radars to Alaska. We are going to add radars to Hawaii, and we are going to do a study on what we need as we look at Cobra Dane coming down. Thank you to the committee for funding Cobra Dane until we figure all this out. But I am very comfortable where we are.
I think as we look at the discrimination of radars, we look at the capacity of the fields in Alaska, I think we are in a really good place because when we sit back and look at what Kim Jong-un has done, he is looking at capability. You and I talked about this. But he has not built up capacity yet. And so right now, our capacity is very good where we are and as we continue to move forward.

Senator Reed: Are you satisfied with the schedule, the frequency, and the rigor of the testing of the system, the actual testing?

General Robinson: I am very comfortable. You know, one of the things that I say about Kim Jong-un all the time is that he is not afraid to fail in public. You learn as much from failure as you do from success. And so I am very comfortable where we are with our testing and where we are going in the future. And I rely very much on General Reaves and where MDA is going, and he and I talk all the time.

Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Reed: Again, thank you both for your service.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Wicker?

Senator Wicker: Admiral Tidd, thank you. Thank you both for your testimony and your service.

But, Admiral, our strategy now is great power
competition first and foremost. Senator Inhofe asked you to
drill down on China. So let me ask you to turn to Russia,
which you discuss extensively in your written testimony.
You mentioned Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Is that
principally where they are playing? What are they trying to
do there and where else do we need to be concerned?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, those are the countries in
which previously the Soviet Union had a longstanding
relationship and Russia has continued that relationship.
However, they continue to engage in a direct competition for
influence with some of our key partners around the region.

Our challenge is to be able to disprove the false
narrative that Russia peddles in the region, that the United
States is withdrawing, that we are not a reliable partner.
And so many of the actions that we engage in are directly
intended to show our partners, who are very much interested
in working with us, that we in fact share common interests.
We certainly share common democratic values and principles,
which neither Russia nor China share.

Senator Wicker: You are not a diplomat. You are a
military person. But if the President’s new openness to the
Trans-Pacific Partnership advances, would that be helpful to
us in making the point that we can be a reliable partner?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I do not profess to be either a
diplomat or an economist, but I would just observe that the
things that we do to show our partners directly -- and we have Pacific-facing nations within the SOUTHCOM region -- anything that we can do to show that we are reliable partners is valuable.

Senator Wicker: To what extent are we comfortable with the militaries of these countries subscribing to the position that we advocate and that we are the great standard of the military being answerable to the civilian leadership? And to what extent are the members of their legislative bodies significant players in this regard?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I think each of the countries differs slightly. My relationships are with the military leaders of the countries. My observations and my conversations genuinely reflect that they recognize and are grounded in the same democratic principles that really are characteristic, that were the founding characteristics of the Americas community. I think as we have seen, as a number of elections that have occurred throughout the region that led to changes in government positions, the militaries in each instance have played a very reasoned, responsible role, and they recognize that the ability to freely and fairly express democratic preferences as enshrined in the background of this theater have been respected. The one country I think that I would highlight, though, that has been singularly contrary to that has been Venezuela where
recent elections have been neither free nor fair.

Senator Wicker: Very good.

Let me ask you quickly to shift to the ships, the role of the Coast Guard there. Clearly for you, it is going to continue being almost totally Coast Guard. If you could take a moment to say how you plan to integrate unmanned systems into your platform.

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I have said before on a number of occasions in the USSOUTHCOM region, my maritime force has white hulls and orange stripes. And frankly, if it were not for the United States Coast Guard and the significant effort by the Commandant, we would not have a maritime presence. That is not because my parent service, the United States Navy, does not recognize the very significant importance of the region. It is just a matter of strategic priorities and availability of forces, and we run out of forces before we run out of mission.

The Coast Guard cutters that have been participating are irreplaceable. The national security cutters, terrific when we get them. But the real workhorse, the cop on the beat vessels, are those medium endurance cutters, many of which are past 30 years in age. Some were built in the 1960s. And so the recapitalization of those medium endurance cutters with the offshore patrol cutters I view as extremely important to USSOUTHCOM’s ability to provide an
adequate maritime presence in our region.

Senator Wicker: Unmanned?

Admiral Tidd: Unmanned vessels? Unmanned aerial vehicles. There are some challenges procedurally to incorporate them in the missions that we are engaged in, but we are actively exploring efforts to be able to do that.

Senator Wicker: Thank you.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Peters?

Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to our two witnesses, thank you for your service to our country. Thank you for being here today.

General Robinson, I am certainly pleased to hear that you have great confidence in our missile defense capabilities. But I would also like to have you expand a little bit on how we can continue to strengthen those capabilities. We currently have, obviously, the site in California, as well as in Alaska. There is talk about having an east coast site that would provide additional capabilities, particularly given the potential threat from Iran at some point in the future. If you could talk a little bit about what the advantages would be to add a ground-based interceptor capacity at another location in addition to the two we have.

General Robinson: Sir, thanks for that.

So I tell everybody that I watch North Korea with an
eyeball and a half to North Korea and then a half an eyeball to Iran. As I continue to watch them work on their space launch vehicles, I know that they can maybe quickly transfer that to an intercontinental ballistic missile defense capability. Right now, they are very regional, and they are staying within the JCPOA.

As I work very closely with Missile Defense Agency understanding what we can do from Alaska and California, I ensure that I have the battlespace that I need to defend from the east coast. So I pay attention to that each and every day, and as the Missile Defense Agency is working their way through what does it look like for an east coast site, I ensure that my words and the battlespace that I need are there to defend the United States.

Senator Peters: Thank you, General.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Peters: Admiral Tidd, you mentioned in some of your earlier testimony the situation in Venezuela and one that you are concerned about. Could you elaborate a little bit as to how concerned you are with what we are seeing in Venezuela?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I think the fact that it is a matter of very significant concern to the nations that neighbor Venezuela is probably the most important piece to point out. As we have seen, the impact on Venezuelans who
are fleeing the absolutely abominable economic conditions in
the country puts a severe burden on the school systems,
medical systems, the social support infrastructures
particularly of Colombia where over 500,000 Venezuelans have
now entered Colombia. It is putting an increasingly growing
strain on Brazil where we have seen tens of thousands that
have come across. But it also places a significant burden
on Guyana, on countries like Curacao and Aruba, as well as
Trinidad and Tobago. So it is having a very significant
impact on those countries, and those countries recognize
that they are going to have to be able to deal with this
humanitarian crisis.

Senator Peters: So it is certainly very destabilizing
to many of our allies and friends in that area.

And I would like you to comment, if you would, on the
involvement of Cuba in Venezuela. Things that I have read
-- there are commentators who believe that there are
hundreds to perhaps thousands of Cuban troops in Venezuela.
Some have said this is a play right out of the old Castro
playbook. What is your assessment of Cuban influence in
Venezuela, and how is that contributing to the instability
that we are seeing?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I think we have read some of
the same documents, both open source and other. When I talk
with, again, my counterparts in the region, they have been
quick to share that we see significant presence of Cuban
advisors to the security forces that continue to prop up the
Maduro regime. And so I just think it is a matter of
concern.

Senator Peters: Well, thank you. I appreciate your
testimony.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Rounds?

Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Robinson and Admiral Tidd, first of all, let me
just say thank you very much for your service to our
country.

Admiral Tidd, I would like to go back a little bit to
what Senator Wicker was discussing with you. Basically in
recent years, China, Russia, and Iran have all increased
their activities in the western hemisphere from economic
investments to military sales and engagement. Which of
these competitors concerns you the most in your areas of
responsibility? And what are doing to maintain and expand
our position as a partner of choice to Latin American and
Caribbean nations? I understand the desire -- and as you
said earlier, you recognize that you will do what is
necessary. I am wondering if you can give us some specific
areas that you either intend to move forward with or that
you would need additional assistance with.

Admiral Tidd: Well, Senator, without parsing, I think
as the new National Defense Strategy has clearly
articulated, Russia and China are significant concerns.
They are global concerns and so they are of concern because
they are very present and aggressive in the USSOUTHCOM
theater.

Iran also is present. Particularly worrisome is their
proxy Hezbollah, which is an area that we have been watching
for many, many years and is an item of concern.

When it comes specifically to Russia and China, the
very best thing that we can do is to be the best possible
partners that we can with countries who are absolutely
interested, committed, want to work with us. Sometimes
there are just things that make it difficult for us to be
the best partner that we can. Sometimes it is adequate
forces for us to be able to engage with them and so to be
able to conduct meaningful exercises with them, but also
sometimes our ability to be able to work with them and
facilitate the kinds of information sharing that is critical
to having an effective common defense for the challenges
that we face.

Senator Rounds: Let me work my way through it a little
bit because I am really curious about such things as foreign
military sales or foreign military financing for those
military sales, international military education and
training, the impact and so forth. Can you talk a little
bit about those specific ones with regard to our ability to
not only provide them with resources but also the training
as well? And where are we at right now with those same
partners? Is that working or is it not working? Do we have
the resources allocated there that we need?

Admiral Tidd: Well, Senator, I do not know a theater
commander who says he has got as many resources as he or she
would like to have, but I would say that particularly with
regard to the programs that you mentioned, FMS and the IMET
program, it is a small pie to begin with. The SOUTHCOM
allocation of that pie is smaller still based on global
priorities. And so our challenge is to make that small
slice of the pie go as far as it possibly can.

Now, sometimes programs that we offer -- it is
expensive for our partners to be able to come and live in
the United States and bring their families with them and
spend the time here. So that is where we really try to
maximize both the number who are able to come and I guess
the quality and the quantity, if you will, and finding that
balance point can be a real challenge.

But I think as far as particularly the IMET program, if
there was one program that I would say is a long-term
strategic investment -- and like financial investments,
sometimes they take a while to pay off, but when they pay
off, they are absolutely priceless.
1      Senator Rounds: Okay, thank you.
2      
3      General Robinson, our 114th fighter wing in Sioux Falls
4      has been flying alert missions out of the March Air Base in
5      California since 2012. We have four jets constantly
6      deployed there and crews on a 24-hour flying alert basis
7      that really are part of that critical defense team for our
8      nation. NORAD recently requested 72 upgraded ASR radars
9      through a joint urgent operational needs request, and they
10     have been funded to include for the aircraft of the 114th.
11     The problem is that there are over 300 Air National Guard
12     F-16’s, and we are only going to modify 72 of them with this
13     radar.
14     
15     Our worry is that we will put real heavy wear and tear
16     on those specific modified aircraft, and that we will only
17     modify a handful of the aircraft, thus really wearing out
18     that particular group.
19     
20     The cost to upgrade these jets is approximately $2.1
21     million per jet, and compared to the additional capability
22     gained, it is probably a pretty good buy.
23     
24     Can you talk a little bit about your perspectives on
25     whether or not we should upgrade the remaining F-16’s in the
26     Air National Guard alert squadron so that we are not
27     focusing just on those 72 with that capability?
28     
29     General Robinson: Yes, sir. I am working very closely
30     with the Air Force on this. First of all, I am grateful to
be able to modify those jets because that just happened recently. So that I think is a really good deal. But I continue to work with the Air Force on what does it look like as we not just modify airplanes but what does the transition to F-35’s look like. And so I will look closely and ensure that not only do we not rely heavily on just those, but what does the long-term transition plan look like.

Senator Rounds: Very good. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for your service and for your testimony today.

General Robinson, I especially appreciate your comments about the support that everyone in the military receives and at NORAD from your families. And I know that sentiment is shared by everyone on this committee. So thank you both.

Admiral Tidd, I want to go back to Senator Reed’s question I think about the 25 percent. Did you characterize that as 25 percent of the missions that you could do, you are able to do, and because of the lack of resources, not able to do more than that?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I think the way that we describe it and to clarify is we have pretty good
situational awareness on an awful lot of the trafficking that is occurring, and that is based on a very close partnership with a variety of countries in the region, most notably with Colombia. Of the known tracks that we are aware of -- and we think we have got a pretty good handle -- we are only able to intercept about 25 percent, about one-quarter.

Senator Shaheen: Well, I am sure you are both aware of the challenges that we face with the opioid and heroin and drug epidemic in this country. It has hit New Hampshire particularly hard. Can you estimate, if you had the resources, that you could use to do all of the missions that you would like for all of the interdiction efforts that you are aware of, what difference would that make in terms of the amount of drugs you are able to interdict?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, you raise an excellent question. And the challenge that we have particularly with regard to opioids -- that is the reason we hosted the conference last week was because we recognize that what we knew and the procedures that we had in place did not seem to be having the kind of impact. And it is because the supply chain of that particular illicit substance does not travel in the same way that the supply chain for, if you roll the clock back, marijuana originally and then cocaine where we have well-understood and identified source zones, transit
zones, arrival zones and we are able to lay across those
various pathways a variety of primarily law enforcement but
also intelligence community and military resources to have
an impact on them. The opioid problem is a fundamentally
different problem. We understand it is different.

I would say the value of last week’s conference was
bringing together many, many, many of the agencies that
touch that problem at least on the interdiction side and
recognize we have got to do business differently. I am not
prepared to tell you that we have an answer to it yet, but
we recognize the scope of the problem, the seriousness of
the problem, and the work that remains to be done and our
commitment to work together to put in place a more effective
mechanism than what we are doing today.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

And, General Robinson, are you seeing similar on the
northern border with Canada -- are you seeing similar traces
of drug runners coming across?

General Robinson: No, ma’am, not like what Admiral
Tidd would talk about.

The one thing I would like to also add and give Admiral
Tidd a lot of credit for is last month we had a meeting with
he and I and Admiral Duran from Colombia and Admiral Soberon
from Mexico to talk about as we watch things go from the
land-based transit to the ocean-based transit, those two
folks talking to each other about how do we decide how we are going to combat this together. So under his leadership, we had Colombia present a plan. We had Mexico present a plan. We had the U.S. present a plan. And now the three of us are going to sit down and go what is the best way we can do this from an open ocean perspective to try to get after that. And so this is not a single dimension conversation. This is a multi-dimension conversation, and it is a multi-combatant command conversation, which to me is what is really important is the fact that he and I stand side by side doing this.

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. I think it is very important, as you all know. And I hope that we can provide additional resources to make sure that you are successful. I want to pick up on another issue that Senator Reed raised with respect to funding for the State Department. You both talked about the importance of working across DOD and State in terms of what you are trying to accomplish. And we have seen a proposed budget that would cut the Department of State by 30 percent. Can you quantify what that would mean in terms of your operations and your efforts to work with State if they saw that kind of a cut?

General Robinson: So I do not know if I can give you a number that would mean anything, but here is what I do know. Every single day we talk about anything, Secretary Mattis
diplomacy leads. And so the fact of the matter that he says
diplomacy leads, then I know my role and responsibility is
to support diplomacy. So I cannot say is that 10, 20, 25
percent, but I can tell you that I know that I follow
diplomacy.

Admiral Tidd: I would just add again -- I cannot put a
number -- but so many of the programs that are critical to
building effective partners across the region -- actually
they come out of the State budget. We implement them, but
we could not do it if they are underfunded.

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you both. I think that
is a very strong statement in terms of funding as we think
about increasing funding for the military and Department of
Defense. I know we are all on board for that, but we should
also be on board for funding for the State Department and
our diplomatic efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Fischer?

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for being here today.

General Robinson, your opening statement discusses the
increasing capabilities of Russian cruise missiles to hold
targets in the homeland at risk, and specifically you state,
quote, these systems present an increasing threat to North
America due to their long range, low radar cross section,
and the limited indications and warnings likely to be seen
prior to a combat launch. End quote. Can you elaborate and
characterize this threat in further detail, and how much
does it concern you?

General Robinson: So, ma’am, here is what I would say.
I tell everybody we should often look at the map from the
North Pole down. I know Senator Sullivan does every single
day. And we should look at the fact that Russia looks
different if you look at it that way.

And then every single day I would tell you I get an
operations and intelligence briefing that talks to me about
where bombers are, where submarines are, and what they are
doing and what their activity is. And I pay attention to
that every single day.

And so when I sit back and I look at that, I look at
their capability, what they are capable of. I look at their
capacity as they continue to train both their bomber pilots
and their submarine pilots. But I look at intent. In the
air domain, as the Commander of NORAD, I know from an intent
perspective their intentions -- I do not see that. But that
does not mean from a strategic, long-term perspective, as we
talked about in the National Defense Strategy what Russia is
out there doing.

But I have to tell you. I have to tell you. So one of
the things that we are doing is a northern approaches’
surveillance analysis of alternatives with Canada to understand what is coming across the northern approaches, both Canada and Alaska, because I look across the entire part as the Commander of NORAD. And what I have said to everybody is I want to be able to detect, ID, track, and engage if necessary at ranges to defend our homeland. And so those are the things I think about when I think about Russia.

Senator Fischer: Your final comments there about being able to detect early and then engage, if necessary -- do you think we have enough of that capability right now? I know that in fiscal year 2017, the Air Force began upgrading the radars on the 72 National Guard F-16 fighters. Is that going to be sufficient because is that not really our last line of defense at that point?

General Robinson: Yes. So, ma’am, what I would say is that is part of our homeland defense phase one. In phase two, it allows us to use our fighters and tactics, techniques, and procedures to move out further than we were able to before. So we appreciate the committee’s support on that. But this is now the longer-range part, if I look at the northern approaches, specifically to be able to do that.

Senator Fischer: And I happen to believe that our missile defense system provides really an immense capability, and the expansion of that system is going to
help us to continue to defend the homeland as this threat
increases.

Yet, over the weekend, General, we saw the “New York
Times” editorial board publish a column titled “The
Dangerous Illusion of Missile Defense.” And in it they
described our homeland defense system as riddled with flaws
and repeated what I consider an old, tired claim that tests
were not conducted under realistic conditions.

So to be clear, do you have confidence in the ability
of the GMD system to defend the United States from a North
Korean ballistic missile attack today?

General Robinson: Ma’am, I am 100 percent confident in
my ability to defend the United States of America.

Senator Fischer: And do you believe the actions taken
by Congress and this administration to expand the system’s
capacity and improve discrimination will enhance NORTHCOM’s
ability to defend the homeland from ballistic missile attack
in the future?

General Robinson: So, ma’am, I would tell you I
appreciate the above-threshold reprogramming for the
capacity that we gave, and I think that is helpful as we
look at adding on to that the redesigned kill vehicle, in
addition to continued work, which we need to do, with the
discriminating radars. Between all of those three things, I
think we continue to outpace everybody, and it gives me more
and more confidence, continued confidence of our ability to
defend the United States.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, General, for presenting
valuable information and very clear answers. Thank you.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Donnelly?

Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank both the witnesses. Thank you for
meeting this week as well.

I want to talk to you about what we talked about in my
office, which is the opioid crisis. Last week, the Centers
for Disease Control reported overdose deaths in Indiana
increased by 28 percent from July 2015 to July 2016. Over
1,700 Hoosiers died from opioid overdoses. Only six States
had larger percentage increases. But this is a national
epidemic. It is getting worse, not better. And your
commands are on the very front lines of this battle.

How would you prioritize the opioid crisis in your
command priorities right now? General Robinson and then
Admiral Tidd.

General Robinson: So, sir, I take this opioid crisis
as a personal issue. When you sit back and you talked about
it and it is about families and it is about people, it is
incredibly important.

I sit down every month and I talk to the Secretary of
DHS. I work very closely with my subordinate commanders who
work very closely with Mexico on all of this.

So this crisis is not something that I set aside. It is something that I take very personally. And so what is important to me is that I understand the support role that I can give to DHS and the support role and information that I can give Mexico which then translates to the things that I can give to Admiral Tidd because the UCP line on the map does not exist for Admiral Tidd and I, and so it is a very personal thing.

Senator Donnelly: Admiral Tidd?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I share General Robinson -- this is a crisis that has come to touch us all personally. And so the challenge that we face is that how do you handle it. How do you deal with it?

What became clear at our conference last week was the United States Department of Defense cannot solve this problem on its own. The Department of Homeland Security cannot solve this problem on its own. Health and Human Services cannot solve it on its own. It will only be through all of us working together in a collaborative manner. That is why our approach at USSOUTHCOM is to apply a threat network-based approach. That is our number one priority is threat networks.

Senator Donnelly: And I apologize because I have limited time.
These drugs are coming across from Mexico not through unguarded areas or anything but through checkpoints in the back of trucks. And so we are in a position of seeing the very checkpoints we have in our country allowing trucks in, many of these trucks loaded with drugs.

There are two questions. Number one is detection systems. In regards to fentanyl, tracker dogs die because of the effects of fentanyl on their mucus systems and other things. Where are we in finding new detection systems so we can determine whether these are in the trucks? And are we in a position where we simply need to say, look, your refrigerator is not coming in today. It is coming in in a month and a half because we are checking every box in every truck because it is more important that a young person in Logansport, Indiana be able to stay alive as opposed to having your refrigerator come in on time. So first is detection systems, and second, should we just simply change the way we do business at the border and check every single box that comes in?

General Robinson: So, sir, I will tell you in the support role that we do for DHS, we have the opportunity to provide them some biometric detection capability. We have the opportunity to provide marine sensor platoons at the border -- capability.

But as you know and as you and I talked about
yesterday, it is very much in a support role and the things
that we can do from a technology capability. Last year in
front of this committee, as you and I chatted about
yesterday, Senator McCain asked us to talk about what are
some of the technologies. And we will come talk to you
about some of the things that we are doing to provide and to
support DHS.

Senator Donnelly: Admiral?

Admiral Tidd: Sir, all I can say is there is no single
silver bullet that is going to solve this problem. This is
going to take the very best efforts across the entire
national security team to be able to work together
effectively.

Senator Donnelly: Is there a discussion about changing
the way we handle crossings at the border because that is
where it is coming through? Not that you know of.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Perdue?

Senator Perdue: Thank you both for being here. I have
got a question about the NDS. Three quick questions before
I get to the two on the NDS.

Admiral, to finish up on what Senator Shaheen was
talking about -- and before I do that, I would be remiss as
a Member of the Senate not to apologize to both of you
combatant commanders on behalf of the United States Senate.
Today we are officially sitting in a continuing resolution again. And you have my personal commitment and resolve that before I leave the United States Senate, we are going to do everything we can to get away from this budget process that puts us in this detrimental, high-risk situation. We are doing more to harm the security of our country than any of these people we are talking about today outside.

Sorry. Admiral, real quick. And General Kelly talked about this too, but you have talked about -- there is an asset that you could use in your AOR to actually interdict more. We do not know what percentage we can get to. I understand that. But you could close that gap without spending a lot of money. Is that true?

Admiral Tidd: I think there are some platforms out there that would be enormously helpful to us. Yes, sir.

Senator Perdue: So what would one of those look like?

Admiral Tidd: I think a littoral combat ship would fit perfectly into the mission space that we are --

Senator Perdue: Rotary wing capability as well?

Admiral Tidd: Absolutely. It is a package. It is a vessel that is capable of operating in the eastern Pacific with rotary wing, with interceptor boats as a package, coupled with maritime patrol aircraft.

Senator Perdue: In Latin America, Russia today is supplying 40 percent of the arms sales. China is the second
largest trading partner in Latin America. Iran is in there through Hezbollah.

The question I have is the NDS is pivoting toward near-peer competitors. Heretofore, our mission in the last 15 to 17 years was mainly about terrorism. You were underfunded in SOUTHCOM because we were pushing resources out to the battle. Today the battle looks like it is getting closer and closer to home. Are you being resourced in order to support the NDS, and is the NDS focusing enough on greater power threats, peer power threats in our own hemisphere?

Admiral Tidd: Not yet. The NDS recognizes these challenging nations, and I think that we must move beyond applying resources to the home ZIP code of where those specific countries are and apply the resources to be able to deal with them wherever they are found across the globe.

Senator Perdue: General, thank you for being here again and thank you for being on the wall.

The Arctic. China just last month issued a statement. Russia has been actively building resources in the Arctic. We see sorties or whatever in the Arctic region increasing at an exponential rate. Admiral, maybe I am going to ask you. I am sure you can too. But I do not know how many icebreakers we technically have. We do not have very many. I think China or Russia has a multiple.

So can you talk about the threats in the Arctic? Are
they increasing? What is Russia’s and China’s strategy?
You told us last year about your strategic estimate. Can
you give us an update on that strategic estimate in the
Arctic?

General Robinson: Absolutely, sir. So I did a
strategic estimate. Out of that strategic estimate, I have
directed by two-star planner to provide a mission analysis.
As I have said to people, we have had our toes in the sand.
It is time to put our feet in the snow, and it is time to
understand more and more what is going on up there.

So out of that mission analysis, we are going to do a
couple of exercises. We did a Vigilant Shield last fall.
We are going to do an Arctic Edge. And we will be able to
understand certain tasks out of that. But at the same time,
we know that we need to look at the infrastructure, the
communications, and the domain awareness to understand what
is happening.

Senator Perdue: Both of you very quickly. I have
limited time.

Our strength against these near-peer competitors is our
network of allies. And I know Secretary of State Tillerson
has talked about that actively. Secretary Mattis has talked
about that actively. In your AORs, what are we doing with
our allies to help leverage our military expenses and
capabilities? Admiral, do you want to address that quickly?
Admiral Tidd: We are working together to help train
them. We are building their capabilities in the areas that
they are most interested in, and we are showing by our
actions that we trust them.

General Robinson: And if I can tell you, earlier this
year Secretary Mattis held a North America defense
ministerial with Canada, the United States, and Mexico to
talk about how do the three of us work together to show that
we have the longest borders in the world and that we are a
shining beacon of trust and cooperation.

Senator Perdue: Thank you both.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Warren?

Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

General Robinson, I know you have said that you are
confident in our homeland defense. And I was glad to see
that the most recent test of our homeland missile defense
system in May of 2017 was successful. It brings our record
to 9 out of 18, which is 50 percent. I know that testing is
important. Whether tests succeed or fail, we gather a great
deal of information and it helps us.

As the missile threat from North Korea increases and we
invest additional interceptors to meet the threat, it seems
to me that it is more important than ever that we accurately
assess the reliability of this system. Physical tests are expensive and they cost hundreds of millions of dollars each.

Predictive modeling is one cost effective way to increase our data. But in his 2017 annual report, General Behler, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, criticized -- and I am going to quote him -- the lack of independent accreditation of modeling and simulation for performance assessment of our ballistic missile defense system. He recommended that Missile Defense Agency prioritize investments in modeling and simulation.

So, General Robinson, as NORTHCOM Commander, you are the primary customer for our homeland missile defense system. Do you agree with General Behler’s recommendation? Would increased modeling and simulation improve your confidence in ground-based missile defense system?

General Robinson: So, ma’am, it is good to see you again.

Senator Warren: Good to see you.

General Robinson: And so thank you for that. So I would tell you two things. Modeling and simulation is as good as what you put in is what you get out. Right? And so I think it is very important that we do modeling and simulation, but I also think that the importance that Missile Defense Agency does with its live
testing helps answer into all of that. So when you take
both the live part and you can input that into the modeling
and simulation, that helps you with overall understanding.

But I want to say to you again I am confident today in
our ability to defend the United States. And so I think it
is important, not just the live testing but the modeling and
simulation, and put all of that together to make us
understand where we are going.

Senator Warren: So thank you, General.

You know, we have spent over $40 billion on the
homeland missile defense system. So I do not think it is
asking too much to expect it to work 100 percent of the
time, and if that is not possible, to rethink our overall
approach.

DOT&E has been making the same recommendation that we
invest in modeling since 2010. That is 8 years ago. And I
think it is time to take that recommendation seriously, not
a substitute but as a both/and.

If I can, let me ask you one other question, and that
is, General Robinson, your responsibilities include
coordinating defense support to civil authorities in the
event of a natural disaster. And in 2017, Hurricanes
Harvey, Irma, and Maria --

General Robinson: And Nate and Ophelia.

Senator Warren: That is right. Strained our federal
response nearly to the breaking point.

I recently visited Puerto Rico, along with the Massachusetts congressional delegation, and we were able to see the damage firsthand. One sector that was particularly hard hit was health care. We previously talked about your decision to send the hospital ship Comfort for about 7 weeks. But I visited a hospital and a community health center that were still struggling without clean water, without reliable power months after the storm and more than a month after the Comfort had departed. And now, even though they have not recovered from last year’s storms, they are all starting to prepare for the next round of hurricane season.

So I am about out of time, but General Robinson, can you very briefly list, say, your top three lessons learned from Maria and whether there is more that DOD can do to support the health care sector specifically?

General Robinson: So, ma’am, I would tell you we just finished -- very quickly -- an internal NORTHCOM lessons learned conference. We are going to go out to OSD. The conversation that we had is, is there a difference between Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico? So you have got State, State, and island. So what can we learn out of that, and can we think about that differently? So I would tell you that would probably be the first thing that I would say back
to you.

Once we finish through inside the Department, I would be happy to have me and my staff come talk to you about the things that we learned and interagency, quite frankly, because as you know better than I do, we are very much in a support role to FEMA and the Governor. And so we would be happy to come talk to you.

Senator Warren: Good. I appreciate that, and I appreciate that you responded to my letter with a lot of detailed information about the Comfort and its use in Puerto Rico.

And, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to submit the letter from the General for the record.

Senator Inhofe: Without objection.

[The information follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]
Senator Warren: All right.

And just to say, Puerto Rico has still not recovered.

General Robinson: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Warren: And health care has been a particularly hard hit area. DOD can move resources often much faster than anyone else, and I think we need to think much harder about the role that DOD plays in future hurricanes because we know they are coming.

General Robinson: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Warren: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Cotton?

Senator Cotton: Thank you, General Robinson, Admiral Tidd, for your appearance and continued service.

Admiral Tidd, the President announced at the State of the Union Address that we would once again be moving detainees, where appropriate, to Guantanamo Bay. That falls under your authority. Can you tell us a little bit more about that plan and what you have in store for the facilities there?

Admiral Tidd: As has been the case, our responsibility is to ensure the safe, secure, legal detention of law of war detainees. I am highly confident that we have been doing that and we will continue to do that. You know, we have 41 detainees who are there right now. We are prepared to
receive more should they be directed to us. As of today, we have not been given a warning order that new detainees might be heading in our direction, but our responsibility will be to integrate them effectively into that mission.

Senator Cotton: And what about the facilities there and your personnel rotation plans?

Admiral Tidd: Thanks to the generosity, obviously, of Congress and spearheaded by this committee, we appreciate the support for barracks that are capable of withstanding the environmental conditions of the Caribbean region especially during storm season. We look forward, once the money is in hand, to be able to start construction on those barracks. I can anticipate, although I do not have a plan for you today -- there were a variety of buildings that were temporary in nature when they were put up that have deteriorated beyond their useful life. We will be taking a hard look and prioritizing those buildings that will need to be replaced with facilities capable of withstanding the environmental conditions in Guantanamo Bay.

Senator Cotton: Thank you.

Let us turn our attention to the south. You have already spoken with a couple Senators about the situation in Venezuela, which is rapidly deteriorating under the brutal Maduro dictatorship. Can you talk to me about the implication it has for Colombian security and especially the
impact it could have in the Colombian elections coming up?

Admiral Tidd: Yes, Senator, thanks.

Because of the significant number of Venezuelans, over 500,000 and continuing to rise, Venezuelans who have come across the border into Colombia overwhelming their social support infrastructure, Colombia has, I think, a grave concern.

They are also beginning to see -- and this is based on conversations with my Colombian partners. They are very concerned that there are a large number of Venezuelans who are being pushed across the border, that are being encouraged to vote in elections. They have dual citizenship as Colombia and Venezuela. And there is some concern that that may skew the elections that will be very critical taking place this spring and summer in Colombia.

So it is a matter of a security concern to Colombia, but those security concerns I think are largely shared by Brazil. Numbers are not as great yet, but it is beginning to overwhelm the states that are directly across the border from Venezuela, and we are seeing it affecting other countries across the region. So the humanitarian disaster is in progress, and our partners are very concerned about it.

Senator Cotton: Thank you, Admiral Tidd.

General Robinson, I want to ask you about a story that
1 was in the news recently, the use by service members of
2 smart exercise devices, for instance, Fitbits or smart
3 watches, particularly overseas. But you, obviously,
4 underneath your authorities have a lot of sensitive sites
5 here in the United States. Could you tell us what steps, if
6 any, NORTHCOM has started to take to address this security
7 risk?
8
9 General Robinson: So, sir, Senator, thanks for that.
10 I would tell you as I watch and I work through the
11 service chiefs and to see what they are doing, while I worry
12 about force protection in all of the installations, I work
13 it through the service chiefs. So I am paying attention to
14 the steps that they are taking to make sure I understand to
15 ensure that I can implement anything that they need me to
16 do.
17
18 Senator Cotton: And you feel comfortable at this point
19 with what the services are pursuing?
20 General Robinson: Yes, sir.
21 Senator Cotton: Okay.
22 Thank you both for your testimony and for your service.
23 Senator Inhofe: Senator King?
24 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 Admiral Tidd, since we have been talking here this
26 morning, four people in this country have died of overdoses
27 just in the last hour. As many people have died in the last
I cannot believe we are having the same conversation today that I remember having with General Kelly 2 or 3 years ago and getting this figure of 8 percent of ISR resources and 25 percent of known drug shipments interdicted, 75 percent get through.

I think you have identified the problem. If we give you a mission, you will deal with it. The problem is nobody has this mission. And I hope you will go back and talk to this interagency group and talk to the White House. It is inexcusable to be sitting here 3 or 4 years later and still only being able to interdict 25 percent of the drug shipments that we know about, and we would know about more if we had adequate ISR. This is simply a question of allocation of resources. And this is the most serious public health problem this country faces. Four people have died in the last hour. And you are giving me the same figures that General Kelly gave 3 or 4 years ago.

Can you commit to me that you will move this to the highest level of priority and kick some behinds and take some names in this interagency cooperation? Please do not come back here again next year with the same testimony.

Admiral Tidd: Senator, I can commit to you that not only will I but I have continued to communicate the
challenge that we face. I will observe the services -- the
biggest challenge they have to being able to provide
additional resources, which they recognize very clearly are
required, are challenged by the inability to have budget
predictability to be able to produce more forces to make
them available. This is a team sport. This is a team
effort. We have to work together as constructively and
collaboratively as possible.

My commitment to you is that I will do everything
within my power to do my part.

Senator King: Hopefully we have just passed a 2-year
budget authorization. Hopefully again we will have the
final numbers within the next 2 or 3 weeks, and then we will
be able to move forward. But please make this the highest
priority. And I am not attacking you. I am attacking the
failure of our structure to adequately get at a problem when
we have it right in front of us. It would be one thing if
we did not know, but when we have it right in front of us.

General Robinson, let us move north. First question.

We all know that there is a Russian buildup along the
northern border along the Arctic Ocean. What is their
purpose? What can you discern? What is their strategic
reason for doing this? Is it defensive, offensive? Are
they looking to get closer to be able to attack us, or are
they simply protecting their shore?
General Robinson: So, sir, I would say I think what you just said at the last is great, protecting their shore. You know, as you and I chatted about the other day, the opportunity for them to move their infrastructure around to their different bases is incredibly important, just like I do. You know, I move capability from Anchorage to Eielson, from Eielson to Inuvik, from Inuvik to Tulele. And so we move things around. But it is to make sure that they can put things in the places they want to at the time and place of their choosing.

Senator King: I think you made an important point earlier that there are two elements of national strategy. One is capability. The other is intent.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator King: And the problem is right now they may have a benign intent or a lack of malicious intent. I would put it that way. But they are building up the capability which requires that we have to be alert. Are there assets you need in the north that you do not have, for example, an icebreaker?

General Robinson: So, sir, I will defer to my colleagues in the Coast Guard for the icebreakers. But what I will tell you is that I very much get ISR capability in Global Hawk and other things that I share with EUCOM and PACOM to understand what is happening in the region. But I
will tell you I am very good at advocating for needing other
capabilities such as, as an example, if you want,
icebreakers. I talk with my Coast Guard brothers often
about this because I think about it in the summer when
Crystal Serenity goes through.

Senator King: And we are going to see more of that.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator King: A final short question. If you had to
choose, if you could only have one priority in order to
improve our missile defense system, what would it be?

General Robinson: So I want to thank the Congress for
the capacity that we just got, but we have got to keep our
eye on discriminating radars.

Senator King: That is what I thought you would answer,
and I think that has got to be a very high priority.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator King: Thank you. Thank you both.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Ernst?

Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

General Robinson, Admiral Tidd, thank you very much.
Sergeant Major, nice to have you here as well. Thank you
very much for joining us.

General Robinson, yesterday we had the opportunity to
talk about the counter-weapons of mass destruction
activities that we have going on here in the homeland.
SOCOM now has the responsibility for countering weapons of mass destruction, but it is something, once it approaches the homeland, we need to figure out how to respond to that. You have a great role in that, as well as number of other combatant commands, departments, and agencies.

One thing I want to point out is we tend to focus a lot about North Korea and the threat that their nuclear program might have on the United States. But we have to remember there are other things involved with weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological, and radiological agents as well. And we know that North Korea does have the potential to develop some of those other threatening means to the United States.

So can you talk a little bit about how NORTHCOM works with all of these other COCOMs, various federal agencies, how are we protecting the homeland not just from the nuclear threat but some of the other threats as well?

General Robinson: Yes, ma’am. Thanks.

First of all, I think one of the things that I really enjoy is my opportunity and privilege to work with DHS, FEMA, and all the other intelligence agencies here in the homeland. I have Joint Task Force Civil Support in Virginia, an amazing guard unit, that works very focused on the chemical and biological reaction. But I have other task forces in the guard that help respond. One of them is
So for me, that whole relationship with the governors and with the TAGs to bring the forces to bear when we need them to be there, independent of the niche capability that JTF Civil Support provides to me from Virginia, but in addition to forces that other guard units provide are amazing. And so it is understanding what is going to happen here. You heard me talk about earlier about our exercise Ardent Sentry, and you heard me talk about understanding what the nuclear capability can do. So it is understanding now the forces that we would need to support and defend governors and States.

Senator Ernst: Thank you.

And we mentioned yesterday too those civil support teams and others that work behind the scene. They truly are those quiet professionals.

General Robinson: Yes, ma’am. They are the quiet professionals. Yes, ma’am.

Senator Ernst: Thank you very much for that.

Admiral Tidd, thank you also for sitting down with me and going through a number of really concerning issues. And you have heard a lot of impassioned speeches from our Senators today. And I think we are all very concerned about the illicit trade that goes on and terrorism throughout the region. We know that there is the trade of drugs, tobacco,
weapons illicit and sometimes, in cases, human trafficking. 
And sometimes they are generating revenue for terrorist 
organizations like Hezbollah.

Can you explain how you are trying to tighten down on 
that nexus? And can you specifically address our wonderful 
partners throughout the region, some of the countries that 
have helped step up and combat some of these problems?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, thanks for your question.

I think the way that we have reoriented the way that we 
do business in our main effort, being countering threat 
networks, is specifically intended to maximize the tools 
that we within the Department of Defense bring to bear into 
this interagency and international partnership to be able to 
counter these threat networks regardless of what commodity 
that they are moving.

Partners like Colombia have been absolutely 
irreplaceable, their willingness to work with us, to share 
information with us, to be partners not just within Colombia 
but also working side by side with Central American 
neighbors to help them build their capacity to be able to 
deal with, track down, apply pressure on, and disrupt these 
threat networks.

I would highlight the terrific work that has been going 
on that General Robinson and all of her work with the armed 
forces of Mexico, SEDENA and SEMAR. Mexico is now exerting
I think a significant interest in helping to improve security in Central America. And so we work together in partnership, NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM together, to facilitate that particular type of activity.

Many other partners throughout the region. We have got capable partners. I would highlight a few, and just working around the continent, Brazil. Argentina has now come on strong and played a critical role. Chile has for many years been one of the premier security partners in the region. Peru is now a very significant partner. And again, I come to Colombia as probably our single most significant strategic partner in the region.

Senator Ernst: Thank you very much. I think it is important that we realize we do have solid partners in the region. It is not all on our shoulders. We cannot do it without them.

Admiral Tidd: Far from it.

Senator Ernst: So I appreciate your service. Thank you very much for being here today.

Admiral Tidd: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Inhofe: Senator McCaskill?

Senator McCaskill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for serving and thank you for being here today.

I am not going to plow ground that has already been
gone over as it relates to opioids. But I just want to echo that the threat of black market fentanyl to the safety and security of Americans probably tops just about anything else we are facing right now. And I do think it is an all hands on deck moment for every part of our national security apparatus.

I wanted to specifically ask about CBRN, and for people that might be watching this that are not yet used -- or maybe never want to get used to all the acronyms, obviously that is chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear schools that we have in the military.

As we look at North Korea and what they are doing, clearly there is an issue about readiness as it relates to the training that we need to have in terms of dirty bombs and biological weapons and obviously the potential that there could possibly be a nuclear threat to our country.

What I wanted to ask, General Robinson, do you not think it might be wise if we started using our military schools, on a space available basis, our CBRN training programs, to start to begin to put some civilian first responders into that training that could really be a force multiplier? Because if we are actually in an armed conflict with North Korea, we are really going to be stretched because there are still going to be trouble spots throughout the world. And it just seems to me if we have got space
available and we have got the infrastructure, that it would be a really good idea that we would begin opening those doors more widely to police departments and fire departments and other first responders in our country to get this really important response training to that kind of attack from our enemy.

General Robinson: So, ma’am, when I first took over command at NORTHCOM and NORAD, I think it was about a week I was there and we had this exercise that was called Ardent Sentry. And it was about I-5 corridor, earthquake, you know, all those things happening. And when I walked into the room, there were 200 people, 300 people in this room. And I looked at one of my predecessors, General Jacoby, and I go who are all these people. And what I discovered in this exercise was the fact that it was local, State, and TAGs and folks from emergency managers from all the States that would be involved in that.

Last year, we had the same exercise, and it had to do with a 10-kiloton nuclear event in New York City. And so the same thing. We had local, State, emergency responders, and all of that.

When Secretary Kelly took over, he said, Lori, I want to talk about let us think about how we are going to do this should something happen with North Korea, and then just recently Secretary Nielsen.
So, ma’am, we are all doing this together saying what does it look like, how do we go forward with this to understand that.

Senator McCaskill: Well, I would like to consider, with the chairman’s, hopefully, support and bipartisan support, something in the NDAA that would open up training slots in our military CBRN schools to first responders just on a space-available basis.

General Robinson: Ma’am, I would be happy to work with the committee.

Senator McCaskill: That would be I think terrific. I know we have a great one at Fort Leonard Wood. But there are times that the infrastructure that is there is not being fully utilized. It just seems to me this would be a hand in glove fit for the threats that we face.

General Robinson: You know, come talk to me. I will have my staff talk to yours, and I would be happy to work with the committee.

Senator McCaskill: Thank you very much, General. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thanks to the witnesses.

General Robinson, sometimes at these hearings I ask questions to get information, sometimes to make a point, and
sometimes to educate the public about something that I think I already know but I think the public should know. And my question is going to be in that category, trying to educate the public about something important.

Within the last month, about a month or so ago, we had two news reports on successive days that caused some real alarm among citizens in Hawaii. There was an emergency alert sent out suggesting that there was an incoming missile attack. It took 38 minutes for that improper emergency alert to be, I guess, retrieved. And then a couple of days later, the Japanese news agency NHK put out a warning about an incoming missile attack from North Korea that I think was corrected within a few minutes. But in each event, these things caused a whole lot of public concern.

I was in a classified hearing recently where I had a chance to ask -- and I think this is actually non-classified material, and I hope you can get there. I was able to ask the question of our military leadership, when these false warnings went out, did our military immediately realize -- how quickly did the military realize that these were not attacks? And I think that is the kind of thing that gives comfort to people that there might be a false warning but our military understands it pretty quickly, which reduces the risk then of an accidental provocation, accidental military action.
From your perspective as NORTHCOM Commander with NORAD under your jurisdiction, can you talk a little bit about those two incidents and how quickly we were able to confirm that these in fact were not missile attacks?

General Robinson: Sir, in this unclassified hearing, I can tell you very comfortably and confidently we were quickly to confirm that nothing had happened.

Senator Kaine: That is, I think, an important thing for the public to know.

General Robinson: But I do want to just say at the first indications of a missile launch, NORAD and NORTHCOM command centers will initiate a conference call to process the event and make an attack assessment. And FEMA ops center and their alternate ops center is a part of that call. So I would like to add that into the record.

Senator Kaine: Right. So there are a lot of folks who are reaching the same conclusion.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Kaine: That is comforting, I think, for people to know.

Let me ask you, Admiral Tidd. You talked a little bit in response to Senator Perdue’s question about the training that we do with SOUTHCOM partners. It is the case that nations in your area are purchasing more from Russia. There is activity by Russia, by Iran, by China. But talk a little
bit more about the training side because I have had a chance
to see some of the training in action, and I am very, very
impressed with the kind of training we do, the degree to
which these nations want us to be their partner, the
relationships you build. Somebody you are training might be
the defense minister in 10 years or the president in 20
years. But talk about some of the nations and the training
exercises currently underway between the U.S. and nations in
your command.

Admiral Tidd: Senator, there is no doubt in my mind
that the countries that we work with unanimously prefer
working with the United States because we work together as
equal partners, because we work together defending the same
interests, the same values, the same piece of the hemisphere
together. So we try to find ways to make it as easy as we
possibly can.

We could not do that without the enormous support of,
for instance, our state partner program, National Guard
units that are active in virtually every country throughout
our region. They provide that long-term contact, personal
relationships many times with these countries that is
valuable and that helps build their capability and capacity.

I mentioned previously the enormous importance of our
very, very small but capable special operations forces that
come down and work with partner nations. They are highly
respected both for their professional ability but also for their ability to work together and to understand how to meet the needs of particular countries. I have told General Tony Thomas he is oftentimes my most important force provider, and special operations forces over and over again are my major maneuver force. Small, small numbers but critically important throughout this region.

Also other reserve forces, the regionally aligned force that the Army provides, could not do a lot of the training that we do in Central America.

And last but absolutely not least, our special purpose marine air-ground task force that 6 months out of the year during the hurricane season, come down, work with partner nations, build their capacity, build their resilience to deal with disaster response, and then when the need arises, if a disaster occurs -- and for the last 2 years, they have been directly employed in disaster response operations throughout our theater.

Senator Kaine: I have had the opportunity to witness some of these. In Honduras, deployment of mobile medical clinics to remote areas which have a humanitarian purpose but also help train our own folks to do deployment of medical clinics in combat, if we need to. I have watched training in Colombia where I have watched not only training on military tactics but respect for the rule of law and
proper respect for human rights during the time when the war was going on against the FARC. And so I have seen the value of these trainings. I also know sometimes it is these kind of training exercises that get really squeezed in budget pressures. That is one of my hopes with the budget that we have recently announced that you will have the opportunity to continue to build those relationships, which I think put us in a much stronger position.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Blumenthal?

Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

General Robinson, I have been to Puerto Rico twice, and I have been impressed by the complete inadequacy of the federal response to fellow Americans there. As we speak, I think a third of the island’s population lacks electricity. The economy is struggling. In fact, it is on the brink of bankruptcy if not there. The Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA have worked hard. People on the ground are devoting themselves valiantly, but my sense is that there is a lack of resources from the Federal Government.

I recognize that NORTHCOM is in a support mission there. I wonder -- and I know Senator Warren has asked about it, and you have said you are conducting a review -- whether you have any preliminary insights or observations for this committee about what could or should have been done
differently.

   General Robinson: So, sir, one of the things I talk
about all the time is every hurricane has its own
characteristics. And so one of the characteristics of this
hurricane season was there were five hurricanes. People
forget about Nate, and we forget that Ophelia was out there.
But the fact of the matter is Puerto Rico is an island, and
that is different than Texas and that is different than
Florida. That is different than other things that we have
seen.

   So one of the things that we are going to go back and
look at -- and we did an internal review inside of my
command, we are going to do inside of the Department -- so
how do we think about that differently. Do we have force
structures set up appropriately? Do we the have things that
we need? Because at the end of the day, sir, as you know,
we support the governor and we support FEMA, and we provide
niche unique capabilities that at that place, as an example,
that the guard might not have, and ensure that we have it
positioned at the right place at the right time to be there
when it is necessary.

   Senator Blumenthal: Do you think that FEMA and other
federal agencies made full use of the resources that you
could offer?

   General Robinson: Sir, I would say it this way.
Secretary Mattis told me I could have whatever I needed whenever I needed it. And so whenever it was asked for, I had a --

Senator Blumenthal: But my question is did they make sufficient use of --

General Robinson: Sir, we have not had the ability to have an interagency top-down conversation about that. I think that is a different conversation. I think what is important is the fact that Secretary Mattis said I could have what I needed when I needed it.

Senator Blumenthal: And he said to this committee that he would make available whatever was necessary when it was needed.

General Robinson: Yes, sir.

Senator Blumenthal: I have no doubt about the availability and your readiness and your willingness. I am asking about resources that were unused because they were unasked for.

General Robinson: Since we have not had a lessons learned across the interagency, I would not want to answer that conversation.

Senator Blumenthal: Admiral Tidd, my understanding is that Hezbollah is very active in a number of South American countries, particularly in money laundering, drug trading. Is that your observation as well?
Admiral Tidd: Yes, Senator, it is.

Senator Blumenthal: What actions are being taken against Hezbollah?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, we have been watching Hezbollah for a number of decades now because, as you well recognize, they have been in this hemisphere for a while engaged largely in criminal activities supporting their terrorist activities abroad. They are the A team that has been mentioned from time to time. And so we are watching what they are doing, working with our partners and with the intelligence community within our country teams and increasingly with partner nations to be aware of what they are doing and to not be surprised.

Senator Blumenthal: Should there be more action as opposed to watching? Have we reached the point where the United States needs to be more actively engaged in light of its interests in the Middle East?

Admiral Tidd: Senator, these actions are taking place in sovereign nations that have their laws that they are applying. We are making sure they have got the best information available to them to apply their laws.

Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: This may fall into the category of Senator Kaine’s educating the public, but I would only say
that we have had a lot of varying experiences with Puerto Rico. I can remember one that was not pleasant, and that was when I personally lost the battle of Vieques. They had the only area where we had the joint training capability, and searching worldwide, we were not able to replace that. And we did not get the cooperation that we should have gotten, and it had some adverse effects.

Following up a little bit on Senator Cotton’s comments about Gitmo, Admiral, what I would like to do -- I was very critical of President Obama when he was trying to close Gitmo. And one of his alternatives -- what are you going to do with all these guys you pick up -- was to put them into incarceration within the United States. One such place happened that was suggested by that administration was Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Obviously, you cannot put -- these are not prisoners. These are not criminals. These are enemy combatants. You cannot put them in and intermingle them with the prison population. Their job is to teach other people to be terrorists. And so I am really concerned, as we follow through with this.

I was happy when the President, in his State of the Union message, talked about expanding, keeping open that great resource that we have there. But I am very anxious for that to happen.

So what I would like to have you do, Admiral, is kind
of monitor that, let us know why we are not using it more already because I know that there have been some placements that took place. If you could do that for me, I would appreciate that very much and follow through with that.

Admiral Tidd: I will, Senator.

Senator Inhofe: And I had one last comment to make. Why do you not go ahead, Senator Reed?

Senator Reed: No, sir.

Senator Inhofe: This would go to the gentleman sitting behind General Robinson. We share a best friend whose name is Sublett. Sublett actually had a lot of missions in Vietnam, I think about 300 of them. When he got out -- they changed the 570th -- and you are aware of this -- from the F-16 mission to a refueling mission. And when that happened, he took retirement from the reserves. And I was his speaker at the retirement. And he wanted to keep flying. And I am still a flight instructor. So what I had to do, I say to you, David, was I took the awesome responsibility. You know, anyone can fly fast. I had to teach Charles Sublett how to fly slow. So I had to say something you were not aware of, and that is it.

Any further comments?

Senator Reed: I cannot top that, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: All right.

Anything more?
[No response.]

Senator Inhofe: Well, we are adjourned and we appreciate very much your willingness and your straightforward answers to the questions. You both did a great job. Thanks so much.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]