

Mr. Patrick Shanahan
Senate Armed Services Committee
Nomination Hearing - Deputy Secretary of Defense
Opening Statement

Senator Cantwell, thank you very much for your kind remarks, thoughtful introduction and enduring support. Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed and the members of this committee, I greatly appreciate the welcome and time you have afforded me this morning.

I am grateful to the President and Secretary Mattis for nominating me to the position of Deputy Secretary of Defense.

I would like to acknowledge my three children that accompanied me today – Kayla, Will, and Jack. I also want to take a moment to recognize and honor my parents, Jo-Anne and Michael Shanahan.

I am the oldest of three boys. My father, Michael Shanahan, instilled in my brothers and I from as early as I can remember.... service before self.

My father was an Army veteran who served in Vietnam. He taught his boys to love their country and value its freedoms.

My father served in law enforcement for over 25 years. He taught us to treat people fairly, respect law and order, and the importance of protecting the community.

My father started a food bank in 1982 that is on-going. To date, they have distributed over 200 million pounds of food to the needy. He showed us, that, with initiative and outreach, good ideas can scale to make a big difference.

At age 52, my father was afflicted with Parkinson's. He battled that savage disease for 17 years before passing...and I never once heard him complain. My father modelled, for us, what it means to have grit...that is...the ability to maintain an indomitable spirit and persevere no matter the challenge.

I so wish he were here today...and I know what he would say to me...don't screw this up.

My mother, Jo-Anne, could not be here. She is here in spirit.

My mother has always supported me unconditionally. She taught my brothers and I to support others unconditionally.

What I appreciate most about her that I would like to share is:

She taught me to truly believe in myself and that I could do anything I set my mind to;

She taught my brothers and I that it is not the size of your muscles that matter it is the size of your heart;

She taught me to be a better parent, a gift I can never repay.

Her words to me for today were ... you'll do fine.

I am here to earn your support. I aspire to join a strong and capable DoD team. I aspire to help them dominate and win. I aspire to usher in a new age of innovation and effectiveness in the Department.

I believe I have prepared myself to contribute as Deputy Secretary of Defense.

I bring over three decades of leadership honed at America's largest manufacturing exporter. I have led large, geographically-dispersed organizations focused on developing and fielding complex, engineered products. I have experience converting technological innovation into operational capability.

I bring with me a formula for leadership that has a record of delivering affordable, high-performing business systems and operations under adverse conditions. Leadership casts a long shadow, and strong leadership can create teams that achieve ambitious change at scale.

I believe my skillset strongly complements that of Secretary Mattis. He is a master strategist with deep military and foreign policy experience. As Deputy Secretary of Defense and Secretary Mattis' Chief Operating Officer, I bring strong execution skills with background in technology development and business management – areas this Committee in particular has identified for reforms.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with Congress and the Department to deliver on our commitments to our men and women in uniform, their families, to defend the Nation and be relentless stewards of the taxpayers' money.

I appreciate the time afforded me today to answer your questions.