

**OPENING STATEMENT**  
**SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**CONFIRMATION HEARING**

**CLEARED**  
**For Open Publication**

Jan 14, 2020

Department of Defense  
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and Members of the Committee –  
Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and a special thank you to the members of your staffs who met with me prior to this hearing.

I would also like to thank President Trump for nominating me and Secretary Esper and Secretary McCarthy for their trust and confidence in recommending me for the opportunity to continue to serve.

Joining me today are the three most important people in my life. My wife, Jennifer, who also served in the United States Navy, and my two children, both of whom serve in the education field. Amanda teaches children with special needs in Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia and Philip is a software engineer for Pearson, an education company. My family gives me the strength, support, love, and encouragement to serve and be the best husband and father I can be.

Both my parents passed away years ago. They were part of what Tom Brokaw coined "The Greatest Generation." On June 6, 1944, my father crawled ashore on Omaha Beach on the Normandy coast. That same day, my mother operated a drill press at Douglas Aircraft in Los Angeles helping build the Dauntless Dive-bomber - she truly was "Rosie the Riveter." They instilled in my brother Scott and I a spirit of service that we both live by today - Scott is a Deputy Sheriff in Wyoming.

Finally, I want to thank this committee for the unwavering and bi-partisan support you provide to our total Army - our Soldiers, civilians, and their families.

Since, January 2, 2018, it has been my honor to serve as the 22d General Counsel of the Army. When Secretary McCarthy assumed the duties of the Secretary of the Army in July 2019, I was entrusted to perform the duties of the Under Secretary until my formal nomination about a month ago.

It has been the privilege of a lifetime to serve with Secretary McCarthy and the entire Army leadership team, including the Chief of Staff of the Army, General James McConville and the Vice Chief, General Joe Martin, and Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Grinston. This has reinforced my perspective of the vital importance for the Army to achieve all of its top priorities - priorities derived from the National Defense Strategy which is the foundation for the Army's Strategy and the Army Vision. Secretary McCarthy remains laser-focused on the Army's priorities of Readiness, Modernization, and Reform.

Also, the Army's senior leadership has adopted General McConville's bedrock philosophy that the Army is a people business – and our people – our Soldiers, Civilians, Families, and Retirees – are the Army's greatest strength. This philosophy has been a critical driver to numerous initiatives directed at improving the quality of life for our people.

If confirmed, in addition to my role as the Chief Management Officer of the Army, I will focus on confronting four challenges I believe we face as an Army: suicide, sexual assault/harassment, domestic violence, and family housing.

In 2018, our annual suicide report documented the highest suicide rate in our ranks since the Department of Defense began tracking such data in 2001. As the General Counsel, I see every report of a Soldier who takes his or her own life. Although we have numerous programs to address this problem – we must do more.

Likewise, in 2018, a DoD biennial survey found an increase in the prevalence of sexual assault, primarily for female service members ages 17 to 24. As I testified before this Committee two years ago - one sexual assault is one too many.

We must do more – and we must do better.

Today, 113,000 Soldiers are deployed to 140 countries world-wide. They defend our nation; they partner with our allies; they fight our wars. They are the very best of our nation. If confirmed, I will do my very best to support them.

It has been my great privilege to serve again. If confirmed, I pledge to you that I will assist Secretary McCarthy in fulfilling his Title 10 responsibilities of providing the best manned, trained, and equipped armed force for our nation.

I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination and I welcome your questions. Thank You.