

Statement of Rear Admiral Gregory J. Slavonic, USN (ret)

Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Senate Armed Services Committee

May 10, 2018

Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

It is an honor and privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Words cannot adequately express how I feel, should I be confirmed to once again serve in the Department of the Navy and the People of the United States.

Before I begin I would like to thank President Trump, Secretary Mattis and Secretary Spencer for their support and confidence in me to serve in this position. I would also like to thank Senator Lankford for the opportunity to return to Washington DC and serve him and the people of Oklahoma for the past three and half years. Most of all I want to thank my wife Molly who has been my partner for 46 years of marriage and truly understands what it means to be a "Navy spouse." Molly, my daughters Kara and Maggie and son Blake were unable to be here today but I know they are here in spirit.

I have had the honor to wear the uniform of our nation for 34 years and serve with some of the brightest military and civilian leaders in the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I intend to once again bring those experiences of success to the position for which I have been nominated.

If confirmed, I promise to continue the excellence that has been the hallmark of the U.S. Military and specifically the Navy and Marine Corps. I will dutifully carry out the laws of this great nation and most importantly ensure that US Navy and Marine Corps personnel are of the highest caliber and are properly trained and prepared for all missions that they are called to undertake.

I am fully aware of the challenges that face our military, especially the Navy. But I also know I the military is full of very bright minds and determined individuals and I won't have to face challenges alone. If confirmed, I will have dedicated military and civilian personnel that I can count on and as a team we can work together to solve problems and meet future challenges.

Looking to the future should you confirm my nomination, I have identified two objectives which I would like to address immediately:

First is to ensure the people within our Navy-Marine Corps team – uniform and civilian – are always our first priority. I learned during my 34 year Navy career – and it appears to continue today –that we ask our military to “do more with less”. At some point this cycle must be broken. People are our greatest and most powerful asset. We must ensure they have the tools to accomplish the mission.

Second is to ensure we continue to have the best and brightest serving in the Navy and Marine Corps. There is a war for talent and we must win. As former Chief of Naval Operations ADM Vern Clark once told a group of fellow flag officers - “we are not in the business of finishing second.” This statement is as true today as it was 15 years ago.

If confirmed, I commit to working with this Committee and every Member of Congress to address any concerns that may arise and to be accessible and transparent – after all, I believe it is in the best interest of our military to work hand-in-hand with the Legislative Branch to address any and all issues that affect the Navy, Marine Corps and the security of our Nation.

I want to reiterate my appreciation to the Chairman and Ranking Member and the Committee Staff for their courtesies and professionalism that I have been shown. I look forward to your questions.