



THE HONORABLE RYAN D. MCCARTHY

Acting Secretary of the Army

Opening Statement

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to come before you today as the President's nominee for Secretary of the Army. I have testified previously in front of this committee and I hold it in the highest regard. I want to thank Secretary Esper for his confidence and the President for nominating me.

Yesterday, as we do every year, we paused in remembrance of the 9-11 attacks to honor the souls lost on that day and the subsequent 18 years of war. Just as the Pentagon building still bears the physical scars of the attack, we will never forget. 18 years ago today, I was beginning my preparation to deploy for the Afghanistan invasion. That day would fundamentally change my life and has brought me to this moment. The troops deployed in combat operations will remain my primary focus.

I would like to begin by recognizing my wife, Jennifer, who joins me here today. She, along with our daughter, Aleksandra, and the rest of my family, serve as the bedrock to who I am as a person. They provide

me with the strength and motivation to be the best husband, father, and man that I can be. To my parents, David and Kathleen, I want to publicly thank them for their love, support, and enduring guidance my entire life. To my sister, Shannon, and brother-in-law, Chase, thank you for being confidants and friends who are always there for me.

Finally, I want to thank the committee for the confidence and bipartisan support they have shown to the Army and the Department of Defense with the recent top line mark, which will provide the foundation for a budget deal that provides fiscal certainty in FY 2020 and FY 2021. We will work to maximize the utility of every dollar, with ruthless prioritization, and safeguard our most treasured national resource, the men and women serving in the Army, DA civilians, and their families.

I am an avid supporter of the National Defense Strategy and will continue the prioritization necessary for it to be realized. The NDS serves as our blueprint, minimizing any potential turbulence as a result of the transition of leaders. This strategy allows for a laser-like focus

against great power competition while institutionalizing the hard lessons learned in Counter-Insurgency and the violent extremist organization fight. If confirmed as Secretary of the Army, I will continue to champion the Army Strategy and vision, with an emphasis on readiness, modernization, and reform.

It is only through the care of our people that these priorities will be achieved. I am encouraged by the retention numbers as a measure of performance. In FY 19, the Army met over 100% of our retention goals without waivers, and we are on track to achieve our revised accession goal without dilution in quality.

If confirmed, I intend to ensure Soldiers and their families have the resources to thrive. This includes quality and safe housing, reliable health care, and access to childcare. Taking care of the force leads to a better quality of life, retention of world-class Soldiers, and ultimately improved readiness.

I am equally committed to the prevention of sexual assault and harassment in our formations, which tears at the very fabric of our institution. Leadership at every level must build a team of teams, protecting our brothers and sisters to our left and right, reinforcing there is no place for suicide and sexual assault and harassment in our Army.

If confirmed, the Army leadership team will continue to build upon the reform agenda we established over the last 24 months. Significant work remains to solidify the modernization enterprise and finish what we collectively started.

Congressional support has immeasurably helped the Army, and I look forward to working with this committee and Congress to fulfilling the responsibility of providing the best-manned, equipped, and trained force our Nation needs to meet its objectives.

I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.