

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Ambassador Kenneth J. Braithwaite
Nominee for Appointment to be Secretary of the Navy

Duties and Responsibilities

Section 8013 of title 10, U.S. Code, designates the Secretary of the Navy as the head of the Department of the Navy and provides that subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy is responsible for, and has the authority necessary to conduct, all affairs of the Department of the Navy.

Section 8013 further provides that the “Secretary [of the Navy] shall, to the greatest extent practicable, be appointed from among persons most highly qualified for the position by reason of background and experience, including persons with appropriate management or leadership experience.””

1. What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Navy?

The Secretary of the Navy is responsible for all affairs of the Department of the Navy in accordance with title 10 of the U.S. Code, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. These functions include recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, training, servicing, mobilizing, demobilizing, maintaining, and administering the Navy.

2. What background and experience do you possess that render you “most highly qualified” to perform such duties and responsibilities?

If confirmed, I would consider it a tremendous honor and privilege to serve our great Nation and work with Congress as the Secretary of the Navy. Qualifying background and experience include:

- In Government, I have most recently served as the U.S. Ambassador to Norway. In this capacity, I worked closely with the leadership of an important NATO ally to ensure peace and stability in Europe during a period of increasing malign Russian influence. I also focused on arctic affairs as this region becomes more critical to the safety and security of our nation endeavoring to develop an even deeper effort of cooperation with the Government of Norway. With respect to my Naval background in anti-submarine warfare, I especially developed a closer working relationship with the Norwegian Ministry of Defense which I believe will add to my abilities to further the work of our two nations on Naval Affairs in the high north.
- In the private sector, I worked as a senior executive in the healthcare industry. This experience included work as a Group Senior Vice President for a large hospital group purchasing and strategic improvement company where I led the turnaround of struggling hospitals divisions. I also worked as a senior staffer to Senator Arlen Specter (R/D-PA) where I gained a greater appreciation for the responsibilities of Congressional oversight.

- As a naval officer and graduate of the Naval Academy, I served as an aviator and then in a variety of leadership roles as a public affairs officer before ultimately retiring as a Rear Admiral. Through service in Western Pacific, Indian Ocean, Iraq, Pakistan, Guantanamo Bay, and throughout the United States, I developed an understanding of the breadth and complexity of the Department's global mission. As a husband and father, I developed an immense appreciation of the hard work and sacrifices that our service members and their families make on a daily basis to keep our country safe.

3. In particular, what management and leadership experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed?

As above I have spent my career in myriad roles in the public, private for profit and not for profit sectors and the military. I have an innate understanding of the interaction and dependence of all upon each.

As a Navy Flag Officer I fully understand the dynamic requirements of leadership in the uniformed sea services of our nation at all levels of command. I dedicated over 30 years of my life to Naval service and have a full and complete appreciation for what service in the military requires at each step in a career. I know what deployment entails from routine at sea deployments to combat operations. And finally I know and recognize the associated sacrifices of a uniformed members family.

As a staffer on Capitol Hill I gained a great appreciation of the Congressional process and the responsibility for oversight of the executive branch. I also came to appreciate working closely for Senator Specter the unique requirements for bipartisan efforts to advance issues/legislation important to our nation.

As a private sector senior executive I know what is required to succeed and be successful in the profit and loss space, how important/imperative ROI is to the organization and to look diligently for more effective and efficient ways to conduct business. I will bring all these experiences and skills to this role should I be confirmed.

4. In your view, are there any steps you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Navy?

If confirmed, I am confident that I will be able to successfully carry out the duties and responsibilities of Secretary of the Navy. However, I will daily seek to learn from the women and men of the Navy and Marine Corps and to work with them to understand the unique challenges and opportunities they currently face on the front lines of service. I intend to be with them often not just in the Pentagon but where they are serving. I believe in what I learned in the Navy, what's called Deckplate Leadership: being with the men and women you are responsible to lead.

5. In light of the lines of effort set forth in the National Defense Strategy (NDS), what other duties and responsibilities do you anticipate the President or the Secretary of Defense would prescribe for you, if confirmed as Secretary of the Navy?

If confirmed, I will work with the President, Secretary of Defense and Navy and Marine Corps senior leadership to assess manpower, funding, and equipment needs to successfully complete the Navy and Marine Corps mission.

6. If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense regarding the organization and operations of the Department of the Navy?

If confirmed, I would assess the organization and operations of the Department of the Navy to develop recommendations for any changes or innovations to the Secretary of Defense. I believe this is one of the most important aspects of the duties of any leader: to seek to improve the organization in effectiveness and efficiency based on your perspectives and the thoughts and ideas of those with whom you serve.

In its report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission cautioned, “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.”

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

Civilian control of the Armed Forces is a foundational and inviolable principle of America’s Constitutional system. If confirmed, I would safeguard this bedrock principle by exercising the duties of leadership, established law, and historical norms. Specifically, I would work closely with military leadership and seek advice while preserving the Secretary’s statutory responsibility and authority, consistent with the Constitution.

8. If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Under Secretary of the Navy?

I understand the duties and functions of the Under Secretary as prescribed in Title 10 and pertinent Department of Defense regulations. If confirmed, I will review the current duties and responsibilities assigned to the Under Secretary and consider any changes within my authority that would enhance the operational efficiency of the Department. Once I had an opportunity to assess the efficacy of the current portfolio of the Under Secretary, I would seek to incorporate the best practices of what I learned in the military of the CO/XO relationship and in the private sector of the CEO/COO relationship to develop an approach that enhances the overall effectiveness of the Secretariat to the advantage of the Department.

9. If confirmed, over which members and organizations of the Department of the Navy would you direct the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, respectively, to exercise supervision, and what would be the scope of such supervision?

Under Title 10, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps perform their assigned duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Navy and are directly responsible to the Secretary. If confirmed, I will review the supervisory responsibilities of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the

Marine Corps and consider any appropriate changes within my authority.

10. What other duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

I understand the duties and functions of the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps as prescribed in Title 10 and pertinent Department of Defense regulations. If confirmed, I will review the current duties and responsibilities assigned to the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps and consider any changes within my authority.

11. What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Navy vis-à-vis the Coast Guard?

Title 10 establishes that whenever the Coast Guard operates as a service in the Navy, the Secretary of the Navy has the same powers and duties with respect to the Coast Guard as the Secretary of Homeland Security has when the Coast Guard is not so operating.

Major Challenges and Priorities

12. What is your vision for the Navy and Marine Corps of today? For the Navy and Marine Corps of the future?

Consistent with applicable law and regulations, my vision for the Navy and Marine Corps of today and the future is to deliver a combat credible maritime force for the joint force, ready to conduct prompt and sustained combat incident to operations at sea. Naturally, there is a near-term requirement to deliver this force and a long-term requirement to ensure we can deliver combat credible forces in the future. If confirmed, I will lead the Navy and Marine Corps team to achieve this vision.

13. What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as Secretary of the Navy?

As stated in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, the central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition from China and Russia, amid persistent challenges to international order. In this strategic landscape, we also face an urgent imperative to adapt to rapid technological advancements and avoid further erosion of our competitive military advantage. New technology accessible to our competitors has the potential to accelerate the pace of military operations beyond what our systems were built to confront. We need to get faster - across the entire Department - in order to inject uncertainty into potential adversaries' decision cycles so we can ensure dominance across the full spectrum of conflict. The adaptability and agility of our people, both uniform and civilian, are key to responding to this central challenge. Also I believe there is an unfortunate lack of full faith and confidence in the leadership of the Department which I would endeavor to re-establish and restore. I believe it starts with words and actions in alignment and follows through to the culture of the organization established at the very top. This will be one of the key initiatives I fully intend to develop

and deliver to the Force.

14. What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed, and on what timeline?

Given the changing security environment and the increasingly multi-domain nature of threats, the Navy and Marine Corps has to focus on emerging technologies that develop a Force that is consistent with these future threats, both at sea and ashore. The Navy and Marine Corps needs to look to future fleet design and ensure it will meet these threats. Also, accelerating Our Navy and Marine Corps digital transformation will be critical to preparing Sailors and Marines to deter, fight and win. Digital technologies have the potential to be a force multiplier, putting data at the center of all Departmental decisions and transforming how the Department fights, stays ready, and conducts business operations. I believe the Department is on the path of a fundamental cultural and behavioral shift. The Department cannot afford to cede the competitive space of data and technology to our Nation's adversaries. Leveraging a deliberate cycle of prototyping, experimentation, exercises, and war games, the Department will accelerate its ability to adapt and rapidly develop the systems and processes that are needed to fight at the speed of information. If confirmed, I will work alongside the Secretary of Defense, Congress, and the other Departments to address these and any other challenges to our nation's security.

National Defense Strategy

The 2018 NDS moved beyond the “two-war construct” that has guided defense strategy, capability development, and investment for the past three decades, and refocused DOD on a framework that prioritizes “great power competition and conflict” with China and Russia as the primary challenges with which the United States must contend, together with the imperative of deterring and countering rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran. Finally, the framework emphasizes the consolidation of gains in Iraq and Afghanistan, while moving to a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism.

15. In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Please explain your answer.

Yes. The NDS focuses the Department's efforts and provides clear objectives. The United States is in a strategic competition for global influence with China and Russia. Great power competition is the defining national security challenge of our age, and will require forward-deployed naval forces that can compete against, deter, and if necessary defeat peer adversaries. At the same time, North Korea and Iran continue to threaten the security and stability of their respective regions while violent extremist organizations remain a persistent problem.

16. If confirmed, what changes or adjustments would you make in the Navy and Marine Corps' implementation of the NDS?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense and Navy and Marine Corps senior leadership to assess the need for any changes and adjustments to the implementation of the NDS.

17. In your view, how should the Coast Guard factor into NDS implementation?

Title 10 establishes that whenever the Coast Guard operates as a service in the Navy, the Secretary of the Navy has the same powers and duties with respect to the Coast Guard as the Secretary of Homeland Security has when the Coast Guard is not so operating. One of six U.S. armed forces, the Coast Guard carries out vital defense and military roles, missions, and tasks in crisis and war. Today, the Coast Guard serves alongside the Navy – and together they comprise the “national fleet,” to provide unique and complementary capacities and capabilities to secure America’s maritime interests at home and abroad. These missions are a direct implementation of the NDS. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Department of Homeland Security and Coast Guard leadership to ensure effective interoperability.

Navy and Marine Corps Readiness

18. How would you assess the current readiness of the Navy—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute the NDS and combatant commanders’ associated operational plans?

It is both my understanding and my view that the high operational tempo for the Navy over the last 18 years, combined with budget reductions and fiscal uncertainty, has resulted in backlogs of maintenance, procurement, and modernization. The Navy has been prioritizing readiness recovery since 2017 and has made some significant progress since then. For example, I understand they achieved and are sustaining 80% mission capable rates for strike fighter aircraft, which is allowing for more flight hours for pilots and thus increased mission readiness. Improvements have also been made in ship depot maintenance, with increases in on-time completions and reductions in days of maintenance delays. Full readiness recovery will take stability and long-term commitment, but the Navy is on an upward trajectory. My understanding is that the Navy is also closely managing the current readiness impacts from COVID-19 and is doing all possible to address the impact of the virus on readiness.

19. How would you assess the current readiness of the Marine Corps—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute the NDS and combatant commanders’ associated operational plans?

I understand the Marine Corps remains ready to support the requirements of the Combatant Commanders as outlined in current operational plans. Some minor shortfalls in the timing of force flow exist, but they are manageable. From what I understand, the Marine Corps has some concerns about the limited operational availability of amphibious warships. So if confirmed I will be working closely with the Commandant and the CNO to resolve these concerns.

20. In your view, what are the priority missions for which *current and future* Navy

and Marine Corps forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?

In my view the priority missions for the current and future Naval forces are sea control, power projection, deterrence, and presence. In competition, the Navy and Marine Corps deter through a presence that clearly demonstrates—to potential adversaries, as well as to allies and partners—the ability to perform sea denial and sea control. In conflict, our Naval forces execute those sea denial and sea control missions to prevent the enemy from achieving their goals and to maintain the initiative for follow-on action.

The character of modern warfare is changing to a multi-domain battlespace with significant emphasis on space, electronic, information and cyber domains. Consequently, the need to conduct increased and different missions in these domains drives a requirement to increase our associated skills. If confirmed I will focus the priority missions for the current and future Navy on: sea control, power projection, deterrence, and presence.

21. In what specific ways have the Navy and Marine Corps utilized their increased budgetary authority over the past three years to foster readiness recovery?

I understand the Navy has prioritized readiness recovery in their budgets since the 2017 Request for Additional Appropriations. This included increased funding in the major readiness accounts and readiness enabler accounts, such as ship and air operations, ship and aviation maintenance, and parts and spares. End strength was increased to reduce gaps at sea. Critical training and safety measures have been fully funded, such as the Maritime Skills Training Centers and physiological episodes reduction efforts. In addition, the Navy has increased funding in shore readiness facilities, sustainment, restoration, and modernization. If confirmed, I will focus my efforts on ensuring the Department stays attentive to being ready to meet any and all requirements assigned.

22. How would you lead the Navy and Marine Corps in applying Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 funding to this end, if confirmed?

I agree with the priorities of the FY 2021 President's Budget, which continues to prioritize readiness recovery to deliver a combat-credible forward force. Force readiness recovery remains paramount. We must deliver and maintain a Navy that is ready to fight today, while also committing to the training, maintenance, and modernization that will also ensure a Navy ready for tomorrow. If confirmed, I will execute FY 2021 funding as authorized and appropriated by Congress and continue a commitment to readiness recovery efforts.

23. What is your assessment of the risk the Navy and Marine Corps have accepted in regard to their respective levels of readiness to execute operational plans in furtherance of the NDS?

I understand the Marine Corps remains forward deployed and forward postured in support of Combatant Commanders around the globe and maintains sufficient depth to generate ready forces over time in response to contingencies. I also understand the Navy is continuing to support Combatant Commanders requirements without qualification. I

understand unit readiness shortfalls are being addressed through Service readiness recovery initiatives. That said I also recognize the culture of these two services to always be ready and willing to accept any mission at any time. During my uniformed career we were proud to accept any challenge at any time. However after 18 years of combat activities and resulting demands on readiness, the Services must be mindful of what is really required to be ready to fight tonight. Readiness must be more than a mere measure of availability. If confirmed I will work with the uniformed leadership to ensure that they fully recognize the difference between availability and operational suitability.

24. If confirmed, how would you prioritize maintaining readiness in the near term, as compared to modernizing the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure future readiness?

Maintaining the right balance between readiness, capacity, and lethality is crucial to providing options to decision-makers. Near-term readiness will be paramount to ensuring our deployed and deploying forces are prepared for any challenges they may encounter. Still, we must field the future fleet, the ships, aircraft, and systems with the technology necessary to maintain the edge on our adversaries in a rapidly evolving world. If confirmed, I intend to make strategy- driven, data-informed decisions in balancing the near-term capacity with future capability requirements.

25. What is your understand of the steps the Navy is taking to operationalize its concept for distributed maritime operations (DMO)?

It is my understanding that the Navy is moving out aggressively on implementing the Distributed Maritime Operations (DMO) concept. The DMO is closely intertwined with two Navy-Marine Corps concepts co-signed by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC): Littoral Operations in a Contest Environment (LOCE) and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO). Both of these concepts are designed to generate a high level of tactical and operational integration, and allow the fleet commander to execute ‘all domain’ operations on land, sea, air, space and information. I understand CNO and CMC have directed a Naval Services war game exploring Joint/Naval C2 to enable DMO. Additionally, the Navy is utilizing a rigorous experimentation plan that leverages the Fleet Battle Problem Campaign Plan. In today’s threat environment, DMO is the right approach. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the CNO and the Commandant to realize their vision of DMO.

Optimized Fleet Response Plan (O-FRP)

26. What is your understanding of the O-FRP?

I understand a 36-month nominal cycle was chosen to balance growing maintenance requirements needed to reset the Fleet, increase readiness and training standards for great power competition, and develop a sustainment capacity to meet wartime needs. The goal is to maximize overall employability while providing a predictable schedule for maintenance, training, employment and sustainment.

27. To what extent has O-FRP been successful in stabilizing rotational deployments

and making them more predictable?

As I understand it, OFRP has been successful at stabilizing deployments and creating more predictability for our Sailors and their families. Having served a career in the Navy, I recognize the immense challenge this presents as there is always more work to do. However, I believe the Navy is moving in the right direction and if confirmed, I will continue these efforts to ensure readiness and sustainability.

28. Given the current operational tempo, are the Navy and the Marine Corps able to maintain desired dwell ratios?

I understand that the Navy is able to meet desired dwell ratios as planned in the annual Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP). But I also recognize that when deployments are extended beyond planned lengths, there are trade-offs between dwell ratios and future deployment timelines.

29. To what extent will O-FRP need to adapt to meet the demands of Dynamic Force Employment (DFE)?

As I understand it, OFRP will not require significant changes to adapt to meet the demands of DFE.

30. To what extent has O-FRP improved, maintained, or degraded the material readiness of the fleet?

I understand that OFRP has delivered a disciplined approach to force generation, providing ready forces while preserving allotted maintenance and training time. However, while ships are getting the maintenance they need and Fleet material readiness has improved overall, the OFRP assumption that ships complete maintenance and modernization on time has not always been met. Longer maintenance periods have had the effect of shortening the sustainment phase of OFRP, extending the OFRP cycle, or impacting Strike Group integrity. To address this, I understand the Navy has initiated an assessment of its force generation model and is reviewing the OFRP. I also understand the Secretary of Defense has directed an outside independent assessment of OFRP. If confirmed I will work closely with OSD to ensure the path forward leads to the best outcomes for the Service and the Nation.

31. In your view, should the assumptions underlying O-FRP be reviewed and the model adjusted?

I understand the Navy has been able to meet every assigned deployment under the OFRP model. I believe the underlying assumptions are sound. Therefore if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the independent assessments and recommendations recently completed by the Mitre Corporation. I do understand that some of their recommendations may have already been implemented and I welcome the opportunity to learn more about them.

National Security Budget

In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).

32. Do you believe that the Navy and the Marine Corps require 3-5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP to implement the NDS effectively? Please explain your answer.

Yes, I unequivocally agree with the Secretary of Defense that 3-5% real budgetary growth annually is needed to implement the National Defense Strategy and build a 355 ship Navy. Flat budget top lines that do not account for inflation drive hard budget choices and risk in delivering a balanced force that can compete, deter, and win. For the Navy, the simple fact is that a fleet of 30 percent more ships is going to require a bigger topline to build, man, operate and sustain this required force.

33. Given the President's FY 2021 budget request, will the Navy and Marine Corps be adequately funded to fight one major power rival, while maintaining deterrence and stability in other regions of the world? Please explain your answer.

In my opinion, the FY 2021 President's Budget supports National Defense Strategy implementation and all domain dominance, and resources the force most likely to win across the spectrum of conflict with China and Russia. It fully funds the COLUMBIA class submarine program to recapitalize our strategic deterrent, prioritizes readiness recovery to deliver combat-credible forward forces in the near-term, invests in increased lethality and modernization with the greatest potential to deliver warfighting advantages against China and Russia, and grows capable capacity of the Fleet. However, due to flat budget top lines, it slows the rate of growth to a 355 ship Navy compared to the FY 2020 President's Budget and that creates some capacity risk. But overall as I currently understand, it is adequate.

34. Given the President's FY 2021 budget request, will Navy and Marine Corps' budgets be adequate to execute operations, maintain readiness, procure needed weapons and equipment, modernize capabilities, and sustain sailor, Marine, and family quality of life? Please explain your answer.

It is my opinion that the FY 2021 President's Budget prioritizes readiness recovery and modernization to ensure the Navy is ready to fight today as well as train, maintain, and modernize a Navy ready for tomorrow. The budget supports a ready, all domain maritime force with focus on sustainment, enhancing competitive capabilities, and improving quality of life. As noted previously, due to flat budget top lines, it slows the rate of growth to a 355 ship Navy compared to the FY 2020 President's Budget and that creates capacity risk. But overall as I currently understand, it is adequate.

Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that not later than 10 days after the President's submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief must submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of his or her armed force.

35. If confirmed, would you support the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps in providing their unfunded priorities lists to Congress in a timely manner?

Yes.

Alliances and Partnerships

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition and conflict against a great power.

36. If confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, what specific actions would you take to strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships, and exploit opportunities for international cooperation?

If confirmed, I intend to continue our current security cooperation efforts to strengthen our network of allies and partners, attract new partners, and deepen current key partnerships to ensure we maintain global access and sustainment capabilities. Consistent with current policy, as a staunch supporter of NATO and building upon what I achieved in strengthening alliance partnerships during my time in Norway, I would look for opportunities to increase interoperability while also working with partners to help their navies remain relevant to countering aggression. Most importantly, I will continue to build on trust with nations who participate with us in exercises and maritime sponsored events.

37. How would you characterize your familiarity with the civilian leaders of the maritime forces of other nations and multi-national and international maritime defense-focused consultative forums?

As Ambassador to Norway, I was provided a wonderful opportunity to work among the Diplomatic Corps of over 84 nations who sent their envoys to Oslo to represent their nations. I established a strong and positive working relationship with each. Furthermore I have established an extremely strong relationship with the Foreign Minister of Norway and the Defense Minister of Norway. I know the importance of establishing strong and lasting relationships with foreign leaders. If confirmed I am confident that I would also establish strong relationships with the civilian leaders of the maritime forces of other nations and multi-national and international maritime defense-focused consultative forums.

38. If confirmed, on which leaders and forums would you focus your engagement, with a view to advancing most effectively the national security interests of the Navy and Marine Corps?

Strong partnerships with allies and partners will be among my highest priorities. From my time with NATO to my recent role as Ambassador, I have always been a strong advocate of partnership engagement. Should I be confirmed, I would seek to establish solid relationships with key allies and partners, and work to attract new partners. I will

engage military and civilian leader counterparts to assure them of the Department of the Navy's commitment to our partnership, and to advance the importance of maritime security and associated investment and capability, freedom of the seas, and adherence to the rules based international order in the maritime space. I will seek to leverage not only bilateral engagement and military-specific forums such as the International Seapower Symposium, but also multinational dialogues and opportunities like the Shangri-La Dialogue, the Halifax International Security Forum, and other similar opportunities in order to reinforce U.S. leadership in the maritime domain and strengthen our relationships.

39. What would you do, if confirmed, to support the seamless integration of partner nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB)?

The defense industrial base relies not only on domestic production, but also on material and components from other nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB). I understand the Department of the Navy is committed to cooperative programs between the DoD and partner nations within the NTIB in order to accomplish our mission. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for the appropriate and seamless integration of partner nations into the NTIB.

Acquisition

In successive National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAAs) beginning in FY 2013 and culminating in FY 2019, Congress expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the other Service Chiefs.

40. If confirmed, how would you synchronize your acquisition-related responsibilities and those of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, with those of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

I believe the Department of the Navy's acquisition processes require close collaboration between the uniformed Services and the Secretariat through its Gate Review process to effectively manage the trade-offs between cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance to provide the best equipment to our Sailors and Marines.

If confirmed, I will work with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition to ensure that the Department of the Navy continues to incorporate a balanced approach that leverages the authority, responsibility, and expertise of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure accountability in DON acquisitions.

41. If confirmed, what role would you assign to the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps in delivering acquisition programs on time and on budget?

If confirmed, I will reaffirm the existing role of the Chief of Naval Operations and the

Commandant of the Marine Corps to determine future capability requirements, balance available resources, and make the trade-off decisions necessary to provide the optimal force that is properly equipped to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Section 804 of the FY 2016 NDAA authorized DOD to employ an acquisition approach that enables the rapid delivery of new capability to meet emerging operational needs.

42. In your view, what benefit does the Department of the Navy derive from its current strategy grounded in robust utilization of Section 804 authority?

As I understand it, Section 804 of the Fiscal Year 2016 NDAA gave the Department the authority to conduct middle-tier acquisitions through specially-tailored requirements and acquisition processes. These authorities enable the DON to accelerate the prototyping of technologies or equipment to better inform requirements, acquisition, and concepts of operation.

43. What risks accrue?

As I have come to understand, Middle Tier Acquisition Programs do not, by inherent design, add risk to the acquisition process, as long as they are constructed appropriately and executed properly. I believe by focusing on prototyping and in some cases, building a small quantity rapidly, Middle Tier Acquisitions have the potential to reduce risk versus a traditional acquisition approach in which technologies are not proven until major resources are committed.

44. If confirmed, what processes would you put in place to ensure appropriate oversight of the Department's use of 804 authorities? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will be committed to providing appropriate oversight of Section 804 programs and adherence to OSD policy. This includes ensuring programs entering into the adaptive acquisition framework, follow the entrance and exit criteria for their designated system, as well as compliance with existing Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition reporting structures.

One of the challenges facing many acquisition programs—ranging from weapons systems to business systems—is unrealistic and infeasible technical specifications.

45. What best practices can the Navy and Marine Corps employ to generate realistic and technically achievable specifications, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas such as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence?

This is an ever evolving challenge with respect to the rapidity of development. However as a best practice, I understand the Navy and Marine Corps continue to leverage the entire Research Development Test & Evaluation enterprise to influence the development of specifications in rapidly-evolving technical areas as well as ensure there is close collaboration between requirements, technical, and acquisition teams. I believe this

ensures the right balance of warfighter need and high confidence acquisition programs. If confirmed, I will continue to review best practices and leverage work that the Science & Technology community performs to influence solutions that are the most technologically advanced.

46. What specific measures would you recommend to control “requirements creep” in Navy and Marine Corps acquisition processes?

I believe the Department of the Navy owes the American taxpayer discipline in all aspects of the acquisition process. A disciplined requirements process, based on capabilities instead of platforms and involving a robust cycle of prototyping, experimentation, exercise, and war-gaming, is critical. If confirmed I will work to strengthen the Navy’s Gate review process to properly manage the trade-offs between cost, schedule, technical feasibility and performance, and ensure that the Department is positioned to take advantage of an affordable adjustment that would significantly improve or expand a required capability.

47. What are your views regarding the merit and feasibility of joint development and acquisition programs, such as the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and Future Vertical Lift?

As a former business executive in the group purchasing space, leveraging collective spend is always advantageous to the organizations involved. Therefore I firmly believe Joint programs can save money by eliminating duplicate research, development, test, and evaluation efforts and by achieving economies of scale in procurement and operations and support. Joint programs are better positioned to succeed when the Services involved have studied their requirements and determined that all elements are well aligned.

48. In your view, would the Navy and/or Marine Corps derive benefit from participating in a greater number of joint acquisition programs? Please explain your answer.

As with any program, I firmly believe you should consider all options including joint solutions with the other services. Experience as a private sector executive in the group purchasing space taught that collective spending influence should always be leveraged. Therefore if confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of the Navy is deliberate in its reviews and pursues opportunities in those Joint Programs where requirements are sufficiently aligned to result in reduced life-cycle costs and achieve economies of scale in procurement and operations and support.

49. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the Department of the Navy has an acquisition workforce of the size and capability required?

I understand the Navy continues to be guided by the Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan which established the vision for shaping the future acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I will review this plan and work to support the stability and continuity of a qualified acquisition workforce by using modern training tools, experiential learning opportunities, continuing education, and incentives. I will leverage commercial best

practices to develop, retain, and reward people to meet current and future organizational needs, and work collaboratively with the other Services and OSD to ensure a DoD-wide approach is taken to align and shape the acquisition workforce now and in the future.

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.

50. Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapons systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, suitable, and survivable?

I believe that only in very rare circumstances, such as impending or ongoing conflict or national emergencies, would it be acceptable to field systems without thorough test and evaluation. If confirmed, I will ensure our weapon systems continue to undergo rigorous test and evaluation to certify that they are safe, effective, suitable, and deliver the capability our warfighters need.

51. What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other evolutionary acquisition processes?

I believe the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities in supporting these acquisition processes is to inform program decisions with data on system performance and educating the warfighter on system capability, limitations, and performance in an operational context. If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen the Department's efforts to ensure developmental and operational test and evaluation communities are fully integrated into these processes, that systems are tested and evaluated according to their intended use, and that risks are clearly documented and understood.

52. Do you believe the Navy and Marine Corps should exploit non-developmental or commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) solutions to meet requirements?

As in everything, your approach to potential solutions should be flexible enough to consider all options. Therefore where appropriate and when in the best interests of the Services and the nation, I do believe the Department should continue to exploit COTS solutions where viable, as they can significantly speed up delivery of capabilities to the warfighter. However, adequate mitigations must be put into place to ensure that the solutions are sufficiently rugged for fielding, can be integrated properly into the desired system, contain sufficient information security, and will be fully logistically supported for the intended service life of the solution.

53. How would you evaluate the sufficiency of COTS solutions in meeting warfighter requirements?

While many COTS items will provide innovative and breakthrough capabilities, I believe these items still must be developed with all of the appropriate mitigations, testing and interoperability needed to ensure safe, secure, and effective operations. If confirmed, I will continue to support the use of these innovative solutions and work with Department leadership to find ways to rapidly experiment, further develop, integrate, and certify them for warfighter use.

Audit Readiness

Since 1995, DOD's financial management has been on the Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) High-Risk list—identified as vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Despite having invested billions of dollars over the past 16 years in an effort to become “audit ready”, DOD remains the only federal agency unable to complete a financial audit in accordance with the law. The FY 2018 DOD audit resulted in a Disclaimer of Opinion—auditors could not express an opinion on DOD financial statements because the financial information was not sufficiently reliable—and more than 1,000 auditor-issued notices of findings and recommendations (NFRs). The FY 2019 DOD audit showed improvement, but again resulted in a Disclaimer of Opinion and more than 1,300 NFRs.

54. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take or direct to achieve better outcomes than have past initiatives designed to improve Navy and Marine Corps auditability?

My understanding is that the DON leads the military departments in auditability, has a solid plan for correcting audit findings, and is executing against the plan. If confirmed, I will continue to support the DON’s audit work as it has improved readiness outcomes by improving accountability for inventory and other property.

55. In your view, what incentives need to be in place to ensure senior leaders across the Department of the Navy—not only in the financial management community—are fully invested and engaged in the process of achieving a clean audit opinion?

I agree that all senior leaders, not just those in the financial management community, must be committed to achieving a clean audit opinion. As in the private sector, all organization leaders, not just those in the financial management section, are vested with the responsibility of fiscal stewardship, and all are held accountable for the performance of the organization. I understand that previous audits identified issues that do not just carry financial impacts, but also impact to operations. Accountability and stewardship of taxpayer dollars is everyone’s responsibility, and if confirmed I will ensure this is an enterprise priority.

56. Has the Department of the Navy developed a feasible corrective action plan (CAP) for each of the NFRs it received in the context of the 2019 audit attempt?

My understanding is that the DON developed solid corrective action plans that get to the

underlying root causes of each audit finding. Success depends on the ability to fix problems at the source so that they do not re-occur. This must be accomplished in a prioritized manner so that the most is gained from limited resources. If confirmed, I will continue the DON's corrective action plans to address the root causes of each audit finding.

57. If confirmed, by what metric would you evaluate the success of each CAP in remediating the NFR to which it responds?

If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure that the DON remains on track and achieves the stated objectives. Steps to doing so include: (1) Monitoring major milestones in all plans to achieve an audit opinion; (2) Reviewing the audit results to ensure the DON is making progress and use the closure of material weaknesses as a metric for evaluating success; and (3) Ensuring that the DON team has a prioritized plan that focuses on both operational and financial remediation activities.

Business Operations Reform for Greater Performance and Accountability

The reform of DOD's business operations is the third pillar of the 2018 NDS, with the goal of saving \$46 billion over four years—savings that would be reinvested in enhancing the readiness and lethality of the force.

58. What business operations reforms have the Navy and Marine Corps achieved to date and how much money has been saved as a result?

I understand that the DON is executing aggressive business operations reforms through the Business Operations Plan (BOP). As a business executive, I welcome this approach and highly support a more effective and efficient manner to operate the Department. This is a must if we are to be good stewards of taxpayer resources. If confirmed, I plan to further familiarize myself with the actions taken to date and will continue to support efforts to maximize cost savings.

59. To what readiness and lethality objectives or programs were these savings transferred?

I understand that the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) process does not align specific reductions with specific requirements. However, I understand that the DON provided Congress with a PB21 budget request that utilizes reform savings and prioritizes investments in readiness and lethality, and continues recapitalization of the strategic ballistic missile submarine. If confirmed, I will fully familiarize myself with these initiatives and will continue current efforts to find and utilize cost savings.

The Business Operations Management Council (BOMC) is the Department of the Navy's primary senior leader decision-making forum, charged to monitor major business initiatives across organizations and functional boundaries.

60. If confirmed, what role would you establish for yourself in regard to the BOMC?

If confirmed as SECNAV, I will seek to have full knowledge and awareness of the BOMCs efforts and I will work with the Council to work cooperatively with the BOMC to adjudicate those issues that cross organizational or functional boundaries in order to provide the strategic direction for reforming the Department's business operations. If confirmed, my efforts will focus on those areas which have the greatest potential to achieve efficiencies and cost effectiveness, and would specifically focus on identifying and eliminating organizational barriers to implementing comprehensive and consolidated solutions, to approve and accelerate programs where necessary, and to manage the risks associated with those decisions. I am very focused on and take professional satisfaction in improving business practices to the advantage of any organization with which I am affiliated.

61. What ideas would you direct the BOMC to explore, if confirmed, to expedite reform of Navy and Marine Corps business operations?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the BOMC to find any and all opportunities for improvement and savings. Specifically, I will work with the BOMC to focus on those areas which would have the greatest impact to core business management processes in order to deliver greater performance and affordability to the Department's business operations. These efforts would focus on integrating the Navy and Marine Corps efforts on acquisition life cycle management, the provision of community services, financial management, human capital management, efforts to streamline our information technology backbone and business systems, medical and healthcare management, service contracts and category management, supply chain logistics and maintenance, and real property and installations lifecycle support.

Safety

The Department of the Navy continues to experience non-combat related injuries, fatalities, and mishaps that undermine its ability to execute mission-critical taskings, even when its sailors and Marines are successfully trained.

62. If confirmed, what role would you establish for yourself in promoting an organizational culture of continuous safety improvement?

From my earliest days as an aviator to my work in line operations with Atlantic Richfield, safety and continuous operational improvement have been inculcated in everything I've done. If confirmed, I would demonstrate my commitment to continuous safety improvement through developing and promulgating clear policy and measurable and attainable objectives. Furthermore, I will hold personnel accountable for adherence to policies and procedures, while providing the resources necessary to enable successful mission execution.

63. What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that all Department of the Navy personal are protected from coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for reporting mishaps, hazards, and near misses?

If confirmed, I would uphold and ensure enforcement of Department of the Navy policy that requires all headquarters commands establish procedures to protect all personnel from coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for safety and occupational health program participation. This would include the reporting of mishaps, suspected hazards, and near misses to their supervisors or safety and health officials. I would also ensure employees are aware that they may file, anonymously if they prefer, through an appropriate grievance process, allegations of reprisals for having filed a complaint of unsafe or unhealthy working conditions. Initial and refresher safety training for all leaders, managers, supervisors, and employees will reinforce these policies and procedures.

64. What “safety” lessons learned were derived from the post-mishap investigations into the separate 2017 collisions that damaged the *USS Fitzgerald* and the *USS John S. McCain* and together killed seventeen sailors?

I understand that in the aftermath of the collisions, the Navy took immediate actions to ensure the fleet was safe to operate, including the establishment of the Readiness Reform Oversight Council. If confirmed, I will review the lessons learned and commit to continuing with longer term actions that are focused on delivering more effective operations and establishing a culture of excellence, and are focused on setting high standards instead of complying with minimums. Many of these efforts will take time to fully assess their effectiveness, and, if confirmed, I intend to keep the Department’s focus on monitoring progress, measuring success, and continuing to eliminate barriers.

65. If confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, what would you do to ensure that these lessons learned are inculcated in tactics, techniques, and procedures across the Navy and Marine Corps?

As a career Naval Officer, there was no more disturbing news in 2017 than the near back-to-back collisions of USS MCCAIN and USS FITZGERALD. Therefore, if I am confirmed, I intend to continue utilizing the Readiness Reform Oversight Council to ensure visibility over readiness reform across the fleet. The DON will continue implementing, assessing, and forging the recommendations of the various reviews and implement the provisions outlined in the John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 to incorporate governance, command and control, material readiness, operations, training, manning, and culture. And finally I will put programs in place that will ensure it is an issue the Navy remains focused on forever. The security of our sailors, the preparedness of our crews and the national security of our nation demand nothing less.

The John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 included 10 provisions—sections 322, 323, 334, 335, 524, 525, 526, 527, 911, and 915—related to the readiness of Navy surface ships, each of which required action by the Secretary of the Navy and/or the Chief of Naval Operations.

66. What actions has the Navy taken to implement these 10 provisions of law?

Sec 322 - Examination of Navy Vessels. My understanding is that the Department of the Navy provides an annual report on the summary of material readiness, number and types

of vessels inspected and material readiness of trends for in-service vessels. In addition, I am aware that the Department has instituted limited notice inspections as required by the law.

Sec 323 – Limitations on the Length of Overseas Forward Deployment of Naval Vessels. My understanding is that the Department is committed to returning ships back to the United States as required by law. The Navy’s current plan began rotating Forward Deployed Naval Force (FDNF) ships covered under this provision back to US ports in FY19. Future FDNF ships will rotate every 5 to 8 years.

Sec 334 - Surface Warfare Training Improvement. It is my understanding that the Department has conducted, adopted, and incorporated all applicable USCG and STCW training and certifications to increase and improve training for SWOs.

Sec 335 – Report on Optimizing Surface Navy Vessel Inspections and Crew Certifications. It is my understanding the Department continues to make progress on this report.

Sec 524 – Assessment of Navy Standard Workweek and Related Adjustments. It is my understanding the Department completed an analysis of afloat and in port standard workweek (and related adjustments) to ensure Navy ships are adequately manned to meet fleet requirements.

Sec 525 – Notification on Manning of Afloat Naval Forces. My understanding is that the Department is providing quarterly reports on the criteria requested to Congress for all ships.

Sec 526 - Navy Watch stander Records. It is my understanding that the Surface Warfare Community has developed, distributed, and has fully implemented the Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) Mariner Skills Logbook which tracks the training/operational experience across an individual SWOs Career path. When paired with the Milestone Assessments that define the revised SWO training and assessment continuum, SWO Logbook data will further refine the Navy’s ability to assess assignment of career milestone jobs and suitability of future commanding officers.

Sec 527 - Qualification Experience Requirement for Certain Navy watch stations. It is my understanding the Department provided the necessary report to Congress on 26 February 2019 outlining the qualification requirements for certain Surface Warfare watch stations. This report addressed the adequacy of individual training for each specified watch station, including any planned or recommended changes in qualification standards.

Sec 911 - Comprehensive Review of Operational and Administrative Chains of Command and Functions of the Department of the Navy. It is my understanding this report requirement was fulfilled on 21 February 2019.

Sec 915 - Expansion of the Principal Duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development & Acquisition (ASN (RD&A)). It is my understanding that the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (ASN (RD&A)) has actively taken on the additional duties and has established an organization within the Secretariat to provide the necessary oversight and management.

67. If confirmed, what further actions would you take, or direct others to take, to implement these laws?

The DoN will continue implementing, assessing, and forging the recommendations of the various reviews and implement the provisions outlined in the John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 to incorporate governance, command and control, material readiness,

operations, training, manning, and culture. If confirmed, I intend to continue utilizing the Readiness Reform Oversight Council to ensure oversight over readiness reform across the fleet.

Cost of Recapitalizing the Fleet

Despite the Navy's existing 355-ship requirement, it is currently operating with approximately 296 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that the Navy has underestimated recent shipbuilding costs.

68. How would you characterize the risks to NDS implementation posed by the current shortfall in battle force ships and tactical aircraft?

Maritime power is an essential element of the National Defense Strategy (NDS). Our global competitors and adversaries continue to grow their naval forces, and they are expanding their areas of operations and collaboration with each other. Today, our Navy is less than half as large as when it last faced a major peer competitor in the late 1980s. I share the Secretary of Defense's commitment to building a Navy of at least 355 ships. As he has stated, the Navy must avoid building this force in a way that creates a hollow force unable to modernize, outfit, crew, operate, or maintain the ships and aircraft the Navy has now. To maintain maritime superiority, the Navy must explore a range of alternative "future fleet" designs that fully meet the demands of the NDS, while being compatible with future warfighting doctrine, threat developments, and budget constraints.

69. Do you agree with CBO's assessment that there is significant cost risk associated with the Navy's shipbuilding plan?

Although there is cost risk in any procurement program, I understand the CBO's estimates are higher than the Navy's because the CBO and the Navy made different assumptions about the design and capabilities of some future ships, used different estimating methods, and treated growth in shipbuilding labor and materials costs differently. I understand much of the difference between these estimates stems from uncertainty about the design and capabilities of large ships being built 10 or 20 years from now. These cost variances widen over time due to differences in applied inflation factors. If confirmed, I would work to better understand these differences and to reconcile them as feasible.

70. What adjustments to individual shipbuilding programs are necessary and appropriate to reduce the risk of erosion in cost, schedule, or performance?

I believe that, while each shipbuilding program is unique, eliminating erosion in cost, schedule, or performance begins with a properly structured acquisition strategy and resultant fair and reasonable contract. If confirmed, I will continue the Navy's focus on acquisition strategies that reduce costs including the use of Multi-Year Procurement and Economic Ordering Quantity funds to procure material. Additionally, I will support efforts to strengthen the industrial base including improvements in the shipbuilding yards via capital expenditure for facility improvements, produce-ability improvements in manufacturing, and encouraging all levels within the shipbuilding enterprise to identify

improvements.

71. To reduce the operational risk?

In my view, on-time delivery is key to reducing operational risk. Recent on-time performance trends in both the public and private sectors are improving; however, challenges remain. If confirmed I will work to address these challenges, including efforts to increase accountability and improve productivity in both public and private shipyards.

Improving Government Technical Control in Shipbuilding

A June 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than the initial budget; 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. Nineteen years later, construction on the lead ship is \$2.5 billion over the original budget estimate, the ship was delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.

72. 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. I understand the DON's requirements and acquisition communities have taken significant steps to reduce overall risk and improve business cases for upcoming lead ships. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to create a more effective and efficient process working with industry to deliver reliable capability to the warfighter, faster.

In a March 27, 2019 hearing before the Seapower Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition acknowledged the challenges of building lead ships and highlighted four initiatives to improve performance: (1) better integration of requirements and acquisition; (2) improved sub-system prototyping; (3) matching necessary government talent to program needs; and (4) investing in the right technologies.

73. Where does the Navy stand on implementation of each of these four initiatives, and what metric is the Navy applying to assess the effectiveness of each initiative on its performance in building lead ships? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will work with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition to understand the progress on each of these four initiatives and to address the challenges inherent in lead ship construction.

74. If confirmed, what other options would you explore for improving lead ship performance?

With Congress's help, I understand the DON is utilizing incremental funding approaches along with multi-year procurement, block-buy, and economic order quantity contracting

approaches that provide stability within the industrial base while also providing the industrial base with the confidence to invest in their people and facilities, allowing for more efficient and affordable ship construction. If confirmed, I would leverage my experience in group purchasing and contracting to accelerate the DON efforts in this space and seek to create more cost efficient processes while supporting more effective contracting approaches.

Force Structure Reviews

The Secretary of Defense is currently reviewing the Department of the Navy’s Integrated Naval Force Structure Assessment, which is intended to re-validate or update the current 355-ship requirement.

75. Do you consider the 355-ship requirement to be appropriate given the current and future strategic environment?

I believe the Navy’s force structure needs to be larger than it is today in order to implement the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and share the Secretary of Defense’s commitment to building a Navy of at least 355 ships. At the same time, the character of maritime warfare is changing rapidly. Technological advancements in space, cyber, and long-range missiles increase the potential for adversaries to track, target, and threaten Navy ships, as well as other joint platforms. Therefore, and to maintain our maritime superiority, we must explore a range of alternative “future fleet” designs that fully meet the demands of the NDS, while being compatible with future warfighting doctrine, threat developments, and budget constraints. If confirmed, I will actively participate in any reviews and analyses of the Navy’s “future fleet” force structure.

76. If not, what changes would you make to the requirement, if confirmed? Please explain your answer.

I believe the new “future fleet” force structure requirement will need to factor in modern warfighting concepts that prioritize joint operations and Navy and Marine Corps integration, critical operational attributes such as distributed awareness and lethality, and other assets integral to the joint fight such as strategic sealift. Composition should shift to fewer larger surface platforms, increased smaller surface combatants, greater reliance on lightly- and optionally-manned ships, and an ample submarine force. Emphasis should also be placed on building a future fleet that will be ready and lethal over its lifetime by remaining affordable, sustainable, and adaptable in an ever-changing environment. Finally, the Navy should focus on maintaining a robust and healthy industrial base.

In March 2020, the Acting Secretary of the Navy chartered the Future Carrier-2030 Task Force—a 6 month study designed to examine the future of the aircraft carrier and carrier-based aviation (manned and unmanned) for 2030 and beyond.

77. What are your views on the need to considering alternative aircraft carrier designs and the advantages such new designs might bring to bear in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

It is my understanding that a 2016 study completed by the RAND corporation, which examined notional aircraft carrier variants that could replace or supplement the FORD-class CVN, confirmed the design attributes of the FORD Class CVN in a near-peer conflict. It is further my understanding that the capabilities of survivability, maintainability, and power projection have been designed into our FORD-class CVNs to support the high-end fight. However, should circumstances change, I will keep an open mind to other alternatives that provide the right warfighting capabilities required by the Combatant Commanders.

78. In your view, to what extent will unmanned systems, both surface and undersea, contribute to the Navy’s vision of distributed operations and how will unmanned platforms augment and amplify the ability of a distributed naval force to successfully compete against a near-peer competitor fleet?

I firmly believe that unmanned systems across all domains (air, surface, and subsurface) will be key enablers in future conflict. I believe that these new systems will increase firepower across greater distances, directly support a more distributed force, while also being a cost effective way to increase combat capacity.

In his *Force Design 2030*, the Commandant of the Marine Corps stated unequivocally, “I assess that the current force is unsuited to future requirements in size, capacity, and specific capability.”

79. Do you agree with the Commandant’s assessment?

I agree that the Marine Corps must identify requirements of the future threat environment and change to keep ahead of them. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Commandant to realize his vision for the Marine Corps.

80. What is your assessment of the objectives the Commandant has established for the transformation of the Marine Corps?

The Commandant’s “Force Design” is aligned to the National Security Strategy and the Defense Planning Guidance. I understand it is aimed at achieving the kind of transformational change that is required of the emerging operating environment. I believe that the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Operations, together, will deliver a fully integrated Naval force that will cause competitors to consider carefully the consequences of malign actions and will reassure allies and partners that the United States is ready and capable of defending mutual interests. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant in supporting his efforts.

81. For the timeline the Commandant has established for meeting those objectives?

I believe the Commandant’s Force Design will bring significant changes to the way the Fleet Marine Forces are organized, trained, and equipped. I believe this change is necessary to deliver the new capabilities that are needed to meet the requirements of the near-future. The Commandant’s timeline calls for achieving an “Initial Operational Capability” by 2023 and the Full Operational Capability by 2030. If confirmed, I will

fully support the Commandant's plan and do all I can to realize this timeline.

82. In light of the Commandant's assessment, should the Navy and Marine Corps' requirement for amphibious ships remain the same, or be decremented, in your view?

As I understand it, amphibious warfare ships are a cornerstone of the Nation's global forward presence, and continue to support a broad range of missions across the spectrum of conflict. If confirmed I will work with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to assess the range of military operations and determine the appropriate requirements for the next generation medium lift intra-theater amphibious platforms and logistics ships.

Ford-class Aircraft Carriers

The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's most recent annual reports cited the reliability of four systems: the electromagnetic aircraft launching system; advanced arresting gear; dual band radar; and advanced weapons elevators, as the most significant risks to the performance of the *Ford*-class program. Only 4 of the 11 elevators on the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN-78) have been turned over to the Navy due to ongoing technical issues, notwithstanding the Navy's acceptance of the ship in May 2017. The reports also noted that the demonstrated reliability of the catapults, arresting gear, weapons elevators, and radar is either orders of magnitude below the requirement or remains unknown.

83. What are your views on the *Ford*-class aircraft carrier program?

As a student of Naval History, it is well known that nearly every lead ship of any class – especially one that is as technologically advanced as USS FORD – always faces challenges with development and construction delays. In this emerging era of Great Power competition, Ford-class aircraft carriers will serve as the most agile and lethal combat platform in the world. Ford-class carriers provide unparalleled advances in operational availability, flexibility to accommodate high power/energy warfighting advances, increased sortie generation, and improved survivability to defeat projected threats. In my view, the Ford-class carrier will provide critical combat-credible naval forces in support of the National Defense Strategy.

84. What is your understanding of the current capability and reliability of each of the key systems on CVN-78?

It is my understanding that since October 2019, CVN 78 has accomplished all planned work and testing on or ahead of schedule with key system performance and reliability increasing during each underway period. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the key systems on CVN 78 meet their operational performance parameters and to manage the reliability growth of each system.

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

The lead ship of nearly every new class of ships authorized have unfortunately had challenges and delays. I am reminded of the debate surrounding the newest class of battleships on the eve of World War One that saw turboelectric drive as the way forward, however with questionable reliability and at much greater initial expense. Nevertheless over the long term, an enhanced cost to benefit ratio and more efficient propulsion system put the Navy on course to be successful in World War Two. Any new program comes with challenges and the associated lessons learned. I understand that the DON is applying lessons-learned from each of these systems on CVN 78 and incorporating them into CVN 79. My understanding is that the reliability growth of those systems will continue as those systems are put through their paces when the ship returns to sea, If confirmed, I am committed to providing the required oversight to ensure we fully harness all lessons learned to incorporate into CVN-79 and follow-on ships of the class.

Early Retirement of the *USS Harry S. Truman*

The President reversed the decision in the FY 2020 budget request that would have canceled the mid-life refueling of the *USS Harry S. Truman*.

86. In your view, what would have been the warfighting and peacetime presence risk of reducing the number of operational aircraft carriers by one from 2025 through 2048?

There is no question that the Combatant Commanders rely on the deterrent posture provided by deployed Carrier Strike Groups to maintain our strategic and economic interests, reassure our partners and allies, and dissuade potential adversaries. Should I be confirmed, I would advocate for the necessary and required Carrier Force Structure to carry out the missions established by the National Defense Strategy, and consult with the Combatant Commanders to assess the needs and impact of any reduction for Aircraft Carriers.

Columbia-class Submarines

Navy leaders have testified that if a higher Navy topline or outside funding is not provided, the investment required by the *Columbia*-class program will result in equivalent reductions elsewhere within the Navy budget.

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

Sea-based strategic deterrence is the most survivable leg of the Nuclear Triad, as re-validated by the most recent Nuclear Posture Review. If confirmed, COLUMBIA would remain my #1 acquisition priority. I would recommend continuing to fully fund the program to ensure on time delivery in order to meet USSTRATCOM requirements for first patrol in FY 2031. I would also continue to prioritize efforts to reduce cost and schedule risk, strengthen the industrial base, and improve affordability.

88. What is your understanding of the current cost estimates for the *Columbia*-class

lead ship and follow-on ships, respectively?

It is my understanding that the COLUMBIA Class is on track to stay within its Milestone B Affordability Caps. The cost estimate will be reviewed this summer as part of the COLUMBIA In-Process Review (IPR) to support construction starting in October 2020.

Navy 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 *Columbia*-class deterrent patrol occurs in 2031.

89. In your view, must the Navy buy 12 *Columbia*-class submarines to meet requirements?

Yes, as revalidated in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, the COLUMBIA program must deliver a minimum of 12 SSBNs to replace the current OHIO fleet to provide required deterrence capabilities. I fully believe this is the most critical element of the Navy's current shipbuilding plan as the deterrent advantage provided by our SSBNs is critical to our national security. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize bringing these ships online as quickly as possible.

90. In your view, what are the most significant risks associated with meeting established cost, schedule, and performance requirements for the *Columbia*-class program?

As I understand, the most significant risks to cost, schedule, and performance requirements for the COLUMBIA Class is the strength of the Submarine Industrial Base and shipbuilder performance. I understand the DON and shipbuilder teams are focused on supplier improvement and oversight as well as shipbuilder execution as Advance Procurement and Advance Construction continues and ship construction begins in FY 2021.

91. If confirmed, what mitigation options would you consider in the event the *Columbia*-class program incurs schedule delays that 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 mine. I will consider all mitigation options and work with the relevant teams involved to manage this risk.

Attack Submarine Force Levels

The Navy's current requirement for attack submarines is 66. However, the Navy projects that the number of attack submarines will fall as low as 42 boats in 2028 and remain below the 66-boat requirement until 2048.

92. What options, including improved maintenance and life extensions of current submarines, as well as increased new construction, exist to ensure the Navy deploys

attack submarines sufficient to meet the combatant commanders' requirements and other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) needs?

I understand the Navy's attack submarine target was increased from 48 submarines to 66 submarines with the 2016 Force Structure Assessment. The March 2018 Report to Congress, "Extending the Service Life of Select LOS ANGELES Class Submarines," identified seven reactor cores for potential LOS ANGELES Class refueling, the first of which was funded FY 2019. If confirmed, I will work with the Department leadership to ensure the Navy takes the necessary actions to reach the force structure requirement of 66 SSNs.

93. In your view, what risks are incurred by allowing attack submarine force levels to remain below 66 boats until 2048?

I do not yet have access to the information necessary to assess these risks. If confirmed, I will review the information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

Missile Defense

Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) ships perform their mission in support of other Navy assets, as well as in defense of U.S., allied, and partner forces on land. There continues to be higher demand for Aegis BMD ships than the number of ships available at any given time.

94. Do you view BMD as a core Navy mission?

Yes, I view ballistic missile defense is one of the Navy's core missions.

95. How would you balance the competing demands for Aegis BMD ships?

Although I do not have first-hand knowledge of the allocation process for Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) ships to Combatant Commands (COCOMs), should I be confirmed, I would work closely with the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Staff to assess how to support COCOM requirements, based on the threat and DoD priorities.

96. Are there opportunities to transition some of the defense of land-based forces to other Navy or land-based assets, with a view to freeing up Aegis BMD ships for maritime-focused missions?

I believe there are several opportunities where advancements in technologies can transition traditional missions and roles from the current Aegis BMD ships. As an example, I am aware the Navy is pursuing the development and fielding of Large Unmanned Surface Vessels (LUSV) that, if configured accordingly, could provide BMD capability similar to BMD DDGs and offer flexibility of employment for Aegis BMD ships. Should I be confirmed, I would explore all options that provide the required combat capabilities at the most value to the Combatant Commander.

Nuclear Enterprise

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed the importance of all three legs of the nuclear triad, and recommended two supplemental capabilities to strengthen deterrence against Russia, in particular. This past winter, the Department announced deployment of the W76-2 low-yield submarine-launched ballistic missile, and the Navy is currently studying the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the fleet.

97. Do you support full funding for the modernization of each leg of the nuclear triad and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) weapons complex?

I believe the highest U.S. nuclear policy and strategic priority is to deter potential adversaries from nuclear attack of any scale on the U.S., our allies, and partners. The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review validated the modernization of the nuclear triad, and I support full funding of the Administration's nuclear modernization efforts as the number one priority – including the associated supporting weapon design and production capabilities of the National Nuclear Security Administration.

98. Do you believe the current Navy program of record is sufficient to support the modernization of the sea-based leg of the nuclear triad? Please explain your answer.

I am confident that the Navy's program of record is on track to support the modernization of the sea-base leg of the nuclear triad. Sea Based Strategic Deterrence is the most survivable leg of the Nuclear Triad. As such, I understand the Columbia class program remains the Navy's number one acquisition priority. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the program is fully funded and actions are targeted to drive affordability.

99. If confirmed, would you advocate for the NNSA's W93 warhead program, which is driven by the Navy's requirements?

Yes; if confirmed, I will advocate for the Navy and NNSA to meet U.S. Strategic Command's requirements.

In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to adverse incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces. The review yielded recommendations to improve personnel management, enforce security requirements, increase deliberate senior leader focus and attention, enact and sustain a change in culture, and address numerous other concerns. More than five years later, responsibility for addressing these recommendations and monitoring implementation of corrective actions has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.

100. In your view, is the Navy maintaining appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the 2014 nuclear enterprise review?

From what I currently understand the Navy maintains a consistent focus on the entire nuclear enterprise through continuous and recurring self-assessments of all portions of

the strategic mission. The results of the internal self-assessments, continuous performance evaluations and corrective actions for identified issues are reported to and validated by the Navy Nuclear Deterrence Mission Oversight Council (NNDMOC), held bi-monthly. With NNDMOC validation and concurrence, the results of the assessments are briefed to the OSD led Nuclear Deterrence Senior Oversight Group and Nuclear Deterrence Enterprise Review Group to inform senior leaders of the health of the Navy nuclear mission.

101. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy continues its efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of the sailors charged to execute and support the Navy's nuclear mission?

If confirmed, I will actively oversee the Navy's nuclear enterprise to ensure that it is properly manned, trained, equipped, and resourced. I will continue to reinforce the importance of nuclear deterrence to ensure our Sailors who execute this vital mission are valued for their role in our nation's defense.

Amphibious Fleet Requirements

102. What is your view of the need for and size of the Navy's amphibious fleet?

I believe amphibious warfare ships are a cornerstone of the Nation's global forward presence. They continue to play a pivotal role in responding to world crises and support a broad range of missions across the spectrum of conflict. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the size of the Navy's amphibious fleet enables the Navy and Marine Corps team to remain a capable and lethal joint force.

103. What alternatives would you consider to augment amphibious ships in providing lift to Marine Corps units?

I understand our naval expeditionary forces must possess a variety of deployment options beyond amphibious warfare ships. E-class, expeditionary ships, unmanned platforms, stern landing vessels, other ocean-going connectors, and smaller more lethal and more risk-worthy platforms could all be considered.

104. In what scenarios would you envision these alternatives being necessary and appropriate?

As the dynamic strategic environment continues to evolve, I could envision amphibious ship alternatives to be used to support a wide range of military operations including Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment (LOCE) and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO).

Frigate

105. Do you support the Navy's acquisition strategy for the new frigate—a full and open competition leading to a single award in 2020?

Yes.

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 consisting of a combination of constructing new vessels, extending the service life of certain vessels, and acquiring used vessels. The range of the Department’s cost estimates varies from \$30 million for acquiring a used vessel to more than \$1 billion for constructing a new vessel, known as the Common Hull Auxiliary Multi-mission Platform (CHAMP).

106. What is your understanding of the Navy’s recapitalization strategy for the RRF and the affordability of acquiring more than 40 sealift vessels as outlined in the latest 30-year shipbuilding plan?

I believe the Navy’s Sealift Recapitalization Strategy is a comprehensive approach to maintaining required sealift capability in support of the Joint Force. This strategy aligns to the Sealift the Nation Needs Report to Congress, the FY 2019 NDAA buy used authorities provided, and is reflected in the “Auxiliary and Sealift Vessel Plan” Appendix to the PB20 30-year shipbuilding plan. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to work with our joint partners and Congress to ensure we acquire the right capability, at best value for the taxpayer, as we proceed with our three pronged approach to extend the service life of selected ships, buy used, and acquire new construction.

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

I am aware that there are several recapitalization programs underway to meet our sealift and auxiliary force requirements. I believe the Navy's Sealift Recapitalization strategy provides a balanced mix of used and new ships.

Unmanned Systems

The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment’s report on Future Carrier Air Wings makes recommendations for the use of unmanned aircraft to augment “5th Gen” fighters. The FY 2021 budget request includes significant investment in Navy unmanned aerial (e.g., MQ-25), surface (e.g., LUSV and MUSV), and undersea systems (e.g., Orca and Snakehead).

108. To what extent will these unmanned systems be interoperable with manned naval platforms and utilize existing Navy and Marine Corps communication links?

With the immense technological advancements we are experiencing today, the Navy is under great pressure to ensure interoperability with existing platforms as we move forward. Safety in interoperability is paramount! If confirmed, I will ensure all air, surface, undersea and land-based manned and unmanned systems are interoperable. I will work with the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders to determine which

legacy communications links can be leveraged for manned/ unmanned interoperability.

109. Do you believe these links will be sufficient to conduct operations in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

Currently I am not as completely familiar with all the challenges this question poses. However if confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders to assess legacy communications links to determine if they are sufficient to conduct operations in a peer-to-peer conflict.

110. How do you envision such manned-unmanned teaming manifesting in naval aviation, and with strike-fighters in particular?

I firmly believe these technologies offer great opportunity in the future. I envision a continuation of manned and unmanned teaming across all warfighting domains. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders to determine how such capabilities can be further matured or expanded to address all warfighting threats.

111. How will this affect the make-up of a carrier air wing?

I understand the carrier air-wing is evolving with the successful demonstration of the X-47B unmanned air vehicle and the ongoing development and acquisition of MQ-25A. If confirmed I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to assess requirements to determine how the carrier air-wing will further evolve and be structured as the Navy moves forward with the Next Generation Air Dominance program

112. If confirmed, what would be your vision for the increased role of unmanned combat systems in the Navy?

As unmanned and autonomous systems become more available and affordable, I have no doubt the DON will continue to leverage unmanned capabilities now and in the future. This includes providing communications relay nodes; intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, targeting (ISR&T); refueling; and logistics. Integration of such systems with manned systems will reduce risk to the force, provide access to areas otherwise denied to manned platforms, increase force capability and capacity while lowering costs and providing distributed intelligent battlespace awareness. If confirmed, I am committed to fully assessing the potential for unmanned aerial combat systems in the Navy.

113. What do you envision as the appropriate balance between manned and unmanned combat aircraft in the Navy's future force structure?

I believe the need to develop and field unmanned systems is paramount to ensure the Department has the necessary capabilities to address future threats. The Department of the Navy has begun to embark on the development of key unmanned systems, and should I be confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department carefully assesses, develops, and fields the required unmanned capabilities to ensure success in any future conflict.

The Navy spent approximately \$1 billion on 10 Remote Multi-Mission Vehicles (RMMVs), semi-submersible USVs, prior to cancelling the program in 2016, primarily due to unacceptable reliability.

114. What lessons learned should the Navy take from the RMMV program?

I believe lessons learned from the RMMV should include the need to fully align all stakeholders to ensure appropriate linkages between the requirements and acquisition processes and industry. If confirmed, I will utilize an enterprise approach that focuses on the resolution of technical, testing, and integration issues while prioritizing reliability and maintainability in earlier program stages.

115. Do you believe that new unmanned systems should be prototyped and proven in a real-world environment prior to procurement?

I understand and fully support the Service's intent to prototype these vehicles/vessels in order to establish cost, schedule, and performance trades prior to commencing with Programs of Record. I believe any new capability should exercise the full Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel Solutions, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policies (DOTmLPF-P) prior to fielding to ensure it is ready to integrate and sustain with minimal perturbations to operations.

The Navy intends to divest all legacy Hornets (F/A-18C/D) from its active component squadrons by the end of this year, and to cease buying Super Hornets.

116. What is the rationale for the Navy's legacy Hornet divestiture plan?

It is my understanding the Department divested the older Legacy Hornets to reduce the inventory of high maintenance aircraft. This facilitated significant cost avoidance, while at the same time providing additional capacity and spare parts availability for the remaining legacy aircraft still in service with the USMC, U.S. Navy Reserves, and Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center.

117. What priority has the Navy set for transition to the Super Hornet (F/A-18E/F): in what order will Reserve squadrons, the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center, test squadrons, and the general fleet inventory be transitioned?

I understand the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron (Blue Angels) will transition to the F/A-18E/F Block 1 Super Hornet first, followed by the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center (NAWDC) and the Reserve Force. The Blue Angels are transitioning first since the Block 1 F/A-18E/F aircraft they will receive are less combat capable than the 'best-of-breed' F/A-18C/D Legacy Hornets currently residing at U.S. Navy Reserve (USNR) and NAWDC squadrons.

118. What is your understanding of the rationale for this order of prioritization?

It is my understanding that the Navy Fleet squadron transition to F/A-18 E/F has been

completed, and the Blue Angels, the NAWDC, and Reserve Component squadrons are following in this respective order based on active component demand and reserve squadron transitions.

119. What is the Navy doing to improve depot throughput for legacy Hornets and to apply lessons learned to the looming service life extension program for the Super Hornet?

I understand that in 2018, the Navy initiated the Naval Sustainment System (NSS) to address shortages of mission capable strike fighter aircraft in the Fleet. Through NSS, which is based on best practices and industry standards from commercial aviation, the Navy did a deep dive into organizational-level, intermediate-level and Fleet Readiness Center (FRC) depot-level maintenance and depot supply chains to find and address inefficiencies. My understanding is that NSS is successfully addressing systemic depot throughput issues that led to reduced aircraft availability. If confirmed, I am committed to fully understanding all of our strike fighter inventory management issues, including the service life extension program and ensuring an effective and efficient process to provide fully mission capable aircraft.

120. What is the Navy's plan for upgrading and maintaining its Super Hornet fleet and on what timeline will this plan be executed?

I understand that the Navy Department's FY 2021 budget procures 24 F/A-18 E/F Block III aircraft in FY 2021, completing the final year of the Multi-Year Procurement contract. Additionally, the FY 2021 budget requests funding for 179 F/A-18 E/F Service Life Modification (SLM) inductions across the FYDP. New procurement aircraft and SLM will deliver Block III configured F/A-18E/F to the Fleet with new procurement deliveries in FY 2021 and SLM inductions beginning in FY 2023.

121. What capabilities are being added or should be added to maintain the Super Hornet's relevance in the high-end fight?

It is my understanding that the Navy is making the required investments in capability and sustainment to maintain the Super Hornet's tactical relevance until its replacement by the Next Generation Air Dominance Family of Systems. The upgrades will deliver lethality and survivability, while ensuring that it can provide the capacity to augment the capability provided by the F-35C. Should I be confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department maintains the right mix of combat aircraft to carry out required missions as articulated in the National Defense Strategy.

The Air Force is moving to a disaggregated architecture for air battle management. The Navy, on the other hand, is investing heavily in the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye and P-8 Poseidon to perform the naval battle management function.

122. Why are the Air Force and the Navy pursuing different strategies?

It is my belief that all Services should pursue mutually supporting strategies where it makes the most sense in carrying out Service designated tasks as outlined by the National

Defense Strategy. The Navy and Air Force have and will continue to share command and control of operational air forces in combat environments. If confirmed, I am committed to working more closely with the other Service Secretaries to align our efforts in support of the Secretary of Defense's objectives, developing and fielding the most combat effective capabilities that can fully integrate into the joint architecture to ensure that the Joint Force succeeds in a contested environment.

123. Is the Joint All-Domain Command and Control effort compatible with the Navy plan?

It is my understanding that the Joint All-Domain Command and Control effort is compatible with the Navy's plan, and that Navy continues to be fully integrated with the U.S. Air Force to ensure the continued improvement to current systems. The full interoperability of systems is vital to ensure the continued capacity, lethality and readiness to support all-domain understanding and integrated decision making in the execution of a broad range of joint operations.

124. What is the Navy's approach to air battle management and how do the Navy and Air Force intend to execute joint air battle management in a high-end fight?

This is an issue I would need to review more, but if confirmed, I would work to maximize unity of effort and develop the required joint capabilities and concepts that provide the United States an advantage in a high-end fight.

125. Given the new capabilities the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye will bring to the battlespace, and the new tactics and concepts of operation it will enable, does the Navy perceive a need for expeditionary squadrons of E-2Ds? Why or why not?

It is my understanding that there are currently no plans or supporting requirements for expeditionary E-2D operations. Should I be confirmed I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's support to the National Defense Strategy and requirements of the Combatant Commanders, and when required, advocate for the necessary resources to fulfill the strategy and requirements.

126. In your view, what would be the benefits and/or drawbacks of establishing expeditionary E-2D squadrons, similar to those for the EA-18G Growler?

This is an issue I would need to review more, but if confirmed, I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's support to the National Defense Strategy and requirements of the Combatant Commanders, and when required, advocate for the necessary resources to fulfill the strategy and requirements.

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program

The follow-on modernization of the F-35 is scheduled to bring key warfighting capabilities to the fleet, but the budget and schedule remain in flux. The total number of F-35s planned for the Department of the Navy was set at 680, but the Marine Corps alone has articulated a requirement for 420 F-35Bs.

127. Do you believe that the plan for 680 aircraft can fully accommodate the needs of both the Navy and the Marine Corps?

I am a huge proponent of this 5th generation aircraft having, while serving as Ambassador, travelled to Fort Worth to visit the production facility because Norway procured the most airframes of any ally -- 52. As a former Naval Aviator, I can attest to the fact that it is one impressive multi-mission aircraft! So while I have been made aware of Department objectives in procuring the goal of 680 aircraft, I am not fully familiar with all requirements outlined by each respective service. I understand that the Marine Corps' Program of Record of 420 F-35 aircraft (a combination of F-35B and F-35C) will fully support Marine Corps shipboard and land-based deployment requirements. Four hundred twenty aircraft support current Fleet Replacement Squadron, Test Squadrons, Active Component squadrons, and the backup aircraft inventory. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the planned buy of 680 total aircraft and working to ensure that number is adequate to meet the challenges faced by the nation.

128. How many of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs will not be upgraded to Block 4?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps plans to modify its current F-35 fleet. This will include retrofits back through Lot 11 for both F-35B and the F-35C. Fifty seven of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs and 8 of its F-35Cs will remain in training squadrons and will not be upgraded to a Block 4 configuration.

129. What do you view as the biggest challenges to successful integration of the F-35 into the carrier air wing?

I understand that one of the biggest challenges to successful integration of F-35 aircraft into the carrier air wing is the sustainment of the current procurement schedule to include predictable funding and on-time deliveries. For the Marine Corps, the F-35C procurement plan currently allows for the fielding of four F-35C squadrons which will fill the Tactical Aircraft Integration (TAI) commitment the Marine Corps has with the Navy. This will support Navy deployment requirements on CVN Carrier Strike Groups by Marine Corps Squadrons.

The F-35B brings new capabilities and operational possibilities to the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). There has been much discussion of linking MEUs more closely with the Joint Force. However, such new capabilities and operating concepts require investment in shipboard infrastructure, including upgraded data links.

130. What is your vision for amphibious assault ship connectivity? What are the Navy's current plans to achieve that vision?

I share the objectives of the Department for all amphibious ships to have the capability to downlink and share F-35 data. The Navy has already installed on several amphibious ships the new Capstone Ship Self Defense System (SSDS) and five Landing Helicopter Docks (LHDs) are scheduled for similar upgrades over the next five years. The

Department has also begun to install Marine Corps Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S) on amphibious ships.

There has been much discussion about the importance of networking and connecting all Navy and Marine Corps capabilities across air, land, and sea platforms.

131. What is the Navy/Marine Corps team doing to make machine-to-machine command and control, across multiple domains, a reality?

I understand the Navy and Marine Corps are modernizing and expanding networking capabilities in a coordinated effort. This requires expansion of existing capabilities, but also developmental efforts that will provide airborne and surface fusion of sensor feeds and dissemination to naval units in a protected manner. This is a topic I look forward to learning more about so that the Department can leverage this to its advantage.

132. Have the Navy and Marine Corps developed and refined the joint operational concepts that will govern this integrated fight?

I understand that to support the integrated fight the Marine Corps and the Navy work closely together to align joint operational concepts, identify current gaps, and develop appropriate modernization efforts to support operational requirements. I especially salute the Commandant for his strong advocacy of putting the Marines back aboard Navy Ships to remain more adaptable and flexible to future threats.

133. What is being done to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps airborne data links are interoperable—not only with each other—but also with the Air Force and Army platforms, as well as resilient against peer competitors?

It is my understanding that there are multiple efforts across the Services seeking to identify datalinks and fusion platforms that will ensure interoperability and resiliency of the future joint force that should yield a net positive for the warfighter. If confirmed, I will work within the Department of the Navy and with the other Services so that the current and planned efforts deliver on this critical capability.

Current technologies allow “low probability of intercept/low probability of detection” datalinks to connect 4th and 5th generation aircraft. As well, other platforms, operating across multiple domains can be networked.

134. Who is leading this effort for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and across the Joint Force, and what progress is being made?

As I currently understand, all of the Services are exploring pathways to ensure interoperability and information exchange requirements. These efforts are tied to unique Service funding lines and priorities. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program Office (JPO) is quickly becoming a touchpoint for the Services to collaborate datalink efforts, identify interoperability requirements, and share funding resources. Largely, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) protects interoperability within the air domain and the U.S. Navy (USN) protects interoperability within the sea domain, though all Services are coordinating efforts.

The services participate in collaborative working groups whose efforts monitor and support multiple Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations that are working on the “low probability of intercept/low probability of detection” capabilities.

Naval Surface Fire Support

The DDG-1000 program was initiated to fill the capability gap for naval surface fire support. The original requirement for 24 to 32 DDG-1000 ships, each with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems, was reduced to 12 ships, then to 10 ships, then to 7, and finally to 3.

135. In your view, and given the significant reduction in the number of DDG-1000 destroyers, will the Navy program meet the Marine Corps' requirement for naval surface fire support?

In my view, the requirement for naval surface fires remains valid and the Navy-Marine Corps team continues to seek affordable, lethal solutions to include other capabilities on other platforms. All options remain valid for consideration.

136. If confirmed, on what other capabilities would you rely to meet naval surface fire support requirements?

I understand the Navy and Marine Corps team has and will continue to rely on current capability to meet naval surface fire support requirements. If confirmed, I will ensure both the Navy and Marine Corps consider emerging technologies and modifications to existing weapons/munition in order to fulfill this requirement.

137. Will the Army's Long Range Precision Fires programs meet the need, in your view?

In my view, the Marine Corps is closely following the Army's efforts in Long Range Precision Fires. I understand the Navy-Marine Corps team continues to seek affordable, lethal solutions to the naval surface fires requirement again considering any and all options. I look forward if confirmed to learning more about these requirements and assessing which option and solutions will best meet current and future force needs.

Ground-based Anti-ship Missile (GBASM) and Remotely Operated Ground Unit Expeditionary (ROGUE) Fires Vehicle

The push for a way for Marines to strike and sink ships—shooting from land to sea—has been a recent priority for the Corps.

138. How does this weapons system fit into the Marine Corps' war fighting concept?

I understand that the Ground-Based Anti-Ship Missile (GBASM) capability is envisioned as part of the Marine Corps' contribution to a Naval Sea Control effort. Aligned with the National Defense Strategy objective to expand the competitive space through building a more lethal force, this capability supports the key Naval operational concepts of Littoral

Operations in a Contested Environment (LOCE) and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO).

139. Where does the Corps stand in the process of testing and fielding this system?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps is leveraging the new Naval Strike Missile (NSM) currently in the Navy inventory and a weapon I'm very familiar with as it was developed by a joint Norwegian-US partnership. This selection has allowed the Marine Corps to move quickly into launcher development and testing. By maintaining commonality with the U.S. Navy, I believe the GBASM capability is on track to be deployed in FY23.

Ground-based Air Defense (GBAD) and Medium Range Intercept Capability (MRIC)

The Marine Corps is pursuing several unique air and missile defense capabilities under its GBAD program.

140. Why is an integrated and layered approach to air and missile defense important, in your view?

I believe that peer and near-peer conflict requires U.S. Forces to be able to conduct both offensive and defensive operations within the enemy's lines of operations. An integrated and layered approach to air and missile defense is critical to operate effectively against a complex mix of aerial threats. This approach creates a complementary defense in depth, mutually supporting an integrated air defense umbrella that is based on the kill chain sequence of detect, track, identify, and defeat. This effort supports Joint Forces operating within the enemy's weapons engagement zone.

141. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Marine Corps systems like MRIC are integrated into the larger air and missile defense architecture?

I understand that the Joint Force shares similar requirements for ground-based protection from aerial threats. Despite potential differences in organization, structure, and doctrine, the Marine Corps' concepts seek every opportunity to achieve synergy with the other services and leverage their efforts to ensure integration, improve effectiveness, and potentially reduce costs. If confirmed, I will support the Marine Corps' continued efforts to ensure a joint integrated air defense umbrella that is capable of defeating peer and near-peer aerial threats.

Recapitalization

The Marine Corps intends to concurrently recapitalize several of its front line systems. The MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and the Joint Strike Fighter are both in production now.

142. Do you believe that these production plans are realistic in light of the demands

on resources associated with maintaining current readiness?

The FY21 budget request prioritizes readiness recovery and modernization, and the pace of procurement for future year deliveries of MV-22s and F-35s is balanced with modernization and readiness efforts to deliver a force that is ready and capable to support naval and joint operations. I understand the Marine Corps is nearly complete with MV-22 deliveries and is beginning to ramp up deliveries across the FYDP for the F-35 in order to meet transition timelines and modernize legacy tactical air capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue to support these efforts.

143. Have MV-22 readiness rates—both deployed and in garrison/ship-borne—achieved desired levels? Will the Common Configuration Reliability and Maintainability program increase overall readiness, in your view?

I understand that MV-22 readiness rates of deployed units currently meet mission requirements but that stateside units have lower rates. Consequently, to increase fleet wide MV-22 readiness, I understand that both planned Nacelle Improvements and completion of Common Configuration-Readiness and Modernization efforts will be required. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Marine Corps to continue to assess and evaluate progress in attaining full mission readiness for these important programs.

144. In your view, will the MV-22 be sustainable over time at an acceptable cost?

I have had a unique window into the development of the MV22. Having worked for Senator Specter, a staunch proponent of the Osprey and having served as a Councilman in the township where the aircraft was built, I understand the challenges and opportunities in the production of this aircraft. Like all programs at inception, the cost per unit to produce such an advanced aircraft like the MC22 is high. However, the U.S. history of aircraft procurement has proven that programs are more cost effective as they mature. In my view, no other aircraft can match the unique capabilities of the MV-22. It has revolutionized the way the USMC operates and influences future modernization efforts for other Marine aviation platforms. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to work with industry partners to identify ways to lower the cost of the MV-22 sustainment program.

CH-53

CH-53K testing is behind schedule and over budget, requiring an additional \$158 million to fund continued testing this FY. In addition, the development program has significant deficiencies that must be corrected before testing can be finished.

145. What is your assessment of the current status of the CH-53K program?

I understand the CH-53K program continues to conduct developmental testing and is currently on track to meet Initial Operational Capability (IOC) requirements along with a vertical-lift deployment capability by FY24. The Department anticipates that technical discrepancy findings will be resolved and funded within agreements reached with the

vendor. If confirmed I will monitor this program closely to ensure that it meets the service requirements while becoming more cost efficient as the program matures.

146. Does it remain on track to achieve initial operational capability and meet the proposed deployment timeline?

Yes, I understand the CH-53K program is currently on track to meet Initial Operational Capability and the proposed deployment timeline.

147. What is the effect of CH-53K delays on the CH-53E fleet?

The CH-53E is a capable platform and still has sufficient remaining airframe life to absorb reasonable delays in the CH-53K program. Though efforts like CH-53E Reset and Engine Reliability Improvement Program will improve that airframe's readiness and availability, the lack of inventory (shortfall 50+ aircraft) and obsolescence issues are a significant risk to the Marine Corps' ability to fight future conflicts with the current operational concept. Therefore if confirmed, I will work closely with the Marine Corps leadership and the aircraft manufacturer to reduce delays while ensuring in the interim the service meets its readiness requirements.

148. On overall Marine Corps readiness?

I understand that CH-53K delays will directly affect the heavy-lift capacity shortfall and the Marine Corps' ability to effectively execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS). As I stated above, if confirmed I will work closely with Marine Corps leadership and the aircraft manufacturer to reduce delays while ensuring in the interim the service meets its readiness requirements.

149. The Commandant has articulated the need for the Corps to move away from "exquisite and costly systems". Is the CH-53K one such system, in your view?

I understand that the CH-53K is the only heavy lift helicopter in the Department of Defense to meet the unique requirements of the Marine Corps. As I understand, the CH-53K contributes to a more lethal joint force and supports both current and future Joint/Naval warfighting concepts by providing agile maritime logistics connectors to the Joint/Naval Force. I understand that the Marine Corps and the acquisition community have been working closely with industry in order to bring the cost curve down as was seen with the F-35.

150. What is the total fleet size the Corps needs?

The Commandant testified in March 2020 that the current Program of Record for the CH-53K remains at 200 CH-53K, but Force Design impacts to the Program of Record will be addressed in POM-23.

151. How many can the Corps afford?

It is my understanding that under current authorities, that the Marine Corps can afford the

Program of Record of 200 aircraft.

152. In your view, what role does the CH-53 play in battlefield mobility, particularly given the Corps' requirement to move and sustain ground forces that have become heavier due to the evolving need for additional armor on the modern battlefield?

As I understand, the CH-53K provides a greater payload at sea level and high altitude conditions, at greater ranges to support the rapid transition of Joint and Coalition forces from contact to blunt layer activities in a contested environment. It addresses current connector shortfalls of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), such as lifting the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV), and is a critical enabler of the execution of Expeditionary Airfield Base Operations (EABO) by enabling distributed operations and more logistical support than any rotorcraft in the DoD. It is a modern fly by wire helicopter that is also capable of integrating into the current battlefield and taking advantage of future technologies, such as manned/unmanned teaming and MAGTF digital interoperability.

Modernization of Marine Corps Capabilities

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.

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

In my view, the Navy and Marine Corps must invest in modernization of key amphibious capabilities that enhance operational maneuver in a contested environment against a peer competitor. Current resource requests prioritizes the future naval force capabilities; not just conventional, but also next generation weapons, artificial intelligence, and unmanned/man-machine learning and integration. A dynamic and evolving threat environment continues to drive creative, adaptable capability development and new operational concepts. The Navy and Marine Corps must, in my opinion, retain and evolve their tactical and operational advantages as adversaries attempt to outpace them.

154. If confirmed, how would you 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?

I understand the Marine Corps has deliberately prioritized mission areas where the Marine Corps anticipates a gap between current warfighting capabilities and the capabilities they will need to retain overmatch against a peer competitor.

The Marine Corps is the nation's crisis response force, which requires capable and ready amphibious warfighting platforms and a family of modern connectors. In my view, expeditionary warfare systems must be networked, lethal, resilient, and must enable quicker movement to new technologies and capabilities. If confirmed, protected mobility

to enhance maneuver ashore will remain one of my top ground warfighting capability investment priorities as I support the vision the Commandant has for the future of the Marine Corps.

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

First, I believe the Navy must work with the Marine Corps to continue prioritizing the amphibious ship and connector modernization program. The Department must take a disciplined approach to programmatics, leverage new construction, and accelerate fielding wherever possible. The Department must also ensure judiciously applied resources are available for active amphibious ship, connector, and vehicle maintenance and modernization programs in order to close existing gaps in operational availability, capability, and capacity.

156. Given the future envisioned by the NDS: high-intensity combined arms combat inland against a peer- or near-peer opponent, are current Marine Corps modernization plans and budgets adequate?

I understand the Marine Corps has a solid foundation for modernization planning in Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. Furthermore, I understand the Marine Corps has conducted extensive war gaming on these concepts and corresponding experimentation with developmental capabilities, and will continue to do so. In my view, maintaining a margin of overmatch against peer competitors requires fiscal stability and predictability. I believe the Commandant's Planning Guidance sets us on the right course: we must divest of legacy capabilities that do not meet our future requirements, regardless of their past operational efficacy.

Amphibious Combat Vehicle

Current Navy and Marine Corps amphibious assault capability includes a large number of self-deploying amphibious assault vehicles (AAV-7) to carry infantry ashore, and a lesser number of small vessels—connectors—that can ferry other vehicles, such as tanks, artillery, and supplies from ship to shore. The Marine Corps is procuring the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as a modernized platform to replace the aging AAV-7 fleet. Despite originally planning for two increments: an ACV 1.1 and ACV 1.2, the Marine Corps made the decision to combine all variants into one program.

157. In your view, where does armored amphibious assault fit in the set of capabilities required to field a credible amphibious operations capability?

In my view, the capability to project power from the sea ensures joint freedom of maneuver against increasingly sophisticated area denial and anti-access strategies across the range of military operations in areas vital to our national interest. To this end, I understand an assault Combat Vehicle creates operational and tactical options through rapid maneuver on sea and land; provides for the seamless transition of combat power

from sea to land; enables rapid response to crisis; enables the introduction of joint follow-on forces; and can impose disproportionate costs on our enemies who must extend their defenses. I understand amphibious combat vehicles enable Naval Expeditionary Forces to perform their assigned mission essential tasks, including but not limited to amphibious operations, non-combatant evacuation operations, embassy reinforcement, and humanitarian assistance / disaster relief operations.

Munitions

Navy munitions inventories—particularly for precision guided munitions and air to air missiles—have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies.

158. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Navy has sufficient inventories of munitions to meet the needs of combatant commanders?

If confirmed I would work directly with the Combatant Commanders, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure all weapons/munition warfighting requirements are addressed and properly resourced.

159. If confirmed, what changes in budgeting and acquisition processes would you recommend to facilitate faster and more accurate Navy munitions replenishment rates?

While I am not currently aware of concerns with munition replenishment rates, if confirmed, I would work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to resolve any difficulties in the Navy munitions replenishment rates.

160. How will the Navy adapt to self-imposed DOD restrictions on area attack and denial munitions, consistent with the Ottawa Agreements?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps are equipped to provide the Joint Force with the capabilities necessary to deter potential adversaries and to fight and win wars. I will ensure that these capabilities comply with all applicable law and policy.

Equipment Readiness

161. What is your understanding and assessment of the methods currently used for estimating the funding needed for the maintenance of Navy and Marine Corps equipment, particularly ships and aircraft?

I understand the Navy and Marine Corps are constantly seeking ways to improve its current models to estimate work and the funding needed to execute this work. Recent efforts such as Performance to Plan (P2P) – Surface, which is heavily focused on data

analytics, has produced new models that are improving surface ship maintenance availability planning, cost estimating, and execution. Similarly, through the P2P – Aviation effort and leveraging industry best practices, the Navy is updating its aviation cost-estimating models to reflect improved maintenance processes. As a former healthcare executive I came to fully recognize and appreciate the value of data driven outcomes. Therefore if confirmed, I am committed fully to leveraging data analytics in order to achieve better fidelity in budgeting for program sustainment costs.

162. In your view, is increased investment is needed to reduce the backlog in equipment maintenance that has accrued over the last several years?

I understand additional investment to increase both the size of the workforce and maintenance capacity since 2017, as well as focused process improvements, has helped to reduce the backlog of maintenance. Investments have resulted in better shipyard and aviation depot performance, such as reductions in days of maintenance delay, improved on-time deliveries, and reduced numbers of ‘not mission-capable’ aircraft. However, in my opinion, fully recovering readiness and further reducing the maintenance backlog will take time and require sustained investment to develop the production workforce and improve both public and private repair infrastructure capacity.

163. How important is reduction of the materiel maintenance backlog to improvements in readiness?

I believe that reducing maintenance backlogs is a critical component to improving the Navy’s and Marine Corps’ overall readiness. Materiel (equipment) maintenance is not the only driver of readiness, which also includes personnel, supply, training, and infrastructure, but it is critically important to get ships, submarines and aircraft through maintenance periods and returned to the Fleet on time and operationally available to support Fleet and Combatant Commander requirements.

164. In your view, is the continued receipt of OCO funding necessary to ensure all equipment is reset?

I understand OCO is necessary to replenish, replace, and repair equipment and munitions expended, destroyed, damaged, or worn out due to prolonged use in combat operations. Upon returning from war zones, units restore their equipment to a condition that enables them to conduct training exercises, achieve required readiness levels, and prepare for future deployments. As personnel and equipment return from theater to their home stations, the need for equipment reset will continue. If confirmed, I will continue to support these efforts.

165. If confirmed, how will you prioritize maintaining readiness in the near term, while modernizing the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure future readiness?

I believe that maintaining the right balance between readiness, capacity, and lethality is crucial to providing options to decision-makers. Near-term readiness will be paramount to ensuring deployed and deploying forces are prepared for any challenges they may encounter. Still, the DON must field the future fleet, the ships, aircraft, and systems with

the technology necessary to maintain the edge on adversaries in a rapidly evolving world. If confirmed, I intend to make strategy- driven, data-informed decisions in balancing the near-term capacity with future capability requirements. I understand the Marine Corps has institutionalized a cost-effective framework for monitoring, managing, analyzing and visualizing materiel readiness. This framework provides real-time, credible supply and maintenance data used to validate and improve material readiness while reducing overall sustainment costs. Exploring this approach for the Navy may also be valid.

Europe

166. What are the key areas in which the Navy and Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in great power competition and potential conflict with Russia?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. If confirmed, I will review the information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

167. What Department of the Navy infrastructure and military construction investments would be required, in your view, to achieve these improvements?

If confirmed, I will ensure the appropriate infrastructure and military construction investments are made to support the findings of the fully informed classified review described above.

In his March 5, 2019 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, then-Commander, U.S. European Command, General Scaparrotti, recommended adding two destroyers at Rota, Spain, stating, “in order to remain dominant in the maritime domain and particularly under sea [the United States] need[s] greater capability, particularly given the modernization and the growth of the Russian fleets in Europe.” In his confirmation hearing on April 2, 2019, current EUCOM Commander, General Wolters agreed with Scaparrotti’s assessment.

168. What do you perceive to be the merit and feasibility of increasing forward-deployed naval forces in Europe, including the option of adding destroyers at Rota, Spain?

While I agree in principle that presence, conventional deterrence, and warfighting could benefit from additional destroyers in the European theater, our Forward Deployed Naval Force (FDNF) posture must be balanced against other competing concerns including standing force structure, material readiness and preparation for high-end warfighting. However, I firmly believe that the best use of our surface combatants is forward presence and the associated deterrence delivered. Therefore, if confirmed, I will assess the strategic laydown of ships and aircraft around the globe and work to ensure that our plans address combatant commanders' concerns.

169. If confirmed, what other specific enhancements to forward-deployed naval

forces in Europe would you recommend?

If confirmed, any recommendations for additional forces I would make would develop from the fully informed classified review of Navy and Marine Corps current and projected capabilities described above. I believe placement of additional forces in the EUCOM AOR must be balanced against other competing concerns including standing force structure, material readiness, and preparation for high-end warfighting.

170. Given advances in Russian attack submarine capability, such as the deployment of the new Russian submarine *Severodvinsk*, do you believe the U.S. advantage in undersea warfare is eroding?

I believe the DON is committed to maintaining its decisive advantage in the undersea domain and denying any potential adversaries the same advantage. Undersea warfare is becoming more challenging as our adversaries continue to make improvements in their platforms. I witnessed this firsthand during my time as US Ambassador to Norway having the opportunity to sail aboard a Norwegian submarine in conjunction with working closely in partnership alongside the Norwegian Navy to identify and maintain awareness of Russian submarine movements in the Arctic region. The DON will sustain its undersea advantage through continued advances in the DON's offensive undersea warfare forces, principally the attack submarines, future unmanned undersea vehicles, and the anti-submarine warfare forces which include P-8 POSEIDON aircraft and the Integrated Undersea Surveillance family of fixed, mobile and deployable systems.

171. What additional capabilities or capacity could the Navy provide in Europe to maintain the U.S. advantage in undersea warfare?

In addition to the significant advantages that the United States maintains with its submarine force, it is my understanding that the United States Navy has and continues to make significant advances in Surface Ship deployed SONAR systems, as well as improved airborne systems resident in the P-8 and SH-60 aircrafts. During my time serving as Ambassador in Europe I was fortunate to see this support up close. Our allies look to us for support and we should remain committed in our support of respective national defense.

172. What is the value of the rotational presence of Marines in Norway?

As the current US Ambassador to Norway I have had a unique and fortunate opportunity to measure the importance and effectiveness of this program up close and personal for both the United States and the Kingdom of Norway. I firmly believe a rotational presence of Marines in Norway helps meet NDS objectives by strategically placing U.S. forces in position to deter Russia; assures NATO allies and partners in the region that the U.S. is invested in our collective security; and facilitates efforts to build relationships with national security partners through our enduring presence, leading to increased interoperability, understanding, and proficiency. The increased readiness of units assigned, coupled with the unique training venues and extreme cold weather environment

are important opportunities.

173. Do you support continuing that presence into the future?

Yes. However, should present circumstances change, I will review the new information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

Indo-Pacific Region

174. What are the key areas in which the Navy and the Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with China?

I understand the Navy has focused on restoring readiness, increasing lethality, and growing capable capacity. This focus is consistent with higher level guidance and supported by robust war gaming and additional forms of activities and analysis that align studies, experiment demonstrations, and exercises into mission engineering threads to solve key solve operational problems and drive decisions on capabilities and capacity.

I understand the Marine Corps has also undertaken a modernization strategy focused on organizing, training, and equipping the Marine Corps to provide combat credible forces that can deter peer competitors and, if necessary, fight and win. I also understand the Marine Corps has conducted extensive war games, experiments, exercises, and formal studies focused on these areas, with special attention to the manner in which Marine Air-Ground Task Forces with these capabilities can contribute to Joint operations. The range of solutions includes development of doctrine, changes to force structure, implementation of new training, and procurement of new equipment.

If confirmed, I will work assiduously to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps will be ready and capable if and when called upon for any contingency.

175. Do you support 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 in Japan, including at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni? Please explain your answer.

I understand the DPRI sought to provide a more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable force laydown. I look forward to learning more about the USMC's Force Design to ensure this initiative will increase capability and relevance for the Pacific writ at large, aligning all Marine Corps initiatives to the NDS, to include the DPRI.

176. In your view, should the DPRI strategy be adjusted in light of NDS objectives?

Beyond what was broadly provided in my previous answer, I have limited exposure to the implications of the DPRI strategy at this time on Navy and Marine Corps force structure

and the National Defense Strategy (NDS). If confirmed, I will work with Service and OSD leadership to better assess this topic.

China has embarked on a massive shipbuilding program. By 2030, China is projected to have almost 100 more ships than the U.S. Navy. It will have more major surface combatants and more attack submarines, most of which will be newer and more capable. And while all of China's Navy will be focused on the Indo-Pacific, the United States keeps only about 60 percent of its fleet in the Pacific.

177. If confirmed, what would you do to ensure that the Department of the Navy adapts to this shifting maritime balance in the Indo-Pacific?

I believe the future of the United States depends in part on the U.S. Navy's ability, as part of the Joint Force, to adapt and adjust to the shifting security environment around the world, including the Indo-Pacific. While the DON needs a larger, more capable fleet, it also needs to continue to mature operational concepts like Distributed Maritime Operations, in order to grow advantages in the maritime domain and offer military options to civilian leaders across the spectrum of conflict.

Given the changing security environment and the increasingly multi-domain nature of threats, accelerating the Navy's digital transformation will be critical to preparing our Sailors to deter, fight, and win in any potential theatre of operations including the Indo-Pacific. Digital technologies have the potential to be a force multiplier, putting data at the center of all of our decisions and transforming how we deter and defeat our adversaries. Leveraging a deliberate cycle of prototyping, experimentation, exercises, and war games, we will accelerate our ability to adapt and rapidly develop the systems and processes we need to fight at the speed of information. If confirmed, I will work alongside the Secretary of Defense, all Service Secretaries, Congress, and the INDOPACOM Commander to address existing and emergent challenges to our nation's security in the Indo-Pacific region.

The NDS specifically calls out China's robust anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) capabilities—including long-range ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced integrated air defenses, electronic warfare, and cyber—and the challenges they pose for U.S. forces.

178. How would you assess the threat to Navy and Marine Corps forces and facilities from Chinese missile forces?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. If confirmed, I will review the information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

179. What does this mean for how the Navy and Marine Corps will operate in the Indo-Pacific region?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. If confirmed, I will review the information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

180. If confirmed, what would be your plan to address Navy and Marine Corps deficits in this regard?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. If confirmed, I will review the information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

Broadly speaking, however, the Navy and Marine Corps must continue integration efforts focused on restoring readiness, increasing lethality, and growing capable capacity, while continuing to mature, develop, and test new operational concepts. If confirmed, I will work to address existing and emergent challenges to our nation's security in the Indo-Pacific region.

181. What is your understanding of how the Marine Corps proposes to better integrate with and assist the Navy in obtaining sea denial and sea control against a peer competitor in the Indo-Pacific region?

The Navy and Marine Corps for the first time in decades, have a unified framework for fleet operations across the globe including the Indo-Pacific. It is my understanding that Distributed Maritime Operations orient the fleet to assure freedom of action within contested maritime environments. Marine forces contribute to the fleet through the application of Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. In application, these concepts aim to integrate maritime power projection, persistent battlespace awareness, and precision strike to enhance sea denial and sea control.

In past years, investments in prepositioned equipment and distributed, adaptive, and resilient basing in the Indo-Pacific have represented only a small fraction of the billions of dollars that have gone towards similar investments in Europe as part of the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI).

182. Do you believe the creation of an "EDI-like" fund for the Indo-Pacific region would yield benefits for the Navy and Marine Corps? Please explain your answer.

Yes I do. As the Ambassador to a nation that has received EDI funding, I have seen not only the appreciation of the nation but the stronger Mil to Mil bonds that have been created because of this program. Additionally I strongly agree with the NDS emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region.

183. In your assessment, what are the priority investments the Navy and Marine Corps could make to improve their foothold in the Indo-Pacific?

It is my opinion that investments to operate forward and forward base assets in the Indo-Pacific are critical to improving the Navy and Marine Corps' deterrent position in the region while enhancing partner building, both critical and primary lines of effort in the National Defense Strategy. Afloat and ashore, allies and partners are crucial force multipliers and enablers of the Navy and Marine Corps' global reach, particularly in

evolving regions such as the Indo-Pacific. Priority investments include training and exercises that increase interoperability, build greater trust, and strengthen ties between nations.

184. Do you believe the planned joint force mix of tactical aircraft is sufficient to counter current and future threats in INDOPACOM, where the “tyranny of distance” is such a major factor?

Although I do not have any specific knowledge of operational plans in the INDOPACOM area of responsibility, I am aware that the Department’s current aircraft procurement has planned for sufficient capabilities to ensure lethality for the future. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate our strategic laydown in the Indo-Pacific, especially as the strategic environment evolves.

185. Do you believe DOD has sufficient sealift and airlift capabilities to move Marines throughout INDOPACOM for both training and contingency purposes?

I understand the Navy is studying its future amphibious and pre-positioning force structure to determine the optimum mix of ships to engage in expeditionary operations with near-peer competitors. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) to ensure the future force is fully integrated and highly interoperable.

186. What is your assessment of the current risk of operational failure in a conflict with China as a result of a critical breakdown in logistics?

In an era of Great Power Competition, I understand the Navy continually assesses anything that could create operational limitations, to include logistics. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing, prioritizing and resourcing logistics capabilities necessary to support Naval and Joint operations now and in the future.

Freedom of Navigation

187. In your view, what role should the Navy play in supporting the freedom of navigation in international waters, including in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

It is my view that freedom of navigation in international waters is vital to the free flow of global commerce and directly supports America’s economy prosperity. The Navy plays a vital role in ensuring international waters remain free and open. Again, I witnessed these challenges directly during routine visits to the high north and Arctic regions of Norway including the remote island of Svalbard while Ambassador. The DON plays a critical role in asserting and preserving these navigational rights pursuant to international law and norms. Ensuring freedom of navigation is particularly important in strategically important contested areas such as the Arctic and the South China Sea.

188. If confirmed, how would you lead the Navy in engaging our allies in the

common cause of ensuring freedom of navigation?

During my time in Norway as Ambassador, I witnessed the aggressive posture in the Arctic by our potential great power competitors. We need to fully recognize the power of uniting with other nations who share a common vision for free and open commerce and the preservation of freedom of navigation. If confirmed, I would work closely with our allies and potential partners to encourage affirmative assertion of navigation and overflight rights that are guaranteed to all nations by international law.

Cyber and Electronic Warfare

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy.

189. In your view, how well postured are the Navy and the Marine Corps to meet the goals outlined in the 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy?

I understand the cybersecurity investments and actions conducted by the Navy and Marine Corps have improved our cybersecurity posture while also supporting the DoD Cyber Strategy objective to “Secure DoD information and systems against malicious cyber activity, including such activity on non-DoD-owned networks.” The Department of the Navy continues to pursue initiatives to improve cyber defense posture, and increase the resilience of networks, weapon systems, and infrastructure through the execution of cybersecurity plans. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the Navy and the Marine Corps are postured correctly to detect, protect, and respond to cyberattacks and intrusion.

190. What actions would you take, if confirmed, to remediate any gaps between Navy and Marine Corps capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals?

If confirmed, cybersecurity will be an area of priority for me. As identified in the Cyber Readiness Review, we have an urgent need to improve Defense Industrial Base cybersecurity for the protection of controlled unclassified information. I understand efforts have been initiated to increase accountability and if confirmed, I would emphasize these efforts to accelerate the pace at which we attain complete cybersecurity.

191. In your view, should the Navy and Marine Corps expand acceptable professional qualifications for their cyber workforces to include non-traditional professional credentialing and schooling from so-called technology boot camps and massive online open courses (MOOCs) as an alternative to traditional education, provided candidates meet the necessary technical standards?

From what I understand of this issue, I believe it would be wise to consider this approach combined with traditional education/certification which is mandated by DoD for well-established foundational requirements. I believe technology boot camps and massive online open courses (MOOCs) could be helpful in rapidly changing areas to augment knowledge/skills, and to meet on-the-job (Residential) and continuing education requirements.

192. If confirmed, what will you do to enhance Navy and Marine Corps information dominance capabilities?

If confirmed, I will continue ongoing efforts to enhance information dominance in order to position the Navy and Marine Corps to conduct operations as needed in support of USCYBERCOM. I will also seek to provide our Fleets and the Fleet Marine Forces with the assured communications and information transfer to project power abroad through fully supporting Navy and Marine Corps' investments in training and education necessary to produce an information-advantaged Naval force.

193. Given the difficulty in defining where cyber operations and electronic warfare merge, if confirmed, how you would organize, train, and equip the Navy to minimize gaps and seams in these two critical mission areas?

If confirmed, I will commit to refining how our Naval forces approach the convergence of not just cyberspace operations and electronic warfare but also space and operations in the information environment as well. More quickly than our adversaries, it is imperative that our Navy and Marine Corps must implement the right technologies in these mission areas. The DON must also organize and train with the other Services including our allies to operate in the multi-domain environment of tomorrow.

Navy-related Defense Industrial Base

194. What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Navy's organic and commercial defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?

It is my understanding that the Navy continually assesses the health and resiliency of the entire defense industrial base, which includes munitions, to identify risks and issues within the supply chains. The Navy, in coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, uses its various authorities and funding programs to fund mitigations for those risks and issues.

195. How should Navy acquisition leaders weigh impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions?

I believe Navy acquisition leaders should be evaluating the impacts to the industrial base on a regular basis as they develop requirements and associated budgets, and should continue to work with industry to improve the health and stability of the industrial base. It is my understanding that the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition and Navy acquisition leaders work to coordinate government and industry efforts to keep the nation's industrial base healthy and functioning, especially during unique periods such as the coronavirus pandemic. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to mitigate risk in both the short term and the long term, with a focus on the physical health of the workforce, both government and industry, the economic wellness of the defense industrial base, and the warfighting readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps.

196. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to ensure that risk in the Navy-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to enable the development, production, and sustainment of technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?

If confirmed, I will assess the organization and operations of the Department of the Navy to develop recommendations for any changes or innovations through engagement with the acquisition workforce and industry.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

DOD has assessed that it has more than 19 percent excess infrastructure that could be reduced through a new BRAC round, saving as much as \$2 billion in fixed costs.

197. In your view, is current Navy and Marine Corps infrastructure properly aligned to the goals of the NDS?

Installations and infrastructure are essential to enable military readiness, project combat power, and provide for security of equipment, personnel, and family members. As such from what I have been briefed, I understand current Navy and Marine Corps infrastructure is well aligned to support the NDS.

198. Do you believe that another BRAC round is needed and, if so, what changes to law and policy would you recommend to improve on the outcomes of the 2005 BRAC process?

Having been an integral part of closing the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard both in uniform and as a Congressional staffer, I am well aware of the practical and emotional issues of the BRAC process. However, I am also an advocate of assessing and reviewing all aspects of current operations in seeking to provide the American taxpayers with any savings which can be accrued. So with this as background and with what I currently understand concerning the limited excess capacity of the DON, I do not believe the Department needs another BRAC round at this time. However, should present circumstances change, I will review the new information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

199. If confirmed, and were Congress to authorize another BRAC round, how would you set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation within the Department of the Navy?

I would work to ensure BRAC decisions were “strategy” and not simply “cost” driven. Accordingly, BRAC should consider the missions of today, but also those anticipated in the future. Again, having witnessed the closing of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, the Navy lost two of only four dry docks on the East Coast capable of servicing Nimitz and Ford Class aircraft carriers. Therefore, I believe it is essential the DON accurately

assesses its current and future requirements and that we focus on preserving those critical and often irreplaceable assets including testing and training ranges.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

200. Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

The United States has long supported the Convention's provisions related to navigation and overflight rights as reflective of customary international law. Our military acts in a manner consistent with those rules. Upholding freedom of navigation and overflight world-wide are important U.S interests and vital to the defense of our other national security interests. If confirmed, I will support policy measures designed to preserve and protect the continued global mobility of Naval forces. I will keep these objectives and facts in mind in making any recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

201. How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

As I understand, the Convention codifies navigation freedoms in a manner beneficial to U.S. military operations. The United States has long supported the Convention's provisions related to the freedom of navigation and overflight as reflecting customary international law. Our military has acted in a manner consistent with these rights and freedoms. Joining the Convention would increase the United States' credibility and legitimacy when acting to protect the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea reflected in it. One of China's central responses to our criticism of their actions in the South China Sea is that the United States is not a party to the Convention. The Convention's navigation provisions are vital to U.S. national security interests, and, if confirmed, I will continue to support them.

202. In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

If confirmed, I am committed to promoting the longstanding U.S. national interest of freedom of the seas, including the right of all nations to engage in lawful uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed under international law. While the United States does not take a position on competing sovereignty claims, acceding to the Convention would strengthen our strategic position on maintaining a free and open South China Sea and Arctic.

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 and generators. Department of Defense energy requirements are projected to increase due to technological advances in weapons systems and the execution of distributed operations over longer operating distances.

203. If confirmed, what would you do to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps harness innovations in operational energy and link them with emerging joint operational concepts?

As I understand, the Navy's operational energy investments target power and energy technologies that will enable distributed operations and future weapons systems. These energy investments reduce risk to naval forces in contested operations and provide flexibility to better align energy supply to the joint force. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue innovative energy technologies that provide greater power and energy capabilities for ships, aircraft, weapons, and unmanned systems.

204. In your view, how can Navy acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms?

I understand the Navy is currently working to improve energy performance, storage, distribution, and controls to both reduce costs and better support advanced weapons systems and sensors. If confirmed I will continue to prioritize energy management in our Navy acquisition programs to enable greater reach and lethality in contested environments and ensure needed supply capabilities are readily available to sustain joint forces in those environments.

205. Should energy supportability be a key performance parameter in the requirements process?

I believe energy costs and the demands of future military platforms must be considered in the context of current energy demands, the Department's ability to support them, and the National Defense Strategy. These considerations go beyond the acquisition process; concepts of employment, changes in force structure, and acceptance of risk, for example, also factor into energy supportability. The energy key performance parameter is just one tool in the tool box, but an important one that must be considered.

It is essential that DOD maintain capability to sustain critical operations in the event of an energy disruption—including commercial grid outages.

206. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to inculcate energy resilience as a mission assurance priority for the Department of the Navy?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department explores resilient, secure, and cost effective energy technologies to provide assured access to available, reliable, and quality power. As we all realize, energy is a critical enabler for both our warfighters in the operational force and supporting organizations that project and sustain naval power.

207. What progress has the Department of the Navy made in creating individualized Installation Energy Plans to identify and remediate resilience gaps on and off Navy and Marine Corps installations?

As I currently understand, the Navy and Marine Corps are both in the process of

conducting installation-level resiliency planning to identify gaps on and off base. If confirmed, I will work with DoN leadership in supporting, programming, prioritizing, and executing projects to close identified resilience gaps.

208. How can the Department of the Navy better integrate energy security and resilience as standard components of its Military Construction (MILCON) programs, in your view?

I understand the DON is already taking steps to address energy security and resilience in planning, design, construction, repairs and maintenance processes. The Department leverages the Mission Assurance program to identify cyber and energy resilience vulnerabilities and the Installation Energy Planning to capture current and future mission requirements including power quality and develop integrated solutions to meet these requirements. If confirmed, I will work to further these objectives.

Installation Modernization and Resilience

Decades of underinvestment in Department of Defense installations has led to substantial backlogs in facilities maintenance, and substandard living and working conditions for sailors and Marines.

209. In your view, how is the readiness of navy shore installations linked to the readiness and lethality of naval power?

In my view, fully functional installations and infrastructure are essential to enable military readiness, project combat power, and provide for security of equipment, personnel, and family members.

210. In your view, does the Department of the Navy receive adequate funding for base operations support, writ large? Please explain your answer.

From what I understand and have often witnessed while in uniform, Base Operations Support accounts have historically been underfunded to help offset higher priority mission requirements. If confirmed, I will work closely with the appropriate stakeholders to examine the accounts and ensure we are budgeting appropriately to meet all requirements as possible with the authorities provided.

211. Do you have any specific plans to leverage infrastructure modernization to improve the quality of life for Navy and Marine Corps service members and their families, who are under considerable strain as a result of repeated deployments?

Yes I would like to think so. Quality of life is important to readiness across the Department. If confirmed, I would be committed to identifying and supporting opportunities to sustain or improve the quality of life programs for Sailors, Marines, and their families. I understand increased investments in Family Housing and Childcare along with increased community engagements are already establishing a pathway to improved services to Sailors, Marines and their families. I am committed to continue these efforts to make life better for our service members.

The results of past underinvestment in infrastructure is particularly acute in naval shipyard facilities. According to the Navy’s shipyard modernization plan, it may take as long as 17 years and require outlays of as much as \$3.4 billion to clear the infrastructure repair and maintenance backlog.

212. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the resourcing of Navy shipyard modernization going forward, in light of other competing priorities?

I recognize the challenges presented by the competing priorities between shipyard modernization and other Navy requirements. If confirmed, I would work closely with all stakeholders, including the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and Naval Sea Systems Command, to ensure the Department is focused on timely funding of public shipyard infrastructure. I understand that without specific "top line budgetary relief" for the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), unfortunately these projects will compete with other Navy priorities.

213. In your view, has the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program achieved its objective of streamlining local project reviews, resulting in more predictable timelines and solutions for shipyard projects? If not, how would you adjust the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, if confirmed, to achieve these paramount objectives?

I understand the Department of the Navy has contracted with an engineering firm to conduct industrial engineering studies that will determine the final optimized production plant at each shipyard. The industrial engineering analysis is modeling and simulating all industrial processes to determine the optimal plant configuration that best supports the shipyard mission. Once these plans are completed, and if confirmed, I would work with the relevant stakeholders to identify all required SIOP infrastructure investments.

214. How will shipyard modernization assist the Navy in achieving its goal of eliminating “lost operational days”?

I understand modernizing the Naval Shipyards will enable the Navy to improve production capacity and restore a number of maintenance periods so ships can return to Fleet operations faster..

Environment

215. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps personnel at all levels comply with environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

If confirmed, I will continue to require compliance with DON policies to meet all applicable legal requirements by mandated deadlines. I understand that the Navy and Marine Corps conduct regular environmental audits and institute environmental training

and education programs to promote compliance. In addition, the DON issues policy, as required, to address areas of emerging concern.

216. If confirmed, how would you structure investments in the Navy's Environmental Research Programs?

If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the DON's Environmental Research and Development (R&D) Program supports mission capabilities while improving environmental performance and reducing costs, while supporting Department priorities.

217. If confirmed, how would you work with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to ensure that the environment on and around Navy and Marine Corps installations, bases, and ranges is protected, while maintaining and enhancing military readiness?

I am aware that the Department of the Navy has a successful track record as stewards of our nation's natural and cultural heritage. If confirmed, I will work with and seek to enhance the relationships between the Navy and the Department of the Interior, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other agencies and organizations. I will lead the efforts to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness and environmental protection at Navy and Marine Corps installations and in the surrounding areas that impact military operations.

Encroachment on Military Installations

Competition for space and other forms of encroachment continue to challenge the resiliency of DOD ranges and amplify the need for larger hazard areas to execute training, testing, and operations to meet NDS requirements. One issue of particular significance for the Navy has been the potential interference with aircraft radars by wind farms installed around military installations and ranges.

218. In your view, what is the gap between "as is" testing and training range capabilities, and current requirements?

I understand the Department of the Navy's weapons systems are becoming increasingly lethal and more powerful, and require greater amounts of land, air, and sea space to test and train effectively and safely. If confirmed, I would work with Department leadership to evaluate current capabilities and determine where training and testing gaps exist as well as develop strategic solutions to close those gaps.

219. Specifically what has the Department of the Navy done to secure or expand operations, testing, and training capabilities at key aviation ranges (e.g., El Centro, Fallon, Barry M. Goldwater Range)?

I have been made aware of initiatives to expand and modernize key aviation training ranges to support the next-generation of warfighter requirements. If confirmed, I would work with Department leadership as well as federal, state, and local authorities to identify solutions to see how best to make these efforts materialize.

220. If confirmed, how would balance the trade-off between energy development and impact on Navy and Marine Corps operations and training?

If confirmed, I will be an advocate for Navy and Marine Corps mission requirements while seeking to understand how their missions are impacted by energy development. By working closely with the DoD Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse, federal agencies like the Departments Energy and the Interior, state governments, and industry, I would lead efforts to identify solutions that support domestic energy development without impacting military requirements for operations, testing, and training.

Environmental Contaminants

According to the GAO, the Navy has identified 127 installations with known or suspected releases of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

221. What is your understanding of the Department of the Navy’s strategy for monitoring drinking water on Navy and Marine Corps installations, as well as public and private drinking water off-installation, for PFOS, PFOA, and other contaminants?

I understand the Navy and Marine Corps have drinking water sampling data for all DON installations world-wide. Drinking water provided at all these locations does not contain PFOS or PFOA above the EPA lifetime Health Advisory (HA). Additionally, where DON suspected a PerfluorinatedCompounds (PFC)/Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) release which may have migrated off an installation, permission was obtained and private and public water systems were tested. In these instances where unacceptable levels of PFOS or PFOA were detected above the HA, alternative water sources were provided immediately. If confirmed, I will continue to make these efforts a priority to ensure that no one is adversely affected by any accidental release into a community’s water system.

222. If confirmed, what would you do to address suspected PFOS/PFOA contamination at Navy and Marine Corps bases and operational platforms?

As above, if confirmed, I commit to ensuring that we continue our work with the Environmental Protection Agency on this issue. Furthermore I will lead the efforts to adhere to the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) process which guides the Departments responsibilities for how to address PFOS and PFOA releases both on and off Navy and Marine Corps installations. Finally, I will ensure that our cleanup activities are open and transparent with state and federal agencies, and I will advocate for the funding required to execute our responsibilities and ensure access to safe and clean drinking water.

Science, Technology, and Innovation

U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared, while

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.

223. What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to the development of these key technologies for application to Navy and Marine Corps warfighting capabilities?

The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) outlines a clear approach to regaining and maintaining technical advantage through investments in key modernization priorities: space, autonomy, cyber, quantum science, microelectronics, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and machine learning (AI/ML), and fully-networked command, control, and communication. With the authorities granted by Congress to accelerate technology, I understand the Navy is widening the aperture of investment areas across industry, government and academia. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the Navy maximizes the value received for that funding, and that efforts are focused on critical needs of the Navy and Marine Corps.

224. In your view, has DOD properly integrated and synchronized investments in these technologies across all Military Services?

Great power competition requires the Department to maximize all assets to derive the most value from taxpayer dollars. The Navy has a strong record of collaboration and teamwork across the Services and with OSD. If confirmed, I will ensure the Navy continues to work closely with Service and OSD counterparts to learn from each other while removing redundancies to accelerate the delivery of technologies to the warfighters.

225. How has the Department of the Navy prioritized limited research and development funding across its technology focus areas? Specifically, where is the Navy either increasing or decreasing focus and funding?

Naval Science & Technology (S&T) objectives are designed to maintain the technological superiority necessary to ensure our Sailors and Marines have a decisive technology advantage. I understand the naval research enterprise portfolio is balanced across the following areas: fundamental research to build the scientific foundation for future technologies; initiatives that can provide disruptive technologies to the warfighter; transitioning S&T programs to the acquisition community and the Fleet; and prototype development and experimentation with the Fleet and Force to rapidly learn and revise. Specifically, Naval S&T funding is prioritized toward artificial intelligence (AI), ocean acoustics, hypersonics, autonomy and autonomous systems, and advanced manufacturing. All of these areas of research are important to the future capability of the Service.

One of the main objectives of the defense research enterprise is to develop advanced

technologies that will be of benefit to the warfighter. In this regard, it is critical that advancements quickly transition from the development phase into testing and evaluation, and ultimately into a program of record for the deployment of capability to the warfighter.

226. If confirmed, how would you ensure that a greater percentage of the technologies being developed by Navy labs transition into programs of record for deployment to the warfighter?

I understand the Department has several programs currently in place to address this requirement. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Navy continues to employ a combination of the Maritime Accelerated Acquisitions (MAA), Future Naval Capabilities (FNCs), Innovative Naval Prototypes (INPs), Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfers (SBIR/STTR) processes and prototyping to transition technology to programs of record and directly to the warfighter.

227. How would you ensure that appropriate technologies are transitioning more quickly into programs of record?

If confirmed, I will continue to leverage all available accelerated acquisition tools and authorities and look to the experts in the warfare centers first to identify potential solutions and identify promising technology. Additionally, I will look for opportunities to streamline processes to develop cutting-edge technologies for integration into platforms, weapon systems, and acquisition programs of record, providing a seamless transition to improve Navy and Marine Corps warfighting and support capabilities.

228. What efforts is the Department of the Navy making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to military and national security purposes?

I understand the Naval Warfare Centers and laboratories maintain a professional staff in a technology transfer/transition office to facilitate interactions between researchers and industry. Working through this office, the Navy has made great use of licensing and cooperative research and development agreements (CRADAs) with partners in industry and academia to bring research results into real products. If confirmed I will continue efforts across the Department to accelerate delivery of small business technologies to acquisition organizations including attracting nontraditional defense contractors and startup companies.

229. In your view, what steps must DOD take to protect and strengthen our National Security Innovation Base to ensure that critical information is protected?

I recognize this is one of the greatest challenges to our security. As developing technologies move from basic research through applied research, to advanced technology development, I believe it is essential that we protect Department of the Navy critical information. If confirmed, I will work closely with OSD and ensure the Navy collaborates with the National Security Innovation Base to identify critical information early on in development, and proactively and aggressively adopts horizontal protection strategies across government, academia, and industry.

Military Health System (MHS) Reform

Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as modified by Sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, and sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2020, transferred the administration and management of military treatment facilities (MTFs) from the Military Services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).

230. Do you support the implementation of the MHS reforms mandated by the NDAAs for FYs 2017, 2019, and 2020?

Yes. I support the Military Health System reform legislation contained in section 702 of the FY 2017 NDAA as clarified by sections 711 and 712 of both FY 2019 NDAA and FY 2020 NDAA. As a former healthcare executive with responsibilities in this space, I firmly believe the legislation is important to the DoD's efforts in transitioning the MHS to an integrated system of readiness and health.

231. If confirmed, how would you ensure the efficient transfer of the administration and management of Navy military treatment facilities to the DHA?

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department of Navy's lines of efforts that were integral to the transition of CONUS military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency in October 2019.

232. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy reduces its medical headquarters' staffs and infrastructure to reflect the more limited roles and responsibilities of the Navy Surgeon General?

If confirmed, I will ensure that DoN execute the plan to restructure and resize our medical headquarters to comply with the readiness responsibilities retained by the Navy and the Marine Corps.

233. In your view, is the Department of the Navy medical force properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements documented in operational plans implementing the NDS?

From my current understanding, I believe that the Department of the Navy's medical force is properly sized to meet the operational requirements set forth in the 2018 NDS. However, should present circumstances change, I will review the new information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

234. In your view, do Navy and Marine Corps medical providers possess today the critical wartime medical readiness skills and core competencies required to provide effective and timely health care to sailors and Marines engaged in combat or contingency operations?

Yes. Throughout my career, I was fortunate to witness firsthand the lifesaving skills and dedication of our Navy and Marine Corps medical personnel sometimes personally both at sea and ashore. I also know that developing and sustaining critical wartime medical skills sets must remain a top priority as our medical teams meet the demands of providing trauma care across the full range of military operations. Therefore I support all creative initiatives that would help Navy Medicine stay at the forefront of the skills they need to operate where they are required and would utilize my healthcare background to assist in facilitating these opportunities.

COVID-19 Response

235. What guidance has the Department of the Navy provided to units about how to react to specific health threat conditions for sailors in conditions ranging from underway to off-duty?

While this scourge has required all aspects of USG efforts to think creatively, I understand that the Navy is working hard to mitigate the risk to readiness posed by this virus. I understand the Department issued guidance to unit and installation commanders to effectively prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 cases through force health protection measures. If confirmed, I will direct every resource possible to secure the safety and security of our force to ensure readiness is not affected.

236. What guidance has the Department of the Navy promulgated about how to prevent, identify, contain and manage COVID-19 cases on a unit level?

I understand the Navy has provided guidance to unit and installation commanders to effectively prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 cases through force health protection measures. As the situation continues to evolve, I understand the Navy provides updates through additional guidance and frequent messages to the Fleets. DON leadership is committed to mitigating the risks the virus presents to the safety of the Services and the readiness of all units.

237. In your view, is the guidance published to date adequate and appropriate?

I understand the Navy guidance includes the most up to date information to unit and installation commanders. The Navy will continue to adapt as the situation continues to evolve.

238. In your view, is the guidance sufficiently flexible to permit commanders to refine it based on local conditions and operational requirements?

I understand the Navy provides overarching guidance to the fleets to prevent and mitigate the spread of the disease, but that the Navy has been very clear to the unit and installation Commanders that the measures taken can be tailored to fit their specific needs in their unique situation.

239. If confirmed, what additional guidance would you promulgate to guide the

force in quickly handling COVID-19 outbreaks when they occur and prevent another Roosevelt?

If confirmed, I would communicate my concerns for the safety and well-being of our Sailors, Marines, Civilians and their families across the Department. It is contingent on leadership to reassure the Force that their wellbeing is paramount. Furthermore, if confirmed, and if this virus is still affecting the safety of our people and the security of our nation, I will direct every resource possible to secure both the safety and security of our force to ensure readiness is not affected.

240. The concern that COVID-19 has effectively sidelined one of the Navy's most lethal combat platforms cannot be easily dismissed. How has COVID-19 affected the readiness of naval forces and what would be your plan for addressing this issue, if confirmed?

While I am not aware of the current readiness status of USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT, I do understand that Navy platforms are fully capable and in a high state of readiness even if that means substituting one for another. I also understand that the Navy is taking all actions to ensure deployed forces stay in the highest state of operational readiness and deploying forces depart with the highest level of training and prevention. Finally, I am confident as the Commanding Officer of the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT stated in regards to the readiness of his ship, if our national interests were challenged, all Navy and Marine Corps assets would quickly answer the call and steam into harm's way to protect the people of the United States.

241. What types of support to civil authorities are the Navy and Marine Corps providing in the context of a coordinated response to the national emergency created by the spread of the virus?

I understand that currently, USNS COMFORT is in New York City while USNS MERCY is in Los Angeles providing nearly 2000 Navy medical personnel to assist civilian authorities with providing health care in response to COVID 19. In addition to the two hospital ships, the Navy has over 1300 medical personnel deployed to the Javits Center and local hospitals in New York, Dallas, and New Orleans.

End Strength

The Navy's active duty end strength grew from 323,600 in FY 2015 to 340,500 in FY 2020. The FY 2021 President's budget would fund an additional 7,300 sailors. In contrast, the Marine Corps' active duty end strength authorization grew from 184,100 in FY 2015 to only 186,200 in FY 2020, and the President's budget submission requests 2,100 *fewer* Marines for FY 2021.

242. Do you believe that Navy end strength must continue to grow?

While I believe the Navy must continue to grow its end strength to support shipbuilding, modernization, and aircraft procurement as authorized by Congress, if confirmed, I look

forward to having in-depth conversations with both the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to determine the appropriate force mix to execute the Navy and Marine Corps mission as laid out in the National Defense Strategy.

243. What end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Navy by the NDS and associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I look forward to having the in-depth discussions necessary to appropriately analyze these demands in light of the constantly changing threat environment.

244. Do you believe that reducing Marine Corps end strength is appropriate given the threats described in the NDS? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I look forward to discussing further with the Commandant the required end strength in light of the threat environment and operational demands, balancing current readiness and modernization goals at the same time.

245. What end strength do you believe is sufficient to meet the demands placed on the Corps by the NDS and associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I look forward to discussing further with the Commandant his recommendations the required end strength in light of the threat environment and operational demands, balancing current readiness and modernization goals at the same time. I am aware, in general terms, that the Commandant has proposed a partial refocusing of the Marine Corps and I pledge, if confirmed, to explore the issue with him and other leaders of the department in detail.

246. What additional authorities and tools would the Navy need, in your view, to recruit and retain the number and quality of sailors required to reach an end strength of 347,800 in FY 2021?

It is my understanding that Congress has been generous in giving the Navy and Marine Corps the tools they need, such as authorities, to reach their end strength goals. I do not yet have the information necessary to make an informed decision on the appropriate recruitment and retention actions or modifications. If confirmed, I will prioritize these discussions, with both Navy and Marine Corps leadership, examine our current authorities, and communicate with Congress on our requests should additional authorities be required.

247. If active Navy end strength is increased in FY 2020, what specific parameters would you use to determine what the corresponding Navy Reserve end strength should be?

I understand the Navy has established processes to determine the proper manpower requirement for each unit, addressing the Active, Reserve, Civilian, and contract manpower requirements. If confirmed, I will analyze the current Navy parameters to ascertain whether these parameters are sufficient, or if parameters should be broadened or

narrowed in scope or other considerations should be made in prescribing the appropriate Navy Reserve end strength.

248. In your view, what additional force shaping tools and authorities would the Marine Corps need to reduce the force by more than 2,000 Marines in FY 2021?

It is my understanding that Congress has been generous in giving Marine Corps the authorities they need to reach their end strength goals, whatever they prove to be. If confirmed, I will examine our current authorities in consultation with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and communicate with Congress on our requests should additional authorities be required to achieve our desired end strength.

249. Were active Marine Corps' end strength reduced to or below 184,100, what specific parameters would you use to determine what the corresponding Marine Corps Reserve end strength should be?

I understand the Department of the Navy has established processes to determine the proper manpower requirement for each unit, addressing the Active, Reserve, Civilian, and contract manpower requirements. If confirmed, I will work with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to analyze the suitability of our current parameters in light of the threat environment at that time.

Navy and Marine Corps Reserves

250. What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Navy Reserve?

Having served in the Navy Reserve for over 18 years, I believe the Navy Reserve is a vital part of the DON's total force mix. Every day, all over the world, Navy and Marine Corps Reservists proudly serve our Nation. Reservists are an economical, flexible, and scalable force multiplier. Furthermore, Reservists often offer unique skillsets and perspectives that are vital to responding to our ever-changing threat environment. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our Navy and Marine Corps reserve leaders to refine the role and scope of our reserve forces' contributions to national defense.

251. For the Marine Corps Reserve?

As above concerning the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve is a vital part of the DON's total force mix. Every day, all over the world, Navy and Marine Corps Reservists proudly serve our Nation. Reservists are an economical, flexible, and scalable force multiplier. Furthermore, Reservists often offer unique skillsets and perspectives that are vital to responding to our ever-changing threat environment. I understand the Commandant has initiated Force Design 2030 and has identified his intent to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the reserve component. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Commandant and his reserve leaders in support of the National Defense Strategy.

252. If confirmed, what objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the

organization, force structure, and end strength of the Navy Reserve?

If confirmed, I will seek to achieve objectives aligned with the National Defense Strategy. This endeavor must optimize our total force mix: service members, civilians, and contractors to meet mission. If confirmed, I look forward to the conversations with Navy and Marine Corps leadership that will be necessary to understand this complex calculation and to define appropriate objectives.

253. Of the Marine Corps Reserve?

I understand that the Commandant of the Marine Corps General Berger has initiated a 2030 Force Design initiative aligned with the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing with the Commandant his views on Force Design to ensure the Marine Corps Reserve is the right force in terms of organization, force structure, and end strength for the great power competition.

254. Do you expect to meet prior service accession goals for the Navy Reserve this FY? For the Marine Corps Reserve? Please explain your answer.

I understand that the Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC) is currently on track to meet FY20 mission requirements. However, in response to COVID-19, I understand the Marine Corps is implementing mitigation strategies to ensure that it remains on track to achieve prior service accession goals. I understand over the last five years the Navy Reserve has met more than 90% of the prior service accession goal. During FY 2018, Reserve Component members converting back to Active Component increased over 400%. The Navy Reserve has increased its prior accession goals to match this new requirement. For FY 2019, the Prior Service Recruiting goal is 5,500, and the Navy Reserve is currently tracking at 85% of that goal. Prior Service recruiting has been a challenge since the Navy Reserve accepted responsibility for 80% of the Navy's Individual Augmentees (IA), and there are efforts planned to improve recruiting. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to meet service accession goals.

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, willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service, and only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

255. Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative initiatives would you implement, if confirmed, to expand the pool of eligible recruits and improve Navy recruiting?

It is my understanding that the Navy is working diligently to transform Navy recruiting to meet today's challenges. From changes in recruitment models to personnel file process transformation, the Navy is working to acquire talent in a more modern, accessible way.

However, as a former Navy Public Affairs Officer I fully appreciate that branding is key to reaching future Sailors....Perception is Reality! Being part of something special which sets you apart is critical. Thankfully the Navy has unique and attractive attributes that must be leveraged, think: “Join the Navy and see the World” or “America’s Navy, a Global Force for Good“ which leverages off the unique humanitarian mission only the Navy can deliver. These are some ideas coupled with emerging technology which can guide future efforts. All this must be done through the preferred channels utilized by this age demographic today and it must convey a modern image of the critical role the Navy plays in our global security environment. If confirmed, I will continue this push to recruit our future Sailors through online efforts, thoughtful recruiting systems, and messaging the Navy’s role in developing cutting-edge technology while providing exciting, rewarding and outstanding careers!

256. In your view, what effect do current recruiting standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—have on recruit attrition and/or future success in the Navy?

It is my understanding that the Navy reviews retention data consistently and often in order to ensure it meets retention goals in line with the effort and cost expended. Data shows that tier-one recruits are a good value for the Navy. The Navy constantly reviews military specialty end strength needs to ensure the it is matching recruiting to need. While no system is perfect, the Navy has applied great effort to review and refine their approach to recruiting retention. If confirmed, I look forward to gaining a deeper understanding of the data in order to ensure that the Navy is continually optimizing resources spent versus readiness needs.

257. In the Marine Corps?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps experience is similar to the Navy. They also review their retention data consistently and often in order to ensure that it meets retention goals in line with the effort and cost expended. Data here also shows that tier-one recruits are a good value for the Marine Corps. Additionally the Marine Corps constantly reviews military specialty end strength needs to ensure it is matching recruiting to need. If confirmed I look forward to gaining a deeper understanding of the data in order to ensure that the Marine Corps continually optimizes resources spent versus readiness needs.

258. What are your views on the opportunities, risks, and costs associated with the Commandant’s proposal to raise to 40 the minimum AFQT score required to enlist in the Marine Corps?

It is my understanding that Commandant’s aim is reflective of today’s highly complex, technologically advanced threat environment. Now more than ever, the Services need recruits that can learn rapidly, think independently, and act with certainty to execute the mission of today and anticipate the needs of tomorrow. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant to gain a deeper understanding of his approaches and goals on this issue.

259. What monetary and non-monetary incentives are the Navy and/or the Marine Corps employing in an effort to retain aviators?

Unlike when I was a young Naval Aviator where many of my squadron-mates were counting the days to go fly for the airlines, that approach has changed greatly due to changes in the airline industry but also because of today's generational perspectives. Young men and women serving in the military today seek a crucial balance between professional fulfillment, quality of service, and work/life balance. I believe the Navy and Marine Corps are keenly aware of this mindset, and it is my understanding they offer significant monetary and non-monetary incentives for aviators, to include not only specialty pay and bonuses, but also advanced training and certifications, and most importantly certainty in their operational assignments. The Navy and the Marine Corps cannot underestimate the challenge in getting this right, and I pledge, if confirmed, to assess this problem with Navy and Marine Corps leadership, as well as junior members of the military to make sure the Department fulfills its promise and duty to them and the nation.

260. Which incentives or combinations thereof have proven most effective?

As I currently understand, it is a mixture of all of the approaches above that give today's young men and women the assurance that military leaders preserve the sacred trust we have with them. What we owe them is certainty, the right tools to do their job, and the freedom to advance in their careers. If confirmed and working with service leadership, I will ensure they have the training, mission systems, and the authority they need to go out and execute.

261. What specific recommendations do you have for controlling the rising cost of military personnel?

I understand personnel costs are the highest costs in maintaining today's military. Of course it's no different in the private sector. Training, managing, providing resources for and leading people is expensive. That said, investment in your Team provides great dividends for People are the Services greatest asset. From what I've been briefed, it appears there is great opportunity to modernize our military personnel support systems to achieve efficiencies and dampen cost growth. It's the same in the business world, and my experiences there lead me to believe we should also consider the viability of some of these best practices within the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to discover ways we can harness technology and reduce unnecessary administrative overhead.

262. What recommendations would you have for increasing the pool of youth who are both eligible and propensed for military service?

For youth who have the propensity to serve, the DON has to demonstrate to them the value proposition of becoming a Sailor or Marine. That means not only demonstrating that the DON respects them and values them as individuals but moreover ensuring they identify with becoming part of something greater than self. Nowhere in any profession, and I've been associated with many, is the feeling of being part of something that really

matters, something that sets you apart from your childhood peers as rewarding as being in the uniform of your nation. Serving in today's military is a tremendously rewarding, exciting and justifiably fulfilling profession. The DON must communicate this to all of today's youth, not just to those who have an inclination to serve. The best recruiting tool is always your employees, for us the young Sailors and Marines who are already in the Service. If the DON keeps faith with them by demonstrating our trust, our concern, our complete support and our affirmation of the importance of what they do every day Our Navy and Marine Corps Team will be victorious in attracting the nation's best!

Military Compensation

263. What is your assessment of the adequacy of military compensation?

No one joins the military to get wealthy. However, from what I understand, military compensation remains very competitive when compared to the civilian marketplace. However, there are certain skillsets and talent pools that need to be incentivized in a targeted fashion to meet the mission demand of the 21st century. Recruiting and retention appear to be quite healthy in the Department of the Navy; however, if confirmed, I will work closely with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to preserve our recruiting and retention in an ever-changing environment.

264. What recommendations would you have for controlling the rising cost of personnel?

While we must do what we can as a Service to recruit and retain the best and brightest and stay competitive, I believe this can be done in a more targeted fashion. If confirmed, I would work with the Navy and Marine Corps to reassess our personnel costs and compensation packages to ensure that those programs that target key skillsets critical to today's threat environment are retained, while at the same time scrutinizing those programs that may be ineffective, inefficient, or obsolete. Our Sailors and Marines, as well as their families, come first, but we can find efficiencies in places where programs may be no longer meeting their needs or providing a valuable service.

The GI Bill, Voluntary Education, and Credentialing Programs

An important feature of the Post-9/11 GI Bill is the ability of career-oriented sailors and Marines to transfer their earned benefits to their spouses and children.

265. As reflected in data, what effect do the transferability provisions of the Post-9/11 GI Bill have on the recruitment and retention of Sailors and Marines?

I understand this issue was studied by the Center for Naval Analyses in 2017. It found that the transferability provisions of the Post 9/11 GI Bill had a positive retention impact that partially offset the negative retention impact of the GI Bill itself. As a beneficiary myself I can attest to the fact that having the ability to transfer this benefit to a family member is highly appreciated.

266. Do Navy and Marine Corps Voluntary Education Programs contribute to

military readiness, in your view? Please explain your answer.

Off-duty education is a valuable recruiting and retention tool that empowers our Sailors to reach their full professional and personal potential. I know as I took advantage of similar programs when I was in uniform I believe Voluntary Education Programs play a key role in fostering a culture of continuous learning, benefiting the entire team. If confirmed I will continue to advance the merits of this pursuit.

In May 2018, the Navy rescinded its 16-semester hour FY limit on Tuition Assistance (TA) and authorized sailors to use TA up to the DOD FY funding cap of \$4,500—an increase from the Navy’s previous effective cap of \$4,000. A year later, the Navy terminated TA for the remainder of FY 2019. When the program resumed in October of 2019, the TA cap was reduced to \$3000 per year and participating sailors were required to focus TA course work on warfighting qualifications and to use TA to pursue a clearly defined degree.

267. What effects have these new TA program criteria had on sailor professional development, in your view?

As I understand it, the Navy made the difficult decision to implement TA management controls to improve efficiency in Sailors’ academic pursuits and degree completion. The Navy continues to invest significantly in multiple pathways for undergraduate education through Navy College Program for Afloat College Education, as well as professional certifications through Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online and the United Services Military Apprenticeship Program. With less than a full fiscal year of data to measure, I believe more time is needed to evaluate the impact of these changes on professional development.

268. What progress have the Navy and Marine Corps made in identifying and leveraging credentialing programs, both to enhance a sailor or Marine’s ability to perform his/her official duties, and to qualify the sailor or Marine for meaningful civilian employment on separation from the military?

It is my understanding that the Navy Credentialing Program has mapped over 2,700 civilian certifications that align with Navy occupations, training, and major collateral duties. Every Sailor in the Navy has the opportunity to earn at least one certification. The Navy has expanded eligibility for credentials aligned with the training Sailors may receive on or off-duty in attainment of academic degrees, through previous ratings held, and in Selected Reserve members’ civilian occupations. These certifications both professionalize our workforce and can assist Sailors in qualifying for meaningful civilian employment upon transition. It is also my understanding that the Marine Corps’ Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) provides Marines with similar opportunities to attain certification and licenses related to their Military Occupational Specialties. These credentials are tied to civilian certificates and can be carried into the civilian world when Marines transition. In addition, through Skillbridge, a Marine can participate in a variety of programs including commercial driver’s licensing, computer programming, and industry fellowships within 180 days of separation from service. The COOL Programs are supported by commands and from FY17-FY19, more than 19,000

credentialing opportunities were funded. I understand that the Marine Corps is focused on increasing awareness of COOL and as a result, more than 2,000 Marines availed themselves of various Skillbridge programs in FY19, double that of FY18.

269. What is your vision of the role and mission of the yet-to-be-established Naval Community College?

I understand the U.S. Naval Community College will provide world-class associate's degrees and industry certificates to our enlisted force in fields that are critical to modern warfighting, including cyber, information technology, computer science, engineering, and data science. I welcome and support this effort to ensure access to higher education for all service members. If confirmed, I look forward to further shaping and leading this initiative.

Non-Deployable Service members

The deploy-ability requirements and processes set forth in DODI 1332.45, *Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service members*, took effect in October 2018

270. Do you agree that sailors and Marines who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should either be separated from the Navy or Marine Corps or referred into the Disability Evaluation System?

I understand that the status of these individuals is tracked very carefully by the Navy and Marine Corps, in order to try to resolve the medical status of each individual on a case-by-case basis and help those who are eligible get back to service as quickly and safely as possible. Furthermore I recognize the importance of having a force that can be deployed anywhere in the world at any time. But perhaps in certain instances, where a Sailor retains a unique and value added skill there might merit consideration of an appropriate role in which she or he can serve besides the standard deployable status. If confirmed I look forward to working with Navy Leadership in exploring creative ways to allow individuals to continue serving retaining as much talent as possible to the benefit of the Service.

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.”

271. In your view, under what circumstances might the retention of a sailor or Marine who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest” of the Navy or the Corps, as applicable?

It is my understanding that many Sailors and Marines seek to return to service, and that there are certain situations where a longer rehabilitation period is required to ensure future deploy-ability. This is an example in my view where the best interest of the Service may be served. Additionally, there may be select cases where the knowledge and skills of a service member who is not fully deployable may warrant retention if the individual can still serve a valuable role in support of the military service.

272. In your view, how should this policy be applied to sailors and Marines with HIV? To sailors and Marines who identify as transgender?

It is my understanding that there are legal protections for service members who are HIV positive and some who are transgender. Those issues strike me as separate and distinct from the Department of Defense non-deployable policy, which applies to all service members, including those with HIV and those who identify as transgender. If confirmed, I will review in detail how these policies are applied to all Sailors and Marines and ensure they are applied fairly and equitably across the Department in all situations.

273. Have the Navy or Marine Corps established any class or group of personnel deemed “deployable with limitations,” such that the class or group is exempt from the 12-month non-deployable retention determination requirement?

It is my understanding that the Navy has not established a new “deployable with limitations” category that is exempt from the requirement of a 12 month non-deployable retention determination. I believe there are certain limited conditions that could limit the types of deployments appropriate for individual Sailors and Marines, such as Sailors who are found fit for duty but are not world-wide deployable, and sailors with Blood Borne Pathogens who can only deploy to certain areas near a large military treatment facility. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department addresses any and all situations that require such attention in a fair and equitable manner to the benefit of the individual and the service.

274. If confirmed, what would you do to improve the timeliness of referring and processing active and reserve component sailors and Marines through the Disability Evaluation System?

As both a former Active and Reserve Sailor I am familiar with this issue witnessing many of my Shipmates affected by these delays. Therefore I strongly support the DoD goal of reducing the Disability Evaluation System processing times. If confirmed, I will work with our medical and administrative personnel to identify and eliminate unnecessary processes while streamlining the Disability Evaluation System timeline through automation and process improvement.

National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

In March 2020, the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service—a Commission chartered by the Senate Armed Services Committee in the NDAA for FY 2017, released its report and recommendations. Congress had charged the Commission with two primary tasks, one of which was to review the selective service process.

275. Particularly given that all military positions are now open to women, what are your views as to whether women should be required to register with the Selective Service System?

Our modern military depends on quality recruits, both male and female. In recent years, the DoD has made extraordinary strides in opening combat roles and missions to women. It is my understanding that the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service has recommended in its final report to include women in the Selective Service System. If confirmed, I will review this report and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

276. What is your view of the Commission’s proposal that Congress authorize the Secretary of Defense to establish an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) of personnel with critical skills?

It is my view that technology plays an ever-greater role in executing combat missions in the 21st century. Technology-driven skillsets are becoming more and more critical to the Navy and Marine Corps’ national security mission, and there is ever-increasing competition with the private sector to retain those skillsets. I believe that an Individual Ready Reserve could enable us to acquire certain skillsets quickly, should a national emergency occur that would necessitate the activation. If confirmed, I will explore the practicality of such a model for the Navy and Marine Corps.

Military Family Readiness

Secretary of Defense Esper has added a fourth line of effort to the NDS: Taking Care of our People and Their Families.

277. What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for sailors, Marines, and their families?

Military families serve alongside our men and women in uniform, and I believe military family readiness is equally important to unit readiness in achieving our National Defense Strategy mission. In particular, it is vitally important to readiness that service members can deploy far from home with reasonable assurance that their families will be safe and have what they need to cope with what are often long absences. As a former member of our Armed Forces, I am acutely aware and fully understand the many sacrifices our families make for us every day. To that end, if confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the support network and assistance we provide to military families is tailored to meet their unique needs. I believe military spouses need career support, and that safe and reliable childcare is a key element of family readiness. My goal will be to ensure that families do not just endure, but thrive in, the Navy and Marine Corps family.

278. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?

If confirmed, I plan to discuss the health and success of our military family support network with Navy and Marine Corps leadership, and with the families. The Navy and Marine Corps provide a comprehensive range of programs and tools to span the spectrum of family readiness issues. This will be one of my top priorities if I am confirmed.

Nothing is more important than ensuring those who you are entrusted to lead have faith and confidence in your support of them.

279. If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as to active Navy and Marine families who do not reside near a military installation?

As a former Reserve Sailor who had to deploy multiple times and leave my young family behind far from any military support installation, this is an issue of which I am well aware. As such I fully recognize the unique challenges faced by Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as active Navy and Marine families who do not reside near a military installation. Both can be organizationally and geographically isolated, requiring a unique approach to providing support services and fostering a sense of community. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps active and reserve leadership to ensure that both components are able to benefit from appropriate support structures. I will also work with families to learn their unique needs and ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are properly serving them and their communities.

280. In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting readiness of the force and family?

It is my understanding that the non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors (MFLCs) and from the Navy and Marine Corps clinical counselors are extremely valuable for the service they provide to Sailors and Marines, especially in high-risk families. MFLCs are integrated in a way that Sailors and Marines can seek help from them without stigma, which is key to getting help to those in need.

Quality of Life and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Services

The Committee remains concerned about the sustainment of key military family quality of life programs, such as family advocacy and parenting skills programs; child care; spouse education and employment support; health care; and MWR services.

281. If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider a priority?

I believe a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach is necessary to support the mental and physical health of our Sailors, Marines, and their families. If confirmed, I pledge to work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to find ways to better support our service members and their families. From family health and wellness, to fitness centers and Single Service Member programs, to continuing education and employment opportunities for military spouses, the network must ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps can complete the mission. If confirmed, I will also work with the Office of the Secretary of Defense to ensure that services provided, such as dependent healthcare and education, are maintained at appropriate levels.

282. If confirmed, what factors would you consider in assessing which quality of life

and MWR programs are ineffective or outmoded and thus potentially suitable for elimination or reduction in scope?

The usefulness, accessibility, and effectiveness of Navy and Marine Corps quality of life programs is key to their success. I believe our Sailors, Marines, and their families themselves can provide valuable input into whether programs truly work for them, or whether adjustment or elimination of certain outdated programs would enable newer avenues to promote the health and welfare of our entire Navy and Marine Corps family. Therefore if confirmed I will in concert with the Service leadership, identify the best manner by which these programs can be assessed.

Child Care

The Committee often hears that Active duty families have difficulty obtaining child care on the military installation and that there are thousands of military families on waitlists to receive infant care.

283. If confirmed, specifically what steps would you take to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps families have access to high-quality childcare at an appropriate cost?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are exploring new ways to address the issue of capacity in the Navy and Marine Corps child care system to include community partnerships that may more rapidly expand capacity. Some installations are collaborating with their local communities to expand daycare, providing a benefit for military families and their civilian neighbors. If confirmed, I will consider these approaches and explore other innovative approaches to this critical issue.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Military Families

284. What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the Navy and Marine Corps? If confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?

Domestic violence and child abuse are crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and are unacceptable and incompatible with service in the Navy and Marine Corps, Period! My understanding is that the data concerning child abuse and domestic violence for the Navy and Marine Corps are reflective of national trends. Understanding the unique pressures deployment, extended family separations, and our national security mission are vital to addressing these issues. If confirmed, I will work with Department leadership to equip service members and their families with the tools necessary to deal with these unique stressors in order to reduce domestic violence and child abuse.

285. In your view, what more can the Department do to *prevent* child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?

One of the most important things that the DoN must do, is to engage early and often to provide life skills to its service members, teaching them how to recognize and deal

positively with high-tempo operations and the unique stressors associated with military service. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps have instituted a variety of programs aimed at providing families support and engaging service members early and often in order to combat these stressors that can lead to domestic violence and child abuse. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our Navy and Marine Corps leaders to determine which programs make a difference and provide all possible support to Our Sailors, Marines and their families.

286. Do you believe that the Family Advocacy Program strikes the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?

It is my understanding that the Family Advocacy Program works very diligently to prevent and respond to violence and other harmful behaviors in relationships and that the program focuses on advocacy, treatment and rehabilitation, and is not disciplinary or punitive in nature. Families are critical members of the Navy and Marine Corps team. Just as domestic violence and child abuse and neglect are crimes in the civilian justice system, they are crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and are addressed through a parallel but separate law enforcement and judicial process. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Navy and Marine Corps Leadership to ensure that everything possible is done to address these incidents and such incidents of criminal abuse are subject to appropriate review and action by the appropriate entities. I also commit to making sure that the Family Advocacy Program is appropriately used to support and serve military families and not used as a mechanism to hold abusers accountable when that responsibility lies with Command and the military justice system.

287. What is your view of the suitability of the Commandant of the Marine Corps' proposal to "disqualify [from enlistment or accession] any applicant with a previous conviction for sex or gender-based violence, to include domestic violence"?

I understand that the Marine Corps is currently reviewing this proposal. If confirmed, I will study the results of the review and in working with the Commandant determine the best approach to ensuring the Marine Corps remains dedicated to accessing the highest quality men and women.

Military Spouse Employment

Section 580F of the FY 2020 NDAA required the Secretary of Defense to expand the DOD My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) program to authorize financial assistance to a military spouse pursuing a license, certification, or Associate's degree in *any* career field or occupation.

288. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps spouses are aware of this expansion of MyCAA?

I believe that proper and aligned communication is a chain of command responsibility starting at the highest levels of the service and extending down to unit Commanding Officers who are accountable for informing the members and their families assigned to

their command. In this manner working in concert with family support and spouse networks these efforts create an effective communication avenue for information and promotion of valuable benefits such as MyCAA. I believe leaders in the Navy and Marine Corps, particularly the Senior Enlisted Advisors, to include the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, are key to communicating these benefits to Sailors and Marines and their spouses. If confirmed, I would work with leaders across both services to promote valuable benefits such as MyCAA.

289. Do you believe that MyCAA eligibility should be further expanded to the spouses of sailors and Marines serving in more senior ranks? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to review the data and usage rates following the most recent expansion to determine if further expansion is warranted. I believe it is prudent to ensure that our most junior families receive the benefits of this program before it is expanded.

Transition Assistance Programs

290. In your view, how can the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)—Goals, Plans, Success, be improved, better to prepare sailors and Marines to address the challenges they and their families may experience in the transition from military to civilian life?

As with many programs, I understand the DON regularly assesses the Transition Assistance Program—Goals, Plans, Success to determine how it can be improved and, therefore, take better care for transitioning Sailors, Marines and their families. The FY2019 NDAA enacted significant changes to the TAP to improve the individual Service member's transition. If confirmed, I would support DON's ongoing effort to comply with requirements, including implementation of tailored pathways, new counseling requirements, and new initial assessments.

Support for Military Families with Special Needs

291. If confirmed, how would you ensure that a sailor or Marine with a special needs family member is relocated only to a new duty station at which the medical and educational services required by that family member are available?

It is my understanding that enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) ensures that the availability of appropriate medical and/or educational resources are reviewed and taken into consideration as families with special needs relocate to a new duty station. If confirmed, I will continue the ongoing efforts to strengthen the EFMP. Through collaboration with local communities, I believe the DON can further identify and close gaps in educational services provided to exceptional family members. I also believe that working with the Defense Health Agency, the DON can identify where gaps exist in medical services provided by our TRICARE partners. If confirmed, I will work with DON service members, their families, and the education and medical communities

to close those gaps and to ensure appropriate and necessary services are made available to families when members are relocated.

292. If confirmed, how would you incentivize sailor and Marine enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)?

It is my opinion that by reducing the strain on families, we strengthen resilience and improve the Department's mission readiness. To reduce this strain, the DON needs to do a better job to ensure families are PCSing to locations that can accommodate their needs by providing the continuation of support and assistance they need to navigate the medical and state educational systems. If confirmed, I will encourage and incentivize enrollment through successes and building trust by having unit commanders and senior enlisted advisors personally meet with and provide appropriate command awareness.

Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI)

- In the FY 1996 NDAA, Congress established the MHPI, providing DOD with the authority to obtain private-sector financing and management to repair, renovate, construct, and operate military housing. DOD has since privatized 99 percent of its domestic housing. In 2019, the Senate Armed Services Committee held three hearings to address concerns voiced by military families living in privatized housing that the program had been grossly mismanaged by certain private partners; that military and chain of command oversight were non-existent; and that in speaking out about the appalling condition of the quarters in which they lived, they were opening themselves and their military sponsors to reprisal.

293. What have the Navy and the Marine Corps done to address sailor, Marine, and family member concerns regarding the untenable living conditions prevalent in certain privatized housing locales?

I understand the Department of the Navy is addressing shortcomings identified in privatized housing projects across facilities. By emphasizing chain of command involvement and improving business processes to permanently correct systemic issues, the Department is seeking to address these concerns. I am also aware the Department of Defense and Services jointly issued a Tenant Bill of Rights and are working with the privatized housing companies to implement the majority of the rights expeditiously. If confirmed, I will support the efforts of the Secretary of Defense in leading this initiative and will work to ensure that DON is compliant with all requirements to enhance quality of life for our service members who reside in these quarters.

294. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to reinforce the accountability of the Navy and Marine Corps chains of command for oversight of the MHPI program as it affects their sailors, Marines, and military families?

If confirmed, this issue will be one of my top priorities. I will lead the effort to ensure oversight of privatized housing by mandating and empowering Navy and Marine Corps leaders to take corrective action before it impacts the safety and wellbeing of military families, and the associated readiness and effectiveness of the force. I will continue to

ensure that the DON actively participates in DoD-led efforts to implement remaining rights in the Bill of Rights and standardizes processes and procedures across DoD.

295. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to establish accountability in MHPI “contractors”, for strict adherence to the terms of their “partnership agreements” with the Navy or Marine Corps?

I understand the Department’s privatized housing companies will remain an important component of the housing solutions offered to military families. However, I believe the DON should never outsource the Department’s role as advocates for Sailors, Marines, and their families. If confirmed, I will empower Navy leaders to assist Sailors, Marines, and their families with satisfactory results in privatized housing and insist that base officials leverage every option available to hold these companies accountable. And I will make it a priority for me personally to visit these residences during any trip I undertake to visit the Fleet and to reflect the commitment I have to this issue.

The FY 2020 NDAA was clear—the Tenants Bill of Rights for military personnel living in privatized housing must include three basic items: the right to dispute resolution, the ability to withhold rent, and access to a home’s maintenance history. Yet DOD’s recently released Tenant Bill of Rights included none of these things.

296. If confirmed, what would you do to address these omissions?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense and other Services to finalize policy and guidance for these three extremely important rights and drive implementation in the Department. Furthermore I will engage with the privatized housing companies on a regular basis to ensure that we do not lose momentum towards completing these items.

297. Given the challenges associated with the MHPI, what value do you perceive in the FY 2020 NDAA’s codification in law of the position of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment?

I believe that the codification of this position is a great step towards providing additional stability and steadiness during a period when we are trying to implement so many new housing policies to support military families. I greatly appreciate Congress’ effort to include the language.

Suicide Prevention

The number of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee. Over the past two years, five sailors assigned to the *U.S.S. George H.W. Bush* committed suicide.

298. Has the Navy conducted a comprehensive review of the *Bush* suicides to determine whether there are any common causal factors? If so, what did the Navy find?

The loss of any Sailor to suicide is one too many, but the tragic loss of five Sailors is a

matter of great concern. I understand that investigations indicated there is no apparent connection between these deaths. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the Department provides the resources and programs required to address this tragic and challenging issue.

299. What actions has the Navy taken to prevent the suicides of other sailors assigned to the *Bush*?

I understand the Navy provides mental health resources to help those affected by these incidents, including the crews, their families, and their loved ones. In situations such as those onboard USS *Bush*, I am aware that a special psychiatric rapid intervention team (SPRINT) is dispatched, augmented by two deployment resiliency counselors, to provide for immediate crisis support, assessment of need, and advice to command leadership. Fleet and Family Services also offer a number of classes for crew members focused on improving resiliency, professional relationship skills and building and maintaining healthy personal relationships. If I am confirmed I will endeavor to expand awareness of suicide prevention and support across the services.

300. If confirmed, what would you do to maintain a strong focus on preventing suicides in the active Navy and Marine Corps, the Navy and Marine Reserve, and in the families of your sailors and Marines?

If confirmed, I will continue to vigilantly monitor the health of the force. There is no single cause or solution to this complex problem, but I will support the full portfolio of suicide prevention efforts including embedded mental health providers, Operational Stress Control programs, and the Navy's Culture of Excellence campaign.

301. What are your ideas for preventing suicides by curtailing the misuse of lethal means by sailors, Marines, and their families?

I believe that practicing lethal means safety is a proven method to reduce the probability of a fatal suicide attempt and open the door for help. If confirmed, I will continue to support training, policies and outreach materials that encourage Sailors, Marines, and their families to use gun locks and practice other forms of lethal means safety, such as voluntary storage of personally-owned firearms during times of increased stress and proactively disposing of unused prescription medications.

302. If confirmed, what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of sailors and Marines across all Components?

I am aware that the Department of Navy is engaged in preventing suicide not only for those who serve, but their dependents as well. This requires accurate and comprehensive data. If confirmed, I will support the Department of Navy efforts to collect and analyze data on suicide deaths of military family members. I will coordinate with the DoD Suicide Prevention stakeholders to advance the multi-pronged approach the DoD employs that leverages both military data and civilian data from several sources. I believe all Department leaders have a responsibility to do all they can to advance awareness and prevention of suicide including de-stigmatizing the issue through proactive engagement

at all levels.

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment 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 *DOD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military for Fiscal Year 2018* documented a statistically significant increase in past-year prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24. These findings echoed earlier reports of alarming increases in the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault at the Military Service Academies, the U.S. Naval Academy included.

303. What is your view of the role of the Navy and Marine Corps chain of command in maintaining a command climate in which sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated?

It is my view that the chain of command is responsible for ensuring each member of the Navy and Marine Corps is treated with dignity and respect, and the command must provide a safe work environment free of sexual harassment and sexual assault. I understand that commands conduct periodic command climate assessments that evaluate commands' effectiveness of sexual misconduct prevention efforts. The chain of command also ensures through training that the members of their command are aware of their reporting options in the case of sexual assault or harassment. Commanding officers are responsible for ensuring reports of sexual assault or harassment are investigated – either through a command investigation in the case of sexual harassment, or referral to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service in the case of sexual assault. Ultimately, commanding officers must ensure that all allegations of sexual misconduct are appropriately resolved to maintain good order and discipline within their unit and deter future misconduct. All leaders, at every level, but especially commanding officers, are responsible for promoting a climate that does not tolerate destructive behaviors, including sexual harassment and sexual assault.

304. If confirmed, what specific role would you establish for yourself in Navy and Marine Corps' programs for preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault?

I understand the Department of the Navy is deeply committed to a positive and healthy culture where sexual assault or harassment is never tolerated, to reduce and ultimately prevent occurrences of sexual assault, where all offenders are held accountable, and where our Marines, Sailors, and civilians receive the support they need. In furtherance of that role, the Department continues towards executing goals that evaluate the program, partnerships with colleges, universities and outside industry, and ensuring that the Services have quality tools and resources. One example of these efforts include the first National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment, as well as two Regional Discussions, where the DON has leveraged expertise across government and academia to identify the latest research and emerging evidence-based tools to assess progress. In every organization I have led, such harassment simply wasn't tolerated. If confirmed, I

will lead this initiative of eliminating sexual harassment by providing the resources required to do so.

305. In your view, are the policies, programs, and training that the Navy and Marine Corps have put in place to prevent sexual assault and respond to sexual assault when it does occur, adequate and effective?

Sexual assault is a crime and an affront to everything for which the Department of the Navy stands. In my view, the DON must and will continue to provide support to victims and hold those who have committed an offense accountable. While I believe that the Department's policies, programs and trainings are effective in the fight to prevent this crime, there is much more work to be done. If confirmed, I will remain dedicated to identifying best practices to prevent and respond to sexual assault which include researching innovative and evidence-based tools; partnering with academia and industry; and improving the DON's ability to identify command climate issues or other factors that suggest risk. I will accept nothing less than the full and complete elimination of this scourge upon the Department.

306. If such policies, programs, and training are effective, why does the prevalence of sexual assault in the Navy and Marine Corps continue to increase?

My understanding is that from 2006 to 2016 there were reductions achieved in the prevalence of sexual assault. However, in 2018 rates of sexual assault increased for women but stayed statistically the same for men, compared to 2016. However, I also understand that the Department knows that there is no "quick fix" that would eliminate the crime of sexual assault from their ranks. I believe the DON needs a sustained, comprehensive approach to prevention, where the right evidence-based activities are championed, leaders are bought into these activities, and personnel with the right expertise are in place to support the execution of these activities. I understand the Navy and Marine Corps are working with the Department of Defense to execute the Prevention Plan of Action, a strategy that outlines identifies actions necessary to measurably and systematically reduce sexual assault in the military. These efforts must account for shifting challenges and demographics across time. For instance, junior enlisted Sailors and Marines and first line supervisors need tools and resources to tackle applied leadership challenges created by sexual violence. If confirmed, I will continue to engage directly with these emerging leaders to develop effective tools and resources that address these applied leadership challenges.

307. What is your assessment of the adequacy of Navy and Marine Corps resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault with medical, psychological, and legal help?

It is my understanding that the Navy Victims' Legal Counsel Program (VLCP) is currently adequately staffed by active duty judge advocates in the field who provide legal services to victims of sexual offenses, but additional headquarters staff requirements have been identified and validated through a Navy Shore Manpower Requirements Determination. However, I also understand that the FY20 NDAA Sections 548 and 541(c) require legal counsel be provided to all victims of domestic violence, not just

those who have suffered a sexual offense, beginning 1 December 2020, and set a limit of 25 cases per Victims' Legal Counsel by 1 December 2023. These NDAA provisions did not include appropriations. Therefore, I understand the Judge Advocate General of the Navy is currently working billet and funding requests through the Navy to ensure Navy VLCP will have adequate resources, both in the field and at headquarters, to meet these new mandates.

308. What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove from Navy and Marine Corps commanding officers, case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

I strongly believe that periodic policy reviews are helpful to ensure the policy continues to add value to the organization. I've learned the worst seven words strung together in our language are: "That's the way it's always been done." That said, after nearly 30 years in uniform, I believe that Commanders are responsible for maintaining combat effectiveness, which is directly tied to good order and discipline. This responsibility must be supported with the authority to take appropriate disciplinary action, including action on serious crimes.

Removing a Commander's case disposition authority for serious crimes would have a detrimental impact on good order, discipline, and combat effectiveness. Commanders are called upon every day to make difficult decisions to accomplish their assigned missions while simultaneously protecting the wellbeing of their subordinates. The authority that Commanders exercise under the UCMJ is important to achieving these goals. Military Commanders, who are entrusted with the lives of their subordinates and the security of our nation, can and must be trusted to make decisions, informed by advice from military lawyers, concerning the disposition of offenses.

Under the current system, Commanders do not make military justice decisions in isolation. Every Commander is informed and advised by qualified, professional judge advocates throughout the life of a case and at each key stage of the process, from report and investigation to disposition and adjudication.

External entities have previously evaluated the role of the commander and have determined that removing the Commander's authority within the military justice system would not improve the quality of investigations and prosecutions, or the military's response to sexual assault. Ultimately, I believe Commanders are in the best position to make decisions affecting good order and discipline because Commanders, not uniformed prosecutors, are responsible for ensuring good order and discipline.

I am aware that the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 requires the Department of Defense to study the advisability and feasibility of removing a commander's disposition authority for serious offenses. If confirmed, I will review this authority based on the findings of the study and objectively assess what is the best system for our Navy and Marine Corps as well as for our Sailors and Marines.

309. Are Navy and Marine Corps policies for addressing retaliation and reprisal for reporting sexual assault adequate?

It is my view that retaliation and reprisal have no place in any organization certainly not in the Navy or Marine Corps. From what I currently understand, I believe the Department of the Navy remains focused on ensuring sexual assault reporting does not result in retaliation, and has taken action to educate its members about how to recognize and prevent retaliation and reprisal. Training to recognize and eliminate retaliation has been added to all leadership development curricula and each installation-based Sexual Assault Case Management Group solicits input for any experiences of retaliation against victims, first responders or witnesses to a crime during its monthly review of open cases. If confirmed I will ensure my views are well known and that all leaders within the Department are held accountable to ensure these practices don't exist in their commands.

310. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the U.S. Air Force Academy's *Safe to Report* policy in increasing reports of sexual assault at the Air Force Academy?

I understand the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 requires the Secretary of Defense to study the feasibility and advisability of expanding the U.S. Air Force Academy's *Safe to Report* policy across the armed services. While premature to draw any conclusions regarding the Air Force Academy's policy prior to the completion of this study, I welcome and look forward to reviewing the determinations of this study.

311. In your view, should the *Safe to Report* policy be extended to the U.S. Naval Academy or to other units and organizations in the Navy and Marine Corps? Please explain your answer.

As a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, I am appalled that even one incident of sexual harassment would occur at an institution which prides itself on setting the standard for honor and integrity. There is no place in the Navy or Marine Corps for anyone who does not respect another. I welcome and look forward to reviewing the determinations of the feasibility and advisability study required by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 into the U.S. Air Force Academy's *Safe to Report* policy.

U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) and the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

Currently, USNA graduates incur a five-year active duty service commitment following graduation. Congress last revised initial active duty service obligations for Academy graduates in 1996. Since then, the average real cost per graduate has increased by nearly 20 percent according to the Congressional Research Service. Additionally, recent studies suggest that Service Academy graduates have the lowest junior officer retention rates of all officer commissioning sources, despite being the most expensive.

312. Do you believe the five-year active duty service commitment required of USNA graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?

As a graduate of the US Naval Academy, I believe the current commitment is appropriate. I started out after graduation believing I would remain on active duty for a

career. That changed when the Navy began to downsize in the early 1990s. So you never know that turn of events you're going to encounter. Moreover every Service Academy graduate is inculcated with a sense of serving the nation for life beyond just active duty. So I believe 5 years is an adequate payback period for the education you received. I firmly believe that you will find in retaining this policy that you will attract many more graduates who give back to the nation in other ways.

313. In your view, does USNA contribute to the pool of Navy and Marine Corps officer accessions commensurate with the attendant costs? Please explain your answer.

When the nation established the Service Academies they created a special institution to train citizens to serve their country as unique leaders. So while I understand the US Naval Academy produces one third of the Navy's unrestricted line officers every year, historically, U.S. Naval Academy graduates consistently retain to the 10 and 20- year marks at a higher rate than their Reserve Officer Training Corps counterparts (4-5% higher), and screen for command at levels exceeding other commissioning sources. In my view, the Naval Academy is certainly a valuable asset. However, as I've said repeatedly, if confirmed I will ensure I review the ROI associated to the Naval Academy and remain open to any opportunities to create cost efficiencies without sacrificing the quality of education.

314. If confirmed, would you support increasing the active duty service obligation for USNA graduates by one year, to a six-year minimum?

I am open to any and all considerations. Therefore if confirmed, I would examine the matter and, if appropriate, would make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense and Congress to address changes to the active duty service obligations of our service academy graduates.

315. What is the Naval ROTC Preparatory Program and is such a program necessary, in your view?

I understand the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) offers a ten-month course to prepare Midshipman for success at the U.S. Naval Academy. NAPS students come from a wide range of backgrounds and are considered well equipped to become improved learners in order to academically address the rigorous, demanding, and fast-paced curriculum of the Naval Academy. I believe NAPS supports the Academy's goal to draw a student population from all segments of society ensuring the Academy classes are representative of the diversity of our Nation.

The Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies for Academic Program Year 2018-2019 documented another increase in the number of sexual assault reports by and against Military Service Academy cadets and midshipmen. While noting that the Academies had implemented a variety of activities aimed at the prevention of sexual assault, it called out "little evidence of change in long-standing attitudes that deter reporting and help-seeking."

316. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault, and to ensure that those who report harassment or assault are not subject to retaliation or reprisal—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage?

I am appalled that any such harassment as this occurs at an institution that has established such immense respect across America for its honor and integrity. If confirmed, I will remain committed to eradicating sexual harassment and sexual assault from the Naval Academy and moreover the Department at large. I believe that the present policies and processes at the U.S. Naval Academy support a robust and leading prevention and response program. The DON remains dedicated to continuously assessing these programs and their impact to ensure that they meet the needs of all Midshipmen. I understand the U.S. Naval Academy will continue to offer comprehensive prevention training that emphasizes leadership at all levels to foster a professional culture that values dignity and respect.

317. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to ensure the free exercise of religion and the accommodation of religious practices?

I understand the U.S. Naval Academy has a robust and effective Command Religious Program (CRP) that supports the diverse religious beliefs and expressions of the Brigade of Midshipmen. In addition to the nine, multi-denominational Chaplains on staff, there are nearly a dozen religious extracurricular activities that support religious expression and spiritual growth. As a graduate of the Naval Academy and one who experienced a positive religious experience during my attendance, if confirmed I will do all I can to support continued inclusiveness for all Midshipmen regardless of religious affiliation.

318. What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at USNA?

I understand the U.S. Naval Academy utilizes a multi-tiered, integrated approach to address mental health and well-being. This includes suicide prevention and awareness training, targeted resilience outreach, and accessible mental health care provided by a comprehensive team of licensed mental health providers in the Midshipmen Development Center (MDC). This approach promotes the personal and professional development of Midshipmen into future officers who are better prepared to help the force prevent suicide, address mental health needs, and improve individual well-being. If confirmed I will work with the Superintendent and Navy leadership to continue to provide the appropriate resources to address this issue.

Women in the Marine Corps

In December 2015, then-Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter changed policies applicable to women in military service, opening all occupations and units to the assignment of women.

319. What challenges still exist with regard to the assignment of women to Navy

submarines and to Marine Corps infantry occupations, and what proactive measures are Navy and Corps leaders, respectively, taking to address those challenges?

I understand that women have fully integrated into the submarine service without any significant issues. I understand that the integration of women into previously restricted MOSs under the Marine Corps Integration Implementation Plan is progressing without any significant issues. The Marine Corps remains committed to providing the most combat effective force possible by capitalizing on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of every Marine. Since 2015, the overall percentage of females in the Marine Corps has increased from 7.7 percent to 9.0 percent, reflecting a growth of 16.9 percent. Due to Marine Corps integration efforts, female Marines are now represented in nearly every MOS, including infantry, with numbers steadily increasing. If confirmed, I will fully support the Departments total commitment to the long term success of female integration in all occupations.

320. What is your view of the efficacy of the Commandant's proposal to recruit female Marines already serving in the Reserves to transfer to active duty, potentially in combat-related jobs that were previously gender-restricted?

I understand that the Marine Corps is currently analyzing the feasibility of identifying and recruiting for return-to-active-duty selected female Marines currently in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR) and Individual Ready Reserve, with a focus on previously gender-restricted units and Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). The Marine Corps is still in the process of determining options and conducting legal reviews. It is my understanding that these options will include a study of the impacts on career progression opportunities for those Marines that return to active duty as well as impacts to the SMCR operational capability. If confirmed I look forward to working with the Commandant and Marine Corps leadership to learn more.

321. The retention rate of female officers in some Military Services declines precipitously between 8-12 years of service. To what do you attribute this decline?

From what I understand, the retention rates for male and female Marines exhibit different behavior patterns. Marine Officer departure decision points are typically at the 5, 9, 12, and 20 year mark. Between 2016 and 2019, at the 9 years of service decision point, female officer retention rate is 4 percent lower than their male counterparts (88% - 92% respectively). At the 12 year decision point, the roles reverse and female officer retention rate is 2.6 percent higher than their male officer counterparts (87% - 84.4% respectively). There are potentially a number of reasons a service member decides to exit the Service. I am aware that, in an effort to better understand those reasons, the Marine Corps has developed the Exit Milestone Longitudinal Survey (EMLS). The EMLS program is a set of surveys that are administered during specific milestones in a Marine's career: initial accession, first and subsequent reenlistments, career designation, officer promotion (Major - Colonel), and upon exiting the Marine Corps. The EMLS program will provide key information to better understand personnel satisfaction regarding career opportunities, leadership, performance management, diversity, and work-life programs. If confirmed, I will work with the Commandant to support these efforts.

322. What specifically would you do, if confirmed, to increase the retention rates of mid-grade female military officers?

I firmly believe that Navy and Marine Corps should continue to focus on increasing retention of quality sailors and Marines – regardless of gender. However, I recognize the importance of diversity and therefore believe it is prudent that the Department of the Navy understand the challenges to retention that our Service women face. Furthermore I believe that the Department should seek opportunities to develop a professional mentoring network for women to provide and receive such support. In order for these efforts to have impact, Senior leaders must visibly commit to support these efforts including attendance at affinity group conferences. Affinity group conferences can be a powerful vehicle to voice concerns, drive change, and educate offering service members and civilians an opportunity to gain professional development, mentoring, and networking experiences. If confirmed, I will endorse these studies, surveys, outreach events and affinity group conferences when the goal is focused on retention, professional development and mentorship. Through efforts like this, the EMLS and other directed studies the Department will continue to monitor female officers' retention.

In 2019, the Marine Corps integrated 50 female recruits into a historically all-male training battalion aboard recruit depot Parris Island. The FY 2020 NDAA requires the Marine Corps to gender integrate basic training at Parris Island within five years, and at San Diego within eight years.

323. In your view, can the Marine Corps fully execute the gender integrated basic training mandate, on the timeline prescribed by the NDAA, while maintaining the readiness and lethality of the Corps?

If confirmed, I will be fully committed to ensuring gender integration across the Department in compliance with NDAA 2020 requirements. I am committed to full gender integration across the Force because I believe it supports the readiness and lethality of the Corps.

Whistleblower Protection

Section 1034 of title 10, U.S. Code, prohibits taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action against a member of the armed forces in retaliation for making a protected communication. Section 2302 of title 5, U.S. Code, provides similar protections to Federal civilian employees. By definition, protected communications include communications to certain individuals and organizations outside of the chain of command, including the Congress.

324. If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sailors, Marines, and civilian employees of the Department of the Navy who report fraud, waste, and abuse, or gross mismanagement to appropriate authorities within or outside the chain of command, are protected from reprisal and retaliation, including from the very highest levels of the Executive Branch?

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy takes whistleblower allegations seriously and abides by applicable law, regulations, and rules regarding whistleblower protections. The Naval Inspector General and Deputy Naval Inspector General for Marine Corps Matters have overall responsibility for assisting the Secretary of the Navy in ensuring full implementation of section 1034 of title 10, United States Code. The Department of the Navy and the Office of Special Counsel have responsibility for ensuring full implementation of section 2302 of title 5, United States Code. If confirmed, I will ensure that those who are responsible for reprisal investigations conduct them thoroughly, and that appropriate administrative or disciplinary actions are taken against personnel who have engaged in illegal reprisal or retaliation, in accordance with law, regulation, and policy.

General/Flag Officer (G/FO) Reductions

The FY17 NDAA reduced the number of G/FOs by about 12% Service-wide. Only the Marine Corps was unaffected by these cuts—gaining one GO billet.

325. What progress has the Navy made in reducing the number of flag officers and restructuring the flag officer grade pyramid?

I understand the Navy remains on track to comply with reductions enacted in the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act by December 31, 2022 as reflected in the Secretary of Defense's Annual Progress Report to Congress. I believe meeting these reductions is challenging given the demand for additional flag officers to support the Defense Health Agency, cyberspace, and Navy's manning in this era of Great Power Competition. However if confirmed I will ensure the Navy complies fully with this Congressional mandated requirement.

326. How have Navy and Marine Corps G/FO been affected by the layering of post-government employment constraints, including the enactment of section 1045 of the NDAA for FY 2017—applicable only to DOD?

It is my understanding that the post-government employment constraints have been a factor in the decision making of some two-Star Flag Officers who decided to retire rather than accept a nomination for a third star, which would then subject the officer to the more significant constraints upon eventual retirement.

327. What actions would you direct, if confirmed, to ensure that the Department of the Navy meets its objectives for reducing enlisted aides?

If confirmed, I will ensure Department of the Navy continues to maintain its allocated level of enlisted aides in accordance with the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.

328. In your view, do the Navy and Marine Corps have in place sufficient training and resources to provide its GOs with the training, advice, and assistance they need to avoid and address conflicts of interest, comply with travel regulations, and ensure that government resources—including employee time—are used only for official

purposes? Please explain your answer.

The Navy and Marine Corps have avenues by which Flag and GOs receive ethics training throughout their careers, including training on avoiding and addressing conflicts of interest. For example, newly selected General and Flag Officers are required to attend the New Flag and Senior Executive Training Symposium, where attendees receive leadership and ethics training. Additionally, in accordance with the Joint Ethics Regulation, Flag and GOs are required to receive annual ethics training, in addition to their initial ethics training (described above for Flag Officers). Annual training is provided in-person by qualified civilian and military attorneys who regularly advise our Flag and GOs. If confirmed, I will continue seek out additional resources and ways to improve this type of training.

Officer Personnel Management System Reforms

The John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 contained several provisions to modernize the officer personnel management system. These reforms were designed to align officer career management with the priorities outlined in the NDS.

329. How are the Navy and the Marine Corps implementing these authorities and to what effect?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps have both largely implemented six authorities from the 2019 NDAA, including: Promotion Merit Re-Order; Expanded constructive service credit for Active Duty Engineering Duty Officer, Cyber Warfare Engineer, and Reserve Cryptologic Warfare and Information professionals; Promotion Board Consideration Opt-Out; Expanded Continuation; Accession policy; and expanded officer spot promotions. If confirmed, I look forward to analyzing the implementation of these and other authorities granted by Congress.

330. Are there other authorities that the Navy or the Marine Corps need to modernize the management of their officer personnel?

As I understand it, the Navy is considering various options including duty status and designations, retirement requirements, grade controls, and spot promote billets. If confirmed, I will review such proposals and seek any necessary legislative relief.

331. In your view, how could the Navy and the Marine Corps' scrolling and appointments processes be improved so as to improve permeability between the Active and Reserve Components?

I believe that while the Department of the Navy has improved processing of transitional appointments by delegating many of the relevant authorities to the lowest appropriate level, accuracy and timeliness of reserve scrolls and appointments might be most easily improved by additional improvements to personnel systems information technology. If confirmed, I will analyze this issue to make it more productive and efficient.

Joint Officer Management

The NDAA for FY 2017 modified the Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) system established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in two significant ways. First, it broadened the statutory definition of “joint matters” to expand the types of positions for which an officer can receive joint duty credit. Further, it reduced from three years to two the minimum tour length required for joint duty credit.

332. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the FY 2017 modifications to the JQO system?

As a career Naval Officer, I fully support the requirement of Joint Duty to ensure officers of all Services fully understand the importance of “Jointness” in how DoD operates today. This is an imperative for any individual who aspires to senior levels of leadership. It was not until I was selected for Captain(O-6) and assigned to Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) working for General Mattis that I came to truly understand the validity of this requirement. I was assigned to JFCOM for slightly more than two years and gained an immense appreciation and full understanding of how DoD operates today. However in order to maintain flexibility, I do believe both the expansion of the definition of “joint matters” and the reduction from three to two years to meet the minimum joint duty credit provides the insight required for officers to adequately and appropriately meet career milestones. I also understand these changes have allowed more officers the ability to fill Standard Joint Duty Assignments, creating a greater pool of officers with joint duty experience.

333. In your view, are the requirements associated with becoming a JQO, and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to general and flag officer rank, consistent with the operational and professional demands of Navy and Marine Corps officers?

Yes, as above I believe the requirements are consistent with the operational and professional demands of the Navy and Marine Corps officers to ensure they are qualified to serve at the highest levels of the Department of Defense. However I do believe that options for Reserve Officers should be implemented to ensure they also gain Joint Duty insight taking into considerations the limitations they may encounter to meet the active duty requirements.

334. In your view, what additional modifications, if any, to JQO prerequisites are necessary to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Navy/Marine Corps-specific leadership experience and adequate professional development?

I am not aware of any additional modifications that are needed at this time. However, should present circumstances change, I will review the new information available and solicit the advice and views of relevant individuals before making any decision that may come before me on this matter.

Adverse and Reportable Information

Incidents of misconduct or substandard performance, and the findings of Inspectors General and command-directed investigations are documented in various ways in each of the Military Services. Procedures for reviewing and forwarding adverse and reportable information for consideration in the promotion selection process are set forth in title 10, U.S. Code, and in DOD Instruction 1320.4.

335. How are the Navy and Marine Corps ensuring compliance with the requirements of law and regulation regarding the investigation and review of adverse and reportable information in the context of both GO and below-GO promotion selection processes?

I understand the records of all Navy and Marine Corps officers selected for promotion are examined for adverse and reportable information to ensure that any officer recommended for promotion meets statutory and regulatory requirements to assume a higher paygrade. Although they differ slightly due to the services' independent administrative procedures, both the Navy and Marine Corps ensure that substantiated officer misconduct is reported to Navy Personnel Command or Headquarters, Marine Corps for recording in service databases and, when appropriate, in officers' official military personnel files. Once recorded in an officer's record, reports of misconduct or substandard performance will be considered by promotion selection boards recommending officers for promotion to control and General/Flag officer grades.

When officers are selected for a higher grade, service personnel offices search Navy and Marine Corps inspector general records, Naval Criminal Investigative Service records, Defense Central Index of Investigations, security clearance databases, and – in cases involving judge advocates – the Judge Advocate General's professional responsibility files. Should an officer's name appear in any of those records, he or she will be withheld from the nomination scroll pending further review of his or her record.

If an officer commits misconduct or substandard performance after the initial review of adverse information databases, both the Navy and Marine Corps will delay the officer's promotion to allow for further review of his or her record. These cases typically occur when an officer's command reports an adverse matter or when an adverse matter is found before the Navy or Marine Corps release monthly messages authorizing the promotion of individual officers.

If an officer's promotion is withheld or delayed, he or she will be given the opportunity to comment on the matter or provide additional information. The officer's chain of command, to include the Chief of Naval Operations or the Commandant of the Marine Corps will provide a recommendation on the officer's fitness for promotion before the matter is sent to the Secretary of the Navy for final vetting of the adverse information and a decision on forwarding the officer's nomination or removing the officer's name from the promotion list.

General and Flag Officer promotions follow a broadly similar process with one significant difference. The records of officers eligible for promotion are "pre-screened" before a board considers their records for promotion. If adverse or potentially adverse material is found and it is not in the officer's record, the officer will be notified and

allowed to comment on the information. After an officer has commented, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) will determine if the information should be presented to the General/Flag officer promotion selection board.

336. Do you believe current Navy and Marine Corps procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending the President’s nomination for promotion or assignment are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?

As a retired U.S. Navy Flag Officer who experienced the administrative procedures for promotion at numerous ranks, I do believe that existing procedures and practices are sufficient to ensure that promotion and assignment decisions are based on sound, accurate information.

337. In your view, are these procedures and practices fair to the individual military officers proceeding through the promotion or assignment process? Please explain your answer.

I believe existing procedures and practices are fair to the officers under consideration. I am aware that should any officer’s promotion be withheld or delayed, he or she is given the opportunity to inspect the materials leading to the delay or withholding, provide statements and other explanatory material, as well as anything else the officer thinks relevant. In each case, the Department of the Navy must ensure that any material considered by the Secretary has been presented to the officer for review. Finally, Navy and Marine Corps personnel staffs provide a rigorous legal review of each promotion case, leading to a department-level legal review by the Judge Advocate General or Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant.

Professional Military Education

According to the NDS, DOD and Military Service Professional Military Education (PME) programs have stagnated—in that they focus on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity.

338. In your judgment, what is the most significant shortcoming of today’s Navy and Marine Corps PME systems?

In response to the Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy warning that our professional military education system had “stagnated,” I understand the Department of the Navy is implementing Education for Seapower Strategy 2020, which will improve PME by expanding educational opportunities for the force, ensuring that talent management systems reward intellectual development, and making important investments in the Naval University System.

339. What is your view of the Commandant of the Marine Corps’ proposal to replace “non-observed academic fitness reports” with an evaluation that documents

how well a Marine did at a professional school, assigns the Marine a class rank, and differentiates high-performing Marines from low performers?

I support the Commandant's proposal because continuously evaluating academic performance as part of an Officer's permanent record demonstrates the importance of education for warfighting readiness and will enable better talent management. If confirmed, I will work with the CNO to evaluate this approach for the Navy.

340. What changes or reform would you recommend to the PME system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the intellectual acumen, military leadership proficiency, and emotional maturity necessary to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps meet the national defense objectives of the future?

I understand the DON is working to implement Education for Seapower Strategy 2020. This comprehensive naval education initiative will focus on creating a continuum of learning for the entire force, integrating education into talent management frameworks, and strengthening our Naval University System. If confirmed, I will support implementation of the DON's Education for Seapower Strategy 2020 to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps leaders have the intellectual acumen, leadership proficiency, and emotional maturity necessary to meet the national defense objectives.

Comprehensive Review of Department of Navy Uniformed Military Legal Communities

In January 2020, the Department of the Navy released the results of its *Comprehensive Review of the Navy and Marine Corps Uniformed Legal Communities*. The review recommended changes to both Services' legal communities in the areas of culture, organization, education and training, resourcing, and unlawful command influence.

341. If confirmed, what would be your relationship with the General Counsel of the Navy, the Navy Judge Advocate General, and the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant?

It is my understanding that the General Counsel of the Navy serves as the principal legal advisor to the Secretary of the Navy and the chief legal officer for the DON. As the principal legal advisor, the General Counsel provides legal advice and counsel to the Secretary of the Navy on any matter or issue the Secretary of the Navy may direct. The General Counsel's legal opinions are controlling legal opinions within the DON. The General Counsel performs such functions as necessary for the proper application of the law and efficient delivery of legal services within the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the General Counsel.

The Judge Advocate General (JAG) of the Navy is the DON's senior uniformed attorney and serves as a Staff Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy, performing duties relating to any legal matter affecting the DON as the Secretary of the Navy may assign. The JAG is responsible for providing and supervising the provision of legal advice in the areas of military justice, national security law, naval administration, and legal assistance. It is

imperative that the Secretary of the Navy receive independent legal advice, and if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the JAG.

The Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) to the Commandant of the Marine Corps serves as the Marine Corps' senior uniformed attorney, providing the Secretary of the Navy independent legal advice on legal matters arising in the Marine Corps in the areas of military justice; national security law; civil and administrative law; legal assistance; and any other legal matters as directed by the Secretary of the Navy. It is imperative that the Secretary of the Navy receive independent legal advice, and if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the SJA.

342. If confirmed, what role would you play in shaping improvements in the legal communities of both the Navy and Marine Corps?

I understand the report on the Comprehensive Review of the Department of the Navy's Uniformed Legal Communities published in December 2019 noted several organizational, procedural, and resource-related issues that limit the efficiency and effectiveness of the Navy and Marine Corps uniformed legal communities.

I understand the Navy and the Marine Corps are currently working through the recommendations made in the report to improve their uniformed legal communities' culture, organization, education and training, resourcing, and training for the Fleet and uniformed legal communities, including training on unlawful command influence. If confirmed, I intend to receive regular updates on the status of these recommendations and will ensure appropriate resources are available to address any impediments which impact the ability of the Navy and Marine Corps uniformed legal communities to address current and future legal challenges.

Identifying and Addressing Conflicts of Interest

In the fallout of the Glenn Defense Marine Asia (GDMA) scandal, numerous Navy personnel, including a significant number of Navy admirals, were investigated for bribery, corruption, and violations of criminal conflict of interest laws and executive branch ethics regulations. Some were prosecuted and convicted in federal or military courts, and many more were subject to public censure and forced into early retirement from the Navy.

343. What actions has the Navy taken in response to the GDMA scandal to ensure that its officers and other personnel are trained—throughout their careers—on objective ethics and the Navy's core values?

The Department of the Navy must be held to the highest ethical standards. The trust and confidence in the Service among all personnel rest upon this core tenet being upheld. If confirmed, I will emphasize and prioritize this and hold accountable any member of the service found to have acted contrary to DON standards. Additionally, I will ensure that the annual ethics message continues to emphasize values-based decision-making rather than merely complying with minimum rules. I will reinforce the expectation that DON personnel act with integrity and walk the "ethical midfield" on every step and action taken. I will work to ensure that emphasis is placed on ethical leadership from the top

down and require senior leaders to take ownership of the ethics programs within their respective DON organizations.

I understand that the DON has conducted a thorough review of its ethics and professionalism programs to ensure the Department maximizes all available resources to emphasize ethics training for all Department personnel throughout their careers. In addition to training requirements identified in 5 C.F.R. § 2638 Subpart C, the Department provides in-depth ethics and professionalism training at the Senior Leaders Legal Course to prospective commanding officers, executive officers, and officers in charge; to attendees of the Senior Enlisted Academy; and at the Navy Supply Corps School. In 2018, the Naval War College established the College of Leadership and Ethics and the Chief of Naval Operations released an updated “Navy Leader Development Framework.” In addition, all new flag officers and senior executives receive ethics training at various flag officer and senior executive symposiums held annually. Moreover, all flag and general officer personnel are required to receive in-person ethics training annually from a certified ethics counselor. If confirmed, I will ensure that the General Counsel, Judge Advocate General, and the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps provide the highest quality of legal services, including ethics and standards of conduct training and advice, to the DON.

Simply put, to uphold these standards should be natural without doubt for any leader in the service...period. Therefore I will establish zero tolerance for any action or lack of ethical compliance that is contrary to the good order and discipline of the Department.

344. What resources has the Navy made available to provide flag officers and other Navy personnel the training, advice, and assistance they need to remain within ethical and legal constraints? Please explain your answer.

It is my understanding that the Department has several avenues by which flag officers and service members receive ethics and professionalism training throughout their careers. Specifically, new Navy flag officers and members of the Senior Executive Service are required to attend the New Flag and Senior Executive Training Symposium, which includes training on ethics and standards of conduct. As a Flag Officer, I attended similar training annually and always found it a good reminder of the expectations of leadership at that level. Furthermore, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations issues an annual ethics and standards of conduct memo for Flag Officers. As part of this effort, in 2012, the VCNO established a requirement that all Flag Officers and their staffs must receive in-person ethics and standards of conduct training and this requirement remains in effect.

The Marine Corps offers similar training for its General Officers and senior executives. Specifically, the Marine Corps hosts a General Officer Offsite and an Executive Offsite at least once per fiscal year, where attendees receive annual ethics training presented by the Counsel to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The Navy and Marine Corps provide in-depth ethics and professionalism training at various stages of career development, including to prospective commanding officers, executive officers, and senior enlisted leaders. In 2018, the Naval War College established the College of Leadership and Ethics as a venue for officers and senior civilians to continually learn and develop as leaders of character.

Each employee or service member who is new to the Department receives initial ethics training that meets the Office of Government Ethics requirements. Additionally, any civilian employee or service member who is required to file an Office of Government Ethics financial disclosure report, including commanding officers and executive officers of Navy shore installations, must complete interactive annual ethics training. The Office of the Assistant General Counsel for Ethics develops annual interactive on-line training that is available to all Department employees and meets the Office of Government Ethics annual training requirements. Furthermore, many commands require annual in-person ethics training for all employees. In addition to initial and annual ethics training, the Navy offers specialized ethics training for specific groups. Finally, as part of career transition, Flag and General Officers attend a pre-separation ethics brief that includes a review of post-Government employment conflict of interest restrictions on their future employment. To uphold unquestionable ethical standards is an imperative that must be supported by all leaders within the Service. If confirmed I will accept nothing less.

The DOD and Navy Civilian Personnel Workforce

DOD is the federal government’s largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD and Department of the Navy 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 (OPM).

345. In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Navy and Marine Corps in effectively and efficiently managing their civilian workforce?

I believe the biggest challenge facing the Department of the Navy is to effectively attract and retain a talented civilian workforce with the right mix of skills to meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy.

346. How will the Navy and Marine Corps sustain requisite civilian workforce capacity and capability during the impending workforce “bath tub”—a descriptor often used to graphically illustrate the impending loss of civilian workforce expertise due to the retirement of large numbers of baby boomers and the lack of experienced personnel to fill the resulting vacancies?

As I currently understand, the implementation of the Department of the Navy’s 2019-2030 Civilian Human Capital Strategy will move the Department toward enhanced mission readiness by ensuring the Department has the right people, with the right training, serving in the right places at the right time. These people-centric elements are critical to enhancing lethality, toughness, and sustainability of our DON operating forces across the spectrum of conflict into current and further operating environments.

347. In your view, how could the Navy and Marine Corps better utilize telework, while maintaining supervisory and employee accountability for high quality performance and the appropriate use of official time?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the DON policy on telework provides that employees and their supervisors enter into telework agreements that hold both supervisors and

employees accountable for the successful execution of telework arrangements and mission accomplishment. In my view, a sustained organizational culture of trust and accountability is the key, especially in providing telework opportunities to all employees who can perform work away from their worksite, as well as flexible work schedules for all positions in the DON. Finally, I believe the silver lining in the dark cloud of COVID-19 has been the operationalizing of a productive telework program which has greatly accelerated incorporating it across the Service. This has provided the opportunity to use lessons learned to enhance the program further and faster.

348. Have the Navy and Marine Corps' experiences to date with the new Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) evidenced the increased supervisor-employee engagement and meaningful "face-to-face" counseling sessions at the core of the program's objectives?

From what I have learned so far about the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal System (DPMAP), I support the tenets of the program which calls for increased supervisor-employee engagement throughout the performance cycle. I understand the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results show an increasing percentage of Department of the Navy employees say their supervisors have had conversations about their performance in the last 6 months. If confirmed, I will focus on efforts to maintain this positive feedback.

DOD and the Military Services often assert that the "time to hire" a civilian employee far exceeds the 80-day standard established by OPM.

349. If confirmed, what actions would you take to adjust Navy and Marine Corps' hiring policies and processes to bring the right civilian employees on board in the least amount of time?

If confirmed, I will ensure the DON continues to utilize to the maximum extent practical the direct hire authorities granted by Congress, and I will ensure the DON continues to look inward for additional ways to streamline and enhance the hiring process.

350. If confirmed, would you advocate for the creation of a new "title 10" DOD civilian workforce? If so, what should be the key components of this new personnel system, and how would it improve on title 5, in your view?

I am always willing to look at ways to improve our civilian workforce, but I am not familiar with this initiative. If confirmed, I will be glad to look into the matter and to continue to support the Secretary of Defense initiatives to enhance lethality and reform business practices which enable us to recruit and retain the talent needed to perform the work required to meet mission.

The President's budget includes a 1 percent pay raise for Federal civilian employees, versus the 2.5 percent due them under current statute, and freezes significant locality adjustments.

351. Are you concerned about the Department of the Navy’s ability to attract and retain the most qualified individuals for civilian service?

As stated previously, the biggest challenge facing the Department of the Navy is to effectively attract and retain a talented civilian workforce with the right mix of skills to meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I will continue with the goals set forth in the DON Civilian Human Capital Strategy 2019-2030 that will enable a transformational shift in how the DON will access, curate, and engage talent.

352. If you confirmed, what actions would you take to enhance the ability of the Department of the Navy to recruit and retain highly qualified civilian employees?

As previously stated, if confirmed, I will continue with the goals set forth in the DON Civilian Human Capital Strategy 2019-2030 that will enable a transformational shift in how the DON will access, curate, and engage talent.

Sexual Harassment in the Civilian Workforce

In responding to the inaugural DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey administered in 2016, 14.2 percent of female DOD employees and 5.1 percent of males indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

353. In your view, is civilian workforce harassment prevention and response training across the Navy adequate and helpful to employees? What about such training in the Marine Corps?

The Department of the Navy is deeply committed to a positive and healthy culture where sexual assault or harassment is never tolerated. If confirmed I will seek to reduce and ultimately prevent occurrences of sexual assault and harassment, including holding all offenders fully accountable. The DON has a robust system of training, programs, and resources to prevent and respond to claims of harassment and discrimination. I believe these programs cover the identification, prevention, and resolution of sexual harassment and reprisal prevention and are directed at all personnel from entry-level to executive level.

354. Do the Navy and Marine Corps’ methods for responding to complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination in the civilian workforce provide appropriate care and services for victims, as well as appropriate accountability for perpetrators?

I am aware that the Department of the Navy continuously reviews its policies and processes for responding to complaints of harassment and discrimination to ensure that it provides appropriate avenues of redress for victims and to take appropriate corrective measures when necessary. There should be no less of a standard of appropriate care and services provided to the civilian workforce than what is provided to the uniformed members. Any perpetrator, uniformed or civilian, determined to have committed such harassment should be held fully accountable under the law.

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.

355. 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 yes or no.

As a former senior staffer to a U.S. Senator, I fully recognize the responsibility I would have, if confirmed, to Congressional oversight. So yes; in accordance with applicable laws and the U.S. Constitution.

356. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

357. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

358. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

359. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

360. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

361. 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 yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.