

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Lloyd J. Austin
Nominee for Appointment to be Secretary of Defense

Duties and Qualifications

Section 113 of title 10, U.S. Code, establishes the Secretary of Defense as the head of the Department of Defense (DOD) and principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department.

What background, experience, and expertise do you possess that qualify you to serve as Secretary of Defense?

I believe my past experience has provided me the necessary leadership skills, geopolitical acumen and deep understanding of joint and combined operations to serve this country as Secretary of Defense. I know how to work collaboratively with interagency partners, and I know how to lead, plan and operate with allies and partner nations.

Having been to war, I also know well the life and death decisions any Secretary of Defense has to make. I am prepared to make those decisions, informed by my own experience. Finally, I believe the experiences gained in the five years since I retired -- with nonprofit organizations, academia, and private sector businesses -- have broadened my skills and my views.

I have worked extensively with our partners in other agencies (State, CIA etc.). Also, I have a wealth of experience in working with our allies and building teams.

Dr. Eliot Cohen, Dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, has written that, “. . . the secretary of defense represents the armed forces to society at large, and far more important, represents society to the armed forces. Selecting a civilian ensures that civilian perspectives dominate, as they should.”

Given your significant and recent military experience, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, how would you approach your leadership of DOD to ensure that “civilian perspectives dominate”?

I have served in multiple senior military positions, working closely with civilian superiors and colleagues, and have appreciated both their perspectives on the difficult challenges confronting our Nation and the importance of their authority over our military. If confirmed, I will ensure that the authority and responsibilities of DoD’s senior civilian leadership are clearly understood throughout the Department of Defense, and I will ensure that I receive advice and counsel from a diverse team, military and civilian, with perspectives and experiences from across the spectrum. Further, if confirmed I will actively ensure in my leadership, words and actions that civilian leadership of the Department is understood and is preminent.

What skills and attributes would you bring to the table in executing your duties to “represent the armed forces to society at large, and . . . represent[] society to the armed forces”?

I understand that, if confirmed, one of my responsibilities will be to represent the men and women of the Department of Defense to the American people and will do that with transparency, integrity and honesty. Though it is clear the American people support their military, it is not clear to me that they fully understand the scope of the sacrifices that military personnel and their families make each day.

My time in uniform, and frankly my time thus far as a civilian, provide me a unique opportunity to help close this gap in understanding. I’m certainly aware of the historic nature of my nomination, and I believe that, too, will help raise awareness of the diversity in our ranks and the need to keep fielding a military that itself represents the breadth of American society.

I obviously have extensive knowledge of how the military operates and what the challenges are. My depth of understanding of the challenges facing our military members and their families not only helps me to better address their needs, but it helps me to accurately tell their stories to the public.

If confirmed, and given your observations and experience, what innovative ideas would you consider implementing with regard to the structure and operations of the DOD?

In my experience, building and leading high performing teams requires excellent communication, unity of purpose, selfless service and agility. If confirmed, I will use the first weeks of my tenure to emphasize these characteristics, and I will look for opportunities to improve the structure or operations to ensure we are as effective and efficient as possible.

I believe we need to re-invigorate our alliance participation and support; that we need to reconsider our investments in technology, research and development, and that we need to continue to look for ways to improve the integration of joint capabilities.

If confirmed, what duties and functions would you assign to the Deputy Secretary of Defense?

If I am confirmed, the Deputy Secretary of Defense would be a ‘full partner’ with me in decision-making, setting policy, and running the Department. If confirmed, I would expect the Deputy to be – more often than not – the last person in the room with me before I make an important decision. The traditional focus of the Deputy Secretary is similar to that of a Chief Operating Officer in managing the day-to-day business and functions of a large, complicated organization. If confirmed, I intend to continue this

model. This would include, most notably, driving the programming and budgeting cycle to modernize the force and reform the Department.

Major Challenges and Opportunities

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed as Secretary of Defense and what are your plans to address each challenge?

The most urgent challenge we face is the pandemic. If confirmed, I will immediately review DOD's support to the broader U.S. government effort and increase the speed and scale of our support, while maintaining military readiness. Globally, I believe the most significant challenge I will face will be to ensure the Department of Defense's continued efforts to prepare and strengthen the U.S. military for a dynamic, future security landscape driven by accelerating competitions with China and with Russia -- with China as our pacing threat in most areas-- while still ensuring our ability to deter today's range of threats. DoD, in concert with our interagency and international partners and allies, will play a crucial role in deterring Chinese and Russian aggression, while still contending with threats emanating from Iran and North Korea and countering terrorism. We must also address risks to the U.S. Homeland, including demands for defense support to civil authorities.

If confirmed, I pledge to be transparent with the American people and this Congress about what is necessary to advance the security of the United States.

Civilian Control of the Military

Section 113 of title 10, United States Code, provides that “[a] person may not be appointed as Secretary of Defense within seven years after relief from active duty as a commissioned officer of a regular component of an armed force.”

Under what circumstances do you believe it is appropriate for Congress to provide an exception to this law?

I understand and respect the intent of the law. The safety and security of our democracy demands civilian control of our armed forces, the subordination of military power to the civil. Congress must determine whether an exception is appropriate. I have served the United States for over 40 years in uniform, and I respect and appreciate the fundamental importance of civilian control over the military. I know first-hand what is expected from our senior military leaders in their interactions with, and support of, the Department's civilian leadership. Moreover, through my experiences both in and out of uniform, I know what is required of the civilians tasked with leading our military services.

What are your personal views on the principle of civilian control of the military?

I believe civilian control of the military is fundamental to our democracy. I spent 41 years as a military officer swearing an oath to the Constitution and to the concept of civilian control. I understand the different roles and responsibilities between military officers and civilian leadership. If confirmed, I will carry out my duties as the civilian Secretary.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as Secretary of Defense epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?

Since the beginning of my journey in the military as a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point almost 50 years ago, to my later service as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and Joint commands in the United States and across the globe, I have understood the foundational importance of civilian control of the military; it is one of the things that makes ours the greatest military in history and is a key guarantor of the freedoms and democracy we cherish and have sworn to defend. The authorities of the President and, through the President, the Secretary of Defense are clear in the U.S. Constitution and laws of our Nation, and in the minds of all who serve, civilian and military, in the defense of our Nation. I have come to learn that large organizations will reflect the principles and values of their senior leaders. The chain of command is clear, and if confirmed I will actively ensure in my leadership, words, and actions that civilian control and authority over the Department are understood and followed.

The 2018 National Defense Strategy Commission report observed, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.”

Do you agree with this assessment? If so, specifically what would you do to address this issue, if confirmed?

I believe in the bedrock American principle of civilian control of the military. Devising the right strategy for our nation’s defense is the very cornerstone of civilian control of the military, and if confirmed, overseeing development of the next iteration of the National Defense Strategy and its implementation will be among my very top priorities. If confirmed, I will ensure DoD’s civilian leadership shepherds this fundamental task, and continues to exercise its necessary authorities and responsibilities for shaping and overseeing U.S. defense policy and strategy, while working closely with the Departments’ military leadership, as well as with Congress.

The National Defense Strategy Commission report also states, “. . . allocating priority—and allocating forces—across theaters of warfare is not solely a military matter. It is an inherently political-military task, decision authority for which is the proper competency and responsibility of America’s civilian leaders.”

If confirmed, specifically how would you exercise your responsibilities in this regard?

If confirmed, I will rely on empowered civilian leaders across the Office of the Secretary of Defense to advise me on the full range of strategic and policy considerations related to global force management. This includes developing our strategic priorities, aligning resources with these priorities, adjudicating resource tradeoffs between different Combatant Commands, and when appropriate, coordinating with the U.S. Department of State and the National Security Council. This civilian expertise will be critical to informing my decision making on how best to allocate and assign forces in support of our national interests.

What civilian officials and organizations, in your opinion, should participate in decisions regarding allocating priority and forces across operational theaters? If confirmed, how would you ensure the participation of these officials and organizations in such decisions?

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy – and the team of civilian appointees and civil servants that support this position – play a central role in reviewing DoD posture and global force management decisions to ensure alignment with strategic priorities, policies for bilateral relationships, and congressional and public affairs considerations. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security also play important roles in reviewing global force management decisions.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is fully empowered to coordinate within DoD and help lead the implementation of our strategic priorities. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy—or the appropriate official within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy—will review every global force management issue prior to recommendations coming to me for decisions, and I will ensure he has the opportunity to provide counsel directly to me, informed by military assessments.

If confirmed, what lessons would you draw from the tenures of former Secretaries Mattis and Marshall—also recently retired general officers who served as the Secretary of Defense—and how would you apply those lessons to your own service, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense?

Secretaries Marshall and Mattis conducted themselves with integrity and professionalism. They were public servants and honest leaders. If confirmed, I would conduct myself in the same manner.

I am mindful of the concerns of another retired general leading the Department, and while I am in no position to judge the details of how these two predecessors chose to do it, I can assure you that, if confirmed, I intend to lead in a manner consistent with my belief in the principle of civilian control.

I will empower the OSD staff to lead the policy-making process. I will fill all available civilian positions on that staff, and I will ensure that the orders I give and the decisions I make are properly formed through a blend of civilian and military perspectives.

Military advice will inform but it will not dominate my thinking. Finally, knowing that Congress, too, represents an important element of civilian control, I will consult closely with the Senate and House of Representatives as you execute your oversight responsibilities. I will be forthcoming, responsive and transparent with you.

2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS)

The 2018 NDS outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment? What do you perceive as the areas of greatest risk?

I believe the 2018 NDS correctly identifies strategic competitions with China and with Russia as the primary challenges animating the global security environment; however, I believe that because of its ascent and the scope and scale of its military modernization, China is the top priority. I am also concerned about transnational threats as the security landscape evolves (e.g., amid COVID-19) and believe that our defense strategy must adapt accordingly. As required by law, if confirmed I will review the NDS and where necessary revise or update it in the 2022 National Defense Strategy.

The continued erosion of U.S. military advantage vis-à-vis China and Russia, in key strategic areas, remains the most significant risk the Department must address. If left unchecked, this continued erosion could fundamentally challenge our ability to achieve U.S. national security objectives – and limit DoD’s ability to underpin other U.S. instruments of power.

What is your assessment of the military threat posed by the People’s Republic of China?

I assess that the rapid development and operational focus of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) constitutes a significant and long-term security threat to the United States and to our allies and partners. This threat is an outgrowth of nearly two decades of intense efforts by China to modernize and reform the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and other forces into an increasingly capable joint force able to conduct the full range of military operations across every warfighting domain. In addition to a significant buildup and modernization of its strategic forces, the PLA is advancing its capabilities and concepts for conducting information, cyber, space, and counterspace operations. China has also made it clear that it expects the PLA to be a global military actor that is able to secure China’s growing overseas interests and advance other PRC objectives abroad. These changes are coupled with the PRC’s aggressive and at times coercive activities

aimed at advancing its military influence through forging closer ties with foreign militaries, attaining overseas military bases, and expanding the PLA's presence worldwide.

If confirmed, would you revise or adjust the 2018 NDS as a result of changes in assumptions, policy, or other factors? If so, in what ways?

Yes. Many of the core concepts in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) are fundamentally sound. At the same time, there are notable changes occurring in the global security environment that warrant deeper evaluation, and which should compel DoD to periodically reexamine and update the strategy and its path to implementation. For example, the pace of China's military modernization, its increasingly aggressive actions in the INDO-PACIFIC and its ability to threaten the U.S. Homeland are concerning and must be continually reexamined. The NDS also assumes sustained defense budget growth, but that has not fully materialized. The NDS anticipated a global rebalancing of U.S. commitments, notably from the Middle East to the INDO-PACIFIC, but that has proven challenging. In light of these developments, if confirmed, I plan to undertake a comprehensive strategic review in consultation with my leadership team to ensure we can achieve our defense objectives.

If confirmed, I would direct my team to evaluate where changes are emerging relative to the U.S. security and fiscal environments; demands on defense-wide and military roles and missions; our military's approach to future warfighting; the state of our network of allies and partners; and the ways DoD is implementing the strategy. Examination of these elements would of course be nested in the broader context of any change in priorities directed in our National Security Strategy. These insights would inform how the Department may update the defense strategy and its implementation.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to the missions and responsibilities (including geographic boundaries) of the Combatant Commands to implement the 2018 NDS more effectively? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will review whether the responsibilities of the Combatant Commands align with the Department's priority missions in implementing the defense strategy and, if necessary, work with the Department's senior leadership to revise. It would be my responsibility to recommend to the President roles and missions for Combatant Commanders to ensure there are no seams our adversaries can exploit. That includes boundaries of the Combatant Commands.

Do you see a need to adjust the size, structure, and resources of each Military Service to ensure they are optimized to implement the 2018 NDS and the associated Operation Plans (OPLANs)? Please explain your answer.

The size, structure, and resources of each Service must be informed by strategy-driven analysis and priorities, a joint understanding of how our military will conduct operations and fight and win the nation's future wars, and a resource-informed pragmatism. In my

view, each of the Services has taken important steps to align their force structures and resourcing to 2018 NDS priorities, especially in shifting away from decades of counter-terrorism operations and toward great power competition and warfighting preparedness. If confirmed, I will carefully consider the approaches the Services are taking, individually and as a Joint Force, and working closely with my senior civilian leadership team I, will make appropriate determinations about their preparedness for both today's and future contingencies.

Does DOD have the requisite modeling and simulation capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, in assessing whether the Combatant Commanders' OPLANs will achieve the national security objectives identified by the NDS? Please explain your answer.

It is my understanding that the Department uses a number of modeling and simulation approaches, combined with military exercises, experiments, and wargames to assess the effectiveness of operational plans. If confirmed, I will assure these plans are thoroughly assessed and adjusted if necessary, and that we continue to ensure robust analytic support to the development of current and future operational plans.

Does the DOD have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, in evaluating the Military Services' force structure and sizing strategies to ensure that each Service can and will generate forces that are manned, trained, and equipped to execute the operational plans associated with the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

Effectively executing operational plans requires the right forces, in sufficient number and with relevant training, arriving in theater on relevant timelines. If confirmed, I will assess each Service's force structure to ensure it supports the wide range of missions required to meet the Nation's defense goals. I will also ensure we continue to use all analytic tools at our disposal to assess Service force structure and sizing strategies against the demands of the defense strategy.

Are there significant opportunities that, in your view, DOD has been unable to leverage, or has leveraged only in part, since the NDS was published in 2018? If so, how would correct this situation, if confirmed?

Our alliances and partnerships globally – including the defense tools at our disposal to engage them, and more fundamentally the mutual security commitments and interests we pursue to maintain them – are an asymmetric strategic advantage that our competitors do not possess. The strength of this network of defense relations cannot be taken for granted, though, especially in global competitions with China and Russia. If confirmed, I would seek ways to build on DoD's alliance and partnership efforts as a core element of defense strategy.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will make it a priority to rebuild strong defense relationships with our allies and partners around the world, many of whom have felt

unsure of U.S. commitments and insufficiently consulted in recent years. In addition to renewing the foundations of our defense relationships, I also understand the Department recently released new guidance to guide efforts to more strategically engage with its network of allies and partners through defense relations, security cooperation, force planning, and elsewhere. If confirmed, I would look to better understand how DoD is framing and implementing this guidance and ensure it is fundamental to broader DoD efforts to review and update defense strategy and its implementation.

Secretary Mattis said that the 2018 National Defense Strategy “establishes my intent to pursue urgent change at significant scale.” Do you share Secretary Mattis’ intent for the NDS? In your opinion, where has DOD succeeded in executing the NDS, where has DOD fallen short, and what should be done to exploit successes and correct deficiencies?

The NDS is the Defense Department’s answer to the President’s National Security Strategy (NSS); it details the ways and means with which our military will implement the larger national security imperatives our country faces.

My intent, therefore, if confirmed, is to develop an NDS that supports President-elect Biden’s NSS and defines how the U.S. military will utilize all its resources to defend the American people.

I expect that such a strategy -- in this time of geo-political flux, accelerating competition, transnational threats and extraordinary technological transformation -- will entail change, even urgent change, but I view the document’s purpose in this larger context.

I believe the Department has taken important steps in beginning to realign Joint Force capabilities and posture to ensure its competitive military edge against China and Russia, including in key strategic regions - but there is yet more work to be done. I believe we need to accelerate the pace and scope of this change, and make tough choices where fiscal, doctrinal, temporal, or other limitations pose trade-offs to implementing the strategy. I also think the Department’s challenges in shifting focus from today’s global, operational commitments (especially in the Middle East) to future mission demands must be reconciled within the strategy, to ensure its feasible and sustainable implementation. I believe further prioritization, better focus, and synchronization of defense relations, security cooperation, research and development, and force planning are important areas to assess and adjust to advance defense objectives.

In mandating changes to the process and form of the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy, and the National Military Strategy, Congress intended that these documents, through the Defense Planning Guidance, would more rigorously drive program planning of the Military Departments, Defense Agencies, and Combatant Commands.

If confirmed, how would you ensure consistency between the guiding strategies of the Department and its allocation of resources?

It is critical to ensure a clear linkage between strategic priorities, planning guidance, and resourcing across the Department, including among the Military Services and Combatant Commands. As well, this linkage must be governed by the core principle of civilian control of the military. If confirmed, I am fully committed to supporting DoD's internal strategic guidance processes to ensure that key Departmental functions – in employing, managing, and developing the Joint Force – are informed by strategy-driven, resource-informed defense planning. This planning guidance should apply across the full defense enterprise, and among the full range of force development and planning functions, including programming and resourcing, acquisition, requirements, concept development, and analysis.

DOD Readiness

The United States now faces two near-peer competitors in an aggressively militaristic China and revanchist Russia.

Do you believe that our military forces have greater overall combat potential today than 30 years ago, despite force structure reductions? If so, please explain.

Yes. Despite force structure reductions over the past 30 years, the Joint Force has the necessary capacity and capability to implement National Defense Strategy (NDS) priorities and contend with today's threats. With congressional support, the Department of Defense will increase the Joint Forces' combat potential by continued investments in joint force readiness and force modernization, along with accelerated investments in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other advanced technologies. These investments, combined with ally and partner cooperation, will enable optimizing our force structure to generate a combat credible Joint Force capable of deterring or defeating adversaries.

In your view, how do the readiness challenges facing the DOD today and over the next 10 years impact the Department's requirements for force structure investments? Please explain your answer.

Increased and stable funding over recent budget years has improved the Department's ability to restore military readiness. To sustain our readiness gains, we must balance force structure growth with the need to train, equip, and modernize the Services. If confirmed, I expect to review our continued investments in mobility, logistics, and force protection for Ground Combat Teams; Navy weapons procurement and fleet maintenance; and increased Air Force Ballistic Missile Systems and airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, space, cyber and advanced technologies, to name a few.

If confirmed, how would you balance force structure and readiness demands, particularly with respect to rotational forces in the U.S. Central Command

(CENTCOM) area of responsibility (AOR), against the imperative to modernize or restructure forces currently in our inventory to meet NDS requirements?

I believe we can better calibrate U.S. military presence in the Middle East, and its impacts on the military broadly, to ensure we rebuild the readiness and modernization of the Joint Force as well as provide opportunities to employ the force in other theaters. Historical levels of force commitments to the CENTCOM theater, if sustained over time, will have progressively more negative impacts on force readiness, recapitalization, and the pace and scale of future capability development. The United States should draw on all tools, not just U.S. military force posture, to secure U.S. interests in the CENTCOM theater. Key to this intent will be working by, with, and through our partners in the region. If confirmed, I will review U.S. force presence globally to ensure it is properly balanced with global mission demands and the health of the Joint Force.

Do you assess that the continuing deployment of significant capabilities to the CENTCOM AOR has produced or consumed readiness of U.S. armed forces?

In many cases, yes - the continued deployment of significant capabilities to the CENTCOM AOR or indeed to any operational area consumes some readiness of our forces. That is to be expected. As we build readiness, we must closely monitor the deployment decisions we make today, to assess the impacts those decisions will have on our ability to operate effectively in the future.

Anticipating constant or declining defense budgets going forward, and if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, how would you prioritize the needs for continued readiness, force structure, and modernization?

Under any resourcing level, the Department must balance readiness, force structure, modernization, and competitive compensation levels while pursuing efficiencies and savings through organizational reform and critical reviews of ongoing missions and activities. If the Department's resourcing levels prove to be relatively "flat" in the coming years, we would need to prioritize modernization of combat-credible forces and deterrent capability, particularly where leveraging advanced technology to ensure the U.S. Joint Force maintains a competitive edge in key domains and warfighting functions, such as in space, 6th generation air power, cyber, undersea warfare, and long-range fires. Doing so under flattening budgets may mean accepting some level of increased risk in the near-term readiness, and greater divestment of legacy force structure, in order to avoid a larger but increasingly obsolete future force.

How would you assess the current readiness of the DOD components across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training to execute OPLANs in support of the 2018 NDS?

Our armed forces are manned, trained, equipped, and ready to answer the nation's call, as the most capable military in the history of the world. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Congress to focus on improving readiness in all facets (Personnel,

Equipment/Materiel, and Training) to ensure our forces stand ready to execute Operation/Contingency plans in support of the priorities of the NDS.

What is your assessment of the risk the Military Departments and Services and the Combatant Commands have accepted in regard to their readiness to execute OPLANs in furtherance of the 2018 NDS?

While I do not have access to all the classified information I would have if confirmed, I believe the Department of Defense has the necessary capability, capacity, and readiness to implement the NDS priorities and contend with today's threats, while minimizing unnecessary risk to our warfighters wherever possible. The threat environment continues to evolve, particularly with respect to China's and Russia's growing abilities to contest U.S. military advantages. If confirmed, I will assess risk across all domains in an iterative, collective, and collaborative effort, supported by the Military Departments, the Services, and the Combatant Commands.

DOD and Congress have often lacked an adequate understanding of trends in the readiness of the armed forces, owing to the difficulty of measuring readiness. This makes it particularly difficult to consider trade-offs among the Military Departments.

If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to improve the Department's definition of specific readiness metrics and the overarching assessment and reporting on readiness trends?

If confirmed, I will continue and reinforce the efforts currently underway to reform how readiness is tracked and reported. This includes the formulation of metrics to convey complex aggregations of data in context, consistent with the way forces are actually employed, that will allow for better management of the current and future force. I will also seek to employ advances in the fields of data science to make our data more strategically informative and help us develop predictive readiness models to anticipate, and ultimately avoid readiness shortfalls.

National Security Budget

In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). Former Secretaries of Defense Mattis and Esper agreed with that recommendation.

Do you agree with the conclusion of the NDS Commission that sustained real growth in the defense budget is necessary to achieve the aims of the current NDS without incurring significant additional risk?

Resources are an important part of generating the capability to achieve our national security goals, but that capability also depends on wise planning, leadership, effective training, and other factors. My goal will be to use the resources available to the Department wisely to realize the strategic aims of the Department and ensure the nation has the military capabilities to compete and win. Given the likely budget impact of COVID-19, DOD must be fiscally pragmatic and be prepared for modest growth in the coming years.

If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of the defense budget?

If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the Department's funding by our ability to defend this nation -- to execute our chosen strategy, maintain the nation's technological edge, preserve the health of the joint force, and provide options to the President that support his foreign policy and defense goals. As part of the framework to measure the sufficiency of our resourcing I would also revisit with the Chairman the way we assess, discuss, measure, and convey risk—a process that is fundamental to informing our recommendations regarding the adequacy of funding.

Many observers have suggested that that the current level of defense spending is not sustainable in the long term given the many priorities the nation faces.

Do you believe the DOD budget request should be based only on strategic considerations or should it also account for fiscal factors unrelated to the NDS? Please explain your answer.

I believe budgets should match resources to strategic national priorities and must strive to maximize our capabilities. At the same time, budgets for any agency, including DOD, are subject to fiscal realities. That is why it is important to set priorities and make hard choices to preserve and expand the competitive advantage we have against our great power adversaries.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget will be the first in a decade debated outside the context of the statutory Budget Control Act (BCA). Defense spending under the Budget Control Act decreased by less than half of the \$1 trillion that had been projected pre-BCA.

However, the relationship between absolute spending levels and the stability and certainty of funding availability remains poorly understood.

Acknowledging the need for stable, predictable, and adequate funding, what are your recommendations, if any, for changing the method by which the Department of Defense develops its budgets?

If confirmed, I will seek to strike an appropriate balance in the budget request between the current and future health and requirements of the force. Stability and predictability in funding, which has been lacking during the Budget Control Act era, would certainly help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department in managing its resources.

In your estimation, what do you perceive would be the effect on the ability of the joint force to achieve its objectives, of adding back—in the near future—DOD funding reduced under the Budget Control Act? Could the Department effectively and efficiently execute such resources?

Realistically, the lost buying power associated with BCA reductions is lost. Moving forward, if confirmed, my immediate aim would be to balance the competing demands of carrying out the strategic objectives established by the President, while maintaining and strengthening our military in order to adapt to changing threats.

The Department would always seek to wisely apply additional resources. If confirmed, my priorities would include increasing the readiness of our force, and ensuring its effective employment in accomplishing the missions directed by the Commander-in-Chief. Both the executive and legislative branches must strive to gain the greatest possible return to our national security for every tax dollar invested, whether that is in the Department of Defense or in other elements of our national power.

Many observers assert that the only way to force DOD leaders to make the “hard choices” to divest of lower priority or underperforming programs, is to constrain the Department fiscally.

Do you believe that this approach leads to more effective and efficient decision-making by DOD leaders?

There will always be fiscal constraints. Given the fragile state of our economy and the large deficits required to combat the impact of COVID, I expect fiscal pressure going forward. Despite such pressures, both the Department and the Congress have struggled at times with divesting legacy or lower priority programs to make way for important new investments. Given the scope of the challenges we face, Congress and the Department will need to work together to make some hard choices.

In your view, what are the effects of the BCA and headquarters cuts on the ability of the Office of the Secretary of Defense to make policy for, and oversee policy implementation across, all components of the Department of Defense?

The mandatory headquarters cuts undertaken over the past decade have effectively cut the OSD civilian workforce by 25 percent. The FY21 congressional marks will further shrink OSD's professional staff. This significant reduction has degraded the organization's ability to pursue effective policy-implementation for the expansive national security mission. Sustained cuts have narrowed OSD's hiring pipeline, weakening the organization's ability to compete for talented recent graduates. It has also challenged OSD's ability to bring diverse perspectives to recommended defense policies. If confirmed, I will direct a review of current staffing levels to determine the billets and resources we need to maintain a sufficiently sized professional civilian staff in OSD relative to our national security mission sets. If I determine that a lack of billets or funding for civilian pay is hindering the ability of OSD to make policy and oversee policy implementation across the Department, I will identify to Congress any additional unfunded requirements identified during my review.

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process has remained fundamentally unchanged since its inception more than half a century ago.

Do you believe the PPBE process results in the proper allocation of resources according to the strategic priorities at the Department of Defense?

It is my understanding that the PPBE process provides an effective, neutral, and open framework to allow the leadership of the Department, including the Secretary, to make well-informed choices about resource allocation in support of the Department's strategic priorities. I am committed to ensuring this process works effectively and, if confirmed, will seek to make any necessary adjustments to meet the nation's defense needs.

What changes would you make, if any, to the PPBE process to improve both resourcing decisions within DOD and information flow about those decisions to the Congress?

If confirmed, I will work in partnership with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and other Department leaders to ensure that the PPBE process is effective in aligning resources to the defense strategy. This includes identifying analytically-informed strategic choices about the size and shape of the future force. Effective communication with Congress is critical to ensuring our nation's defense needs are met. If confirmed, I will review the Department's communication process with the intent to ensure information flow to the Congress is both timely and effective.

I understand the Congress directed the Department, in the newly-enacted Department of Defense Appropriations Act for FY2021 to enhance the capabilities of the budget liaison offices in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and the services. That initiative will be an important part of ensuring an effective communication flow regarding the budget.

In recent years, several observers have asserted that relative detachment of the combatant commanders from the PPBE process results in inadequate treatment of combatant commander priorities.

If confirmed, do you believe that the PPBE process could be improved to more accurately reflect the resourcing requirements of the combatant commands, especially for joint requirements that are not high priorities for the individual military departments? If so, how?

Having served as both a combatant commander and as a service vice chief, I understand the different needs and perspectives each brings to the PPBE debates inside the Department. Assessing and resourcing the requirements of the Combatant Commands is a critical component of the PPBE process. It is my understanding that these requirements are currently integrated via multiple channels in the PPBE process and assessed based on their ability to meet the Department's defense goals. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that Combatant Command needs are fully and fairly reviewed as the Department builds its input to the President's Budget.

If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring Combatant Command needs are fully assessed as the Department builds its input to the President's Budget and will leverage existing PPBE inputs, such as Integrated Priority Lists to properly understand the resourcing requirements of the combatant commands. I will also rely on the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for advice on the priority of joint requirements.

Former Secretary of Defense Mattis stated, "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition."

What are your views on the role of the State Department and other non-DOD departments and agencies in achieving U.S. national security objectives?

Based on my 40 years of experience, I firmly believe that contributions of non-DoD departments and agencies are fundamental to achieving U.S. national security objectives. I believe there are few national security issues that can be properly addressed by only one agency of the government. Most require some level of interagency cooperation, and in my view, our diplomats should be in the lead for issues related to America's interests around the world. The Department of Defense should not and cannot alone address the many complex security challenges confronting this Nation. The military must at all times work in concert with all elements of national power – including diplomatic, economic, and intelligence activities – as part of a whole-of-government effort to address threats to the homeland, our allies and partners, and our interests abroad. The Department of Defense should eagerly support diplomatic efforts to establish and maintain a peace, to persuade and convince recalcitrant leaders, and to advance our goals for regional security and stability. The use of military force should be a last resort after alternatives have been exhausted. If confirmed, I will work very closely with my interagency counterparts to ensure the Department of Defense is always nested within a broader U.S. Government approach.

Do you believe non-DOD departments and agencies have been sufficiently resourced to appropriately contribute to U.S. national security objectives?

It is imperative that non-DoD departments and agencies receive sufficient funding to be able to contribute their respective parts in addressing the complex array of security challenges confronting this Nation. I do not believe current funding levels for security assistance and development programs are pacing the challenges posed by China and others in these areas. The Department of Defense alone cannot shoulder this burden – the Department’s success requires its interagency partners to be resourced sufficiently. Each department and agency leader must act with responsible fiscal stewardship as he or she sets resource requirements for respective missions in the context of the overall National Security Strategy. If confirmed, I would look to these leaders to determine the appropriate resource levels for their departments and agencies and would partner with them to advocate for sufficient funding.

Chain of Command

In accordance with title 10, U.S. Code, the President and Secretary of Defense exercise authority, direction, and control of the Armed Forces through two distinct branches of the chain of command. One branch runs from the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the combatant commanders for the execution of missions with forces assigned to their commands. For purposes of organizing, training, and equipping forces, the chain of command runs from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the Secretaries of the Military Departments.

Do you believe this dual structure provides for clear and effective chain of command?

Yes, I do. I have worked in this dual structure at both Military Service and Joint commands, and believe it is both effective and clearly understood throughout the Department.

How could the effectiveness of each branch of the chain of command be improved, in your view?

I have no specific recommendations to offer at this time. If confirmed, I will continuously consider the need for improvement to our chains of command, and will recommend them to the President and Congress as warranted.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff

Section 921 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2017 made changes to section 151 of title 10, U. S. Code, concerning the role of the Joint Chiefs as military advisors to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What is your assessment of the authorities and processes by which the Joint Chiefs provide military advice and opinions to the President, and the Secretary of Defense? What changes, if any, do you assess are required?

I believe the authorities and processes established in 10 U.S.C. § 151, as enhanced by the FY 2017 NDAA, are sufficient because they grant clear authority and responsibility to the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide military advice and opinions to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

I don't believe changes are required at this time.

What is your level of confidence that these authorities and processes will provide you, if confirmed as the Secretary of Defense, the best military advice, including "minority opinions" that may diverge from those of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs or the majority of members of the Joint Chiefs?

I am highly confident that, if confirmed, the current process will provide me with military advice. I am equally confident the authorities and processes in 10 U.S.C. § 151 ensure that when the advice or opinion of another member of the Joint Chiefs differs from that of the Chairman, the information will be provided to me, along with the reasoning behind the differences.

If confirmed, both the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff would share the experience of having served as general officers in the U.S. Army. Under these circumstances, how would you ensure that the President benefits from the diversity of opinion and expertise required to optimally address tough national security problems?

I will work with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to ensure that the opinions and perspectives of the Joint Chiefs – particularly if they differ from his or my own – are presented to the President and get a full airing.

Do you commit, if confirmed, to always provide your best advice to the President, even when your advice and opinions might differ from those of other members of the Cabinet, the President's other senior advisors, or from the President's own views?

I do.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff

Section 151 of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. Pursuant to Section 163(a) of title 10, the President has directed that communications between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the commanders of the combatant commands be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I will respect the independence of the Chairman, as stipulated in Title 10, to provide his military advice to me and to the Commander-in-Chief. And I will, of course, consult with the Chairman and the Joint Chiefs as I develop U.S. defense policy and issue orders to the Joint Force. This will, I expect, require constant and frequent personal interaction with them.

If confirmed, would you modify the current duties and responsibilities of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in any way? Are there any other duties and responsibilities you would consider assigning or delegating to the Chairman?

If confirmed, I intend to lead the policy-making process through the statutory structure of the OSD staff, and I intend to execute my duties in the military chain of command -- including the issuance of operational orders -- with the full benefit of the advice and counsel of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Combatant Commanders. I do not believe that performing these duties requires any modifications to the current duties and responsibilities of the Chairman.

I do not envision any such changes at this time.

If confirmed, what timeline would you assess to be appropriate for the Department's development, programming, and implementation of the joint operating concepts required by the NDS?

I understand that the Department is working on development of a Joint Warfighting Concept, with a first iteration due this spring. If confirmed, I will review the progress to date on this effort, to include the independent assessments of it, to determine what follow-on concept work is needed to ensure a strategy-driven and joint approach to future warfighting, and identify a timeline that ensures the overall concept is backed by solid analysis and can usefully inform future joint and Service capability investments.

In your view, is the Joint Staff appropriately structured, resourced, and experienced to adjudicate competing interests among combatant commands if the U.S. became

engaged in significant combat operations against a strategic competitor? If not, what organization do you believe should make decisions about the strategic tradeoffs required in such a situation?

Yes. The Joint Staff is trained and capable to present what would be a surge of competing requests before and during significant combat operations. The process of gathering risk, to both mission and force, and to present a strategic picture of associated tradeoffs is a core competency of the Joint Staff.

Use of Military Force

If confirmed, what factors would you consider in making recommendations to the President on the use of military force?

The decision to use military force is one of the most consequential decisions a President can make. In evaluating whether to recommend the use of military force, I would consider a number of factors, including: the nature of the threat and vital national interests at stake; whether the United States would be acting alone or with others; the risk to force and to mission; whether the proposed action complies with applicable domestic and international law, including the principles of necessity and proportionality; whether there is a defined and achievable military end-state; and whether non-military means that could sufficiently address the threat have been exhausted.

In your view, is a “new” Authorization for the Use of Military Force needed at this time? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will review current congressional Authorizations for Use of Military Force with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and provide the President with my recommendations.

What factors would you consider, if confirmed, in determining which forces of other nations are eligible for collective self-defense by U.S. forces, and under what conditions? What limitations, if any, would you seek to impose on the provision of collective self-defense by U.S. forces?

It is fundamental that the United States stands by our partners and allies. When U.S. forces have the authority to protect our partners from attack or imminent threat of attack, it can: help achieve mission objectives; bolster the protection of U.S. forces and facilities operating abroad; help maintain the resolve of partners that U.S. forces work by, with, and through to address mutual threats; and ensure the United States furthers important national interests, including its commitments in mutual defense agreements. If confirmed, I would consider these and other factors in assessing whether U.S. forces should be authorized to defend particular foreign partner forces.

Rules of engagement authorizing U.S. forces to defend foreign partner forces should clearly identify the particular partners eligible for such protection and whether any limits exist on the groups or individuals against which such force may be used. Any use of force in defense of foreign partner forces must also be necessary and proportionate to address the particular hostile act or demonstration of hostile intent.

Are there circumstances in which you believe it appropriate for U.S. military forces to be under the operational command or control of an authority other than the chain of command established under title 10, U.S. Code?

The Commander-in-Chief always remains at the top of the chain of command, and the U.S. military operates under U.S. control. Military capabilities may, at times, need to be made temporarily available to support an activity of a department or agency other than the Department of Defense. Under such circumstances it may be appropriate for the head of another department or agency to direct operations while working with the Secretary of Defense. Further, U.S. military personnel are always subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

What is your understanding and assessment of the authorities and agreements in place to permit U.S. military personnel to carry out missions under the provisions of title 50, U.S. Code? If confirmed, how would you modify these agreements or authorities, if at all?

I understand that the necessary framework is in place for U.S. military personnel to conduct and support the activities of the Department of Defense and other U.S. Government departments and agencies when called upon by the President or Secretary of Defense as the situation may require. I believe that the current framework is sufficient.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work within the Department and with colleagues in other U.S. Government departments and agencies to adjust existing arrangements as the need arises.

According to the 2018 NDS, Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) will allow for the more “flexibl[e] use [of] ready forces to shape proactively the strategic environment while maintaining readiness to respond to contingencies and ensure long-term warfighting readiness.”

In your view, have past DFE operations had the desired effect in “shaping the strategic environment”? Please explain your answer.

By providing a more flexible mechanism to employ forces, DFE allows Commanders to capitalize on strategic opportunities to employ forces without a significant loss to readiness. A critical component of DFE is requiring Combatant Commands to assess how successfully a past DFE operation impacted the strategic environment.

In your view, have past DFE operations promoted, strained, or degraded the long-term readiness of U.S. forces?

In FY20, DFE operations likely promoted, or at least maintained, overall U.S. Force readiness. Forces that deploy in support of DFE operations maintain their combat readiness, while gaining valuable experience, and shape the strategic environment.

If confirmed as the Secretary of Defense, what factors would you consider in authorizing the use of particular forces to execute a DFE mission?

If confirmed, I would consider the Combatant Command's justification for the requested unit (if specifically requested) or capability and how its employment meets national strategic objectives, as well as the requested unit's readiness, previous recent DFE operations, and a summary of costs for comparison to other DFE unit candidates.

Alliances and Partnerships

The 2018 NDS stresses that mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition with, deterrence of, and potential conflict against long term strategic competitors.

What is your view of the continuing strength of our current alliances, relationships, and partnerships, and the trust our partners have in the willingness of the U.S. to meet its obligations? If confirmed, how would you enhance that trust?

The United States' global network of alliances and partnerships is a strategic advantage our competitors cannot match, but it is one that has been undermined in recent years due to inconsistent statements about U.S. commitments, seemingly erratic decision making, and insufficient consultation on important issues. If we take our allies for granted, we squander our greatest strategic asset; we must rebuild and modernize our alliances and partnerships. By working together with allies and partners and aligning our defense priorities, the United States has the best chance to protect its security interests, by maintaining favorable balances of power that deter aggression, support stability, and favor democratic values and economic growth. If confirmed, I will take steps to mend and strengthen this critical advantage.

If confirmed, I will make it a priority to rebuild strong defense relationships with our allies and partners around the world. I would direct the Department to pursue tangible, sustainable measures to strengthen and modernize our alliances and partnerships in ways that bolster our ability to deter aggression, and if necessary, fight and win as interoperable coalitions. More broadly, I would seek to ensure the Department, in concert with U.S. interagency partners, is able to engage more comprehensively with ally and partner security establishments, to act decisively to meet shared security challenges. I believe the Department should focus on strengthening its defense relationships based on a foundation of mutual respect, responsibility, shared priorities, and mutual accountability.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships in each combatant commander's geographic AOR for long-term strategic competition?

If confirmed, I expect to focus my attention on engaging with key allies and partners, focusing DoD efforts on strengthening collaborative planning, and increasing interoperability. I would strive to align the Department's priorities and synchronize the employment of the Department's security cooperation resources to help allies and partners develop their defense establishments and military forces. Also, if confirmed, I would confer with my staff in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and geographic Combatant Commanders on how best to enhance their efforts to strengthen defense relationships in their areas of responsibility, consistent with the strategic priorities I identify.

If confirmed, on which leaders and forums would you focus your engagement, with a view to advancing most effectively U.S. national security interests?

If confirmed, I would prioritize engaging leaders and forums most relevant to U.S. interests, especially as articulated in the National Defense Strategy and the Guidance on Development of Allies and Partners. I would rely on my team in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy for recommendations on timing and specifics of these engagements.

U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)

AFRICOM has minimal assigned forces and, as a result, is required to compete for the vast majority of its U.S. forces in the global force management process.

What is your assessment of the availability and predictability of forces and associated capabilities to support the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan, the NDS, and other emergency requirements?

The approach to work by, with, and through U.S. partners to achieve security and stability in Africa has been effective with a limited forward presence. This includes using the full breadth of our title 10, chapter 16, security cooperation authorities to enable our African partners. Key to this approach is also DoD's strategic focus on building African partner nation institutions and capabilities while supporting efforts of other international partners with an interest in facilitating security and stability on the continent. However, I have not seen the full posture laydown, and if confirmed, I will conduct a global force posture review to ensure our posture is in line with our strategy. That will include examining the impact of the Trump Administration's redeployment of forces from Somalia.

Are there any changes you would implement to the allocation or assignment of forces to AFRICOM, if confirmed?

DoD assets have been allocated based on the priorities set out in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS), and my understanding is that the Department's Fiscal Year 2021 allocations for AFRICOM are aligned with that strategy. If confirmed, I will consider the Combatant Commander's requirements and requests for forces, and assess risk, based on changes in the strategic environment and the direction provided in the national security and defense strategies.

What should be the primary objectives of the DOD specifically, and the United States more broadly, in the AFRICOM AOR?

DoD's priorities in Africa are countering 1) violent extremist organizations (VEOs) that threaten the homeland and U.S. national security interests and 2) competitors such as China and Russia. The Department's activities in the AFRICOM AOR contribute to the whole-of-government effort to combat transnational threats to U.S. national security interests. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department works closely with other U.S. departments and agencies to properly align its efforts with other agencies that are advancing lasting peace and security on the continent. I will also coordinate, as appropriate, with our allies and partners to achieve our national security objectives.

What is your assessment of U.S. counterterrorism strategies in the AFRICOM AOR, particularly those in East Africa, North Africa, and the Sahel? If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to these strategies?

My understanding is that the current strategy is to disrupt and degrade priority threats to the U.S. homeland, our interests, and our allies and partners. A key element in the Department's approach is collaborating with our allies and partners on areas of shared interest, which is an area where we can improve. Across East Africa, the Sahel, and North Africa, a whole-of-government approach to address the drivers of extremism will remain a central pillar of our strategy. If confirmed, I will assess our counterterrorism strategies both in the AFRICOM AOR and more broadly.

Given the threat posed by terrorist organizations in Africa, the Department would continue to prioritize degrading and disrupting the al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates that pose direct threats to the U.S. homeland and U.S. personnel. If confirmed, I will prioritize collaborating with and enabling partners to combat shared threats so that, over time, the majority of the effort and resourcing shifts to partners and/or multilateral efforts.

What is your assessment of the strategic objectives of Russia and China in Africa? In what areas, if any, do these oppose U.S. and partner objectives?

Over the past five years, Russia has increased its engagement with African nations to bolster global power projection, access raw materials, expand arms sales, and undermine Western influence. Russia views investment in Africa as part of its global influence strategy. China's strategic objectives in Africa include securing access to economic resources, opening new markets, and gaining operational military experience through

peacekeeping and counter-piracy operations, while portraying it as a responsible global actor. I am also concerned about China and Russia's overseas military basing ambitions and the PLA's expanding global military presence. The PRC has a well-established air and naval base in Djibouti, which they continue to expand, and is also looking for other African basing locations including along the Atlantic coast. China also uses multilateral forums and international organizations like the Belt and Road Forum to generate new opportunities to strengthen its political influence, promote strategic messaging that portrays it as a responsible global actor, advance its development interests, and limit outside interference in and criticism of its initiatives.

Given Africa's diverse political, economic, social, and security landscape, it is difficult to generalize how Russia and China "oppose partner objectives." However, we have seen how heavy-handed Russian private military companies' operations in Mozambique, Central African Republic, and Libya have exacerbated local tensions and alienated members of the public. These actions undermine our efforts in African countries to promote civilian control of the armed forces, transparency, and accountability.

What is your assessment of the efficacy of the current U.S. strategy to compete against Russia and China and to be the security partner of choice in Africa? What changes, if any, would you recommend in this strategy, if confirmed?

The current U.S. strategy focuses on African partnerships – building capacity, working toward shared objectives, operating transparently, and promoting institutions and good governance for sustainable security – while highlighting and exposing the dangers associated with dealing with China and Russia. DoD's competitive security edge lies primarily in (1) the superior quality of the equipment, training, education, and other security assistance we provide; and (2) our support to counterterrorism operations. In the face of motivated and capable competitors, we must work to enhance our ability not only to compete, but to win. This means continuing our whole-of-government commitment to stay engaged and develop partnerships and address mutual security concerns in Africa, which will critically involve other agencies strengthening their non-military tools.

The Department has made notable progress implementing the National Defense Strategy to advance our lines of effort to compete with Russia and China in Africa. This includes enhancing our alliances and partnerships in Africa through efforts like the signing of the 10-year Roadmaps for Defense Cooperation with Morocco and Tunisia. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing and advancing our strategies to protect and secure U.S. interests in Africa.

The redacted report of the Army's investigation into the 2017 incident in Niger found ". . . several problems with the advise, assist, and accompany activity. Exercised conservatively, with advisors remaining far from the fight, advising higher echelon commanders, [activities] could be executed in accordance with Presidential Policy. Exercised aggressively, with [accompanying] U.S. advisors . . . the direct actions of our partners cannot be distinguished from U.S. direct action. U.S. provision of 'advice and

assistance' looks more like U.S. direct combat operations that are not reported that way to Congress”

In light of these findings, if confirmed, how would ensure that advise, assist, and accompany activities are executed in a manner consistent with Presidential Policy and are reported in a timely manner to Congress, as mandated by law and policy?

I understand that over the last year, DoD has reviewed the training Special Operations Forces Soldiers receive and that they provide to partner forces, which reinforces their proper roles as foreign partner advisors during counterterrorism operations. By incorporating lessons learned from the Niger ambush across all Service Components, USSOCOM has ensured that SOF operators have an understanding of the expectations and limitations of working “by, with, and through” partner forces. Furthermore, the Department honors its congressional reporting requirements and remains committed to fulfilling the responsibilities and requirements as mandated by law and policy. If confirmed, I will be committed to providing the committees with timely, appropriate, and sufficiently detailed information, consistent with congressional direction.

In light of these findings, if confirmed, how would you seek to clarify the roles and policies governing U.S. advisory efforts, particularly in support of partners operating outside areas of active hostilities?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that any limitations on the role of U.S. advisory efforts, particularly in support of partners in locations where U.S. forces do not have authority to conduct direct action, are communicated clearly and implemented in a disciplined manner, as needed.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)

In your opinion, to what extent does achieving U.S. national security interests in the Middle East require a continuous U.S. military presence, and in your view is the current U.S. force presence appropriately sized? Please explain your answer.

The Middle East remains critical to our national security interests. It is important for the Department to review its military posture in the Middle East to ensure we are prepared to defend against threats to the homeland and respond to contingencies, without compromising focus on our global strategy and military readiness. Our posture also provides opportunities for security cooperation with our partners in the region, as we seek to strengthen their military capabilities and build interoperability to meet our shared objectives. If confirmed, I will review our force posture in the Middle East to ensure it is properly balanced with global requirements and the health of the joint force.

What opportunities exist for increasing burden-sharing with U.S. partners to counter threats emanating from and affecting the CENTCOM AOR?

Given global threats and the U.S. role in the world, burden-sharing with our partners and allies must be a central element in the Department's approach in the Middle East. As our partners continue to expand their defense capabilities, we should explore greater opportunities to work by, with, and through them to address mutual threats. The Department of State and the Department of Defense should work together in this effort, as we seek more partners who share our values to bear the collective burden of international security, while also accounting for good governance and human rights principles through training and institutional capacity building. There are already strong examples of this, such as the International Maritime Construct to secure freedom of navigation in the region, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, as well as NATO, which I understand is now assuming a direct and expanding role in supporting Iraqi Security Forces and continuing its important role in Afghanistan.

What threat does increased Chinese and Russian involvement in the Middle East pose to U.S. operations and interests and to what extent does a continuous U.S. presence counter their involvement? In your view, what other policy tools might be useful in this regard?

China and Russia seek to expand their influence in the Middle East and are increasingly using defense sales to try to drive a wedge between us and our long-time partners. Russia, in particular, seeks to reshape Middle East security structures and expand its regional influence by exploiting vacuums of governance and creating frozen conflicts to increase Russian leverage and influence, unconstrained by respect for international rules and norms. Chinese economic activity and technology transfers—coupled with a corresponding but as yet smaller expansion of its military footprint and collection capabilities—is growing Chinese influence across the region. The Chinese seek to apply their economic power to exploit weakened or failing economies in the Middle East. These actions put U.S. influence—military, diplomatic, and economic—at risk. If confirmed, I will review our force presence to ensure it is properly balanced to address the broad range of challenges in the Middle East – including from China and Russia – with global requirements and the health of the joint force.

Afghanistan

What are the current U.S. national security objectives in Afghanistan, and what is your understanding of the current strategy to achieve them?

President-elect Biden has pledged to bring the war in Afghanistan to a responsible end. In doing so, the focus will be on ensuring that terrorist groups -- al Qaeda and the Islamic State Khorasan Province -- are not allowed to threaten our homeland again. The incoming Administration will support the peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban with a high-level, robust diplomatic effort. That effort will aim to help the Afghan government and the Taliban reach a durable political settlement and a ceasefire. If confirmed, I will look closely at the current and future U.S. military footprint in Afghanistan. In the near-term, if confirmed, I will work with the President-elect to

ensure that our forces have the ability to continue their core missions of counterterrorism, and support for Afghan forces effectively and safely.

If confirmed, what changes to the U.S. military strategy in Afghanistan would you recommend?

Before making any recommendations about the U.S. military strategy in Afghanistan, if confirmed, I will seek the advice of Office of the Secretary of Defense experts, U.S. military leadership, and our Resolute Support coalition partners to assess the military campaign in Afghanistan and its role in supporting Department of State-led efforts to end the war on terms favorable to the United States. Changes in the U.S. military strategy should complement and support diplomatic efforts.

In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan be tied to the achievement of conditions on the ground? If so, what specific conditions do you believe to be prerequisite to reducing or eliminating U.S. military presence there?

I believe troop levels should always be commensurate with the strategy we are executing and to the achievement of our national security goals. If confirmed, I will seek the advice of Office of the Secretary of Defense experts, U.S. military leadership, and our Resolute Support coalition partners to assess the military campaign in Afghanistan and its role in supporting Department of State-led efforts to end the war on terms favorable to the United States. I take seriously the concerns senior military officials have expressed about the Taliban and current levels of violence in Afghanistan. I also understand from discussions during the transition that at current troop levels, we are able to conduct our core missions of counterterrorism and support to Afghan security forces.

I believe troop levels should always be commensurate with the strategy we are executing and to the achievement of our national security goals. If confirmed, I will seek the advice of Office of the Secretary of Defense experts, U.S. military leadership, and our Resolute Support coalition partners to assess the military campaign in Afghanistan and its role in supporting Department of State-led efforts to end the war on terms favorable to the United States.

What is your understanding of Taliban fulfillment of their commitments under the February 2020 U.S.-Taliban Agreement to date?

My understanding is that the Taliban's continued participation in Afghanistan Peace Negotiations helps to fulfill a key element of the U.S.-Taliban Agreement. I understand that the Taliban have also made specific commitments regarding counterterrorism, including to break ties with al Qaida, and reducing violence. Violence levels have been far too high throughout the ongoing peace process. If confirmed, I intend to consult with interagency stakeholders to review the Taliban's actions relative to all its commitments.

What changes in U.S. force posture, if any, would you recommend to prepare for the potential that the Taliban fail to meet their commitments by the May 2021 deadline outlined in the Agreement?

If confirmed, I will ensure the United States retains all options for changes in U.S. force posture, depending on an evaluation of the Afghan Peace Negotiations and U.S. national security objectives in Afghanistan. I will work with Congress to ensure that the U.S. military and our Afghan partners have the capacity and capability necessary to protect U.S. personnel, our allies and partners, and our interests.

Given the failure to meet the authorized force level of 352,000, are current target end strengths for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) achievable, in your assessment?

My understanding is that the 352,000 force level is the maximum number of ANDSF personnel that the international community has committed to fund. I also understand the ANDSF end strength has remained between 85 and 90 percent of this ceiling for several years because of high casualty rates and challenges with recruiting and retention. I understand that maintaining the authorized force level at 352,000 is important to allow DoD and the Afghan Government the flexibility to reconfigure forces, such as absorbing personnel from the recently disbanded Afghan Local Police, which as I recall were not part of the 352,000 force level. If confirmed, I will review the ANDSF Plan of Record to ensure the ANDSF force structure is sufficient to meet shared objectives.

In your view, do current Afghan security forces have the capability and capacity to project security and stability throughout Afghanistan in 2021 and beyond? If not, what changes to U.S. efforts to develop and sustain the ANDSF would you recommend?

My understanding is that Afghan security forces have the capability and capacity to project security and stability in Afghanistan in 2021 and beyond with U.S. and international financial and advisory support. The Afghan Air Force and Afghan Special Security Forces have proven particularly effective but still rely on certain international assistance.

If confirmed, I will review what adjustments may be required to develop and sustain the ANDSF through the ANDSF Plan of Record as conditions evolve.

In your view, what role should DOD play in supporting intra-Afghan negotiations?

DoD should continue to support Department of State-led efforts in support of Afghanistan Peace Negotiations, particularly on matters related to the security of Afghanistan.

In your view, what should be the role of Afghanistan's neighbors—Pakistan, in particular—in this negotiation process?

Pakistan is an essential partner in any peace process in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will encourage a regional approach that garners support from neighbors like Pakistan, while also deterring regional actors, from serving as spoilers to the Afghanistan peace process.

In your opinion, what is the role of the Taliban with regard to counterterrorism efforts against ISIS? Against al Qaeda?

It is my understanding that the Taliban committed in the February 29, 2020 agreement with the United States to prevent any group from using the soil of Afghanistan to threaten the security of the United States and our allies. This includes ISIS-Khorasan, which maintains a presence in Afghanistan. The Taliban must live up to its commitments. Regardless of Taliban actions, the United States should protect itself from terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan and should reserve the right to take any action necessary to ensure its security.

The Taliban have longstanding ties to al Qaeda. The Taliban have agreed to take concrete steps to ensure that al Qaeda never again is able to use Afghanistan's soil to threaten the security of the United States or our allies. If confirmed, I will review the Taliban's progress toward implementing their commitments with regard to al Qaeda.

Pakistan

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to U.S. relations with Pakistan, particularly in regard to security assistance programs, including International Military Education and Training?

If confirmed, I will focus on our shared interests which include training future Pakistan military leaders through the use of International Military Education and Training funds. Pakistan will play an important role in any political settlement in Afghanistan. We also need to work with Pakistan to defeat al Qaeda and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and to enhance regional stability.

Have you perceived any change in Pakistan's cooperation with the United States since the U.S. decision to withhold security assistance to Pakistan in September 2018?

I understand Pakistan has taken constructive steps to meet U.S. requests in support of the Afghanistan peace process. Pakistan has also taken steps against anti-Indian groups, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, although this progress is incomplete. Many factors in addition to the security assistance suspension may impact Pakistan's cooperation, including Afghanistan negotiations and the dangerous escalation following the Pulwama terrorist attack.

In your view, what tools and options are available to the United States to ensure that Pakistan is not used as a sanctuary for militants and violent extremist organizations (VEOs)?

Pakistan is a sovereign nation. If confirmed, I will press Pakistan to prevent its territory from being used as a sanctuary for militants and violent extremist organizations. Continuing to build relationships with Pakistan's military will provide openings for the United States and Pakistan to cooperate on key issues.

Syria and Iraq

What is your understanding of current U.S. strategy and objectives in Syria?

Response: It is my understanding that the military mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS and that the broader objective of U.S. Government policy is a peaceful resolution to the Syrian conflict in line with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254.

From a DOD perspective, what must be done to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS? What non-military efforts are needed for the enduring defeat of ISIS?

It is in our interest that local partners have the capacity and capability to counter ISIS' efforts to regain territory and acquire resources and revenue. It is also in our interest to enable DoD's interagency partners to address the underlying political, economic, and social grievances that ISIS seeks to exploit. If confirmed, I will review the progress to date, develop options, and provide my recommendations to the President.

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) play a critical role in countering ISIS and al Qaeda. It is my understanding that U.S. and Coalition forces have been working to develop the capacity of these local partner forces and are now focused on enabling the ISF and SDF to conduct successful counter-ISIS operations independently.

What do you perceive to be the role of the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in countering ISIS and al Qaeda?

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) play a critical role in countering ISIS and al Qaeda. It is my understanding that U.S. and Coalition forces have been working to develop the capacity of these local partner forces and are now focused on enabling the ISF and SDF to conduct successful counter-ISIS operations independently.

In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Syria be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? If so, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on future troop levels in Syria?

I understand the Department of Defense mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. The capacity of local partner forces to thwart ISIS's effort to regain territory and acquire resources and revenue independently over the long term is a critical condition. If confirmed, I will evaluate our strategy and conditions for progress in Syria.

U.S. force levels are determined by the requisite capabilities to achieve the directed mission, including force protection requirements based on the threat and risk assessment. With a variety of forces operating in a complex environment, those threat and risk perceptions may fluctuate. If confirmed, I will review DoD's strategy, capabilities, and conditions in Syria, and provide my recommendations to the President.

In your view, do U.S. troops in Syria help “push back” on Russian and Iranian influence in the Middle East? What do you perceive to be the risks and benefits, if any, of such U.S. presence?

I understand the Department of Defense (DoD) mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. With the confluence of numerous actors in the region, it is important that all militaries conduct themselves in a professional manner and that we de-conflict our movements to ensure our forces are protected.

Unless pressure is maintained against ISIS, its re-emergence remains a real possibility. U.S. and Coalition forces operate by, with, and through local partner forces to achieve the enduring defeat of ISIS. The Defeat-ISIS campaign in Syria is made more complex by the presence of other threats and destabilizing forces in the region beyond ISIS and al Qaeda, including Russian, Iranian, and other pro-Syrian regime forces, as well as the need to balance our relationship with Turkey.

What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Iraq?

I remain concerned about the threat ISIS poses inside Iraq and beyond. I support maintaining a small number of U.S. troops to carry out a limited mission focused on advising and assisting Iraqi counter-terrorism forces to deal with the continuing threat from ISIS so that it cannot reemerge to again threaten the American people or our partners. Beyond the safety of our own people, this is our priority security mission in Iraq. The United States is in Iraq by invitation, to help Iraqis prevent the reemergence of ISIS. We will work with the Iraqi government to ensure that the U.S. military presence and its activities are respectful of Iraq's sovereignty.

Iran

What is your understanding of the objectives of the U.S. security strategy with respect to Iran? What is the role of the U.S. military in this strategy?

I understand that the U.S. security strategy for Iran aims to ensure that Iran cannot acquire a nuclear weapon; protect our citizens, personnel and interests from Iranian threats; counter Iran's destabilizing activity through diplomacy and deterrence and by

working closely with our allies and regional partners; and more broadly preserve unity of effort among allies and partners in the Middle East.

The Department of Defense plays a supporting role in the U.S. Iran strategy by focusing on deterring and, if necessary, defending against the military threats posed by Iran to our personnel and national interests, while broadly supporting regional stability through security cooperation and maintaining freedom of navigation.

What is your assessment of the current military threat posed by Iran?

Iran poses a conventional and unconventional threat to the security of U.S. personnel and partners in the region. Conventional threats include ballistic missiles capable of hitting U.S. military facilities in the region and naval forces capable of threatening freedom of navigation in the Gulf and Strait of Hormuz. Iran also employs unconventional activities, including cyber-attacks and intrusions, attacks on civilian shipping and energy infrastructure, and regional weapons proliferation. Iran also directs, trains, supplies, and funds militia groups across the region to advance Iran's interests, threaten U.S. partners, and undermine regional stability.

Are U.S. military forces and capabilities currently deployed to the CENTCOM AOR adequate to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats posed by Iran?

If confirmed, this is an issue that I will assess in more detail with civilian and military leadership. The United States should draw on all tools, not just U.S. military force posture, to secure U.S. interests in the Middle East. The Department must balance readiness and force modernization requirements against the security situation in the region. If confirmed, I will review our force presence to ensure that it is properly balanced with global requirements and the health of the joint force.

Multinational Force & Observers (MFO) in Egypt

The United States is a significant contributor to the Multinational Force & Observers (MFO) in Egypt.

In your view, what are the benefits of our participation in the MFO?

U.S. participation in the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) benefits U.S. security objectives in several ways. First, as a trusted partner of both Israel and Egypt, the U.S. military presence in the MFO provides ironclad reassurance to both parties. Both Egypt and Israel strongly support U.S. participation in the MFO; absent a strong and trusted arbiter capable of convening the two sides for dispute resolution, either party could choose to remilitarize along the border, increasing the potential of a miscalculation that could lead to overt conflict. Second, U.S. participation in the MFO demonstrates our leadership in the region as a reliable guarantor of regional stability. Such leadership bolsters U.S. credibility to pursue major diplomatic and security initiatives in the region and around the globe. Should the United States diminish its presence in the MFO, it is

likely that other international contributors to the MFO would follow suit, potentially endangering the continuation of the mission. U.S. leadership and presence in the region likewise prevents more opportunistic competitors such as China and Russia from potentially taking advantage of a diminished U.S. presence.

If confirmed, what criteria would you use to evaluate the advisability of any potential reduction in United States military participation in or support to the MFO?

Response: As with all decisions regarding force management levels, we must carefully consider how deployments affect the readiness of our military. The MFO relies upon high demand/low density personnel and equipment, including explosive ordnance disposal, aviation, logistics, legal, and medical career fields. The Department of Defense recognizes the need to prioritize investments of personnel and equipment across all of our vital national interests. Any consideration of changes to the level of U.S. support to the MFO would take into account potential impacts on the MFO, the Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace, U.S. obligations under applicable international agreements, and broader regional stability, and involve consultation with the U.S. Department of State, the governments of Egypt and Israel, and other international partners who contribute to the MFO.

U.S. European Command (EUCOM)

Implementation of the 2018 NDS

Do you believe the deterrent posture in Europe is sufficient to support the 2018 NDS and deter further Russian aggression in Europe?

President-elect Biden pledged a comprehensive review of our global military posture relative to the threats we face and, if confirmed, I look forward to leading that effort and examining how that posture should change over time. While I have not yet fully reviewed our deterrent posture in Europe, I believe it must be a part of this review. If confirmed, I will also want this review to examine the Trump Administration decision to withdraw significant numbers of US troops from Germany.

In your assessment, which capability and/or capacity shortfalls in current U.S. posture most adversely affect U.S. ability to address the threats in EUCOM?

The U.S. should have a combat-credible forward presence in EUCOM sufficient to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression in accordance with U.S. national security interests. If confirmed, I will lead a global military posture review to assess the current U.S. posture, including in EUCOM.

In your assessment, does the United States have sufficient air and missile defense capability and capacity to defend critical infrastructure in EUCOM? What are the areas of highest risk?

I have not yet reviewed U.S. military posture in EUCOM. I understand that U.S. military and Allied capabilities, including Integrated Air and Missile Defense systems, have improved in recent years, facilitated in part by the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) and other initiatives. If confirmed, I will review the appropriate mix of capabilities necessary to meet U.S. national security objectives, including in EUCOM.

In EUCOM, the highest military risks are Russia's aggressive behavior to undermine European security coupled with its military modernization, including investments in long-range cruise missiles, undersea and cyber capabilities, as well as the development and fielding of its new, so-called "novel" nuclear systems, and the large and varied arsenal of non-strategic nuclear weapons.

If confirmed, what specific enhancements would you make to other U.S. capabilities and force posture in Europe to execute the NDS more effectively?

If confirmed, I would initiate a global force posture review relative to the threats we face and examine how that posture should change over time. That review would, of course, include U.S. posture in Europe, particularly given Russia's aggressive behavior, and I would closely consult our NATO allies in considering any changes. Finally, I would continue to encourage our allies to increase their investments in modernization and new defense capabilities.

European Deterrence Initiative (EDI)

The FY 2021 NDAA authorized \$4.5 billion for the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) to support stability and security, and to deter Russian aggression.

In your view, has EDI improved U.S. and allied capability and capacity to deter Russian aggression in the European theater?

EDI funding has enabled DoD to increase our force presence in Europe, improve critical capabilities, establish prepositioned equipment sets, and execute readiness-building exercises, all of which have contributed to USEUCOM's warfighting capabilities and deterrence.

Do you believe continued, dedicated funding for EDI is required to support implementation of the NDS in Europe?

If confirmed, I will review the range of resource requirements to support our defense objectives in Europe. EDI funding has helped the Department maintain a combat-credible force in Europe, which is essential to deterring and, if required, defeating aggression against the United States and our NATO allies.

If confirmed, how would you ensure DOD compliance with statutory requirements and Senate Armed Services Committee requests for detailed funding information concerning future years' plans for EDI?

If confirmed, I would continue to ensure appropriate DoD compliance with statutory requirements and Senate Armed Services Committee requests for information concerning funding for future years' plans for EDI

NATO Alliance

In your view, how important to U.S. strategic interests is the U.S. commitment to its obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty, especially Article 5?

Vitally important. Our shared commitment to the values enshrined in the Washington Treaty has made NATO the most successful alliance in history; helped to keep the United States politically, economically, and militarily strong; and helped to safeguard our way of life. Article 5 is the cornerstone of our collective security within NATO, and I am fully committed to ensuring that the United States fulfills its obligations under Article 5.

What do you view as the essential strategic objectives of the NATO Alliance and what do you perceive to be the greatest challenges in meeting those objectives?

NATO's top strategic objectives are deterring nuclear and non-nuclear aggression, defending Allied populations and territory if deterrence fails, and projecting stability beyond NATO's borders. U.S. leadership is required to meet these strategic objectives, as is a shared responsibility among Allies for our common defense. Maintaining unity in the face of active and continued attempts to fracture the Alliance and ensuring ready forces and capabilities may be NATO's greatest challenges.

If confirmed, how would you prioritize the development of a plan to train, certify, and maintain the readiness and interoperability of NATO's "Four Thirties" units, and what would be the key element of such a plan?

If confirmed, maintaining ready and interoperable forces and capabilities will be among my highest priorities. I am aware that Allies have approved a plan to train, certify, and maintain the units associated with the "Four Thirties," which I will review with my counterparts if confirmed. I also understand that the "Four Thirties" was the first step of the NATO Readiness Initiative, and I would consider additional steps to rebuild a culture of readiness at NATO.

In December 2020, NATO reaffirmed the Allies' longstanding position that, "as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance." In your view, do you believe this principle requires the United States to continue to deploy nuclear weapons in NATO countries?

The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capabilities is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression. The presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO countries for the last 50 years has successfully deterred aggression against the Alliance, and they continue to provide an essential political and military link between Europe and North

America. In my view, they should remain in NATO countries for as long as nuclear weapons remain a threat.

How would you define and measure the success of the new NATO Joint Force Command for the Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia, and the Enabling Command in Ulm, Germany, in enhancing credible deterrence in Europe?

As the newest headquarters in the NATO Command Structure, both the Joint Force Command in Norfolk and the Joint Support and Enabling Command in Ulm must first be certified as fully operationally capable. At that point, if confirmed, I will measure the extent to which the headquarters successfully develop and integrate plans to move forces across the Atlantic and through Europe, defend critical infrastructure, and secure the multi-domain lines of communication that will ensure Allied forces in Europe are supported and sustained in peace and crisis. If confirmed, I will ask to be briefed on the NATO certification and exercise programs to ensure these headquarters are appropriately certified, tested, and incorporated into NATO's strategic exercises.

In your view, how important is it to align the defense efforts of the European Union (EU) and NATO, and what effect would an EU decision to exclude the United States from participation in European Defense Fund (EDF) and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects have on that alignment?

Continued and enhanced cooperation between the EU and NATO is critical, especially in light of the hybrid threats that require whole-of-government responses. The EU's efforts to enhance cyber security and hasten military mobility, for example, are key to strengthening both societal resilience and military deterrence. Excluding U.S. participation in EDF and PESCO projects would be counterproductive to closer EU-NATO cooperation and risks EU capabilities developing in a manner that produces duplication, non-interoperable military systems, diversion of scarce defense resources, and unnecessary competition.

Russia

What are appropriate objectives for U.S.-Russia security relations, and what security interests common to the United States and Russia would you emphasize, if confirmed?

Russia has used military force and other acts of coercion and intimidation in pursuit of a geopolitical agenda that is contradictory and inimical to the rule of law and U.S. national interests. The primary objective in U.S.-Russia security relations must be to deter Russia from acting against vital U.S. interests, including by defending our allies from military aggression, strengthening our partners' capacity to resist coercion, and imposing appropriate consequences for malign activities. If confirmed, I will look for ways to prevent a dangerous escalation in tensions, stand firm in defense of our interests and values, and will leave the door open to greater cooperation with Russia in areas of mutual interest. Some potential areas of greater security cooperation include: strategic arms control, counterterrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and deconfliction in areas where our military forces are operating in close proximity to each other.

In your view, which EUCOM and NATO activities most deter Russia and mitigate the Russian threat to NATO Allies and partners? How do these activities fit into a whole-of-government approach?

There is no one activity by itself that can sufficiently deter Russia and mitigate its threat; rather, it is the complex array of deterrence activities the U.S. and its allies in Europe conduct to deter Russian aggression effectively. In particular, the combination of consistent U.S.-NATO deterrent presence and training exercises demonstrate resolve and combat-credible capability and capacity to operate throughout Europe.

As Russia increasingly utilizes a whole-of-government approach to achieving its geopolitical objectives, the Department of Defense continues to organize its resources to compete with Russia below the level of armed conflict. DoD currently supports broader U.S. government initiatives to counter Russian influence by deterring and defending against all forms of aggression, building partner capacity to resist hybrid threats, and holding Russia accountable for its malign actions. If confirmed, I will review our authorities, resources, and policies to ensure that we are optimally positioned to support U.S. whole-of-government efforts.

What aspects of U.S. and NATO force posture do you assess as having the most significant deterrent effect on Russia?

Along with our Allies, it is critical that we maintain combat-credible conventional and nuclear forces to provide the most effective deterrent against Russian aggression. Our posture must be credibly lethal, resilient, agile, and ready. If confirmed, I will undertake a posture review to ensure the right mix of forces and capabilities sufficient to deter Russia.

What should DOD do to counter Russian influence in Europe?

In my view, maintaining combat-credible conventional and nuclear forces is one of the most effective deterrents against Russian military aggression. However, the Russian threat continues to evolve in a direction that combines both hard and soft power through the use of hybrid tactics. Operations employing such tactics are multilayered and sophisticated and aimed at building Russian influence across the globe. Effectively countering Russian influence in Europe demands a comprehensive approach involving our allies and partners, other U.S. government departments and agencies, and the private sector. For many aspects of hybrid warfare, the Department of Defense cannot achieve success without unified and integrated efforts by our interagency partners and allies, particularly in diplomacy, development, law enforcement, information, and intelligence.

As exemplified by the *Severodvinsk*, Russia possesses advanced submarine capability. What capabilities or capacity should the U.S. Navy provide to ensure NATO advantage in this regard?

The Navy is committed to maintaining its decisive advantage in the air, surface, and undersea domains, and denying any potential adversaries the same advantage. The commander of our newly established U.S. Second Fleet is dual-hatted as the commander of NATO's Joint Force Command in Norfolk and is tasked to ensure both headquarters operate seamlessly to increase Allied maritime domain awareness and capability. Both headquarters will also synchronize their exercise programs and operations in the Atlantic to maintain our sea and air lines of communication. If confirmed, I will undertake a review to ensure Naval assets are appropriately resourced and postured to contend with threats posed by Russia.

In your view, what are Russia's strategic goals in the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean? Do you believe that NATO and U.S. force posture need to improve in those areas? If so, what improvements would you direct or support, if confirmed?

Russia's strategic goals in the Black Sea include maintaining access to the Mediterranean Sea and facilitating the defense of the Russian homeland. In the eastern Mediterranean, Russia seeks to expand power projection capabilities, demonstrate expeditionary reach to potential partners, and influence a variety of ongoing diplomatic and regional issues in its favor. Russia's maritime activities in the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean Sea are also likely intended to maintain pressure as part of its ongoing campaign to undermine and destabilize Ukraine and Georgia, challenge U.S. and allied operations and freedom of maneuver, and to put in place the necessary pieces to complicate U.S. warfighting operations.

If confirmed, I will make it a high priority to review our force posture in this region to ensure the strength of our deterrence along NATO's Eastern and Southern Flanks and our continued mobility in response to crises.

U.S. and NATO force posture in the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean regions is key in deterring Russian aggression. Just as Russia's strategic goals in these regions are not static, U.S. and NATO force posture must be regularly re-assessed to ensure it is making the intended impacts. If confirmed, I will ensure our force posture is reviewed, updated and improved as needed.

In your view, does DOD currently have a mature joint concept of operations to mitigate the challenge of Russian anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) capabilities? If not, what is needed to ensure U.S. forces have operational freedom of maneuver at decisive points?

I understand that the Department is working on development of a Joint Warfighting Concept. If confirmed, I will review the progress to date on this effort, and determine what follow-on concept work is needed to ensure a strategy-driven, joint approach to future warfighting, including to address the challenges uniquely posed by Russian anti-access, area denial capabilities.

If confirmed, I will review the Department's progress to date in developing a Joint Warfighting Concept that ensures U.S. forces have freedom of maneuver in the challenging operating environment posed by Russian anti-access, area denial capabilities. My understanding is that the Department's ongoing concept work is focused on ensuring the effectiveness and resilience of key joint warfighting functions such as command and control, fires, logistics, and information advantage; my review will account for these and other areas as relevant to joint operations against the Russia threat. The United States must have operational freedom of maneuver at decisive points.

In September 2019, Secretary Esper noted that "our adversaries will continue to target our democratic processes" and that "influence operations are at a scope and scale never before imagined."

Do you agree with these assessments? Please explain your answer.

Yes, I do. Russia has threatened U.S. democratic processes and exerted its malign influence on the world stage. Operating below the threshold of armed conflict, Russia continues to target the United States through a number of sophisticated cyber and information operations, including infiltration of institutions vital to our democracy. Russia will likely remain a credible threat for years to come, exploiting the United States' openness and driving wedges between the United States and its partners in an effort to weaken U.S. standing and credibility.

In that same speech, Secretary Esper declared "election security an enduring mission for the Department of Defense." How would you envision DOD supporting

the mission of defending our democratic processes from interference by foreign adversaries?

DoD is part of a whole of government effort to defend elections. The FBI leads the U.S. government's efforts to counter foreign influence operations, and DHS leads the U.S. government's efforts to support state and local governments' election security efforts. DoD provides DHS and the FBI with insights into adversary activities. DoD may also provide defense support of civil authorities, upon request, should a cyber-incident exceed the capacity of another department or agency.

Do you assess that our actions to date are currently deterring Russia and other foreign adversaries who wish to interfere in our elections?

I have no reason to doubt the assessment of our intelligence community that our foreign adversaries continue to attempt interference in our election process. If confirmed, I will work with my interagency counterparts to review ways to improve our deterrence when it comes to Russia and other adversarial influence operations. This is a key challenge and one we must do better in addressing.

Ukraine

The Russian attack on Ukrainian ships in the Black Sea in November 2018 represented a major escalation in Russia's war on Ukraine. In FY 2019, for the first time, DOD's Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI) was used to provide lethal assistance to Ukraine.

What do you see as the role of U.S. security assistance in building the capabilities and capacity of Ukraine to meet its military requirements to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity?

U.S. security assistance efforts to build the capacity of Ukraine's forces should remain a priority. If confirmed, and assuming continued progress on governance and anti-corruption reforms, I will strongly support efforts to provide training, equipment, and advisory support to help Ukraine's forces preserve the country's territorial integrity in the face of Russia's continued aggression.

In your assessment, should a greater proportion of USAI be dedicated to lethal assistance? What are the obstacles, if any, to increasing lethal assistance?

I support the provision of lethal assistance to ensure Ukraine has the equipment it needs to defend itself. Ukraine also has critical non-lethal requirements, such as secure communications equipment, that is funded through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI). There is currently a good balance of lethal and non-lethal assistance to meet Ukraine's capability needs. If confirmed, I will continue to actively assess Ukraine's security assistance needs and make adjustments, as necessary.

Do you believe corruption, including but not limited to the defense sector, is a national security threat to Ukraine?

Although the United States is currently able to address Ukraine's most pressing operational needs, lengthy technology release processes, contracting, and procurement timelines could limit DOD's ability to provide a greater proportion of more advanced defensive lethal capabilities through USAI. This is primarily due to the statutory requirement to obligate half of the USAI funds before the end of the fiscal year in which they are appropriated.

NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR)

KFOR includes approximately 650 U.S. service members. In your view, what is KFOR's continuing role in maintaining security and stability in the Western Balkans?

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) has helped maintain a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and has bolstered stability more broadly across the Western Balkans. If confirmed, I will assess our KFOR contributions--in coordination with NATO and the EU--as part of a broader posture review aimed at ensuring the most effective distribution of U.S. forces and capabilities globally. Our goal remains a Europe that is secure, democratic, and undivided, including in the Western Balkans

Do you believe the United States should maintain its commitment to KFOR?

I recognize the important role that KFOR continues to play in bringing stability to the Western Balkans. U.S. contributions to KFOR are small relative to their impact. If confirmed, I will assess our KFOR contributions--in coordination with NATO and the EU--as part of a broader posture review aimed at ensuring the most effective distribution of U.S. forces and capabilities globally.

Is Russian and Chinese influence increasing or decreasing in the Western Balkans? What do you believe DOD's role should be, if any, in countering such influence?

Malign actors such as Russia and China increasingly attempt to exploit ethnic tensions, corruption, and weak rule of law in the Western Balkans through disinformation, cyberattacks, and economic manipulation. These tactics represent a strategy designed to undermine regional stability, hinder Euro-Atlantic integration, and secure critical infrastructure.

Chinese Influence Activities in Europe

The London Declaration issued by NATO Heads of State in December 2019 recognized that "China's growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges that we need to address together as an Alliance."

Do you share security concerns about China's growing influence in the European area, and if so, what role do you see for NATO in addressing these concerns?

Yes, China's growing influence and international policies present challenges in the European area that NATO needs to address. The Alliance acknowledged China's growing influence in 2019 and finalized a comprehensive report on China in December 2020, which are important steps in understanding and addressing the implications of China's rise. The next step will be the inclusion of China in the Alliance's forthcoming strategic concept. Among other things, NATO's role should include intelligence sharing on the risks posed by China, political and economic coordination (including with the EU), and continuing to help increase the resilience of Member States, including their critical infrastructure and secure communications.

U.S. INDO-PACIFIC Command (INDO-PACOM) and China

China

The FY 2021 NDAA authorized \$2.2 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI) to support the stability and security of the region and deter further Chinese aggression.

Is the current U.S. force posture in the Indo-Pacific region sufficient to support the NDS? How would you propose to restructure U.S. security posture in the Indo-Pacific to counter Chinese aggression, if confirmed? Please explain your answer.

There's no question that we need a more resilient and distributed force posture in the Indo-Pacific in response to China's counter-intervention capabilities and approaches, supported by new operational concepts. If confirmed, I'll review our posture in the Indo-Pacific including our presence, capabilities, logistics, exercises, infrastructure, and capacity building and cooperation with allies and partners.

In your assessment, what are the priority investments DOD could make to implement the NDS and improve the military balance in the Indo-Pacific?

If confirmed, I will work across the Department to identify those programs most critical to increasing our military effectiveness in the Indo-Pacific region and ensure that those programs are prioritized appropriately.

In your view, will PDI be a useful tool to improve U.S. posture in the Indo-Pacific? In your opinion, how could PDI help gauge progress in improving the adequacy of the U.S. posture as it relates to deterring Chinese aggression?

Yes, I believe PDI will be a useful tool. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to ensure its effective implementation.

I believe PDI will help to focus attention on the progress the United States is making to establish a more distributed and resilient posture that deters China's aggression and reassures our allies and partners.

Do you believe that continued, dedicated funding for PDI is required to support implementation of the NDS in the Indo-Pacific? Please explain your answer.

I believe that PDI is an important step as DoD invests in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with Congress to examine how best to ensure sufficient funding for our shared priority of a distributed and resilient U.S. force posture in the Indo-Pacific region.

If confirmed, how would you ensure compliance with statutory requirements and Senate Armed Services Committee requests for detailed funding information concerning future years' plans for PDI?

If confirmed, I would ensure that the Department provides detailed funding information for annual PDI investments and complies with all other statutory requirements.

The size, diversity, and capabilities of China's cruise, ballistic, and hypervelocity missile forces create significant asymmetry in the current balance of forces in the Indo-Pacific theater.

How would you assess the threat to U.S. forces, bases, and mission success from Chinese missile forces? How would you evaluate our ability to address such threats? In your assessment, what U.S. investments, concepts of operations, and posture shifts are required to address this threat?

China's military modernization--including in cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic missiles--coupled with its aggressive and coercive actions, presents an increasingly urgent challenge to our vital interests in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. We will need to continue to strengthen our force posture in the region, making it more resilient, including through investments in capabilities and new operational concepts. The Biden administration will view China as our most serious global competitor and, from a defense perspective, the pacing threat in most areas.

If confirmed, I will further focus the Department on China, including the growing missile threat. I will begin by taking stock of the broad range of activities and investments the department has made in recent years, include investments to maintain our technological advantage and the development of new concepts and capabilities to counter China across the spectrum of conflict; updates to U.S. force posture in the region, including through the Pacific Deterrence Initiative; and efforts to strengthen our alliances and partnerships. I'll seek to understand how my predecessors have risen to the China challenge and then chart a course for the Department's next steps.

If confirmed, I will carefully review the Department's investments, concept and capability development, force posture, and alliances to address the threat from China before determining the next phases of the Department's work in this vital area.

In developing the Joint Multi-Domain Operational Concept for the Indo-Pacific theater, the INDO-PACOM Commander, the Joint Chiefs, and Secretary of Defense Esper endorsed a major role for Army and Marine Corps ground forces operating within the first island chain as part of the contact and blunt layers.

What are your views at this time on these plans?

Army and Marine Corps forces are an important component of U.S. force posture in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Joint Staff, Army, and Marine Corps to continue development of their operating concepts as part of the Department's overall strategy in the Indo-Pacific region.

In your assessment, does DOD need to invest in a wider range of primary bases as well as alternate operating locations throughout the Indo-Pacific? Do we need a more forward-deployed military posture in the Indo-Pacific theater?

There's no question that we need a more resilient and distributed force posture in the Indo-Pacific in response to China's counter-intervention capabilities, supported by new operational concepts. If confirmed, I'll review our posture in the Indo-Pacific from all aspects including presence, capabilities, logistics, exercises, infrastructure, and capacity building and cooperation with allies and partners.

If confirmed, I'll review our posture in the Indo-Pacific from all aspects including presence, capabilities, logistics, exercises, infrastructure, and capacity building and cooperation with allies and partners.

What is your assessment of the current military balance across the Taiwan Strait? If confirmed, what would you do to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability?

If confirmed, I will carefully review the current military balance across the Taiwan Strait. President-elect Biden has said many times that U.S. support for Taiwan must remain strong, principled, and bipartisan, in line with longstanding American commitments to the Three Communiqués, the Taiwan Relations Act, and the Six Assurances. We will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan. If confirmed, I will also ensure the United States meets our commitment to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability. Doing so increases stability both across the Taiwan Strait and within the region. At the same time, we will further buttress peace and stability by developing new concepts and capabilities to strengthen our own deterrent in the region. Bipartisan support for Taiwan in Congress is critical, and I look forward to working with Members on this crucial issue.

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Should the United States revisit or change its “one China” policy, in your view?

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In furtherance of its stated intent to possess almost 100 more ships than the U.S. Navy by 2030, China has launched a massive shipbuilding program. Although all of China’s Navy will be focused on the Indo-Pacific, the United States maintains only about 60 percent of its fleet in the Pacific.

In your assessment, how should the United States adapt to this shifting maritime balance in the Indo-Pacific?

China’s military modernization, coupled with its aggressive and coercive actions, presents an increasingly urgent challenge to our vital interests in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. The Biden administration will view China as our most serious global competitor and, from a defense perspective, the pacing threat in most areas. If confirmed, I will further focus the Department on China and work to identify and prioritize those programs most critical to maintaining a favorable maritime balance in the Indo-Pacific. That will include investing to maintain our technological advantage and developing new concepts and capabilities to counter China across the spectrum of conflict; updating U.S. force posture in the region, including through the Pacific Deterrence Initiative; and strengthening our alliances and partnerships

The Korean Peninsula

How would you describe the value to U.S. national security interests of the U.S.-South Korea alliance and what is the significance of resolving the Special Measures Agreement between the United States and the Republic of Korea?

The U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Alliance is the linchpin of peace and security in the region. It is among the most combined, interoperable, capable, and dynamic bilateral

alliances in the world, and is a robust deterrent to aggression on the Korean Peninsula. Strengthening America's alliances will be at the center of President-elect Biden's foreign policy and national security strategy. Having built coalitions and fought alongside our allies for decades, I consider our unparalleled network of allies and partners one of our greatest strategic advantages -- and the foundation of our position as a Pacific power. If confirmed, I will focus on modernizing our alliances throughout the Indo-Pacific and will seek the early conclusion of cost sharing negotiations with South Korea as part of those efforts.

Do you believe the transfer of wartime operational control from the U.S. to the Republic of Korea should be conditions-based? If confirmed, what threshold requirements for transfer of control would you establish?

If confirmed, I will review the status of Operational Control (OPCON) transfer from the United States to the Republic of Korea (ROK), including the bilaterally approved "Conditions-based OPCON Transition Plan" (COT-P) signed in 2015.

In your view, are there additional steps that DOD should take to improve U.S. and allied defenses against North Korea's missile capabilities?

If confirmed, I will review the full range of current and proposed activities to enhance U.S. and allied defenses against North Korea's missile capabilities.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that U.S. Forces Korea has the capability to defeat weapons of mass destruction sites in North Korea and how would you involve the U.S. interagency in such actions?

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the necessary military requirements for our major operational plans, including on the Korean peninsula. I will also work with partners across the interagency—to include the State Department, Treasury Department, the Department of Energy and the intelligence community—as well as regional partners and allies—including Japan and the Republic of Korea—to forge a comprehensive approach to addressing the North Korea nuclear, weapons of mass destruction, missile, and cyber threats.

DOD policy constraining the use of certain cluster munitions went into effect on December 31, 2018. How will these constraints affect the ability of the U.S. military to meet requirements on the Korean peninsula?

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the necessary military requirements for our major operational plans, including on the Korean peninsula.

India

If confirmed, how would you enhance the overall defense relationship between the United States and India? What priorities would you establish?

If confirmed, my overarching objective for our defense relationship with India would be to continue elevating the partnership. I would further operationalize India's "Major Defense Partner" status and continue to build upon existing strong defense cooperation to ensure the U.S. and Indian militaries can collaborate to address shared interests. I would also seek to deepen and broaden our defense cooperation through the Quad security dialogue and other regional multilateral engagements.

U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM)

Defense Support to Civil Authorities

Civil authorities may request DOD support for domestic disasters and certain counter-drug operations as well as in managing the consequences of a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.

In your view, are the procedures by which Federal, State, and local agencies request DOD support efficient, effective, and timely?

Yes, I understand these procedures are well-documented and field-tested. Federal, State, and local agencies plan together to prepare for and respond to major disasters, emergencies, and security events and then put these plans and procedures to the test in exercises. If confirmed, I will have the opportunity to review these plans and procedures and evaluate how well the Department of Defense has incorporated lessons learned regarding Federal, State, and local requests for assistance.

What factors should be considered in determining whether DOD will provide support to a civil authority?

Consistent with the law and DoD policy, DoD considers six factors: (1) legality (would providing the requested support comply with law?); (2) lethality (does the requested support involve the potential use of lethal force by or against DoD forces?); (3) risk (would providing the requested support pose an unacceptable risk to the safety of DoD forces?); (4) cost (will DoD be reimbursed for the support and what effect will providing the support have on the DoD budget?); (5) appropriateness (would providing the requested support be appropriate and in DoD's interest?); and (6) readiness (how will providing the requested support impact DoD's ability to perform its other primary missions?).

In your view, what missions and tasks are appropriate for execution by members of the armed forces charged to provide support to civil authorities in countering a civil disturbance or, when directed, to provide support under sections 251, 252, or 253 of title 10, U.S. Code?

I would not want to prejudge potential actions necessary to support civil authorities. In accordance with sections 251, 252, or 253 of Title 10, U.S. Code, National Guard

members called into Federal service and members of the armed forces may be used as the President considers necessary to: (a) suppress an insurrection (Section 251), (b) enforce the laws of the United States or to suppress a rebellion (Section 252); or (c) suppress, in a State, any insurrection, domestic violence, unlawful combination, or conspiracy. The missions and tasks assigned must be appropriate to the specific circumstances and risks involved and consistent with the law. If confirmed, I will ensure that the President receives my best advice and that National Guard members called into Federal service and members of the armed forces carry out missions and tasks that are appropriate, compliant with the law, and appropriately respectful of rights and civil liberties.

In your view, what is the efficacy of DOD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? How could DOD's response be improved, in your view, and what role would you envision as appropriate for DOD in response to future pandemics?

DoD has an important supporting role in our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Health and Human Services is the lead Federal agency, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency is the lead Federal coordinating agency. DoD has contributed thousands of military and civilian personnel, equipment, and supplies to our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. I consider this mission my most immediate priority. If confirmed, I will actively review the status of DoD's support and DoD's protection of its personnel and look for opportunities to make improvements.

What is your assessment of DOD's role in producing and distributing COVID-19 vaccines? Are there particular functions or types of support that you believe DOD to be uniquely capable of executing?

It is my understanding that DoD has been a major contributor to Operation Warp Speed's efforts to produce and distribute COVID-19 vaccines. If confirmed, I will review DoD's support to identify opportunities to continue or enhance this support.

DoD's major contribution is capacity. For example, medical personnel are not unique to DoD, but DoD medical capacity filled the gaps when hospitals were overwhelmed. Additionally, while DoD is not the only agency that can procure critical equipment and supplies, DoD logistical capability helped deliver critical equipment and supplies where they were most needed, including: personal protective equipment (PPE); medical equipment; ventilators; masks; N95 respirators; medical gowns; gloves; test kits; test components; hand sanitizer; food; and fuel

The Arctic

What threat do Russian and Chinese activities in the Arctic pose to U.S. interests?

Climate change is drastically altering the natural environment of the Arctic--and the strategic balance. This is fast becoming a region of geopolitical competition, and I have serious concerns about the Russian military buildup and aggressive behavior in the Arctic--and around the world. Likewise, I am deeply concerned about Chinese intentions

in the region. If confirmed, I will assess the situation and consult allies and partners on the strategy, posture, and equipment required to ensure a stable and open Arctic, as well as to protect the homeland, our economic interests, and deter aggression.

In your view, what are the implications of Russian infrastructure investments in the Arctic for U.S. and allied security interests?

The United States has a long history of cooperation with Russia in the Arctic region, and it is my hope that can continue. I have serious concerns, however, about the Russian military buildup in the region and Russia's aggressive conduct in the Arctic and around the world, as well as the importance of protecting the global commons and international law in the region. If confirmed, I pledge to review U.S. posture, strategy, and equipment for the full range of Arctic defense missions, and to ensure that our strategy toward Russia is coherent and effective.

In your view, are current U.S. and allied ports in the region sufficient to achieve U.S. defense interests in the Arctic?

I have not yet reviewed the full U.S. posture in the Arctic, or that of our allies and partners. If confirmed, I will assess the situation and consult allies and partners on the strategy and posture required to ensure a stable and open Arctic, as well as to protect the homeland, our economic interests, and deter aggression.

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to the President to deter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in the SOUTHCOM AOR?

The U.S. must leverage all instruments of national power to counter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in SOUTHCOM. DoD has an important role in demonstrating American values and military culture in the region. Strong bilateral and multilateral defense partnerships, enabled by engagements and presence, intelligence and information exchanges, and educational programs and exercises, are necessary tools to minimize the influence of malign actors in the hemisphere.

Do you believe these influences threaten hemispheric security and prosperity?

Russia, Cuba, and China are actively seeking opportunities to deepen their political, economic, and security influence in the hemisphere. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary for Policy, the SOUTHCOM Commander, and other U.S. government agencies to ensure we are able to check and counter the negative influence of these countries.

Detainee Treatment and Guantanamo Bay Naval Station

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in Army Field Manual 2-22.3, *Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, issued in September 2006 and DOD Directive 2310.01E, *Department of Defense Detainee Program*, dated August 19, 2014, and required by Section 1045 of the NDAA for FY 2016?

Yes, I support the standards for detainee treatment in the Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DoD Directive 2310.01E, DoD Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014 (Incorporating Change 2, Effective September 18, 2020), and required by Section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92). Individuals in the custody or control of the U.S. Government may not be subjected to any interrogation technique or approach, or any treatment related to interrogation, that is not authorized by and listed in the Army Field Manual.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD detainee operations and interrogations comply strictly with these standards?

If confirmed, I would exercise leadership to ensure that DoD detainee operations and interrogations comply strictly with these standards and are in keeping with our values. I would emphasize the need for the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of detainees. I would also work through the Combatant Commanders to ensure that DoD policies on the humane treatment of detainees continue to be effectively implemented in military operations, including the requirements to report, investigate, and, where appropriate, take corrective action with respect to any suspected or alleged incidents of detainee maltreatment.

What are your views on the continued use of the detention facility at Guantanamo?

I believe it is time for the detention facility at Guantanamo to close its doors. If confirmed, I would direct my staff to work with other Administration officials to develop a path forward for the remaining 40 detainees at the facility. Until that time, however, the Department must ensure the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of detainees through Joint Task Force – Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO).

Do you believe the U.S. Government should be keeping detainees in long term detention, without charges or prosecution? In your view, under what circumstances would such long-term detention be appropriate?

Guantanamo has provided us the capability to conduct law of war detention in order to keep our enemies off the battlefield, but I believe it is time for the detention facility at Guantanamo to close. My understanding is that the Biden-Harris administration does not intend to bring new detainees to the facility and will seek to close it.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to reinvigorate the Periodic Review Board (PRB) process established by Executive Order 13567, *Periodic Review of Individuals Detained at Guantánamo Bay Naval Station Pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force*?

If confirmed, I would reinvigorate the review process using available information to determine whether a detainee no longer poses a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States and whether there is a suitable country to which to transfer such a detainee. The Periodic Review Board Process is currently the best means available for making such determinations in a systematic manner. If the PRB process concludes that the threat from individual detainees may be sufficiently mitigated, then the U.S. Government should identify options for the transfer of such detainees to other countries that have provided credible security assurances in accordance with applicable legal and policy requirements.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to address the cases of detainees already recommended by a PRB for transfer from Guantanamo to another nation?

If confirmed, I would support the PRB process. If the PRB process concludes that the threat from individual detainees may be sufficiently mitigated with appropriate security assurances, then the U.S. Government should consider the transfer of such detainees to other countries that have provided credible security assurances in accordance with applicable legal and policy requirements.

Will you commit to notifying Congress if a decision is made to transfer a detainee to Guantanamo *before* any such transfer occurs?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to notify Congress as required by law.

In your view, what standard of care should govern the physical and mental health services provided to detainees at Guantanamo, particularly as the detainee population ages?

The health and well-being of the detainees at Guantanamo are an important part of the mission of JTF-GTMO. Accordingly, U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), through JTF-GTMO, provides adequate and humane care for the detainees at Guantanamo that complies with the standards of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. As the detainee population ages and detainees experience chronic medical conditions, it will remain Department policy to protect the life and health of detainees by humane and appropriate clinical means, and in accordance with all applicable law and DoD policy.

Cuba

Under what conditions would you recommend the establishment of military-to-military engagement between the United States and Cuba?

The U.S. military maintains only limited contacts through longstanding, practical meetings regarding routine issues at the Guantanamo Naval Station and between the U.S. Coast Guard and its Cuban counterparts. The limited nature of this engagement is due in large part to the Cuban regime's continued suppression of the rights and freedoms of the Cuban people and ongoing efforts in support of the Venezuelan dictatorship.

Venezuela

What is your assessment of the current situation in Venezuela and to what degree is the illegitimate Maduro regime dependent on support from external actors like Russia, Cuba, and China?

President-elect Biden has repeatedly condemned Maduro, who he described as a "dictator, pure and simple." The dictatorship is the principal reason for the deep humanitarian crisis facing the country. External actors have indeed helped prop the regime against the wishes of the Venezuelan people.

What would be the threshold condition at which you would recommend U.S. military action in Venezuela, if confirmed?

I believe DoD should play a supporting role in a whole-of-government and multilateral effort to encourage a peaceful transition of power in Venezuela

Counternarcotics Activities

DOD serves as lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime foreign shipments of drugs flowing toward the United States. On an annual basis, DOD expends nearly \$1 billion to build the counternarcotics capacity of U.S. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and certain foreign governments.

Do you believe that the U.S. broadly, and the U.S. military more narrowly, have been effective in achieving their counternarcotics objectives?

I understand that DoD's main role is supporting interagency and international partners, and that DoD support has helped in the interdiction of drugs headed toward the United States, as well as denied revenue to criminal organizations and others who profit from drug trafficking. If confirmed, I will review these efforts and recommend adjustments as appropriate

What changes, if any, should be made to DOD's counternarcotics strategy and supporting activities?

It would be premature for me to recommend changes at this time. If confirmed, I will assess our goals and activities and recommend adjustments as appropriate.

Corruption and the absence of the rule of law enable the Northern Triangle narcotics trade that contributes to the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

In your view, what should be DOD's role in countering the flow of narcotics to nations other than the United States?

Our primary focus should be on the flow of drugs headed to the United States, including the flow that passes through the Northern Triangle countries, bringing criminal activity and instability in its wake. DoD should leverage its military capabilities and expertise as appropriate to help our partners in the region disrupt drug-trafficking networks operating in and around their territory.

How, if at all, should U.S. security assistance be scoped to address factors at the root of counternarcotics trafficking, in your opinion?

In coordination with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, the Department should assist partner nations in developing capabilities and strengthening defense institutions that respond to their specific security challenges. Focusing our limited resources on those countries that are major drug-producing or transit countries while empowering them to create stable conditions at home and improve security within their region makes it less likely that drug-trafficking networks can thrive.

U.S. Space Force and U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM)

The United States is increasingly dependent on space, both economically and militarily—from the Global Positioning System on which many industrial and military capabilities rely, to the missile warning systems that underpin U.S. nuclear deterrence. Our great power competitors are making concerted efforts to leap ahead of U.S. technology and impact U.S. freedom of action in the space warfighting domain. Congress created a new Military Service, the Space Force, within the Department of the Air Force, and a unified Space Command, to deal with the challenges stemming from the fact that space is now a contested domain upon which the terrestrial forces of the United States and peer competitors are highly reliant for support.

Do you believe that the creation of the Space Force and SPACECOM was warranted? If so, do you recommend changes in the structure, authorities, and missions of these organizations?

The decisions to create the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command reflect recommendations and advice of multiple independent commissions and studies regarding how to adapt our defense space enterprise to the growing security challenges in space. The House, the Senate, and multiple Administrations have examined these questions over

several years, leading to support for creating the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command.

Congress provided in statute that there should be a civilian Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration, and the Space Force Acquisition Council, among other changes. These officials and organizations will have an important role in ensuring that we maintain appropriate civilian oversight with respect to our military activities in space, and make decisions that enhance innovation and allocate resources effectively and in a timely manner. If confirmed, I will assess the current structure to ensure the defense space enterprise is postured to advance our national security objectives most effectively.

Establishing the U.S. Space Force as the sixth branch of the Armed Forces and the U.S. Space Command as the eleventh unified combatant command are significant organizational changes within the Department of Defense. Looking ahead, the DOD space enterprise is still not well-integrated with other Services and terrestrial commands, and there are several other challenges that will need to be addressed, as would be expected when establishing a brand new military service and new unified combatant command. If confirmed, I will assess the structure, authorities, and missions of these organizations, as well as their relationship with other stakeholders within the Department of Defense

In your view, does the current NDS accurately assess the strategic environment as it pertains to the domain of space? If confirmed, what changes would you make to the NDS regarding the space domain?

The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) assesses the strategic environment accurately by highlighting great power competition with China and Russia and the importance of working with our allies and partners. The 2020 Defense Space Strategy provides additional detail on the growing space and counterspace threats posed by China and Russia and the extent to which our national security and prosperity require unfettered access to and freedom to operate in the space domain. Since the NDS was developed, the recognition of the central role space plays in supporting other services in their warfighting role continues to grow. If confirmed, I will ensure the space domain is carefully considered across the range of upcoming strategic reviews.

The strategic environment continues to evolve rapidly, especially as it applies to space. If confirmed, I would review changes to the strategic environment since 2018, and address significant shifts in the development of the next National Defense Strategy. For space in particular, I would account for the continued growth of adversary space and counterspace capabilities, as well as the adequacy of the steps the United States has taken to improve the DoD space enterprise to address growing threats and challenges in the domain. I would also emphasize the role of resilience in improving our warfighting capability, the role of allies and partners, and space-related information sharing. Lastly, I would highlight growing commercial activities in space which can both be threats to and opportunities for the United States.

In your view, what will “great power competition” look like in space and to what extent do you view China’s and Russia’s activities related to the space domain as a threat or challenge to U.S. national security interests?

Space is already an arena of great power competition. Chinese and Russian space activities present serious and growing threats to U.S. national security interests. Chinese and Russian military doctrines also indicate that they view space as critical to modern warfare and consider the use of counterspace capabilities as both a means of reducing U.S. military effectiveness and for winning future wars. Addressing these challenges in the space domain is central to “great power competition” more generally. While Russia is a key adversary, China is the pacing threat. Given the importance of space in affecting our economic competitiveness, it is essential to continue developing best practices, standards, and international norms of behavior in space. Development of global norms of behavior in space will also deter threatening behavior, and uphold the rights of all nations to use space responsibly and peacefully.

Are other nation-states or actors operating in space that you perceive as a risk to the United States, or as cause for concern? Please explain your answer.

Although not on the same order of magnitude of threat as Chinese and Russian capabilities, space-related threats from Iran and North Korea, such as jamming of satellite communications and GPS signals, are also growing, and hold U.S. space capabilities at risk. Both countries also maintain independent space launch capabilities, which can serve as avenues for testing ballistic missile technologies. Other countries not considered adversaries or hostile to US interests are conducting space activities of concern, and there are few norms or guidelines to dictate how it should be done. This lack of transparency in the space domain is a risk to U.S assets and cause for concern. Last but not least, growing private activities in space (according to some projections, there will be as many as 54,000 new satellites in orbit in the next decade, mostly privately-owned and operated) are a risk to the United States in the sense that the government needs to ensure that they do not collide with expensive and exquisitely capable government assets.

How would you assess current DOD readiness to implement the 2018 NDS and U.S. strategic objectives as they relate to the domain of space?

If confirmed, I would want to understand, as a first priority, the state of our military readiness, including space readiness, in particular resilience, vis-à-vis priority threats, in light of U.S. strategic objectives. If confirmed, I would seek to assess whether major DoD space-related investments and ongoing organizational changes, including the creation of the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command, are improving the readiness of forces across all domains to protect and secure our homeland and U.S. interests abroad and are advancing the development and employment of spacepower for the Nation.

What do you perceive as the most significant threats to our national security space satellites and commercial space systems owned by U.S. companies?

The growth of Chinese and Russian counterspace arsenals presents the most immediate and serious threats to U.S., allied, and partner space activities. Iran and North Korea have also demonstrated some counterspace capabilities that could pose a threat to militaries using space-based services. As with commercial services in other domains, like airlift, sealift, and cloud computing, we should not expect adversaries to discriminate between military and commercial satellites that support the military, whether in peacetime competition or in the event of a conflict.

Do you support the development of offensive and defensive space systems to counter threats in the space warfighting domain?

Other nations are contesting the ability of the United States and its allies to operate in space. A balance of offensive and defensive capabilities, as well as resilient architectures, are essential to any credible strategy to deter hostile action and protect vital U.S. interests should conflict extend to space

If confirmed, what guidance would you give the Commander, SPACECOM to lead Joint Force operations and activities in the space warfighting domain?

If confirmed, I would see that the Commander, U.S. Space Command, is prepared to protect and defend U.S. interests in space as the President may direct and in a manner consistent with law, including our obligations under relevant international law. SPACECOM must have a deep understanding of Russian and Chinese doctrine, strategy and tactics. The command must be able to protect and defend US interests, and in particular be able to manage escalation and crises in space. I would also direct that DoD space activities contribute actively to shaping a space domain that is secure, stable, and accessible and to deterring threatening or irresponsible behavior in space. This would require that in addition to nurturing technology innovation in-house for resilience, SPACECOM work within the Department and across the government to build strong alliances in space, develop norms and standards of behavior, and increase partnerships with commercial space entities. Lastly, the commander should emphasize not just wartime roles of space warfighting, but also peacetime roles of ensuring access to space for the US and our allies.

What is your vision for including the Reserve Components as a part of the U.S. Space Force and as contributors to Joint Force space operations?

Reserve and National Guard units and personnel provide strategic and technical depth for U.S. space operations today. If confirmed, I will review the appropriate organizational structure for the U.S. Space Force Reserve Component in order to design a flexible and forward-looking organization able to compete for the best talent and meet the needs of a twenty-first century military service.

Does the national security space enterprise need a revised approach to space-related acquisition, in your assessment? How would you propose to improve and streamline space acquisition, if confirmed?

In recent months, there has been guidance on improving the national security space enterprise. Congress has given DOD authority to create a single space acquisition executive. New acquisitions organizations such as the Space Development Agency and the Space Rapid Capabilities Office, among others, have been established. I believe the Department's processes, including its acquisition system, must continue to evolve regardless of domain or mission to become more agile so that we can strengthen warfighting effectiveness and resilience of current systems, better leverage technology, innovation, and partnership opportunities, rapidly deploy future capabilities, and dynamically adapt to changes in the threat and strategic environment. Together with civil space agencies with whom the Department shares a common industrial base, it needs to leverage innovation and cost-effective investments driven by the private sector, presenting opportunities for collaboration to develop innovative capabilities with a more streamlined and responsive acquisition process.

If confirmed, I would continue to work with Congress to refine the Department's acquisition innovation initiatives, including the Adaptive Acquisition Framework, to accelerate delivery of operational capability, effectively reduce program risk, and enhance the nation's ability to respond to an evolving and ever more capable threat. The Department needs to give new space acquisition organizations (such as the Space Development Agency and the Space Rapid Capabilities Office among others) the opportunity to succeed, and at the same time, review the performance of and reorganize and improve legacy organization for management of space acquisitions (such as the Space and Missile Systems Center). I will also look to models of and best practices for efficient acquisition outside the Department.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that commercial technology is appropriately incorporated into Space Development Agency products and SPACECOM mission execution at acceptable risk levels?

The Department bears an important responsibility to balance the unique latency, accuracy and reliability needs of the warfighter with the affordability and flexibility offered by commercial space technology to efficiently guarantee mission accomplishment on a global scale. The Space Development Agency is actively pursuing solutions based on commercially available technology. USSPACECOM incorporates commercial technology across nearly all elements of its mission set. If confirmed, I intend to support this and will encourage SDA and SPACECOM to pursue leveraging commercial technology via commercial services and by capitalizing on commercial investments and technology advancements and integrating them into Government-owned and operated systems.

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September 2018, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy. The strategy charges DOD to “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war”.

What role do you envision for DOD and the Cyber Mission Force in defending the nation from an attack in cyberspace? In what ways is this role distinct from those of the homeland security and law enforcement communities?

In order to defend the nation from an attack in cyberspace, the Cyber Mission Force (CMF) conducts “defend forward” operations against attacks in cyberspace to disrupt or halt malicious cyber activity at its source, including activity that falls below the level of armed conflict. I believe the Department can effectively defend forward in three ways: generating insights about the threat based on our activity outside U.S. networks; enabling better defenses by leveraging those insights to help its interagency, industry, and international partners; and, acting when necessary to disrupt adversary cyber actors. DoD may also provide defense support of civil authorities, upon request, should a cyber-incident exceed the capacity of another department or agency.

The homeland security and law enforcement communities operate under authorities that are domestically aligned, whereas DoD focuses on foreign State and non-state actors that threaten the interests of the United States. DoD is in constant collaboration with the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation sharing information and threat intelligence that are critical in this whole-of-government approach to defending the Nation from an attack in cyberspace.

How will the “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” concepts deter and disrupt Russia and China in cyberspace?

China and Russia are conducting persistent malicious cyber campaigns to erode U.S. military advantages, threaten our infrastructure, and reduce our economic prosperity. I believe the Department must effectively counter these campaigns by taking proactive action to: generate insights about the adversary’s cyber operations and capabilities; enable its interagency, industry, and international partners to create better defenses, and; acting, when necessary, to disrupt adversary cyber actors and halt malicious activities.

Congress passed legislation recognizing that clandestine military operations in cyberspace below the threshold of armed conflict may be conducted as traditional military activities under title 10, U.S. Code. In addition, the Trump Administration promulgated National Security Presidential Memorandum-13, which streamlined the process for proposing, evaluating, and approving cyber operations below the threshold of armed conflict. These reforms have enabled CYBERCOM to implement its strategy of persistent engagement and defending forward in cyberspace.

What are your views on these reforms and their impact?

These reforms were adopted in response to our adversaries' rapidly evolving and growing malicious cyber activity. I understand these reforms have enabled DoD to develop and employ timely, well-coordinated, and risk-managed cyber-effects operations and have made positive contributions to our ability to perform our missions in and through cyberspace effectively. If confirmed I will review these changes and adjust accordingly if need be.

If confirmed, what role should DOD and the Cyber Mission Force have in combating foreign influence operations, especially those conducted via social media?

The DoD and the Cyber Mission Force play a supporting role in greater whole-of-government efforts to combat foreign influence operations. In cooperation and coordination with interagency partners, the DoD may bring a number of capabilities and authorities to bear - relative to the circumstances of a particular foreign effort. DoD tools can include cyber effects operations, military information support operations, public outreach, and others. Using combinations of these capabilities in concert with the interagency, I understand the DoD can combat both foreign technical means and also the foreign narrative carried over those technical means.

What role should DOD and the Cyber Mission Force have in anticipating, preventing, or responding to attacks on commercial entities?

While not centrally a DoD issue, through a series of partnerships with the Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and sector-specific agencies, DoD supports efforts to anticipate, prevent, and respond to significant cyber incidents on commercial entities. For example, as the lead for the Defense Industrial Base (DIB), DoD helps protect those commercial companies DoD relies on by fostering a cyber-threat information sharing partnership to enhance their cybersecurity capabilities. The DoD should continue to look for ways to better integrate with interagency partners and the private sector.

Do you believe that the National Security Agency and U.S. Cyber Command should be dual-hatted? What are the "pros" and "cons" of this arrangement, in your view? Please explain your answer.

I understand that in 2016 Secretary Carter and Director Clapper made the recommendation to split the two organizations, once U.S. Cyber Command was mature enough to do so, and that the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff must certify that the six conditions stated in the FY17 and FY20 NDAs must first be met. If confirmed, I would study this question closely to ensure that any decision concerning the dual-hat leadership arrangement between the Director of the National Security Agency and the Commander U.S Cyber Command is fully informed by thorough analysis and mitigates potential risks to national security and to the operational effectiveness of U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency. If confirmed, I

will work with General Nakasone and the Chairman to ensure U.S. Cyber Command has the resources it needs to ultimately meet these maturity requirements.

My understanding is that past Secretaries of Defense directed multiple internal and external assessments regarding the future of the dual hat arrangement. When U.S. Cyber Command was established, the Department believed the dual hat arrangement enabled more effective direction and cooperation in cyberspace, in developing intelligence to support those operations, in sharing capabilities such as the cryptologic platform, and in sharing expertise. In the ten years since U.S. Cyber Command was established, operating and intelligence forces have increased in capability and capacity, and the pace of operations has steadily increased. I understand there are clear benefits to this arrangement. For example, one leader controlling both organizations provides agility and seamless coordination, however, it also may generate risk to both organizations as that same leader is called on to balance priorities of each role and respond to multiple chains of command. If confirmed, I will assess, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of National Intelligence, the pros and cons of this arrangement, in addition to the six conditions the FY20 NDAA states as needing to be met prior to any certification of the decoupling of the dual-hat. Only after making those assessments would I be prepared to fully answer this question, and make any recommendations on the matter.

If confirmed, what specific measures would you take to improve cybersecurity culture across the DOD workforce? How would you empower and hold key leaders accountable for improvements in DOD cybersecurity?

Cybersecurity is central to military readiness and underpins the Department's imperative to secure its critical classified and unclassified information, as well as technologies and programs that enable the lethality of the joint force. If confirmed, I will do two key things. 1) I will drive efforts to recruit, train, and retain our cyber workforce more effectively to better defend our networks. 2) I will improve cybersecurity training, personal responsibility and awareness for the entire workforce. My vision also includes achieving a basic level of digital competency and awareness of artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities for the majority of our workforce to improve the ability of the Department to make data informed decisions.

The Department has created and implemented a Network Cybersecurity Accountability Scorecard to show a specific component's progress in addressing and mitigating key cyber risks to DoD's networks and information systems. Additionally, the Department is developing and piloting a weapons cybersecurity accountability scorecard which will assess selected critical platforms associated with critical defense missions and the Cyber Risk Mitigation Tool to prioritize and track vulnerabilities and mitigations of weapon systems and critical infrastructure. If confirmed, I will ensure these tools meet the Department's needs for improving our cybersecurity performance and will hold senior leaders accountable for improvements in cybersecurity for information systems, critical warfighting platforms, and infrastructure across each DoD Component.

In your opinion, what characteristics of a cyberattack would constitute an “act of war”? Do you consider the recent malware campaign involving SolarWinds to be an “act of war or an espionage operation that falls within *de facto* norms? In your view, does the nature and scope of this intrusion operation merit a strong and tangible response? Please explain your answer.

Whether a particular cyber activity may be considered an “act of war” requires a case-by-case and fact-specific determination. For example, malicious cyber activities could result in injury, death, or significant property destruction. These activities would need to be considered in their totality.

I understand from a joint statement released by FBI, CISA, ODNI, and NSA that the SolarWinds malware campaign appeared primarily to be an intelligence gathering effort. There’s still a lot more to learn about this breach, but one thing is clear - as President-elect Biden has stated, those responsible for the breach will be held responsible; our adversaries must know that we will not stand idly by in the face of malicious cyber-attacks on our nation.

Any intrusion operation is of great concern to the security of our systems and country. The investigation into the scope of the SolarWinds compromise is ongoing. This is a whole of government effort, and I would expect the response will reflect that. If confirmed, I will ensure DoD, in support of the USG-wide effort, takes necessary steps to understand the full scope of this campaign. President-elect Biden has stated that the U.S. will impose “substantial costs” on those responsible for such malicious attacks, including actions in coordination with our allies and partners

While it does not seem yet that DOD was compromised in the SolarWinds malware campaign, many other critical organizations across the government were actively compromised for the better part of a year, and it took a private sector company to detect the intrusion and alert the government.

What do you conclude from this about the state of our cyber defenses?

This is an unfolding incident, but the information available today is greatly concerning, as it impacts a wide swath of American public and private networks. Consistent with President-elect Biden’s remarks, I believe we must elevate cybersecurity as an imperative across the government in order to defend the American people and U.S. critical infrastructure. Additionally, the government must continue to strengthen its partnership with the private sector to foster greater information sharing and collaboration.

U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

Beginning in FY 2017, successive NDAs have empowered the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SOLIC)) to serve as a “service secretary-like” civilian official for special operations forces. Among other reforms, the law defines the administrative chain of command for USSOCOM as running

through the ASD(SOLIC) to the Secretary of Defense for issues impacting the readiness and organization of special operations forces.

What is your understanding of the Department’s progress in implementing the “service secretary-like” responsibilities of the ASD(SOLIC)?

I understand that the Department has taken concrete steps to institutionalize these reforms, to include significant steps in the past few months. If confirmed, I will review the Department’s progress to ensure that the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) has sufficient authorities to execute his or her Military Department Secretary-like responsibilities.

If confirmed, would you commit to fully implementing these reforms?

If confirmed, I commit to implementing fully the reforms intended to strengthen the role of the ASD(SO/LIC) within the administrative chain of command for USSOCOM and to provide appropriate oversight of special operations activities (including oversight of policy and resources). I strongly support the role of the ASD(SO/LIC) in providing civilian oversight for special operations activities and in matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces.

In your view, does the ASD(SOLIC) require additional authorities and resources, including additional civilian personnel, to administer oversight of special operations forces?

I understand that the Department has recently taken steps to provide the ASD(SO/LIC) with additional delegated authorities and resources to administer oversight of special operations forces. The recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act also includes legislation further strengthening the ASD(SO/LIC)’s authorities in this area. If confirmed, I will review the authorities and resources of the office of the ASD(SO/LIC) and recommend any necessary adjustments to help enable the ASD(SO/LIC) to execute his or her statutory responsibilities effectively.

Violent Extremist Organizations

What is your assessment of the threat to U.S. interests posed by Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates and adherents? Which group, in your view, presents the greatest threat to the United States?

Violent extremist organizations continue to pose a threat to U.S. interests around the globe through robust networks of affiliates and adherents. Although continued pressure from the United States and its Allies and partners has helped prevent these groups from attacking the U.S. homeland, these groups present localized and regional insurgent threats to our partners and direct threats to U.S. interests. The proliferation of this radical ideology across the internet has expanded the reach of these fringe groups, threatening the homeland and inciting violence within the borders of our closest allies and partners.

For more than two decades, al-Qaeda has been at war with the United States, continually working to attack, disrupt, and destabilize U.S. interests and Western influence. Although the al-Qaeda brand has suffered over the past 20 years, due in large part to efforts by DoD, there remains a dedicated network of al-Qaeda and its associated forces providing a population-centered counter to U.S. interests across Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia. In addition, the self-proclaimed caliphate of the Islamic State has been destroyed. However, ISIS's virulent ideology and open hostility towards Western society remains intact through their adherents across the internet, remaining leaders, foreign terrorist fighters – some who have returned home and others who remain in the region, and the indoctrinated personnel who remain in detention within Syria and Iraq. There is no question that the Islamic State continues to pose a threat to the United States despite the end of its so-called caliphate in Iraq and Syria. The focus of al-Qaeda on local conflicts, however, does not mean they have taken their eye off attacking the U.S. homeland. In the long-term, al-Qaeda likely represents the greater and more enduring threat to the United States due to the group's strategic adaptability and trend of decentralization. Should I be confirmed, I will work to ensure neither of these organizations presents an enduring threat to the homeland or to our allies or partners.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the U.S. counterterrorism strategy and DOD's role in supporting it? What metrics would you apply to measure the effectiveness of the strategy?

As I understand it, combatting terrorism requires a whole-of-government approach that reflects an understanding of and takes into account the root causes of such activities, which are not the same in all regions. In order to provide recommendations to change DoD's role in supporting the U.S. counterterrorism strategy, the Department must perform a systematic, comprehensive, and collaborative assessment of: terrorist threats; current policy objectives as stated in published guidance; DoD actions to counter that threat; and acceptable risk weighed against objectives not yet achieved. Additionally, assisting partner nations to improve their capability to counter terrorists would remain a key tenet of our strategy. If confirmed, I will direct a review of the current strategy to account for regional consideration and a whole-of-government approach that addresses regional issues

If confirmed, I would work with senior civilian and military leaders, including where appropriate officials of other agencies, to assess progress toward achieving our counterterrorism objectives. I cannot at this time determine the extent to which standard metrics will be useful such assessments.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to promote a "more resource sustainable" approach to counterterrorism, as directed by the 2018 NDS?

If confirmed, I plan to draw on successes of both the United States and its partners in developing a counterterrorism coalition representing all facets of government involved in protecting the homeland from threats. The Department likely requires changes in its plans and processes in order to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness and unity of effort

with interagency and international partnerships. Leveraging the lessons learned from past successes, I look to optimize and, where necessary, expand on these relatively small-footprint solutions.

An October 2020 Homeland Threat Assessment highlighted the threat from racially and ethnically motivated violent extremist groups engaging in “outreach and networking opportunities abroad” that “might lead to a greater risk of mobilization to violence, including traveling to conflict zones.”

Do you view the threat from racially and ethnically motivated violent extremist networks overseas as a national security threat? If so, what role do you see for DOD in responding to this threat?

Terrorist organizations are motivated by a myriad of ideologies, objectives, and causes, and some are racially and ethnically motivated. When the capability, intent, and motivation of any terrorist organization, including racially and ethnically motivated groups, threaten the vital interests of the United States or the shared interests of its allies and partners, then this terrorist organization is a threat to national security.

The Department of Defense (DoD) plays a key supporting role in the U.S. Government’s overall response to terrorist threats. DoD cannot achieve U.S. policy objectives to address terrorist threats unilaterally, and all DoD strategies and plans must be correlated with and complementary to a U.S. Government-wide and international partner-integrated response. The Department must also work with our allies and partners -- another key pillar of the current National Defense Strategy -- to leverage their regional expertise and unique capabilities. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the enterprise-wide efforts in reform and sustainable counterterrorism approaches to determine if additional opportunities exist.

Section 127e and Section 1202 Activities

Section 127e of title 10, U.S. Code, authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to forces and individuals supporting or facilitating military operations for the purpose of combatting terrorism. Section 1202 of the NDAA for FY 2018 authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to forces and individuals supporting or facilitating irregular warfare operations.

What is your assessment of the national security utility of each of these authorities in the current strategic environment?

The ability to support foreign irregular forces, groups, and individuals under this fiscal authority gives U.S. special operations forces an effective, low-cost option to combat terrorism while maintaining a minimal U.S. footprint. Geographic Combatant Commanders continue to express strong support for this authority as it is a critical component of their counterterrorism efforts. Section 1202 of the National Defense

Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, as amended, fills a gap in the Department's ability to provide support to irregular (non-government) forces, groups, and individuals advancing U.S. policy and military objectives short of armed conflict. This authority is particularly helpful in addressing U.S. threats and objectives in current strategic environments that can be described as "grey zones" – spaces between amicable peace and outright war. Authorities such as Section 1202 allow the Department to contribute its special operations capabilities in support of whole-of-government objectives in this competitive space. If confirmed, I would ensure that operations using this authority remain thoroughly coordinated with relevant Chiefs of Mission and Intelligence Community counterparts, and remain fully transparent with Congress on how the Department uses this authority. As the Department prioritizes great power competition, I could see a need to discuss how these authorities interrelate, and whether there should be adjustments to one or both of them.

If confirmed, what criteria would you use to evaluate proposals for the use of each of these authorities, particularly with respect to mitigating the risks associated with conducting irregular warfare activities below the level of traditional armed conflict?

I believe appropriate civilian oversight is an integral aspect of implementing these authorities. With respect to Section 1202, if confirmed, I would ensure that all potential uses are suitable, feasible, and acceptable — "suitable" denoting alignment with the Department's strategy, "feasible" meaning whether the proposed resources are useful to accomplish the mission, and "acceptable" in balancing the risk with any potential advantages gained. For both authorities, if confirmed, I will ensure that selection, screening, and vetting procedures for partner forces continue to be robust and that implementation of these authorities is informed by careful analysis of risks and consistent with U.S. objectives.

Military Operations in the Information Environment

What is your assessment of DOD's ability to conduct effective military operations in the information environment to defend U.S. interests against malign influence activities carried out by state and non-state actors?

The Department of Defense (DoD) has numerous capabilities routinely employed to conduct effective military operations in the information environment, including cyberspace operations, Military Information Support Operations (MISO), and public affairs (PA). When these activities are executed correctly, DoD can achieve its mission more effectively, more affordably, and with reduced risk to our operating forces. I understand the Department is updating the 2016 Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment and that the update will be informed by a posture review of capabilities, the current defense strategy and its Irregular Warfare Annex, designation of information as a joint function, and statutory requirements in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020. If confirmed, I will support the development and implementation of this strategy.

Are DOD's efforts in this regard appropriately integrated with other U.S. Government organizations and activities?

Department of Defense (DoD) efforts throughout the information environment cross traditional department and agency lines. In areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan, where military operations have been ongoing for some time, the integration is fairly seamless, with roles and mechanisms well-established. In other parts of the world, the integration is a bit more complex, and DoD is often not in the lead. If confirmed, I intend to sustain those relationships.

Does DOD have sufficient authorities and resources to conduct these operations effectively? If not, what additional authorities and resources would you request, if confirmed?

I am not aware of any new authorities required. I understand that the Information Operations posture review being conducted pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 will review capabilities and capacities and inform future integration and resource investments. If confirmed, I will regularly assess our authorities, resource availability and allocation, and strategic alignment, and I will prioritize appropriately to support operations in the information environment.

It is my understanding that the Department is addressing any needs as it works through the posture review.

U.S. Strategic Command

Nuclear Policy

United States nuclear forces have served as the bedrock of our nation's defense, underpinned our most critical alliances, and deterred nuclear aggression and great power conflict for more than 70 years. Unfortunately, long overdue investments in these forces have left us with systems nearing the end of their useful lives. These capabilities must be updated to maintain a viable nuclear deterrent.

What is your understanding of how Russia and China have expanded and/or modernized their nuclear force capabilities? In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies?

I am generally aware of public reporting that both China and Russia continue to invest in their nuclear weapons capabilities. If confirmed, I will undertake a deeper review both of US nuclear posture as part of the Administration's formulation of our National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy and of the nuclear weapons capabilities of Russia and China.

Clearly, it is not in the US interest to see either Russia or China expand their nuclear arsenals. If confirmed, I will undertake a deeper review both of US nuclear posture as part of the Administration's formulation of our National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy and of the nuclear weapons capabilities of Russia and China and the threat they pose to US interests.

Do you believe Russia has or is willing to employ nuclear coercion as a means of advancing its foreign policy goals?

Russia regularly engages in a host of actions that undermine the interests of the United States and its Allies. If confirmed, I will seek a comprehensive understanding of how Russia is using all elements of its national power to challenge US global interests and domestic stability.

Do you believe that as China completes its build out of a triad of delivery platforms it adheres to the full meaning of "no first use"?

I believe that it is important that we have a complete understanding of China's intentions and capabilities when assessing the threat it poses to strategic stability and US interests in East Asia. If confirmed, I will request a comprehensive review of China's nuclear weapons program, including its declaratory policy.

Do you agree with the assessment of past Secretaries of Defense that nuclear deterrence is DOD's highest priority mission and that modernizing our nation's nuclear forces is a critical national security priority? Please explain your answer.

Yes, I agree that nuclear deterrence is the Department's highest priority mission and that updating and overhauling our nation's nuclear forces is a critical national security priority. Our nuclear deterrent has served a vital purpose in U.S. National Security Strategy for the past 70 years and continues to be an essential component of our strategy to preserve peace and stability by deterring aggression against the United States, our allies, and our partners.

Although effective today, U.S. nuclear deterrence remains dependent on aging weapons, delivery systems, infrastructure, and nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) systems originally built during the Cold War. U.S. nuclear weapons have been extended far beyond their original service lives, and the tipping point, where we must simultaneously overhaul these forces, is now here.

Do you agree that a triad of land, air, and sea based nuclear delivery platforms is consistent with an effective deterrent posture in an era of great power competition with Russia and China?

The United States must retain a secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent for its security and that of its Allies. The United States has long relied on a range and mix of capabilities. If confirmed, I will commit to retaining a robust nuclear deterrent.

Do you believe the current program of record is sufficient to support the full modernization of the U.S. nuclear deterrent, including delivery systems, weapons, command and control systems, and infrastructure?

I believe that it is critical for the United States to maintain a secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent. The overhaul and updating of the US nuclear arsenal is a critical national priority. If confirmed, I intend to review, early on, the details of the current modernization program to ensure that it is being executed in a cost effective and judicious manner.

What is your understanding of the condition of the U.S. Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) system and what aspects of the NC3 system most need recapitalization or replacement, in your view?

A robust NC3 system is essential to execute nuclear command and control functions – the situation monitoring, planning, decision making, force management, and force direction. If confirmed, reviewing this system will be a top priority along with addressing critical shortfalls.

Do you believe the governance reforms of the NC3 system have improved DOD’s management of the global architecture? Please explain your response.

I agree that a robust NC3 system is essential to execute nuclear command and control functions. If confirmed, reviewing this system, including the governance reforms, will be a top priority along with addressing critical shortfalls.

Do you believe a major shift in the United States’ nuclear policies, such as adoption of a “No First Use” policy, would be appropriate, given Russia’s and China’s expanding nuclear arsenals? Please explain your answer.

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, I would anticipate that President-elect Biden will direct the interagency to conduct a thorough set of strategic reviews, including of US nuclear posture. Such a review will certainly need to take into account the challenging international security environment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense plays an active role in all strategic reviews.

Do you believe a “No First Use” deterrent posture would be consistent with our extended deterrence commitments to our NATO and other regional allies around the world?

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, I would anticipate that President-elect Biden will direct the interagency to conduct a thorough set of strategic reviews, including of US nuclear posture and declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense plays an active role in all strategic reviews

The Minuteman III (MM III) Intercontinental Ballistic Missile and the AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile will be in service for over 65 and 55 years, respectively, before they are replaced by the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) and the Long Range Stand-Off (LRSO) weapon. The Air Force has highlighted the pervasive age-related risks associated with the MM III system.

In your view, are there any circumstances under which delaying or cancelling the GBSD and/or LRSO programs would be appropriate, particularly in light of Russia and China's ongoing efforts to modernize and expand their nuclear forces? Please explain your answer.

Maintaining a secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent is imperative and is a top US national security priority. If confirmed, I plan to request early on a briefing on the US nuclear modernization program to ensure that it is being executed in a cost effective and judicious manner. I also intend to request a threat briefing on Russia and China's nuclear weapons programs.

Both the Obama and Trump Administrations deemed the GBSD and LRSO programs essential. If confirmed, would you continue to support and advocate for these programs?

Maintaining a secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent is imperative and is a top US national security priority. If confirmed, I plan to request early on a briefing on the US nuclear modernization program to ensure that it is being executed in a cost effective and judicious manner.

In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces and their senior leadership. Seven years later, DOD and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) have made significant progress in rehabilitating the nation's nuclear forces and reestablishing the senior leader focus required in this mission area.

If confirmed, what would you do to ensure that DOD and the NNSA continue the investments and senior leader attention needed to modernize all aspects of the nation's nuclear deterrent and avoid age-driven unilateral disarmament?

A secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent remains vital to US national security and that of our allies. If confirmed, I will review the US nuclear modernization program as a high priority program and ensure that the program has senior level attention and management. I understand that the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act and Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act called for strong interagency coordination on these issues, and if confirmed, I will ensure the Department of Defense works closely with the Department of Energy on these programs.

The NNSA and the Nuclear Weapons Council

The NNSA is responsible for maintaining the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile and meeting military requirements for nuclear weapons, which are established through the interagency Nuclear Weapons Council. NNSA's principal challenge over the next 20 years is to recapitalize and modernize the Cold War-era U.S. nuclear weapons design and production infrastructure into a responsive and resilient enterprise.

Do you support the recapitalization of the NNSA's capabilities to design, manufacture, and sustain an effective nuclear weapons stockpile, including the two-site solution for restarting plutonium pit production?

A secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent is vital to US national security and that of our allies. If confirmed, I will review the US nuclear modernization program as a high priority program, including the country's capacity to produce plutonium pits and other stockpile components. The Department of Defense's partnership with the Department of Energy on this program is critically important.

Do you support the W80-4 and the W87-1 programs?

A secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent remains vital to US national security and that of our allies. If confirmed, I will review, early on, the US nuclear modernization program as a high priority program, including nuclear warhead programs. The Department of Defense's partnership with the Department of Energy on this program is critically important.

Do you support the continuation of the W93 program and parallel efforts to collaborate with the United Kingdom in the maintenance of its independent nuclear deterrent?

A secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent remains vital to US national security and that of our allies. If confirmed, I will review, early on, the US nuclear modernization program as a high priority program, including nuclear warhead programs. The Department of Defense's partnership with the Department of Energy on this program is critically important.

In your view, does the NNSA's Stockpile Stewardship Program provide the tools necessary to ensure the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile without explosive testing? If not, what additional authorities and capabilities are needed?

Yes, the President-elect has committed to maintaining the moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing. It is my understanding that since 1992, the U.S. has observed a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing. Since that time, the investments made in the Stockpile Stewardship Program have developed the personnel, tools, capabilities, materials, components, laboratory and flight testing, and supercomputer modeling and simulation that underpin the annual assessment for safety, security, and effectiveness of the nuclear deterrent without explosive testing. If confirmed, I will look to the advice and

judgment of our national security laboratory directors to best understand technical risks in our nuclear stockpile, and recommend adjustments to the current approach if warranted.

If confirmed, I will monitor the Stockpile Stewardship Program through the Nuclear Weapons Council.

What is your understanding of the role of the Secretary of Defense relative to the Nuclear Weapons Council and NNSA's responsibility for maintaining the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile? How would you execute your duties vis-à-vis this role, if confirmed?

I am aware that the Nuclear Weapons Council is a critical interagency body overseeing issues vital to the US nuclear stockpile. If confirmed, I will request a briefing on the functioning and work of the council in order to ensure that the US maintains a secure, sustainable and effective nuclear deterrent.

If confirmed, I would work with the NWC Chairperson, the Undersecretary for Acquisition and Sustainment, to ensure that NWC decisions are incorporated into Secretary-level reviews, to provide guidance when needed, and to resolve interagency issues as necessary.

If confirmed, how would you leverage the roles played by the Secretary of Energy, the Administrator of the NNSA, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to ensure that annual budgets adequately support the modernization and sustainment of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile?

If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of Energy, the Administrator of the NNSA, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, through the Nuclear Weapons Council's Planning Guidance and Budget Certification Process, to assess the adequacy of annual budgets to support the modernization and sustainment of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile.

Arms Control

Arms control, when effective and verifiable, has been a valuable tool for managing competition and international security concerns. In contrast, unverifiable arms control regimes observed by only one party can generate great instability. The New START Treaty will expire in February unless the United States and Russia agree to extend it.

Do you believe the new strategic-range systems announced by President Vladimir Putin in February 2018 should be included under the New START Treaty's central limits?

I am generally aware of Russia's nuclear modernization program but am not in a position to speak to the specifics of whether or not individual systems are in compliance with the New START Treaty. I believe, however, that nuclear arms control is in the US interest.

If confirmed, I will request an extensive briefing on Russia's nuclear weapons program and the status of the New START Treaty.

Do you believe it to be in the national security interest of the United States to extend the New START Treaty?

Yes, I do and so does President-elect Biden. Nuclear arms control is in the US national security interest.

What are your views on Russian tactical nuclear forces not covered by the New START Treaty and whether arms control measures can adequately address them?

Russia's nonstrategic nuclear weapons through arms control is a very important strategic objective. I know that this perspective is shared by the Senate as reflected in the resolution of ratification to the New START Treaty that includes a condition to negotiate an agreement with Russia to address the disparity in U.S. and Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons.

Do you support unilateral reductions in United States nuclear forces or do you believe that further reductions should be taken only within the context of a formal, verifiable arms control agreement with Russia and other nuclear-armed powers? Please explain your answer.

I believe it is in the national security interests of the United States and its allies and partners to pursue formal, verifiable arms control agreements that reduce the nuclear threats from Russia and China.

In your assessment, how would delaying or cancelling current nuclear modernization plans and programs affect our arms control negotiation leverage with near-peer and peer competitors?

The nuclear modernization program is clearly a critical national security priority. If confirmed, it will be critical for me to review the program, begun under the Obama Administration, to ensure that it is being executed in the most cost effective and judicious manner.

Despite decades of reductions in the number of nuclear weapons in the U.S. stockpile, and ongoing efforts to reduce global nuclear threats, the U.S. currently faces a more complex nuclear landscape than at any other point in its history.

Do you believe the United States should continue its longstanding policy of not officially recognizing North Korea as a nuclear power and pursuing denuclearization of the peninsula over the long term?

I believe that it is in the US interest to pursue a sustained coordinated effort with allies and others, including China, to advance the shared objective of a denuclearized North

Korea. I fully expect the President-elect to direct the interagency to undertake strategic reviews, including on US policy towards North Korea. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense participates robustly in all strategic reviews.

If so, and if confirmed, what additional steps would you take to ensure continued stability and deterrence of North Korean threats to the U.S. and its allies in the region until denuclearization can occur?

One of the greatest advantages the United States has today and in the future is its alliances and partnerships with those who share common national security interests. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be ensuring U.S. forces have what they need to maintain a robust readiness posture in Northeast Asia, in close collaboration with regional allies. Our relationships with important partners such as the Republic of Korea and Japan are critical to regional security and stability and provide a powerful deterrent to North Korean threats.

Do you agree with DOD's assessment that China intends to double the size of its nuclear arsenal over the next decade?

I am generally aware that the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency has publicly stated that over the next decade, China will likely at least double the size of its nuclear stockpile. If confirmed, I am committed to being briefed on the specifics of China's nuclear weapons program and its threat to US interests.

In your view, at what threshold condition should future nuclear arms control regimes be expanded to include China's arsenal, as well as that of the United States and Russia?

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, I would anticipate that President-elect Biden will direct the interagency to conduct a thorough set of strategic reviews, including one on objectives for nuclear arms control and non-proliferation. President-elect Biden has pledged publicly to restore American leadership on arms control and non-proliferation as a central pillar of U.S. global leadership. If confirmed, I would ask for a briefing on China's nuclear weapons program to further inform my judgements.

Do you believe that the United States should consider accepting limitations on its missile defense, cyber, or conventional power projection capabilities in order to obtain an agreement with Russia or China on nuclear weapons reductions?

In keeping with past practice for incoming Administrations, I would anticipate that President-elect Biden will direct the interagency to conduct a thorough set of strategic reviews, including one on objectives for nuclear arms control and non-proliferation. President-elect Biden has pledged publicly to restore American leadership on arms control and non-proliferation as a central pillar of U.S. global leadership. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense plays a robust role in all strategic reviews.

Certain groups are urging the new Administration to rejoin arms control agreements to which the United States is no longer a party, such as the Open Skies Treaty. To this end, some have advanced legal theories that would permit the President to circumvent the Senate, in which the Constitution vests sole power to approve treaties negotiated by the executive branch.

If confirmed, would you support a decision to circumvent the Senate’s exercise of its constitutional responsibilities through the advice and consent process?

I respect the Senate’s constitutional role, including in the treaty-making process. If confirmed, I would work with the State Department and Congress to help ensure the United States is able to pursue international agreements that are in our national interest and are concluded in accordance with the law.

Missile Defense

The United States enjoys a measure of protection against ballistic missile threats from rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, but the threat from Russian and Chinese ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles against U.S. forces, allies, and the U.S. homeland continues to grow. The 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) codified existing policy on missile defense and endorsed follow-on actions to improve U.S. capability.

Do you believe the MDR should be updated? If so, in what areas?

If confirmed, I will ensure that an MDR is considered as part of the Administration’s formulation of our National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy.

What are your views on the relationship between missile defense and nuclear deterrence?

The relationship between U.S. missile defense and the U.S. nuclear arsenal is complementary and mutually supportive. Both capabilities contribute to deterring attack on the homeland, with U.S. nuclear weapons presenting a credible threat of retaliation and U.S. missile defense presenting a credible threat of denying the adversary a successful attack. In addition, both U.S. nuclear weapons and missile defenses provide reassurance to our allies and partners - contributing to our nonproliferation goals while presenting a credible commitment to regional and global security.

If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, what would be your priorities for U.S. missile defense capabilities for the homeland?

The United States is currently defended from existing intercontinental missile threats posed by countries such as North Korea by the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). Specifically, there are 44 ground-based missile defense interceptors – with 40 interceptors located at Fort Greely, Alaska, and 4 interceptors at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. I understand the Department is also examining an architecture for the

defense of the homeland from cruise missile threats, and will identify an organization responsible for development and acquisition of this capability. If confirmed, I would support continuing improvements to our homeland missile defense architecture.

If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, what would be your priorities for U.S. defense capabilities against cruise and hypersonic missiles?

As our adversaries have demonstrated through rapid and repeated flight testing, the lines between ballistic and non-ballistic missile threats have become increasingly blurred, most clearly evidenced by the advent of hypersonic missile threats. If confirmed, I would encourage efforts to address the full spectrum of missile threats, including the continued development of integrated air and missile defense architectures for both regional and homeland defense, as well as the accelerated development of intercept capability for hypersonic missile defense.

In your view, what should DOD do to improve the protection of deployed U.S. and allied forces from growing missile threats in operational theaters, particularly from advanced cruise missiles and intermediate range ballistic missiles in Europe and the Indo-Pacific?

We must continue working together with allies and partners to enhance our regional missile defense efforts in the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. Our cooperation strengthens deterrence and provides assurance essential to the unity of our alliances which are threatened by missile coercion and attacks. Many of our Allies and partners are acquiring advanced maritime and shore land-based air and missile defense systems that will contribute to collective security. If confirmed, I will encourage them to continue these efforts, while seeking opportunities to deepen interoperability with the U.S. and regional partners. These opportunities include joint exercises that demonstrate both interoperability and our joint resolve to both work together and fight together.

The MDR described the advantages of space-based sensors. In your view, is a space-based sensor layer a required “next step” in enabling a variety of missile defense capabilities, including targeting of advanced threats? Please explain your answer.

Yes, space-based sensors are an important tool in enabling a variety of missile defense capabilities. Space-based sensors are required to provide global boost through burn-out tracking of ballistic missiles and for the detection, tracking, and targeting of hypersonic and advanced threats. In addition, space-based sensors support hit and kill assessment of engagements. I understand the Missile Defense Agency is collaborating with the Space Development Agency in the deployment of the National Defense Space Architecture’s Tracking Layer to address hypersonic and advanced threats.

Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program

The CTR Program historically focused on accounting for, securing, and eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction and materials in the states of the former Soviet Union. As part of its expansion to other countries, the CTR Program is widening its aperture to include biological weapons and capabilities as well as biological surveillance and early warning, and encouraging the development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

What are your views on the efficacy of the CTR Program?

I am generally aware that The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program supports DoD and U.S. objectives of reducing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats worldwide. I understand the program has delivered significant returns on U.S.-funded investments since the early 1990s. If confirmed, I will work to ensure program efficacy.

How could coordination of the CTR Program across U.S. Government agencies that engage in threat reduction efforts (i.e., the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the State Department) be improved?

If confirmed, I will make clear my expectation – across the Department and for all programs, including the CTR Program – that we need to constantly work to improve and maintain communication across the Federal Government. Constant engagement is invaluable to best-align resources.

Notwithstanding the use and proliferation of chemical weapons documented recently in Libya and Syria, about 60% of CTR resources are allocated to biological programs.

Do you believe this shift in focus to biological programs accurately reflects the current threat?

I understand the Department has a process to assess WMD threats and prioritize activities and investments accordingly. If confirmed, I look forward to learning about and advancing the Department's work with partner nations to reduce the threats posed by biological weapons and biological agents.

The CTR program is the primary program in the U.S. government to work with other countries to build and operate High Containment Biological Laboratories as well as develop safe operating and handling practices. Do you agree that this work is of high importance and if so why?

I agree fully that safety and security are essential in any context of working with biological agents. If confirmed, I will ensure the CTR Program's biological threat reduction activities are aligned with DoD and interagency priorities.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure the CTR program is capable of meeting the mission of rolling back the threat of weapons of mass destruction?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure CTR Program efforts are prioritized, aligned with DoD and interagency priorities to counter weapons of mass destruction, and are tailored to what partner countries are able to absorb and carry forward.

If confirmed, would you recommend adjustment in the allocation of CTR resources? If so, how?

As I understand it, the CTR program has played an impactful role over the years in mitigating CWMD threats to the Nation. Its activities and resourcing must be reviewed in light of the defense strategy and balanced against other resource requirements across the Department. If confirmed, I will review the current status of the program and recommend adjustments accordingly.

Air Force Issues

It has been stated the Air Force is too small and too old to do what the nation asks of it. First, do you agree with this statement?

Each Service's portfolio of forces and programs are assessed as part of program review. I am aware that the Air Force has several active modernization programs underway which would replace older aircraft and increase the capability of its force to undertake current and projected missions. If confirmed, I will seek the most effective allocation of the Defense Department's resources to include any Air Force modernization and force structure issues.

Second, if confirmed, where do you see the greatest risk in capability and capacity for the Air Force and what actions would you take or direct to mitigate those risks?

I believe the greatest risk in the Air Force's ability to perform its key missions is presented by the complex anti-access area denial capabilities of competitors such as China and Russia. Air Force modernization must ensure that the service is able to adapt to these challenges. The Air Force also has responsibility for large aspects of nuclear modernization and nuclear command and control, which is an important priority. If confirmed, I would work with Air Force leadership to ensure the Air Force's ability to contribute to critical joint capabilities in line with the defense strategy.

The Air Force is on record as needing to purchase a minimum of 72 fighter aircraft per year to maintain requisite force structure. In your opinion, what is the optimum mix of 4th and 5th generation aircraft required to meet the threat outlined in the 2018 NDS?

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China and Russia. Air Force modernization must ensure that the service is able to adapt to these challenges. The Air Force also has responsibility for large aspects of nuclear modernization and nuclear command and control, which is an important priority. If confirmed, I would work with Air Force leadership to ensure the Air Force's ability to contribute to critical joint capabilities in line with the defense strategy.

The follow-on modernization of the F-35 is slated to bring key warfighting capabilities to the Air Force, but the schedule and budget of this modernization program remain in flux.

Are you confident in the affordability and executability of the Department's plan for Block 4 Continuous Capability Development and Delivery (C2D2)?

I am aware that the F-35 Block 4 modernization effort is designed to ensure Joint Force can employ airborne systems effectively in highly contested battle spaces now and in the future. The F-35 joint program office reports to the Office of Secretary of Defense, so I understand the program requires a specific focus from the Secretary's team. If confirmed, I will work with the OSD team and the military services to ensure the success of the F-35 Block 4 modernization effort.

Given the importance of extending the range of U.S. aircraft, what do you believe to be the overall tanker requirement for the Air Force and at what rate and on what schedule must the Air Force procure the new KC-46 to be able to meet that requirement?

I am aware of the critical role that Air Force aerial refueling capabilities play in supporting the joint force. If confirmed I will work with Air Force leadership and the head of Transportation Command to ensure that the Department fields and modernizes the aircraft needed to support the joint force in all operations.

Army Issues

Army Budget Challenges

While the FY2022 budget request has not yet been released, some public reports indicate there could be an effort to shift funding from the Army toward building a larger Navy to deter China.

In your view, would this shift of resources make sense from a strategic perspective? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will review the Department's FY2022 budget request to ensure it is aligned with the Administration's priorities and balanced across the entire Department to meet defense goals. Competing to win against our adversaries and deterring them from threatening our critical interests requires the combined effects of the full joint force, in coordination with our allies and partners. Each service brings vital and unique

capabilities and a shift of resources away from one particular service may have a negative impact. If confirmed, I will address the challenge of providing the President and the American people with a balanced force able to strategically counter adversary actions in both competition and conflict, and I will seek Congressional support to provide timely, adequate, and sustained funding for the Department.

If confirmed, would you support a decrease in Army end-strength that would accompany any substantial reduction of the Army budget topline? In your view, what would be the effect of such a reduction on Army force structure, readiness, and operations tempo?

I am committed to reviewing the end-strength of all of the Services and their manpower, equipment, and training, mindful of national security objectives. End-strength reductions must be subject to careful analysis and a clear understanding of strategic impacts and risks. The Army is currently undergoing a major transformation to modernize its forces while simultaneously maintaining a high OPTEMPO to support Combatant Command requirements. Army end-strength should support the Army's efforts to build a modern, lethal force.

Many factors, including end-strength, affect force structure, readiness, and operational tempo. Reductions of end-strength should be rigorously assessed to fully understand how it affects Service and broader Department goals. If confirmed, I am committed to clear prioritization of missions and operational requirements that would be associated with any potential force structure changes to any Service.

Army Modernization Priorities

Budget pressure could impact the Army's ongoing investment in modernizing the force for near-peer competition, deterrence and, if necessary, conflict.

Do you believe the Army must modernize to effectively fulfill the requirements of the NDS? If confirmed, what would you do to ensure the Army is adequately resourced to concurrently maintain readiness, modernize the force, and take care of its people?

Yes. Many of the Army's combat platforms were originally designed over 40 years ago. While the Army has continued to modernize these platforms, future conflict will likely require capabilities delivered by new designs. Meanwhile, both China and Russia continue to aggressively modernize, and the pace of technological change continues to accelerate. If confirmed, I will work with the Army to assess the progress made on these elements and to field those capabilities that offer important advantages to the joint force in future operations.

Each Service must be adequately resourced to meet the demands of the strategy. If confirmed, I will work with Service leadership to ensure continued emphasis on internal reforms and I intend to be transparent with Congress on our budget decision making process.

In your view, which are the most critical Army modernization priorities, particularly in the context of countering the rapidly increasing threat posed by China?

If confirmed, I will work with the Army and the other services to determine how the capabilities in the Army's modernization portfolio can contribute to a joint warfighting concept through rigorous analysis and robust experimentation so that we field the right systems on the right timelines. Looking ahead, artificial intelligence and machine learning, a next-generation synthetic training environment, robotics, autonomy, and advanced network sensors will all play increasingly important roles, to include supporting the Army's contributions to Joint All-Domain Command and Control.

How would you evaluate the importance of Army efforts in the Indo-Pacific, including the Army's activation of modernized Multi-Domain Task Forces, to conduct cross-domain operations in support of air and naval forces, in countering China?

Army efforts in the Indo-Pacific, as part of the Joint Force, are absolutely essential to support successful competition with our adversaries, ensure effective military response to crises, and win in conflict if necessary. We know that ground defense remains a priority for our Allies in the region. The Army is critical to building relationships, establishing logistics footholds and expanding operational reach for the Joint Force.

Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD)

The FY 2021 NDAA requires the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in consultation with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, to conduct a holistic assessment of current and emerging air and missile threats and the integrated defensive capabilities and capacity required to counter them. It also requires the Secretary of Defense to certify integrated air and missile defense roles and responsibilities.

In your view, are the roles and responsibilities for IAMD appropriately assigned across the Military Services and defense agencies?

IAMD is inherently a joint endeavor and requires a synchronized approach across the Department. Emerging adversary air and missile capabilities continue to fundamentally alter the way future conflicts will be conducted. Correspondingly the threat requires the Department to thoughtfully and routinely reassess future organizational structures in a global context to address threat capabilities that limit or negate U.S. capabilities to operate and project joint military forces. If confirmed, I will work with the services, the Joint Staff, and civilian leadership to ensure that our approach to IAMD is well integrated and addresses current and future operational needs.

If confirmed, how would you ensure the Military Services make the investments required to fulfill their IAMD responsibilities, including for base defense? How

would you ensure effective integration of the Services' current capabilities, as well as of the capabilities each is separately developing?

Each Military Service provides major contributions to the IAMD mission area, and each must balance those requirements with their service specific missions and priorities. If confirmed, I will work with the services, the Joint Staff, and civilian leadership to ensure that our approach to IAMD, including base defense, is well integrated and addresses current and future operational needs.

If confirmed, I will work with the services, the Joint Staff, and civilian leadership to ensure that our approach to IAMD is well integrated and addresses current and future operational needs as well as addressing IAMD roles and responsibilities.

During his confirmation hearing before this committee, the current Chief of Staff of the Army stated that the Army's purchase of two Iron Dome batteries to address shortfalls in theater base defense capabilities was a "good first step." However, several months ago, the Secretary of the Army stated the Army does not intend to complete the purchase and fielding of two additional batteries by 2023, as required by the FY 2019 NDAA.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that forward stationed servicemembers have adequate near-term protection, given the expanding number of complex threats to U.S. bases in the Pacific, Middle East, and Europe?

I know that our Combatant Commanders work carefully to refine threat estimates within their areas of responsibility and assess impacts of those threats to their operational plans and activities. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these risks are effectively mitigated through a combination of approaches such as intelligence and surveillance collection for better awareness and early warning, deterrence posture, investment in localized force protection, and active and passive defenses.

Over the last year, the Army was designated as executive agent for the Joint Counter Small Unmanned Aerial Systems Office (JCO), and has made progress demonstrating, testing, and advancing effective counter small unmanned aerial systems (C-sUAS) capabilities for the Joint Force.

If confirmed, would you support continuation of the JCO effort? How would you prioritize and focus efforts across DOD to counter larger UAS?

The threat posed by sUAS systems is evolving and expanding. If confirmed, I will support efforts, such as those JCO efforts currently underway, that streamline innovation, enhance warfighting capabilities, and simultaneously minimize unnecessary duplication and redundancy.

Counter-UAS is a subset of the larger Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) mission area, which is a Joint effort. The Department is currently addressing the significant UAS threat through Service-specific capabilities. If confirmed, I will examine

ways to prioritize and focus DoD efforts working with the Service Secretaries to assist in prioritizing C-UAS efforts across the Department to facilitate greater synergy between the Services.

If confirmed, do you intend to explore options for expanding DOD cooperation with other agencies, such as the Departments of Energy, Justice, and Homeland Security, on C-sUAS capability development and procurement?

If confirmed, I will review C-UAS capability development and procurement, assess DoD's cooperation with other Federal departments and agencies, and if necessary explore options for expanding cooperation to ensure we achieve our objectives.

The current validated requirement for THAAD batteries is nine, yet only seven batteries are fully manned and equipped, despite the fact that THAAD and Patriot batteries are some of the highest-demand, lowest-density assets in the Army. The FY 2021 NDAA and Defense Appropriations Acts both support procurement of an eighth battery.

If confirmed, what action would you take to ensure that the Army expeditiously acquires the eighth THAAD battery and appropriately plans and budgets for the ninth as soon as feasible?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Army works closely with the Missile Defense Agency to acquire sufficient THAAD capability to support the joint force and execute the funding Congress has provided.

Soldier Lethality

Last year's realignment of the Close-Combat Lethality Task Force (CCLTF) from a cross-functional team reporting directly to the Secretary of Defense to an activity under the Department of the Army appears to have de-emphasized this effort, which is critical to the lethality and survivability of formations that traditionally sustain more than 90 percent of combat casualties.

If confirmed, what would you do to ensure the necessary prioritization, manning, and resourcing of the CCLTF? How would you ensure that the CCLTF fulfills its charter to drive materiel and non-materiel innovations for the Soldiers, Marines, and Special Operators who comprise our close-combat formations?

It is my understanding that the CCLTF continues to develop, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding improvements to U.S. squad-level close combat formations, ensuring overmatch against potential threats. This effort is important, and if confirmed, I will ensure that the work of the CCLTF receives appropriate levels of organizational support and resources.

Navy and Marine Corps Issues

What is your assessment of the recently published *Advantage at Sea: Prevailing with Integrated All-Domain Naval Power*? In your view, how well does this strategy nest within the 2018 NDS?

I commend the Naval Services' for working to develop a maritime strategy that supports the National Defense Strategy which focuses on improving joint operations. If confirmed, I will work with the naval services to assess the effectiveness of this strategy and continue development of a joint warfighting concept.

My initial sense is that the Naval Service's Strategy is well aligned with the 2018 NDS's focus on China, and to a lesser degree Russia, as being the most significant threats to U.S national defense interests. If confirmed, I would want to engage more closely with the Naval Services to understand the detailed implications of the strategy.

Do you believe the Departments of the Army and Air Force should publish similar strategies? If confirmed, what timeline would you seek for such a publication?

If confirmed, I would welcome discussion with all of the services on strategy development and a joint warfighting concept. I would also encourage perspectives from civilian and policy oversight, as well as joint functions in these matters.

If confirmed, I would first want to gain insights from relevant civilian (OSD) and joint components, as well as the affected Military Services, about the analytic, strategic planning, and other prioritization considerations of pursuing similar efforts. I would also want to ensure that any such follow-on efforts would be well nested with next steps in reexamining, updating, and refining implementation of the National Defense Strategy.

Recapitalizing the Fleet

Despite the Navy's requirement for at least 382 ships, it is currently operating with approximately 297 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that achieving the Navy's FY 2020 30-year shipbuilding plan would require an average \$31 billion per year, one-third more than Navy estimates, and an increase of more than 50 percent compared with recent shipbuilding budgets.

Do you consider the Future Naval Force Study and the FY 2021 Shipbuilding Plan released in December 2020 to be appropriate given the current and future strategic environment?

It is my understanding that the Future Naval Force Study (FNFS) explored a range of future fleet designs capable of meeting today's enduring maritime missions and tomorrow's global security challenges. If confirmed, I will review both the Future Naval Force Study and shipbuilding plan in detail and work with Navy leadership to develop a well calibrated shipbuilding plan.

How would you characterize the risks to national security posed by the current number of battle force ships?

It is my understanding that the size of the Navy fleet is currently growing as new ships are delivered to the fleet and that the Navy plans to continue this growth in future budgets. I am also aware that the Navy has experienced recent challenges in ensuring that ships are ready to deploy after maintenance periods and in delivering all necessary training to ship crews prior to deployment. If confirmed, I will review the Navy's assessment of current and future risks in performing its assigned missions, and in supporting the requirements of the joint force, and work with Navy leadership to address those risks.

Improving Government Technical Control in Shipbuilding

A June 2018 Government Accountability Office report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than initially budgeted; were delivered at least six months late; and were marked by dozens of deficiencies. As an example, the first procurement dollar for the *Ford*-class was spent in 2001. More than nineteen years later, procurement dollars continue to be spent to finish construction on the lead ship, *USS Gerald R Ford (CVN-78)*, which is \$2.7 billion over the original budget estimate, was partially delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.

Do you believe acquisition performance on recent lead ships has been satisfactory?

As I understand it, the lead ship in any class comes with complex challenges, particularly in the areas of technology development and integration, design, ship construction, and testing. Even so, performance on lead ship efforts such as the *USS Gerald R Ford* and others has given cause for concern. If confirmed, I will assess the Navy's performance on lead ships generally and its plans for upcoming lead ships, understanding that multiple critical lead ship construction efforts are currently underway or in the planning process.

What actions do you believe should be taken or explored to improve on recent lead ship performance, particularly in regard to improving technical foundations?

If confirmed, I will work with the Navy to improve performance on lead ships. I anticipate this will require a strong focus on understanding the technical risks in these ship design efforts and detailed work to effectively manage and retire that risk in a manner that can be validated before potential design flaws are baked in. Having a skilled and trained workforce in our shipyards will also be critical.

Section 125 of the NDAA for FY 2021 directs the Navy to establish a land based engineering site (LBES) for the complex propulsion system of the new *Constellation*-class frigate. This LBES is essential to provide a firm technical foundation for this program, including by reducing risk on lead ship construction and systems integration, facilitating additional shipyard competition, providing lifecycle in-service support, and training of Sailors.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that section 125 mandates are executed as required by law?

I understand the objective of the language of Section 125 is to reduce the technical and schedule risk associated with the new Constellation Class frigate. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy to ensure a sound risk management approach to the Constellation Class as well as other shipbuilding programs.

Ford-class Aircraft Carriers

What is your understanding of the current capability and reliability of each of the key subsystems on the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN-78), including the Advanced Arresting Gear, Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Dual Band Radar, and Advanced Weapons Elevators?

It is my understanding that the Navy has been working to develop, test, and evaluate these key subsystems to meet the Navy's performance requirements. If confirmed, I would assess the Navy's efforts in these matters as key decisions on the Ford and follow-on ships in the Ford Class are made.

What is your understanding of the measures being taken to ensure these key systems are stable for the next aircraft carrier, *USS John F. Kennedy* (CVN-79), and those that follow?

It is important that the learning on key subsystems in the Ford Class be applied to the *USS John F. Kennedy* and other ships in the class as soon as practicable. If confirmed, I would assess the Navy's progress on these subsystems as carrier construction issues are brought forward for decision.

In your view, is it still appropriate for the Department to procure large-deck, nuclear-powered carriers and large-deck amphibious ships after CVN-81 and LHA-9? Should the Department conduct a capabilities-based assessment of the future of ships that embark fixed-wing aircraft?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as independent analysts, have conducted studies on capabilities required for future naval warfare. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy and Marine Corps to assess how their fleet design and modernization plans support the National Defense Strategy and the joint warfighting concept.

The Department should rigorously analyze and assess the capabilities of the entire joint force in addressing the key operational challenges inherent in the missions required to support the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I intend to ensure that this analysis is carried out.

Columbia-class Submarines

Navy leaders have testified that the *Columbia*-class program, the Department of the Navy's top acquisition priority, will require significant investment and will result in equivalent reductions within the Navy budget, if a higher Navy topline or outside funding is not provided.

What is your understanding of the current cost, schedule, and performance of the *Columbia*-class program?

It is my understanding that the Columbia Class program is working actively to meet its scheduled fielding date to sustain the nation's strategic deterrent. In addition to the challenge inherent in this schedule, there are challenges in the submarine industrial base based on how long it has been since the nation constructed a new-design missile submarine as well as the demanding pace of submarine construction. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy to ensure these challenges are carefully managed.

If confirmed, what would be your recommendation for funding the *Columbia*-class program?

If confirmed, I will assess the requirement for funding for the Columbia Class program in the FY22 budget proposal.

DOD leaders have testified that the Navy needs to procure 12 *Columbia*-class submarines and avoid schedule delays in the *Columbia*-class program in order to ensure the first deterrent patrol occurs in 2031.

Do you agree that 12 *Columbia*-class submarines will be needed for strategic deterrent patrols to meet requirements of the Strategic Command?

I am aware that extensive analysis has been done to develop the current plans for the COLUMBIA Class program and of the importance of meeting the fielding schedule associated with the projected retirement of the OHIO Class in supporting the nation's strategic deterrent. If confirmed, I will work with Navy leadership to ensure the effective execution of the Columbia Class program to meet national security requirements.

What is your understanding of mitigation options DOD is considering or should consider in the event the *Columbia*-class program incurs schedule delays that might prevent the lead ship from deploying in 2031?

If confirmed, on-time delivery of the lead ship of the COLUMBIA program will be a principal objective of the Department. I will ensure efforts are taken to review all options to help mitigate risks to COLUMBIA schedules and work with the relevant stakeholders to manage the risk.

Ready Reserve Force (RRF) Recapitalization

DOD has developed a three-pronged recapitalization strategy for the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) and Military Sealift Command surge fleet. This strategy combines new construction, extending the service life of certain vessels, and acquiring used vessels.

What is your understanding of the Navy’s recapitalization strategy for the RRF and the affordability of acquiring more than 50 sealift vessels as outlined in the latest 30-year shipbuilding plan?

It is my understanding that the Navy’s Sealift Recapitalization Strategy is outlined in the Navy’s 30-year shipbuilding plan. If confirmed, I will review this strategy and work with Congress, Navy leadership, and other stakeholders to ensure sealift requirements are met.

To what extent do you believe the Navy has identified the appropriate mix of used and new ships to continue to meet sealift and auxiliary requirements?

If confirmed, I will review the Navy’s Sealift Recapitalization Strategy and work with Congress, Navy leadership, and other stakeholders to ensure sealift requirements are met.

Marine Corps Modernization

The Marine Corps’ current concepts for modernization of its amphibious capabilities includes ships, ship-to-shore connectors—such as the Landing Craft Air Cushion—and armored amphibious combat vehicles. Modernization across these systems is complex, technically challenging, and costly.

What is your assessment of the current capability of amphibious maneuver and assault systems in the Navy and Marine Corps?

The current set of amphibious capabilities, to include warships, aircraft, connectors, and amphibious combat vehicles have served us well, but require modernization to deter peer competitors and fight decisively if deterrence fails. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Congress, Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps team remains a capable and lethal joint force.

If confirmed, how would you propose to prioritize the development and acquisition of capabilities required for sea basing, connectors, and armored amphibious assault and tactical mobility ashore to achieve a full spectrum capability in the Marine Corps?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy, along with Marine Corps and Navy leadership to ensure that naval force have the capabilities they need to fight and win today and in the future. This includes a review of the current set of priorities to ensure joint access in an anti-access area denial (A2AD) environment.

In your view, what is necessary to ensure that modernization of the amphibious force—ships, connectors, and vehicles—is achievable and affordable in the near and long term?

First and foremost, the Department’s investment strategy must be predictable, clear, and aligned with its strategy. Funding that is timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained provides the Department the ability to acquire, train with, and employ Naval combat power across the full spectrum to be successful against threats outlined in the strategy.

If confirmed, would you support the continued execution of the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative (DPRI), including the realignment of some U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and the build-up of facilities at other locations, such as Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan?

If confirmed, I will review the implementation of the realignment plan known as the Defense Policy Review Initiative, understanding it is the bilaterally-determined way forward. The realignment of Marine Corps forces on Okinawa and the main islands of Japan, including the establishment of a strong presence on the U.S. territory of Guam, supports our effort to achieve an improved Indo-Pacific defense posture. The Department of Defense working with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the Military Departments and Services, and the Department of State must proactively adapt and adjust U.S. access and joint presence to the realities of great power competition to ensure our posture is optimized for deterrence of adversaries, ally and partner assurance, and warfighting, if necessary. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to ensure that our posture plans are consistent with the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy, and other relevant plans, policies, and agreements.

Last year the Commandant of the Marine Corps released a new strategy reorienting the Marines to be more directly part of the integrated naval force, with a focus on China.

Do you believe that General Berger’s new strategy for the Marine Corps is correct, and that the divestiture of end-strength and ground combat capabilities such as tanks and artillery is appropriate? What, if any, modifications to this strategy would you recommend?

If confirmed, I will review the Marine Corps’ strategy and work with General Berger to ensure his forces are strategically aligned.

I would not recommend any modifications to the strategy at this time. If confirmed, I will seek to work with the Secretary of the Navy, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Congress to review and implement the strategy.

Reform of DOD Business Operations and Decision-Making Processes

Management Reform

Reform of DOD business operations is the third pillar of the 2018 NDS.

If confirmed, what specific new actions would you take and what ongoing actions would you continue to initiate and accelerate the meaningful reform of DOD business operations, processes, and systems?

If confirmed, I would continue the Department's efforts to achieve a clean audit opinion on its financial statements. The process of undergoing an audit drives discovery, transparency, and business process discipline that yields significant positive results for the Department. Also, having accurate, actionable business data is essential to running any large organization. I understand the Department has developed a single common 'data lake' that is used to provide real time information on financial, HR, security, acquisition and readiness status, which I will continue to use to manage and reform the Department. Now that we have the data – no small feat – we need to use the data to drive and support our decision making. The Department has too many information technology systems that perform similar functions. These need to be reduced and rationalized. If confirmed, I would require the Services and Defense Agencies/Field Activities to migrate from legacy systems to modern systems that already exist inside the Department or elsewhere in government wherever possible instead of developing new capabilities internally. DoD has a long history of not making optimal investments in business systems, and now is the time to capitalize on the expertise that exists in the civilian side of government.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to improve the governance and performance accountability of the so-called "Fourth Estate"?

The elimination of the Chief Management Officer position by the FY2021 NDAA requires the Department to re-think its approach on governance generally, including the Fourth Estate. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Deputy Secretary and other senior leaders across the Department on that, if confirmed. My goal is a Department that is both effective and efficient.

The FY 2021 NDAA eliminated the Chief Management Officer (CMO) position.

If confirmed, how would you approach the FY 2021 NDAA tasking to reallocate the responsibilities of the Chief Management Officer?

If confirmed, I would approach it in two ways: what has worked well before, and where we need to do better. For the "Pentagon Reservation" functions in CMO, I would rely on what has worked well before. For example, I would consider re-establishing the position of Director of Administration and Management (DA&M). For the business/management reform functions in CMO, I believe we can do much better linking budgeting and performance. I believe the business reform duties at the core of the CMO's portfolio should be performed by existing, respected, and highly capable staff offices in OSD. These are, primarily: the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer; the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation; and the DoD Chief

Information Officer. Importantly, I would employ well understood processes that the Pentagon knows and regularly uses – for example, the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution cycle – to drive a management reform agenda and improve the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Department.

Digital Modernization

The Department expends significant resources on information technology and related services, yet remains highly reliant on slow legacy systems and enterprise infrastructure, and on personnel intensive workarounds for critical operating functions such as personnel, financial management, logistics, and acquisition. Not surprisingly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, DOD struggled to enable the total force to work remotely in a persistent and secure fashion, incurring health and safety risks that should not have been necessary had the Department not repeatedly deferred investments in digital modernization initiatives.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to prioritize and resource digital modernization initiatives such as secure enterprise-wide cloud, teamwork, and collaboration tools, as well as senior leader decision support initiatives like advanced analytic capabilities (ADVANA)?

The Department has made notable progress toward Digital Modernization, but much remains to be done. Modernizing the hardware and software DoD's digital systems rely on will increase its efficiency, its ability to be resilient in the face of a cyberattack, be more cost effective over time, and ensure the total force has secure and resilient access to the information it needs anywhere in the world. The COVID challenge clearly demonstrated the critical role of modern cloud-based collaboration tools in allowing the Department to successfully perform its mission without interruption. Enterprise cloud is foundational to the Department's ability to rapidly and securely develop and deploy advanced software. Our weapon systems increasingly depend upon software to ensure our competitive advantage over near peer adversaries. If confirmed, I will organize DoD to ensure continued progress toward Digital Modernization. Analytic capabilities like ADVANA are empowering senior leaders to use standardized data to inform policy and make better decisions. If confirmed, I am committed to continue to use such analytic capabilities to better operate and manage the Department.

Has your experience with defense industry and private industry engendered an appreciation for modern management tools and systems that you would seek to implement at the Department of Defense, if confirmed?

Industry managers must be adept at setting clear goals, measuring value creation in their products and processes, and making decisions based on objective, data-driven measures of performance. If confirmed, I would accelerate the progress the Department has made using data management and executive analytics tools to ensure that DoD's decisions are driven by relevant and timely access to standardized data and a shared operational picture.

Former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper took a personal interest in modernizing the DOD CHARRTS software system used to manage congressionally-required reports.

Given your significant and recent military service, what are your views on the efficacy of the processes and systems used to manage congressional reporting requirements?

I understand that, recently, congressional and DoD staff have been working to modernize the reporting process, and streamline both the way Congress identifies items requiring Department reporting, as well as the reporting process itself. I understand the importance of the reporting process and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this process.

In your view, how can the DOD processes and systems—including CHARRTS—for managing engagements with, and the flow of information to Congress writ large, and the congressional defense committees more specifically, be improved?

It is my understanding that the Congress and the Department have begun collaborating on technologies to enhance the flow of information between the Congressional defense committees and the Department through an online, cloud-based, exchange portal to track reporting requirements from inception by the committees, through assignment and completion by the Department, with a goal of enhancing the timeliness and transparency of the process for all stakeholders. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this process.

DOD Auditability

Since 1995, DOD's financial management has been on the Government Accountability Office's High-Risk List, identified as vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Over the past several years, DOD undertook a department-wide financial audit, despite not being audit-ready, and has made significant progress toward auditability. The Department is now targeting 2027 to achieve an unqualified or clean opinion.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to maintain the significant momentum achieved in auditability over the past several years at the Department of Defense?

If confirmed, I would ensure the Department has actionable and achievable plans in place to keep making progress toward an unmodified audit opinion. All leaders--military and civilian, operator or supporter--will be held accountable for collaborating and completing, in a timely manner, these plans and roadmaps. I will expect my Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and other DoD leaders to work together to address and reduce the findings from the most recent audit and to continue the recent progress in the use of data analytics as an important tool in this effort.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take or direct to achieve better outcomes than have past initiatives intended to improve DOD auditability?

The tone set by leadership at the top is critical to accomplishing goals. There is a history of the Secretary of Defense establishing priority areas for audit remediation. If confirmed, I intend to continue that advocacy. I will reinforce leadership's engagement and focus on these audits. Better outcomes occur when we leverage our auditor's feedback to prioritize corrective actions that bring the greatest value to our operations and warfighters. Better outcomes also occur when leaders are accountable to the results of these audits, and, if confirmed, I will lead them through this important task. What gets measured also gets done, so if confirmed, I will monitor and push for progress by using and emphasizing metrics that enable the Department to quantify progress throughout the year.

How does the DOD audit contribute to operational readiness, in your view?

The value of audit is not so much in DOD being able to say it has a clean audit opinion, but in the audit recommendations that bring insight into how the Department can improve its operations. The audit process can improve the Department's operations on many levels--in the form of more reliable information for decision-making, improved inventory management, and cybersecurity. With time, I expect that the value and contributions that flow from the audit will grow. Our audit efforts should lead to strengthened internal controls, streamlined business processes, improved visibility of assets and financial resources, and increased transparency and accountability. All of this makes the Department more effective.

Acquisition Management

Acquisition Reform

Recent NDAs have enacted sweeping reforms to the Department's acquisition organizational structures and systems, including introducing new acquisition flexibilities and delegating significant acquisition authority to the Services.

In your view, what are the key tenets of the Department's new Adaptive Acquisition Framework and does it effectively implement the reforms directed by Congress? If not, what additional changes in the defense acquisition system are needed?

It is my understanding that the Department of Defense Adaptive Acquisition Framework implements the following tenets: (a) Empower program managers (PMs); (b) Simplify acquisition policy; (c) Employ tailored acquisition approaches; (d) Conduct data driven analysis; (e) Actively manage risk; and (f) Emphasize product support and sustainment. If confirmed, I will work with my staff and the services to ensure that Department policy is

fully aligned with these tenets and effectively implements the reforms needed in the defense acquisition system.

It is my understanding that recent reforms have allowed the Department to engage effectively in rapid prototyping and expand access to new partners in industry. At the same time, the fielding of new capabilities continues to proceed at a slower pace than is required to address the challenges the Department faces and the development of new entrants in the generation of defense capability is suboptimal. Acquisition of services and software remain challenging and implementing sound cybersecurity throughout the acquisition system and the weapon systems it produces is a major need. If confirmed, I will work closely with my staff and the services to continue to improve the defense acquisition system along these fronts and in other areas.

Recognizing that the Adaptive Acquisition Framework represents a significant change in DOD acquisition policy and process, what steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure it is successfully adopted throughout the Department?

If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, and the Military Departments' Senior Acquisition Executives to ensure that we have the necessary policies in place to implement and institutionalize reforms in the defense acquisition system and to ensure its effective operation.

Given the delegation of significant acquisition authority to the Military Services, what do you believe to be the respective roles of the Secretary of Defense, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, and the Service Acquisition Executives in ensuring acquisition programs deliver promised capabilities to the end user on time and on budget? If confirmed, who would you hold accountable for large-scale acquisition failures?

I believe the role of the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and the Service Acquisition Executives, as well as the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering is to operate collaboratively, consistent with their statutory responsibilities, to ensure the effective operation of the defense acquisition system.

Problems with acquisition can arise from many factors, including overly ambitious requirements, immature technologies, and poor planning and/or execution by government or contractor teams. If confirmed, I would assume ultimate responsibility and accountability for the stewardship of the resources the American taxpayer invests in the department. I expect to work closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and the Military Service or Component acquisition executives to monitor and improve program performance. Accepting and managing risks is a necessity to deliver needed capabilities. When there are failures, we should learn from them, identify root causes, and move on from the program if a better alternative can be identified.

In your view, what are the most significant acquisition and contracting challenges facing the Department today? What additional acquisition or related reforms would you recommend and implement to address those challenges, if confirmed?

Working with defense contractors to protect critical information and implementing appropriate cybersecurity measures are significant challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to addressing the need to protect critical information and implement appropriate cybersecurity measures, including working with the Congress. This needs to be a priority for DoD's acquisition and contracting community. In implementing these important authorities, we must balance the absolute need to secure our systems, with the impact to cost, schedule and performance in implementing these measures.

If confirmed, I will work with the OSD staff and the services to identify improvements to the acquisition system in areas with continuing challenges. In addition to those areas I previously identified, developing the acquisition workforce will be a top priority. I will also ensure that the Department works closely with Congress on these issues.

Many acquisition experts attribute past failures of defense acquisition programs to a cultural bias that routinely produces unrealistic performance expectations and overly optimistic cost and schedule estimates.

What is your understanding of the tools available to the Secretary of Defense to identify and direct appropriate trade-offs between cost, schedule, and performance requirements early and regularly throughout the acquisition process?

It is my understanding the Department of Defense's policies, including DoD Instruction 5000.02, the Federal Acquisition Regulation, and the use of Other Transaction Authority agreements, provide the Department with significant flexibility to tailor cost, schedule, and performance. A key factor in leveraging these tools successfully is having knowledgeable officials in place on the OSD staff and in the services as well as across the acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I would work with the Congress to continue to refine these policy tools and to ensure that we have the talent we need in the defense acquisition system.

The rapid pace with which our adversaries field technological change demands a DOD acquisition system that can innovate, adapt, and respond to new threats and opportunities.

In your view, how should the Department define and manage concepts like risk and failure so that program managers can try new technologies and concepts, learn what does and does not work, and more quickly drive technological advancement?

Risk management is a technical and cultural challenge. If confirmed, I will work with acquisition and sustainment and research and engineering leadership in OSD and in the military services to ensure risk is understood and that the acquisition workforce is encouraged to manage risk effectively. It is my understanding that effective management

of risk is part of the reason the USD(R&E) was established in the first place: to help foster a culture of innovation. If confirmed, I would expect USD (R&E)'s efforts, in coordination with those of the USD (A&S), to complement each other and foster adoption of new technologies and concepts with appropriate management of risk.

Requirements

One of the challenges facing many acquisition programs—ranging from weapons systems to business systems—is unrealistic, unfeasible, unstable, and unaffordable requirements.

What best practices can the Department employ to generate realistic and feasible requirements, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas, and given that software increasingly defines the capability?

Dynamic approaches to requirements generation in a mission engineering context, as well as insights from prototypes, experiments, and pilots aligned with the department's modernization priorities and the National Defense Strategy should continuously shape requirements and designs. These approaches that actively engage users, and allow rapid iterative insertion of emerging technologies. If confirmed, I will work with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and others to encourage these types of approaches.

In your view, how well does the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) draw upon and use input from the systems engineering; cost analysis; and programming, planning, and budgeting communities in its requirements deliberations? How would your experience inform your future oversight of the JROC?

It is my understanding that the JROC includes representatives from the engineering, cost estimation, and budgeting communities in its deliberations. I am also aware that the current Vice Chairman is working to reshape the JROC's focus around key requirements of a joint warfighting concept. If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Staff, the services, and civilian leadership to ensure that our requirements process supports the development of the capabilities needed to execute the strategy.

During my time as the Army Vice Chief of Staff from 2012-2013, I was a member of the JROC, so I am fully aware of its strategic and day-to-day tasks. If confirmed, I will maintain appropriate oversight of its critical responsibilities for the joint force through the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and work with them to implement the strategy.

Title 10, U.S. Code establishes the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, acting as the Chairman of the JROC, as the primary adviser to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense on requirements. In this context, the law authorizes the Vice Chairman to establish requirements without the consensus of the JROC as a whole. This reform was intended to improve support for joint warfighting requirements and missions that may not be of sufficient priority for the Military Services.

What are your views on these reforms?

I am broadly comfortable with the statutory framework undergirding the work of the JROC. If confirmed, I will review the JROC's efforts to better align its approach to the requirements process around key elements of the joint warfighting concept, and work with the Joint Staff, the services, and civilian leadership to ensure that our requirements process supports the development of the capabilities needed to execute the strategy.

Defense Industrial Base

In recent years, Congress, industry, and DOD have increasingly expressed concerns about the health of the defense industrial base and its ability to reliably meet defense needs, coupled with an interest in “on-shoring” industrial activity. The NDAA for FY 2021 seeks to address these issues, in part, by establishing an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy.

What do you assess to be the most significant challenges facing the defense industrial base? How would you address these challenges, if confirmed?

A number of weaknesses exist in the defense industrial base. They include: workforce stability, financial health, cyber exploitation, a reliance on sole or single source suppliers, reliance on foreign sources (including adversarial sources), and vulnerabilities to predatory and adversarial capital investments. COVID-19 has highlighted previously unknown industrial base risks, created new risks, and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities. These impacts have been visible across businesses of all sizes and their supply chains.

A robust defense industrial base is critical to supporting the Warfighter. If confirmed, I will assess the vulnerabilities in the defense industrial base and strategically invest in programs such as Defense Production Act Title III to address them. I will ensure implementation of statutory authorities, including those related to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, to protect American technology and know-how from adversarial foreign capital. Further, if confirmed, I will focus efforts to ensure that all companies within the defense industrial base have access to tools to combat cybersecurity threats. I will also work within the DoD to strengthen activities with small business, and with allies and partners, to support policies that foster collaboration, competition, and innovation, to ensure a vibrant defense industrial base.

What steps should the Department take—on its own or as part of a whole-of-government approach—to increase domestic industrial capacity and reduce reliance on suppliers in China?

The President-elect has identified increasing domestic industrial capacity as a top priority and a priority across U.S. government agencies. The Department of Defense has substantial investments in research, development, production of major weapon systems, procurement of supplies, and other support efforts related to national security requirements that spur industrial activity and private investment. If confirmed, I will support a whole-of-government approach to ensuring we have the domestic industrial capacity needed to meet defense requirements and support the economy. DoD can leverage its authorities and programs to onshore capacity and capability in certain areas and collaborate with allies and partners to leverage their unique capabilities.

If confirmed, what would you establish as the key priorities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy?

If confirmed, I will look into this area in more detail. However, I will focus efforts on a number of critical and timely challenges. This includes ensuring that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy is supporting the critical industrial base challenges I noted earlier, including the whole-of-government approach to fighting COVID-19 and its disruptions.

Test and Evaluation

A natural tension exists between the goals of major defense acquisition programs to reduce cost and accelerate schedule and the need to ensure performance meets requirements and specifications—the objective of the test and evaluation function.

If confirmed, how would you approach your relationship with the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, particularly in light of the independence and direct reporting relationships and responsibilities accorded the Director in law?

The success of the Armed Forces depends upon the objective, unvarnished information and assessments the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) provides. If confirmed, I will respect DOT&E's independence, granted by Congress in statute, and look forward to working closely with DOT&E to ensure that our warfighters receive the most capable and safest systems possible.

The Major Range and Test Facilities Base (MRTFB) and DOD's associated test and evaluation infrastructure are critical national assets. In recent years it has become clear that digital engineering and digital modeling and simulation tools and infrastructure will be critical to achieving the Department's objectives for optimizing existing legacy weapons systems and facilitating the delivery of modern software-defined capabilities.

Based on your past experience in DOD and in the defense industry, are you satisfied with DOD's test and evaluation capabilities, including the test and evaluation workforces and infrastructure of the Military Services?

In my experience, DoD's T&E community has contributed substantially to producing the world's most effective fighting force, the U.S. military. The technology available to us and our adversaries and the methods of employing that technology are evolving at an

incredible pace. If confirmed, I believe a review of our T&E infrastructure, tools and workforce is necessary to ensure that they are ready for the systems we intend to field and the threats we expect to face.

If confirmed, in which areas, if any would you require the Department to develop new test and evaluation capabilities?

If confirmed, I believe a thorough review of DoD's T&E capabilities and workforce would be prudent. The results of this review would inform my decisions regarding T&E investment. DoD must be prepared to test and evaluate current and emerging systems and technology. Critical areas to assess include our national space test and training capability, our capability to test hypersonic weapons, directed-energy platforms, and autonomous and artificial intelligence-based systems; and our test and evaluation capabilities for software systems and cybersecurity.

Under what conditions should other U.S. Government agencies (Federal, State and local), allied foreign governments, and defense contractors be permitted to use the MRTFB?

DoD organizations must have priority for use of the Major Range and Test Facility Base. If confirmed, I would support robust interagency cooperation whenever possible and I envision many mutually beneficial opportunities, particularly in the areas of space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum, for partnership with other government agencies. Strengthening partnerships with our international allies will be at the top of my agenda. That will include improving their warfighting capabilities and supporting our forces' interoperability through opportunities for via testing and training at U.S. facilities.

Defense Security Cooperation

What should be the primary objectives of Department of Defense security sector assistance activities, in your view?

The Department's primary objective for security sector assistance efforts should be to enhance the capabilities and capacity of our partners to provide for their own defense and enable partners to address regional security challenges—to advance shared security interests. Working with the Department of State, the Department of Defense's security sector assistance tools are a linchpin in maintaining and leveraging the United States' robust constellation of allies and partners, which are vital to achieving U.S. objectives abroad.

Is the Department of Defense appropriately organized and resourced to execute security sector assistance effectively? If not, what changes would you make or direct, if confirmed?

Congress has provided the Department sufficient authorities to address capability and capacity shortfalls among allies and partners to ensure partners are able to operate alongside or in lieu of U.S. forces. It is my understanding that the Department has made significant strides in recent years through aligning security cooperation activities with National Defense Strategy (NDS) objectives and utilizing the full range of available authorities for building partner capacity. If confirmed, I will build upon this progress and explore innovative ways to leverage security cooperation resources as a key element in advancing defense strategic objectives.

I appreciate the Title 10 Chapter 16 tools Congress has provided to the Department and the continued support toward improving the execution of security cooperation efforts. If confirmed, I will advise the Committee of any additional legislative or organizational changes that I conclude are necessary to execute this mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

It has been noted repeatedly that the 2005 BRAC round resulted in major and unanticipated implementation costs and saved far less money than originally estimated.

Do you believe that another BRAC round is needed? If so, what changes to law and implementation policy would you recommend to improve on the outcomes of the 2005 BRAC process?

If confirmed, I will work with my senior advisors and the Military Department leaders to determine whether authorization for a BRAC round is something to consider in the future as we shape priorities.

The BRAC process is recognized as fair, objective, and a proven process for closing and realigning installations in the United States. That said, I understand that Congress has expressed concerns about the 2005 BRAC round. If confirmed, I will assess the need for changes to law or policy to address congressional concerns with the 2005 BRAC round. The key will be maintaining the essence of the BRAC process: treating all installations equally, all or none review by both the President and Congress, an independent Commission, the priority of military value, and a clear legal obligation to implement all of the recommendations in a time certain together with all the authorities needed to accomplish implementation (specifically the authority to undertake military construction necessary to implement recommendations).

If you are confirmed, and were Congress to authorize another BRAC round, how would you set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation across DOD?

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize a new BRAC round, I would work with my civilian and military experts to determine the priorities to be addressed by that round.

What is your understanding of the responsibilities for working with local communities with respect to property disposal that would vest in DOD and the Military Services, were Congress to authorize another BRAC round?

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, I would consult with the Department's experts on this matter.

Operational Energy and Energy Resilience

The Department defines *operational energy* as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. As early as 2004, then-General Mattis testified before Congress that DOD must “unleash us from the tether of fuel” if U.S. forces are to sustain momentum and retain freedom of maneuver. He cautioned that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that would be exploited by the enemy.” Today, DOD energy requirements are projected to increase significantly due to technological advances in weapons systems and distributed operations over longer operating distances.

If confirmed, what would you do to harness innovations in operational energy and link them with emerging joint operational concepts?

If confirmed, I will work across OSD, the Joint Staff, the Services, the Combatant Commands, and industry to enhance the energy resilience of the Joint force. That includes investing in energy RDT&E and incorporating energy resilience into emerging joint operational concepts through exercises, wargames, modeling and simulation, and other means.

In what specific areas, if any, do you believe DOD needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations in its strategic planning processes?

DoD must consider the supportability of our energy requirements in contested and competitive operating environments, including the homeland, as well as how changing geopolitical conditions affect energy supplies. If confirmed, I will review how well the Department is incorporating energy considerations into all aspects of the strategic planning process.

How can DOD acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms? In your view, should energy supportability be a key performance parameter in the requirements process?

DoD does not and will not have uncontested access to unlimited energy, from the homeland to forward deployed locations. If confirmed, I will work with my staff to ensure the acquisition system values and enhances the energy supportability of future platforms and operations.

It is my understanding that energy supportability is already a key performance parameter, by statute. If confirmed, I will ask the acquisition and energy experts, in coordination with the Joint Staff, to update me on the implementation of the energy supportability key performance parameter, and recommend any necessary improvements.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to prioritize energy resilience and mission assurance for DOD, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to support mission critical functions and address known vulnerabilities?

In order to achieve their missions, our warfighters must have assured access to energy that is resilient to all hazards and threats. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department considers a full range of resilient, cyber-secure, and sustainable energy solutions, including renewable energy technologies, to meet the needs of mission critical functions.

Section 2805 of the FY 2017 NDAA accorded the Secretary of Defense the authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and energy security.

If confirmed, for what types of construction projects would you leverage section 2805 authorities to enhance mission assurance?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the DoD utilizes all available authorities, including section 2805, in an integrated and holistic manner to strengthen its mission assurance posture. Solutions may include microgrids, distributed on-site generation (such as renewable energy), and battery energy storage systems, among others, to improve mission assurance at our installations.

Environment

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD and the Military Services comply with environment protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

If confirmed, I will work with the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure the Department of Defense complies with environmental regulations, laws, Executive Orders, and EPA guidance while meeting its mission responsibilities.

If confirmed, how would you structure investments in DOD's Environmental Research Programs?

If confirmed, I will structure the Department's environmental research programs to address the highest priority issues facing DoD and to support Administration priorities.

What are your ideas for improving DOD collaboration with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure

military readiness, while protecting the environment on and around military installations?

If confirmed, I will collaborate with all relevant Federal, State, Tribal, and local stakeholders, including the Department of Interior and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, towards conservation outcomes that support our mission requirements; sustain resilient landscapes on and around military installations and ranges; and conserve our nation's natural and cultural heritage now and into the future.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD and the Military Services comply with environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to ensure the Department has the policy, organization, training, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities to comply with all environmental requirements.

Environmental Contaminants

According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), DOD has identified more than 400 military installations affected by known or suspected releases of Perflouroctane sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

If confirmed, what actions would you take to address PFOS/PFOA contamination on DOD installations?

If confirmed, I will ensure the DoD PFAS Task Force proactively addresses PFAS concerns, and aggressively pursues a PFAS-free firefighting agent.

If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing the health concerns of service members and their families regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on U.S. military installations and in the context of performing military duties?

Nothing is more important than the health and well-being of our people and their families. If confirmed, I will make sure health concerns that are reported are promptly reviewed, investigated, and mitigated when necessary. I will direct Department of Defense officials to work with the EPA and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure we are taking care of Service members and their families. I will also work for a more proactive approach to protecting the environmental quality of installations for our Service members, their families, and the communities that support them.

Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather

Over the last few years, hurricanes have resulted in more than \$10 billion in damage to military installations across the U.S.

How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on DOD from recent extreme weather events?

Severe weather and other climate change-related disasters have degraded DoD's ability to operate and train at certain installations, imposing significant costs. If confirmed, I will work with Department leadership, the Joint Staff, and the Military Services to develop a full understanding of the national security implications of extreme weather and climate change, taking a comprehensive approach that includes impacts on operations, readiness, installations, equipment, infrastructure, and force development.

Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in DOD infrastructure?

Yes. It is common sense, cost effective, and arguably necessary to promote resilience in DoD infrastructure and supporting communities. If confirmed, I will work with DoD leadership to ensure our standards continue to improve.

Science, Technology, and Innovation

U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared. Our competitors are engaging in aggressive military modernization and advanced weaponry development. DOD has identified ten key areas in which investment to develop next generation operational capabilities is imperative: hypersonics; fully networked C3; directed energy; cyber; space; quantum science; artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning; microelectronics; autonomy; and biotechnology. Much of the innovation in these technologies that could prove suitable for national defense purposes is occurring outside of the traditional defense industry.

If confirmed, would you make any changes or adjustments in current DOD modernization priorities?

I understand the current list of modernization priorities has been drawn directly from the National Defense Strategy, with input from stakeholders across the DOD enterprise. I would be open to revisiting these priorities as technology evolves and new challenges and opportunities are identified.

What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to DOD's development of these key technologies?

I believe the department faces a significant challenge in accelerating our adoption of new technology in ensuring that new capabilities make their way quickly from the lab into the hands of warfighters, while at the same time balancing the sustainment needs of our legacy systems. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to speed the transition of new technologies from concept to prototype to fielded capability.

Are the Department's investments in these technologies appropriately focused, integrated, and synchronized across all Military Departments and Agencies?

The FY2017 NDAA reestablished and elevated the USD(R&E) to focus strategically on the integration and synchronization of technology development programs across the department. If confirmed, I will support the USD(R&E) in ensuring that the Department's technology investments are appropriately focused, integrated, and synchronized across all military departments and Agencies.

In addition to the technologies identified in the 2018 NDS, are there other technology areas in which you believe DOD must invest to ensure that the United States maintains its technological superiority in the long-term?

Yes, and that is reflected in the fact that the Department's research portfolio is much broader than the modernization priorities. The Department invests in a broad portfolio of technologies to drive future capability improvements and to create technological advantage. For example, areas such as advanced materials, propulsion, software engineering, and electronic warfare are now, and will continue to be, key enablers.

Given your experience in both DOD and the private sector, is DOD applying appropriate effort to identifying new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and applying those technologies to national security and warfighter purposes?

While we can always do better, I believe DOD continues to reduce the obstacles associated with bringing commercially developed technologies to bear in support of the warfighter. The Department is focused on identifying new technologies developed commercially and applying those technologies to national security and warfighter purposes. For example, the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), a component of OUSD (R&E), has made significant strides in bridging the gap between the commercial technology sector and the military.

The DoD Research and Engineering Enterprise also seeks out promising technologies/capabilities through outreach via public engagement, presentations to industry and academic forums, engagement with technical professional groups, and open solicitations to non-traditional vendors. If confirmed, I will support these and other efforts to leverage commercial technology developed by the private sector to bring advantage to the warfighter.

The Defense Science Board has recommended that DOD adopt a goal of dedicating 3% of the total defense budget to Science and Technology (S&T).

If confirmed, would you implement the DSB's recommendation?

The S&T budget provides critically important funding for long-term technology needs, and if confirmed, I will direct the USD(R&E) to develop a strategy for funding the S&T

priorities to ensure that we can maintain and enhance our operational capabilities and work with Service Secretaries to support funding for the priorities.

If confirmed, by what metric would you assess whether DOD is investing adequately in S&T programs and whether the DOD enterprise has achieved the proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T?

S&T is a critical component of the Department's long term strategy to address the objectives of the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that DoD invests adequately in S&T to meet our mid and long term strategic needs and properly balances near-term R&D and longer-term S&T.

In its 2018 report, *Foreign Economic Espionage in Cyberspace*, the National Counterintelligence and Security Center warned that “foreign economic and industrial espionage against the United States . . . represent a significant threat to America’s prosperity, security, and competitive advantage.” The report confirmed that China and Russia are engaged in campaigns to steal trade secrets, proprietary information, and other forms of intellectual property from the United States, through infiltration of the software supply chain, acquisition of knowledge by foreign students at U.S. universities, and other nefarious means—all as part of a strategic technology acquisition program.

What steps would you take, if confirmed, to strengthen National Security Industrial Base and National Security Innovation Base systems and processes to ensure that critical information is protected?

The National Defense Strategy and the Department of Defense Cyber Strategy highlight the importance of harnessing and protecting the National Security Innovation Base in order to compete, deter, and win in an increasingly complex global security environment. The Department can and should work closely with industry to protect sensitive information, platforms, and infrastructure through mechanisms such as cybersecurity assessments, supply chain illumination, and cost-effective, secure architectures and cybersecurity services. It will take a whole of government effort to ensure that critical information is protected and ensuring that every relevant agency in the government is working together to address this problem is a priority for the President-elect. If confirmed, I will make this area a priority.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Many DOD officials, including previous Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have advocated for accession to the Law of the Sea Convention.

Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

I support the navigation and overflight provisions contained in the Law of the Sea Convention. The global mobility of U.S. forces relies on these rights and freedoms. I understand the United States has recognized that these provisions of the Law of the Sea

Convention reflect customary international law that is applicable to all nations, whether or not a nation has ratified the Convention. The United States consistently respects the law of the sea and exercises these rights around the globe by flying, sailing, and operating wherever international law allows. If confirmed, I will support policies and actions that continue to exercise and safeguard these interests, as well as the free and open order of which the law of the sea is a part. I will keep these objectives in mind when providing recommendations to the President and the Congress.

In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on emerging maritime disputes, such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

Regardless of accession to the Law of the Sea Convention, the United States will continue to advocate for the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes without force or coercion. The United States does not generally insert itself into territorial or maritime disputes to which it is not a part. But the United States maintains a strong position on adherence to the legal regime of the oceans reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. This principled stance drives the United States' commitment to not only a free and open Indo-Pacific region, but also to a free and open Arctic domain. If confirmed, I will work with other Federal departments and agencies and our allies and partners to support the free and open international order and continued access for all lawful uses of the oceans.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Despite significant efforts by the Military Services to enhance their response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24, remains too high.

Do you believe the policies, programs, and resources that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working? If not, what else must be done?

My understanding is that over the last ten years, the Department has made progress in many areas, but there is much more to do. Although the current policies and programs are sound, execution of our approach must be more proactive and oversight of these efforts must be more timely and responsive. But as with all policies and programs, if confirmed, I would continue to closely monitor our progress and identify opportunities to improve and better support our Service members. The challenges posed by sexual assault constantly evolve; as such, our efforts must also continue to adapt. If confirmed, I will continue to refine and improve our approach so that every member can serve in a climate of dignity, respect, and inclusion.

In your view, why hasn't the Department been more successful in preventing sexual assaults?

My understanding is that while the Department was able to see progress in this space between 2006 and 2016, the most recent data shows an uptick in reports of sexual assault. I also understand that this uptick was predominantly within our youngest enlisted cadre. This tells me we must do more to train, educate, and hold accountable enlisted leaders – our greatest influencers at that level – while maintaining a vigilant eye at the highest levels of leadership as well. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to take this on and ensure we not only have a force that embodies our expectations for good order and discipline, but that we hold our leaders, at all levels, appropriately accountable for these expectations.

What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove disposition authority from military commanders over felony-level violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assault?

While I am very familiar with the current role of military commanders in the disposition of allegations of Uniform Code of Military Justice violations, I have not studied the potential impact of removal of that authority in depth. During the campaign, President-elect Biden stated his intention to “appoint a commission of current and former military leaders, sexual assault survivors and their advocates, and sexual assault experts, and give them 90 days to make concrete recommendations to me, including on prosecution decisions.” If confirmed, I would closely study any such recommendations and confer with the President on the best way forward.

Why are the number of prosecutions for sexual assault and retaliation in all Military Services so low? Why are conviction rates so low?

I understand that the Defense Advisory Committee on Investigations, Prosecutions and Defense of Sexual Assault in the Armed Forces—a statutorily mandated federal advisory committee—has studied the issue of preferral of charges alleging sexual assault offenses and provided preliminary findings in its October 2020 Report on Investigative Case File Reviews for Military Adult Penetrative Sexual Offense Cases Closed in Fiscal Year 2017. If confirmed, I will closely study the committee’s findings and recommendations.

I have not studied conviction rates in the military justice system, but I understand that the Defense Advisory Committee on Investigations, Prosecutions, and Defense of Sexual Assault in the Armed Forces is studying the conviction rate in sexual assault cases and plans to further examine that issue. If confirmed, I will closely study any resulting findings and recommendations.

If confirmed, what initiatives will you implement that focus on the prevention of sexual assaults in the military?

If confirmed, I intend to support comprehensive prevention approaches that are part of a holistic plan to address sexual assault and other problems that may give rise to the crime, such as sexual harassment, hazing, and bullying. The Department’s policies must

demonstrate an integrated prevention approach that helps all leaders address command climate issues across the spectrum of problematic behaviors. If confirmed, I will demand that all leaders and Service members take ownership of their respective roles and execute them to the fullest of their abilities. President-elect Biden has also stated his intention to “appoint a commission of current and former military leaders, sexual assault survivors and their advocates, and sexual assault experts, and give them 90 days to make concrete recommendations to me,” including on prevention initiatives. If confirmed, I would closely study any such recommendations for expanding the Department’s prevention initiatives.

If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD’s program of preventing and responding to both sexual harassment and sexual assault?

If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department’s proactive approach to prevent and address sexual harassment and assault, including focusing on helping our young enlisted Service members. We must continue to equip our current and future leaders with the skills and competencies necessary to foster and maintain respectful climates. I will ensure that the Department continues to innovate and adapt its approaches. I also intend to lead by example and regularly engage with staff and the Military Departments and Services so everyone understands that mission readiness relies on taking care of our most valuable asset: Our people.

Given your extensive experience as a military officer, do you perceive that if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, you would require additional authority from Congress to improve the Department’s programs to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assaults?

If confirmed, I will review existing authorities and work with the Administration and with Congress if I determine additional authorities are necessary.

Active and Reserve Component End Strength

Since 2016, the active force has grown by about 50,000 servicemembers.

Do you believe military end strength should continue to grow? If yes, where do you believe that growth should occur?

Our service members are our greatest asset. However, our people can only be effective if we pair them with the right equipment, training, and support. If confirmed, I will assess the Department’s military manpower with the goal of ensuring it is properly sized to create an effective fighting force in line with the strategy.

As previously stated, if confirmed, I will look to ensure any end strength growth or reduction is paired with associated requirements with equipment, training, and support.

If confirmed, I will focus any end strength changes on the highest priority national security challenges.

What aggregate active end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Military Services by the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

Each service member plays a crucial role in enabling the Department to defend the nation in line with our strategy. If confirmed, I will seek to find the right balance between the size of the force and our ability to keep it ready and modernized to provide the best protection to our nation.

If active end strength continues to increase, what specific parameters would you use to determine what the corresponding Reserve Component end strength should be?

The mix of active and reserve forces should be assessed by each service and by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and as part of the program and budget review process used to build the annual defense budget request. The best mix would maximize lethality and readiness and ensure that the range of the Department's missions are covered by those forces best suited to them, while minimizing cost.

In your view, do the reserve components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, do the Reserve Components require increased levels of full-time support, improved equipment, increased training, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness going forward?

For the last twenty years, the Reserve Components have successfully provided both ready operational capabilities and on-call strategic depth to provide the full spectrum of lethality in support of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) requirements.

The Reserve Components' resourcing levels in manning, equipping, training, and readiness must be tailored to meet National Defense Strategy (NDS) requirements in competition, crisis, and armed conflict. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Reserve Components are appropriately resourced to execute NDS requirements.

Recruiting and Retention

The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, and willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service. Further, only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

Do you agree with the premise that the shortage in the number of American youth eligible, qualified for, and interested in serving in the Armed Forces poses an existential threat to national security?

Yes, I agree that the limited population who are eligible to serve and a low propensity to serve are concerning, as this challenge impacts our ability to meet our national security objectives. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress and the Military Departments and Services on initiatives to increase interest and eligibility for military service among young Americans to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

In your opinion, why are so few individuals in the 17-24 age range eligible for service, and what can be done to increase the pool of individuals qualified for, and interested in military service?

Medical reasons disqualify most of the youth in this age group, a third of which are disqualified for being overweight. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress and the Military Departments and Services on developing ideas and initiatives to increase the number of young Americans qualified for military service in order to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

What programs, policies, or tools does the Department need to increase the propensity to serve of today's youth?

To improve propensity, we must change misperceptions of what it means to serve in the military. Today, fewer Americans have a personal connection to the military than at any time in the past several decades, and the gap between the American people and their military continues to grow wider. If confirmed, I will support initiatives that bridge knowledge gaps, correct misperceptions and reinforce a consistent, positive message in the market that raises the esteem of joining the military.

If required to choose between maintaining high recruitment and retention standards and achieving authorized end strength levels, which would be more important, in your view?

I believe it equally important to maintain high recruitment and retention standards and to meet authorized end strength levels. Despite ongoing recruiting challenges, the Services have been successful in recruiting both the quality and quantity of recruits needed to sustain the All-Volunteer Force. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts and policies that enable the Services to meet their recruiting goals.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to increase diversity and improve inclusion in the military?

The Department has long identified diversity as a strategic imperative to maintaining a strong, viable military force. As I understand it, the Military Departments and Services are exploring new initiatives to expand and bolster the strategic tools needed to reach a

wide and representative number of youth. Initiatives include reviewing promotion and command screening procedures and issuing policies that ensure pregnancy does not impede a service member's career. If confirmed, I remain committed to building on and expanding these efforts. We must find a way to engage with American youth in all communities and to help them understand the many benefits of military service, which they could not attain in the private sector.

Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Forces

One consequence of the relatively low proportion of American youth who are eligible and interested in military service is that the military services have increasingly recruited from the same sources, schools, and geographic locations, and have targeted recruits from military families. Over time, these practices can decrease diversity in the armed forces, including diversity of background, experience, and thought that benefit any organization.

Do you believe broadening recruitment efforts and promotion practices within the armed forces, with a goal of ensuring the armed forces reflect the diverse population of the United States eligible to serve, is a matter of national security, and should be a national priority?

Yes, I believe that recruiting a force reflective of the Nation serves as a critical component of our national security strategy. I recognize the Department gains a strategic advantage by leveraging the diversity of all members. If confirmed, I will support the Armed Forces with ongoing efforts to recruit a Force that reflects the rich diversity of the Nation they serve, and an equitable approach to promotion practices.

If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to support increased diversity and inclusion within the armed forces?

If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize and strengthen the Department's commitment to diversity and inclusion – and equal opportunity – all of which enhance our military readiness. Our force is stronger when we leverage the strengths of all members. I will reaffirm that military and civilian leaders at all levels are responsible to promote and instill these ideals. And I would champion accountability as the DoD continues with efforts on improving diversity, equity and inclusion within the department. Additionally, if confirmed, I would support the Department's ongoing efforts to implement the recommendations recently offered by DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion and ensure that the Department appropriately prioritizes and resources these implementation initiatives. Moving forward, if confirmed, I will seek the independent advice of the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion to inform efforts underway and to provide additional insights.

If confirmed, how would you expand recruiting efforts to reach every corner of America, including expanding recruiting efforts and outreach to historically hard-to-recruit locations?

If confirmed, I will continue to support Military Department and Service initiatives to apply a broad array of strategic tools and approaches to increase the diversity within their ranks. Furthermore, I will continue to foster key partnerships with community leaders and other influencers to generate interest in the military as an employer of choice for today's youth.

There is a long history of honorable and courageous immigrant service in the armed forces, in all conflicts.

Do you believe that military entrance requirements and testing practices accurately measure the military potential of non-native English speakers?

If confirmed, I will review the current efforts across the Department to ensure valid, reliable, and fair criteria and measures are used to assess applicants with highest potential, to include non-native English Speakers.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that entrance requirements ensure the armed forces are not inadvertently missing out on talented youth who may be disadvantaged because they are not native English speakers?

The Department's overarching goal is to assess applicants with highest potential to perform in the field, while ensuring diversity and inclusion. It is my understanding that the Department is in the process of conducting an overarching review of best practices used by the academia to assess academic achievement for non-native English speakers. If confirmed, I will review these results and those of similar efforts, and direct actions that achieve a wider reach to all populations while maintaining appropriate enlistment standards.

Assignment Policies for Women in the Service

Since 2015, all military occupations and units have been open to the assignment of any service member who can meet the occupational standards, including women.

What challenges still exist with regard to the assignment of women? What proactive measures would you take or direct to address those challenges, if confirmed?

The Department has lifted all assignment restrictions regarding the assignment of women. We must continue oversight of the integration of women into formerly closed units. We should redouble our efforts to attract and retain women in the military. Women are less compelled to join and pursue careers in operational specialties. We must assure prospective recruits that they can have extremely successful and rewarding careers in a full range of specialties. Otherwise, we are missing out on critical talent that is vital to sustaining the All-volunteer force.

If confirmed, I will ensure DoD is known as an employer of choice for women and all underrepresented populations. We have become disconnected from the majority of Americans. They do not understand who we are and misunderstand what life in the military entails. This lack of familiarity often results in military service not being considered when American youth make their career choices.

Religious Accommodation

On September 1, 2020, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness released DOD Instruction (DODI) 1300.17, in accordance with Section 533(a)(1) of NDAA for FY 2013, as amended, and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. DODI 1300.17 establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the accommodation of servicemembers' religious practices.

Do you believe that DODI 1300.17 appropriately protects servicemembers' right to observe the tenants of their religion, or to observe no religion at all?

Although I have not yet had an opportunity to review how DoDI 1300.17 has been implemented, my understanding is that all applicable statutory provisions, including recent amendments, are included in the latest revision to the DoDI, thereby ensuring the rights of our Service members are protected.

Do each of the Military Service's policies and processes appropriately accommodate the religious practices of individual service members, in your view?

If confirmed, I will be attentive to the necessity to ensure the appropriate accommodation of Service members' religious beliefs. The demands of service require individuals who are strong physically, as well as spiritually.

Do you support a policy that allows a prospective recruit to request and receive an accommodation of religious practices prior to enlisting or accepting a commission in a Military Service?

Yes. To do otherwise would require an individual to potentially violate their faith by signing documents committing to follow all uniform regulations without knowing if an accommodation such as maintaining a beard will be granted.

Do you support a policy that allows a servicemember's religious accommodation, once granted, to follow the member throughout his/her military career—no matter where he/she is stationed or the nature of his/her specific duties—unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation adversely affects military mission accomplishment?

We should not make individuals choose between faith and service to our great Nation. Having their accommodation follow them unless that accommodation adversely affects

mission accomplishment is a means to not placing the Service member in such an untenable position.

In your view, do existing DOD policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by a military chaplain in both official and unofficial settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain's right to pray in accordance with the tenets of his/her religious faith and the rights of other service members who may hold with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs, who may be present in these settings?

In my experience, yes. If confirmed, I will direct a review of our policies to ensure chaplains have the right to pray in accordance with the tenets of their faith.

Military Quality of Life and Family Readiness

The Senate Armed Services Committee views military quality of life and military family readiness as critical factors in the recruitment and retention of servicemembers. Military families want access to high quality education for their children, and to high quality health care and child care services on military installations and in local communities. Military spouses seek education and employment opportunities, and military families benefit from modern morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.

If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider to be a priority?

If confirmed, I will support quality of life programs that reinforce a strong military community and focus on those that will help to build and sustain resilient families. My priorities include spouse employment, preventing both domestic violence and serious harm to children, and child care programs. I will base my decisions on programs that are determined to have the greatest impact on readiness, retention, and resiliency.

Do you believe that the Department should include military family readiness considerations, such as the quality of public education, and the availability of healthcare and childcare, in its evaluation of basing options in the United States?

Yes. These considerations, and others such as housing, and licensure portability for military spouses and other beneficial State-level legislation and policies, are important as they contribute to the overall readiness and well-being of the military family.

If confirmed, how would you improve the "base scoring" process to ensure that local communities are capable of providing quality services to support military families?

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Department Secretaries to continue their efforts to develop criteria that will equitably evaluate State and local community actions to support the needs of military families.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that reserve component families receive necessary support services while their servicemembers are mobilized and deployed? How would you ensure that active component families who do not reside near a military installation receive support services?

The Department's approach must focus on both active duty and reserve component members and families. It is imperative that the Department continue to provide support for a geographically-dispersed population through a coordinated network of care encompassing support and services provided by the Department and other Federal, State, local, non-profit and private entities. One example of a DoD-wide resource for families is Military OneSource - the Department's 24/7/365 solution to providing Service members and their families with resources, tools, and information.

If confirmed, I will explore what needs currently exist, and determine what is available to families wherever they reside in order to identify gaps. Innovative solutions, such as web-based delivery systems, may allow the Department to be more flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of the population. Military OneSource, for example, is a virtually accessible program offering support services from anywhere around the world. The Department should continue to work with other federal agencies, and those in local governments, businesses, and non-profit stakeholders, to ensure support for military families wherever they live and work.

The Committee often hears that Active component military families have difficulty obtaining child care on the military installation and that there are thousands of families on waitlists to receive infant care.

What are your innovative ideas for increasing the availability of accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost, for military families?

Child care is a critical issue for military families, especially in the current environment. If confirmed, I will review the current efforts of the Department in this vital area and work with the Military Departments and Services and the Congress to develop a multi-pronged strategy that addresses identified shortfalls. My understanding is that the Department is hard at work evaluating the FY21 NDAA child care legislation including but not limited to: standardization of child care fee assistance, 24-hour child care, and assessment of staff pay and benefits to increase capacity.

If confirmed, would you support the consolidation of commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system?

If confirmed, I will review the Department's original recommendations on this issue and will evaluate the savings and efficiencies that can be gained by various service models or consolidations. It is important that any consolidation or shared services model maintains or improves the benefit while achieving desired savings.

Non-Deployable Service members

The Department has published DODI 1332.45, *Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service members*.

Do you agree that service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from service or referral into the Disability Evaluation System?

As I understand the current policy, individuals who are non-deployable for more than 12 months are evaluated to determine if they are able to perform their duties and, if not, evaluated, to determine whether or not continued Service is appropriate. As every Service member contributes to the readiness of the force, I believe such an individualized review is necessary. If confirmed, I will direct a review of the existing policy to better understand how it has been implemented.

DODI 1332.45 provides that the Secretaries of the Military Departments may “retain . . . those service members whose period of non-deployability exceeds the 12 consecutive month limit . . . if determined to be in the best interest of the Military Service.”

Under what circumstances would the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the Military Service”?

Each case must be evaluated on its own set of facts. What is in the best interest of the Service will vary greatly depending on the skills of the individual when measured against the needs of the Military Service. Individuals with unique skills that are in short supply would be an example of when a Service may determine that the individual’s continued Service warrants retention.

In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?

My understanding is that medical science is advancing in the treatment and prevention of HIV. The Department of Defense should routinely review our policies if medical advances occur for all medical conditions. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing our policies as it relates to HIV.

To be credible to our Service members, the Department’s policies must apply fairly and equally to all. An individual’s gender identity should not be a factor in such a determination.

Military Health System Reform

In your view, do military medical providers have the critical wartime medical competencies and experience required to provide competent combat casualty care?

Emphasizing the importance of continuously exercising and improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of our medical force must be a high priority for the Department, and if confirmed, I will seek to ensure that medical providers have the necessary medical competencies and experience.

Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as modified by Sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, transferred the administration and management of military hospitals and clinics from the Military Departments to the Defense Health Agency (DHA), a Combat Support Agency.

Do you agree with the congressional mandates for military health system (MHS) reform? Please explain your answer.

The Military Health System should be focused on its core readiness mission and providing quality health care to all beneficiaries in accordance with guidance provided by Congress. Consolidating the administration and management of the military hospitals and clinics, along with public health and research activities, under the Defense Health Agency (DHA) as directed by Congress has the potential to continue improving overall readiness, effectiveness and efficiency. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with Congress to ensure effective implementation of Military Health System reforms.

If confirmed, specifically how would you ensure the rapid and efficient transfer of the control, administration, and management of all military treatment facilities to the DHA?

If confirmed, I will commit early in my tenure to being briefed on the status of the transition and continue to follow the transition progress to make sure the transfer is completed to best support the future needs of the National Defense Strategy and the nation and in full compliance with all legal requirements.

If confirmed, specifically how would you bring to an end actions by the Military Services to delay or reverse MHS reform?

If confirmed, I will listen intently to the Military Services concerns and work to address any issues they raise if possible. I will work to facilitate unity of effort across the Military Services, ensure transparency and cooperation among all stakeholders, and will make clear decisions to move forward within the timelines set forth in law to accomplish the Congress' intent.

Do you see value in restructuring the DHA as a new combatant command—a Unified Medical Command—in the future? In your view, what would be the pros and cons of such a command?

If confirmed, I will work to fully implement the ongoing reforms Congress has directed. These ongoing reforms represent major transformations for the military health system and should serve to increase operational readiness and improve quality and efficiency in

healthcare delivery. After a reasonable period following completion of the statutory reforms, I will assess the net effect and determine if there is a need for further consolidation or potential value to moving to a Unified Medical Command model.

With regard to pros and cons, if confirmed, I would want to consult with Congress after I have had time to more fully examine the issue and assess the impact of the current round of reforms.

If confirmed, I will work to fully implement the ongoing reforms Congress has directed. After a reasonable period following completion of the statutory reforms, I will assess the net effect and determine if there is a need for further consolidation or potential value to moving to a Unified Medical Command model. With regard to pros and cons, if confirmed I would want to come back to you after I have had time to more fully examine the issue and to fully assess the impact of the current round of reforms.

Suicide Prevention

The number of suicides in each of the Military Services continues to concern the Committee.

If confirmed, what new initiatives would you implement to prevent suicides by military personnel and their family members?

Suicide is a national public health tragedy that affects people of all ages, from all walks of life. Every suicide is devastating, and forever changes the lives of families and communities. I am deeply committed to supporting and protecting those who defend our country, and it is imperative that we do everything possible to reduce the risk of suicide and prevent suicidal behaviors. If confirmed, I will ensure new suicide prevention initiatives continue to be evidence-based and support efforts target prevention strategies for our populations of greatest concern, particularly our youngest military members. If confirmed, I will continue to collaborate with leaders across the Military Departments and Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and those in academia and the non-government sector to evolve our strategies – and identify new, evidence-informed methods to prevent the national tragedy of suicide.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to stem higher incidences of suicide at remote installations (like Fort Wainwright, Alaska) and on ships underway?

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's public health approach to suicide prevention focused on our populations of greatest concern. We must continue to emphasize comprehensive efforts to help individuals before they may become at risk of harming themselves and ensure we provide all necessary medical care and treatment; this includes support initiatives that enhance connectedness to family, friends, and fellow Service members, and promote help-seeking behavior, particularly for those serving in remote environments. Additionally, I will ensure that DoD continues to investigate and learn why there may be higher concentrations of suicides in a particular area. In

accordance with the recently passed National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, I will issue guidance requiring each suicide involving a Service member to be reviewed by a multidisciplinary board to ensure no stone is left unturned.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of servicemembers across both active and Reserve Components?

If confirmed, I will assess the current processes and identify opportunities to enhance both the accuracy and timeliness of collecting, tracking, and reporting suicides among our military community. I am deeply committed to supporting and protecting those who defend our country and their families, who also sacrifice for our Nation.

The DOD Civilian Workforce

DOD is the federal government's largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD civilian personnel policies comport with requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Although this Committee does not have jurisdiction over title 5, over the years, it has provided numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities tailored to specific segments of the DOD civilian workforce.

In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Department in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

In my view, one of the biggest challenges the Department faces is the competition for cutting-edge technical talent. This talent is essential to implement the defense strategy and is in high-demand in the private sector. DoD must be innovative in our talent, recruitment, and retention efforts in order to achieve the DoD mission. DoD must be an employer of choice for such high-demand professionals. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress in continuing to create the necessary efficiencies and flexibilities to recruit, retain, and compensate these in-demand professionals.

Do you advocate the creation of a new "title 10" DOD civilian workforce and a concomitant body of title 10 personnel authorities applicable only to the DOD civilian workforce? If so, how should these new authorities improve on title 5, in your view?

If confirmed, I will work to determine if creation of a new title 10 system for the DoD civilian workforce would be more effective in meeting the Department's needs.

It is my understanding that the current title 5 civilian personnel system may not be fully sufficient to outpace our competitors where needed to attract, hire, and retain a civilian workforce necessary to support of DoD's national security mission.

Under current law, the civilian pay raise to adjust for wage inflation is set at the Employment Cost Index (ECI) minus 0.5 percent, or at about a 2.5 percent for FY 2021. Yet, the Department's budget frequently does not provide funding for a civilian pay increase.

If confirmed, would you support a pay raise for DOD civilian employees, consistent with current law?

Yes. If confirmed, I would support pay raises for civilian employees. Civilian pay must remain as competitive as possible to attract and retain a qualified workforce in support of the DoD mission.

Do you agree that the DOD civilian workforce is part of the total force and serves as a force multiplier for the uniformed military force?

Yes. The effective and appropriate use of the DoD civilian workforce allows the Department to focus its service members on the tasks and functions that are truly military essential, thereby enhancing the readiness of our warfighters.

How do you assess the diversity of the DOD civilian workforce? If confirmed, how would you ensure that diversity and inclusion within the civilian workforce is sufficiently prioritized?

If I am confirmed, diversity and inclusion across the entire Department will be one of my highest priorities. Ensuring the civilian workforce reflects our nation is critical to DoD's success. If confirmed, I will continue to leverage the Department's established surveys and equal employment opportunity (EEO) data assessments to gauge civilian employee experiences and identify trends involving equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion. In addition, as the Department implements the recommendations recently offered by the DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion, I will, if confirmed, seek internal and external inputs and perspectives to strengthen our equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion programs Department-wide.

DoD civilian employees are vital to our nation's defense and integral members of the Total Force. If I am confirmed, as part of DoD's efforts, I will instruct leaders at all levels to prioritize diversity and inclusion initiatives across the civilian workforce and identify trends and areas for improvement. Further, I would ensure the Department appropriately assesses the effectiveness of existing and newly proposed initiatives, and tailor DoD's diversity and inclusion policies, programs, and processes to ensure we appropriately leverage diversity and inclusion initiatives throughout the civilian workforce.

General/Flag Officers

The FY 2016 and 2017 NDAs required DOD to reduce by about 12 percent the number of General/Flag Officer (G/FO) positions by the end of 2022. As of December 2020, the Department has achieved only about one-third of the required G/FO reductions,

mostly by cutting vacant positions. DOD currently plans to identify and implement all remaining non-Joint reductions in 2022.

Do you believe that the Department's decision to delay the identification and elimination of the remaining G/FO positions is prudent? Please explain your answer.

I have not yet had an opportunity to assess the Department's decision to delay the identification and elimination of the remaining G/FO positions. If confirmed, I am committed to ensure the Department meets the statutorily-required reductions, as mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY17.

If confirmed, what factors would you consider in determining whether a G/FO position should be continued in the current grade, downgraded, or eliminated?

If confirmed, I would prioritize existing and emerging senior officer requirements based on the position's scope of responsibilities and prospective contributions to accomplishing the National Defense Strategy to ensure the Department meets all statutory limitations.

If confirmed, and as the U.S. Space Force continues to grow, how would you propose to transfer the requisite number of general officer allocations to the Space Force while also meeting the reduction mandate?

If I am confirmed, in consultation with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I would seek to optimize the senior officer corps to best accomplish the missions assigned to the Department of Defense. At this time, I do not know enough about the U.S. Space Force requirements to provide an informed response. However, I commit to providing Congress with a response at a later date once I have had an opportunity to review the issue.

National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

Last year's report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service made a number of recommendations to increase and facilitate service opportunities in military, national, and public service. These recommendations included modernizing the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) to include the registration of women, and strengthening the relationship between military and national/public service recruitment and programmatic efforts.

Do you support amending the MSSA to include the registration of women? Do you support the Commission's other recommendations intended to modernize the MSSA? Please explain your answer.

I understand that Congress created the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service to study and provide a recommendation on this question as a core task. If confirmed, I would review the Commission's recommendations and seek the input of

experts within the Department before making an assessment. I am aware that future wars may have requirements for skills in non-combat fields in which the percentage of individuals qualified would not be variable by gender and excluding approximately 50% of the population—the female half—from availability for the draft in the case of a national emergency. Having a national conversation on the responsibilities of citizenship for all Americans would play an important role in increasing consideration of military service by both women and men, which is critical to the sustainment of the All-Volunteer Force.

If it is determined that the MSSA is an important component of our National Defense Strategy, then it is logical to modernize the system. If confirmed, I would work across the government to aid this effort.

Do you agree with the Commission’s conclusion that the Selective Service System is still needed today, but must be updated to reflect how we fight and breadth of skills needed in today’s armed forces?

Yes, the Selective Service System is useful as it provides a hedge against the catastrophe we do not yet anticipate. The Selective Service System is a means to remind our youth that public service is a valued part of American citizenship. Making the data more useful to the Department through modern data mining techniques would be a way to improve the system’s effectiveness. Capturing civilian experiences in a structured way would also aid in managing the talent the Department seeks to recruit.

What other changes to the MSSA and the Selective Service System do you believe would be useful and why?

If confirmed, I will thoroughly review the Commission’s report, consult with experts and seek opportunities to identify other changes I believe would enhance the value of the SSS to the Department’s mission.

Do you agree that expanding military, national, and public service opportunities, and encouraging greater service by America’s youth generally, not just in the military but in national and public service, can, over time, increase propensity to serve among youth, and increase the likelihood that influencers recommend military service to the young men and women seeking their guidance?

Military, national, and public service are an important component of citizenship. Expanding both the knowledge of and access to these opportunities would have an overall positive impact on all forms of service to our country.

Defense Department and the Intelligence Community Collaboration

Since September 11, 2001, collaboration—both analytical and operational—between the Defense Department and the Intelligence Community has grown increasingly close. On one hand, seamless collaboration is vital to effective and rapid responses to non-traditional

threats, and bringing together the strengths of the full spectrum of defense and intelligence capabilities can generate more effective solutions to complex problems. On the other hand, without effective management and oversight, such collaboration risks blurring distinct agency missions, authorities, and funding, as well as creating redundant lines of effort.

In your view, are there aspects of the current relationship between the Department and the Intelligence Community that should be re-examined or modified?

Yes, we should always be open to examine our procedures and processes. Close collaboration between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Intelligence Community (IC) is vital to national security. I believe it is particularly important for DoD and IC collaboration to focus on improved integration of intelligence priorities, equitable resource management, and enhanced information sharing to include refined policies, where necessary, and common data standards. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Director of National Intelligence to achieve unity of effort and the best effect in employing DoD intelligence elements within the law in support of the National Security Strategy.

Execute Orders (EXORDs)

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 requires the Secretary of Defense, upon request by the Chairman or Ranking Member, to provide the Armed Services Committees with the ability to access and review EXORDS signed by the Secretary or the commander of a combatant command.

If confirmed, would you comply with this requirement?

Yes, consistent with legal exceptions.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents

and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.