

David L. Norquist
Senate Armed Services Committee
Nomination Hearing – Deputy Secretary of Defense
Opening Statement

Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and members of this Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be Deputy Secretary of Defense. I am humbled by the confidence that the President has shown in recommending me, and I thank this Committee for its consideration of my nomination.

My family would be here today but this week is our annual family reunion so they are watching with their aunts, uncles, and cousins in California. Even in their absence, I would like to express my appreciation to my wife, Stephanie, for her love, her dedication to our family, and her willingness to support me in this endeavor, as well as my children, Warren, Elise, and Vivian. They are a constant reminder that the decisions we make today determine the America our families will live in tomorrow.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the men and women in uniform, our civilian workforce, and their families. We may spend a lot of time talking about budgets, weapon systems, technologies, and doctrine, but our most important asset is our people. When the rubber meets the road, it all comes down to the individual men and women serving this Nation—their bravery, courage, professionalism, sense of duty, and selflessness. Everything we do is about them—and ensuring they have what they need to prevail.

I began my career as a Federal civil servant, a GS-9 Program/Budget analyst working for the Department of the Army. Over the past 30 years, I've worked at multiple levels of the national security establishment: at a field site overseas, at a Major Command, at Army Headquarters, on the staff of the House Appropriations Committee - Subcommittee on Defense, at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and three times within the Pentagon including my current position as Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller). Each of these positions has had a common thread: protecting this Nation's

security while safeguarding the taxpayers' money. It is a profound responsibility, but I believe in this mission passionately.

When I sat before you two years ago for my confirmation hearings for Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), I made two pledges should I be confirmed. First, I promised that after years of sequestration that undermined the readiness of our military and delayed its modernization, I would work within the Administration, and with Congress, to support robust defense budgets that fully support our Department's mission. Second, I pledged that after 24 years, the Department would finally conduct a comprehensive financial statement audit.

Over the last two years, in close partnership with Congress and this Committee, the Administration has proposed and Congress has supported robust defense budgets—and on November 15, 2018, the Department of Defense completed its first-ever department-wide full scope financial statement audit. This is a start, but there is more work to be done.

The role of the Deputy Secretary of Defense is to support the Secretary in implementing his vision. Since 2018, each Secretary has made it clear that their vision is the National Defense Strategy and that the Department will remain laser focused on implementing it.

Should I be confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense, I will work tirelessly with you to implement the NDS's three lines of effort: restoring readiness and modernizing key capabilities to build a more lethal force, strengthening alliances and attracting new partners, and reforming the Department for greater performance, accountability, and affordability.

These are challenging times, from the continuing threat of terrorism and the provocative actions of rogue states such as Iran and North Korea to the return of great power competition. In addition, we now have two new warfighting domains—cyber and space—for which to build capabilities and doctrine; and new technologies such as: artificial

intelligence, hypersonics, and lasers; which promise to drive new concepts and ways of fighting.

These dynamics create challenges and opportunities for us. But the last few years have demonstrated how much can be achieved with a clear vision and strong bipartisan support.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for its consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to answering your questions.