

Veronica Daigle
Senate Armed Services Committee - Nomination Hearing
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness
Opening Statement

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of this Committee. It is truly an honor and a privilege to appear before you this morning as the President's nominee for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness. Thank you for considering my nomination.

I am grateful to the President and Secretary Mattis for this opportunity and for their confidence in me to assume this critical position. On a personal note, I would like to thank my husband, Bob, and my two sons, Mitchell and Justin, for their steadfast support and encouragement over the years. I simply would not be here today without them. Unfortunately, my son Mitchell could not be here today because he just started as a freshman in college and is hopefully in class. I'd also like to recognize my mother, Margaret, who taught me the value of hard work and always encouraged me to pursue my goals.

If confirmed, it would be an honor to serve as the Department's first Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and I want to thank the Committee for preserving this position in the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act. It is clear to me that this position will play a vital role in the Department's implementation of the National Defense Strategy and I commit to you that, if confirmed, I will focus my full attention on building the readiness of our Military Services and ensuring they have the resources needed to man, train, and equip to meet current missions and counter future threats.

To this end, if confirmed, some of my priorities would include:

- Establishing the readiness requirements to meet the National Defense Strategy objectives and associated recovery goals;

- Better aligning how the Department programs resources with how it measures readiness outcomes, in order to ensure we are meeting the Secretary's stated direction to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars; and
- Pursuing readiness-related reforms, such as improving the Department's readiness reporting system.

I have a decade of Federal government experience analyzing readiness – as a program examiner at the Office of Management and Budget for the Army's readiness account, and for the Defense Health Program, which funds military medical readiness. I have also served as the division director for readiness within the Department's Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) organization, and currently serve as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness. If confirmed, I will leverage this experience in program assessment and resource allocation to support the Secretary of Defense in his efforts to build readiness.

Speaking as the daughter of a Marine Corps pilot and the sister of a Marine Corps officer, if confirmed, this position would not only be a professional honor, but a deeply personal one for me as well.

Thank you again for your time and consideration, I look forward to your questions.