

Mr. Carlos Del Toro
Nominee to be Secretary of the Navy
Senate Armed Services Committee
July 13, 2021

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Inhofe, and Distinguished Members of the Committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Secretary of the Navy. I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination, and I hope this hearing will help earn your trust.

I want to thank Senator Warner for his kind words of introduction.

If I may Mr. Chairman, I would like to quickly recognize and introduce to the Committee my wife of 38 years, Betty, who will undoubtedly serve as a constant reminder to me of the sacrifices of military families. As long as she has my ear – and she always will, I will work tirelessly, if confirmed, to care for our military families. I also want to thank my beloved children, Chris, Marcel, Brice, and John who could not be here today, but who collectively put up with 17 moves over 22 years in the Navy.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to testify before you and am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Austin for extending me this potential opportunity to again serve our Sailors, Marines, our Navy Civilian Workforce, their families, and our nation. As President Biden said in his Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, “democracy holds the key to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity.” I know the value of freedom and democracy because I was born in a country with neither. As a child, my family and I fled an autocratic communist regime and settled in our new home, the United States of America. At age 17, I joined the Navy and served proudly for 26 years. The United States Navy - Marine Corps Team is sacred to our basic freedoms and national security. Should this committee and this Senate vote to confirm me, I will always remember and honor what we are sworn to protect and defend.

As President Biden has previously stated, our nation is at an inflection point and we face challenges as severe as they are unprecedented. China, with its authoritarian system and its determined incursion into the South China Sea and globally, presents a constant naval threat. Russia and other resurgent powers also threaten stability. Our adversaries are even targeting the Arctic theater where we must now also compete despite its harsh operating conditions. We must meet these challenges from a position of demonstrated strength and unity.

China's rising military expenditures fueled by a growing economy coupled with their global adventurism means that we can no longer take U.S. naval superiority for granted. Access to contested waters requires more robust capabilities and capacity. This demands new thinking

about how we invest our defense dollars. I was pleased to see the President's budget request recognize this challenge and invest billions of dollars toward improving readiness and for future capabilities. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing these capabilities to ensure our Navy - Marine Corps team has what it needs to project strength and provide a credible deterrent to China and other adversaries.

The climate crisis also demands U.S. Navy investment precisely *because* it exacerbates every other challenge our Navy faces, including great power competition. Already, installation resilience is an issue, with vital installations facing threats from rising sea levels. Building energy and environmental resilience into our installations will make them more combat effective. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our community partners, at home and abroad to address these complicated issues.

As Secretary Austin has repeatedly stated we must build teamwork and always care for those that defend our nation. We must continue to build a Navy - Marine Corps Team where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We must recruit from the widest possible talent pool. Diversity of experience, thought, and background makes for a more combat effective team. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our leadership to make sure every Sailor, Marine, and Civilian in the Department feels safe, welcome, and included.

Creating such a force also means we must hold accountable those who do *not* treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of who *they* are.

There is also the inexcusable issue of military sexual harassment and assault. It must end. I appreciate the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, and if confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Congress to find impactful solutions.

In closing, I again thank our Sailors, Marines, Civilian Personnel, and their families whose professionalism, commitment, and abilities never cease to amaze me.

I also thank my parents in heaven for summoning the courage to leave Cuba and communism with me in tow as an infant and for having both worked two jobs so that my brother, Robert, and I could live and prosper in freedom.

To President Biden and Secretary Austin, thank you for entrusting me with a sacred duty - to support the men and women who defend our nation's interests and our citizens.

I look forward to answering your questions and I hope, earning your trust, as well.

Thank You.

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Mr. Carlos Del Toro
Nominee to be Secretary of the Navy

Duties and Responsibilities

1. What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Navy?

The Secretary of the Navy leads the Department of the Navy, including his or her staff and the Navy Marine Corps team in all matters as its Chief Executive Officer, responsible under Title 10 U.S. Code 8013 and subject to the authority of the Secretary of Defense. His or her principal functions include organizing, recruiting, supplying, equipping, training, servicing, mobilizing, de-mobilizing, maintaining, and construction, outfitting, and repair of military equipment, buildings, and other real properties.

2. What background and experience do you possess that render you “most highly qualified” to perform such duties and responsibilities?

I possess over 40 years of experience, leading organizations in both the military and the private sector during times of peace and war. My subject matter expertise in the Navy for 26 years and my current experience as a Chief Executive Officer of a “highly successful” small business for 17 years renders me “most highly qualified” to serve as Secretary of the Navy.

3. In particular, what management and leadership experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed?

I would apply numerous and very diverse leadership and management experiences to my service as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed.

I currently serve as a Chief Executive Officer of a small business that I founded 17 years ago, providing program management services to several federal agencies. As such, we serve as an extension of the Government’s Program Management Teams.

In the private sector, I have served on numerous Boards of Directors and Advisory Boards that have gained me community service and engagement experience relevant to serving as Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed. I currently serve on the Stimson Board; the Virginia Governor’s Board of Visitors to Mount Vernon; and the Virginia Committee on Higher Education Board of Visitors Appointments. I have previously served on the Board of a Public University; the Foundation Board of a Community College; and numerous other not-for-profit boards, including Rappahannock Goodwill Industries and the DC Metro area Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Boards.

During my tenure in the military, I gained extensive leadership and management experience fulfilling responsibilities as:

1. The Senior Military Assistant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense’s Office of Program Analysis & Evaluation (now CAPE);
2. The Pre-Commissioning and later Commanding Officer of our nation’s then newest Arleigh Burke Destroyer, overseeing the construction of the ship and initial training of the

crew;

3. White House Fellow and Special Assistant to the Director of the White House Office of Management & Budget, focused mostly on National Security & International Affairs related agencies;
4. Director of Training for all Aegis Class Cruisers & Destroyers;
5. Executive Officer of a Cruiser stationed in Asia, operating extensively with Japan and South Korean naval forces;
6. Program Manager of a satellite ground station;
7. Engineering Department Head aboard a destroyer and an aircraft carrier during Operations Desert Storm, Desert Shield, and Provide Comfort;
8. Division Officer at the end of the Cold War conducting anti-submarine operations in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

4. If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense regarding the organization and operations of the Department of the Navy?

As a veteran of the Armed Forces and as a small business owner, I have come to understand that no matter what organization I have been associated with, a critical review of an organizational structure, policies, practices, and procedures can reveal areas that can be improved upon to ensure the organization is operating effectively and efficiently. Although I do not have any specific recommendations at this time, I am interested in reviewing the effectiveness to the Department's Programming, Planning, Budgeting, and Execution system to determine if it is responsive and agile in the era of rapid technology development to support the Department of the Navy. If confirmed, I would like the opportunity to thoroughly review the Department of the Navy's organizational structures, policies, practices and procedure prior to making any specific recommendations.

In its report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission cautioned, "there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy."

5. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as Secretary of the Navy epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws? (DUSN)

One of the foundational elements and attributes of the United States military has been the establishment of a non-partisan culture that carries out and executes the orders as directed by the civilian leadership of the military. Ensuring we maintain this non-partisan culture, focused on respect, dignity, and unity of action, in the defense of this Nation, is critical in ensuring our military remains one of the most well respected military forces in the world. Should I be confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Civilian leadership of the Department's staff to continue to build upon, reinforce, and strengthen these foundational elements to ensure our Marines and Sailors have the trust and confidence of the leaders and institutions that direct them.

6. What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed

as Secretary of the Navy?

I believe our most significant challenge is the long-term, strategic competition with peer competitors, China and Russia. This long-term challenge is complicated by enduring and emerging threats causing episodic disruptions in the international order by other state and non-state actors. If confirmed, I will lead the Department in accelerating its progress to align strategy to mission; match resources to strategy; adapt existing systems, develop new systems, and demonstrate new ways to use them in order to increase awareness, accelerate decision making and disrupt our adversaries, and deter or defeat, if necessary, this broad range of threats.

7. What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed, and on what timeline?

Deterring Russia and China is a critical national security priority, requiring a robust “Joint Force” approach. The Navy and Marine Corps have been pursuing a force structure to protect and defend our national interests with a clear-eyed focus on China and Russia. If confirmed, to increase awareness, accelerate decisions and disrupt our adversaries, I will lead the Department’s efforts to align and execute our maritime strategy in support of our national security interests as defined by the President and the Secretary of Defense. I will then match resources to that strategy. The Department of the Navy is also uniquely positioned to foster and develop cooperation with our allies and international partners as part of that strategy. Historically, the Naval Services have been a major contributor to global diplomacy. If confirmed, I will fully support the Secretary of Defense’s efforts in cooperation with the State Department to build new relationships and strengthen existing ones in the pursuit of national security. I will also master the data and technology space and leverage accelerated prototyping, experimentation and acquisition to rapidly develop the required systems and capabilities to disrupt our adversaries’ ability to affect the battle space.

National Defense Strategy

The 2018 NDS prioritizes “great power competition and conflict” with China and Russia as the primary challenges with which the United States must contend, while also recognizing the need to deter and counter rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran, and moving to a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism.

8. In your view, what, if any, changes should be considered in reshaping the NDS, taking into account developments since 2018?

The 2018 NDS identified China and Russia as our strategic competitors and the focus of its implementation. The President and Secretary Austin have affirmed those priorities, which I fully support. Recent challenges, such as the coronavirus pandemic and extreme weather events related to climate change highlight the importance of Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) and a whole of government approach to national security issues. Secretary Austin has emphasized the importance of DSCA moving forward and I see DSCA as a critical enabler to any U.S. response to a future pandemic or other large-scale catastrophe.

9. In your view, how should the Coast Guard factor into NDS implementation?

The Coast Guard is a naval service and an important partner that brings important law enforcement authorities to the high seas. Together we provide unique and complementary capabilities and capacities to secure our maritime interests at home and abroad. If confirmed, I will continue the work already in place with the Department of Homeland Security and the Commandant of the Coast Guard to ensure effective inter-operability and continued cooperation.

Secretary of Defense Austin has announced that the Department will conduct a Global Posture Review to assess requirements for military capability.

10. If confirmed, what role would you expect to play in that review?

I understand that the Department of the Navy has been actively involved in the ongoing Global Posture Review, and is participating in the supporting analyses and decision forums. Should I be confirmed as Secretary, I will make it a priority to become fully informed on this effort to guide the Department's continued engagement in the GPR, providing our naval warfighting perspective and helping to constructively shape future force posture decisions in support of Navy and Marine Corps requirements for great power competition.

Navy and Marine Corps Readiness

11. How would you assess the current readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps —across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute their required missions?

I am confident that the Navy and Marine Corps team stands ready today to execute their missions, deter conflict in any domain, and if necessary, fight and win against any challenger. I recognize readiness challenges exist and the Services are working through the backlogs in maintenance, modernization, and procurement. My understanding is that the Navy and Marine Corps are making steady progress in recovering from and responding to these readiness challenges, in addition to modernizing and transforming the force in ways that most effectively meet the demands of strategic competition to execute the defense strategy. If confirmed, ensuring that our Sailors and Marines have the materiel, equipment, and training to execute their missions will be one of my top priorities.

12. In your view, what are the priority missions for which *current and future* Navy and Marine Corps forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?

Maintaining the nation's advantage at sea remains the most important peacetime and warfighting mission. It requires generating integrated all-domain naval power, strengthening alliances and partnerships, prevailing in day-to-day competition, controlling the seas to deny the objectives of our adversaries, and modernizing the future force. However, the threats to global security are rapidly changing and no longer limited to conventional warfare. Pandemics and other biological risks, the escalating climate crisis, cyber and digital threats,

international economic disruptions, protracted humanitarian crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all pose profound and, in some cases, existential dangers. The Navy and Marine Corps play an active role within the Joint Force in responding to all of these threats in order to defend our national security interests. The Navy and Marine Corps team also needs to be trained and ready to support global security missions, to include humanitarian and pandemic response, tackling the climate crisis, enhancing diversity within our force, and protecting economic trade across free and open seas.

13. If confirmed, how would you prioritize maintaining readiness in the near term, as compared to modernizing the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure future readiness?

If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to find the best balance of investments across readiness, capability, capacity, and taking care of our people. All are critical priorities to defend our nation – we cannot field a hollow force. The operating environment of the future will likely not afford us the luxury of time to project force, so having modernized forces in the right places, sufficient size and readiness will be the key to sustaining deterrence, maintaining the peace, and if deterrence fails, then fighting and winning. If confirmed, I will seek risk analysis and assessments to make strategy-driven, data-informed decisions on where risk can be managed and accepted.

14. Does the Department of the Navy have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as the Secretary of the Navy, in measuring its readiness to execute the broad range of potential Navy missions envisioned by 2018 NDS and associated operational plans—from low-intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted high intensity fights? Please explain your answer.

I understand that the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy titled “Advantage at Sea” builds on the National Defense Strategy and provides guidance to the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard for the next decade to prevail across a continuum of competition, from day-to-day competition to being in crisis to times of conflict. If confirmed, I will fully familiarize myself with the Department’s analytic capabilities and tools in measuring readiness and the ability to execute missions. In addition, I will work closely with the Department of Defense to fully leverage analytic capabilities and tools across the Joint Force. If adjustments are needed, then it will be my responsibility to ensure the Department develops these capabilities, in partnership with the Department of Defense, to ensure we can make strategy-driven, data-informed decisions across the continuum of competition.

15. To what extent has Optimized-Fleet Response Plan (O-FRP) been successful in stabilizing rotational deployments and making them more predictable?

As I understand it, OFRP has been generally successful in generating forces in a more stable, predictable, sustainable, and disciplined manner. In addition, I understand that the Chief of Naval Operations directed an assessment of the Navy’s force generation model in 2019. My understanding is that this assessment re-validated OFRP as a sound construct. I am aware of challenges to OFRP due to high operational tempo and ship maintenance delays, and that the Navy is aggressively working to improve on-time maintenance. If confirmed, I plan to work

closely with the Navy to regularly assess OFRP – making improvements as needed.

16. Given the current operational tempo, are the Navy and the Marine Corps able to maintain desired dwell ratios?

It is my understanding that over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic and Combatant Commander demand for forces necessitated multiple extended Carrier Strike Group deployments. I know from my own military experience that this results in increased stress on the force, including impacts to maintenance schedules, training, and quality of life for Sailors and their families. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Navy and Marine Corps to assess and attempt to improve dwell ratios while continuing to assess and meet the demands of the Global Force Management Allocation Plan. We will additionally adjust based on the outcome of the Department of Defense's ongoing review of global force posture.

National Security Budget

In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). The President has released the DOD budget for fiscal year 2022 which would not provide such an increase, but would be essentially flat.

17. If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of funding for the Department of the Navy?

If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the Department's funding by our ability to meet the mission of the Department to recruit, train, equip, and organize to deliver combat-ready naval forces to win conflicts and wars while maintaining security and deterrence through sustained forward presence. Fundamental to measuring adequacy of funding is analyzing, assessing, and measuring risk so we can make informed recommendations as we develop each budget.

18. Do you believe that the Navy and the Marine Corps require 3-5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP to implement the NDS effectively? Please explain your answer.

Recent testimony by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps highlighted the key factors the Navy and Marine Corps face in sustaining and modernizing the naval power necessary to address the potential challenges posed by our nation's strategic competitors. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Service Chiefs to understand the resource requirements generated from their classified analysis and to examine opportunities for reform and efficiency to maximize the return for every dollar received. The President's Interim National Security Strategy commits to ensuring our armed forces are equipped to deter our adversaries and to defeat emerging threats. Secretary Austin has committed to matching resources to strategy. Numerous strategic reviews are on-going and Secretary Austin has announced his intent to develop a National Defense Strategy that supports President Biden's strategy. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of

the Navy fully supports Secretary Austin's direction for a more integrated Joint Force that leverages our allies and partners while also ensuring that appropriate funding for unique naval contributions to our Nation's defense are prioritized within our budget requests.

19. Given the President's FY 2022 budget request, will the Navy and Marine Corps be adequately funded to fight one major power rival, while maintaining deterrence and stability in other regions of the world? Please explain your answer.

The FY 2022 President's Budget resources the capabilities most needed for strategic competition and drives investments that advance key priorities to defend the Nation, take care of our people, and succeed through teamwork. I agree with Secretary Austin that the FY 2022 budget request reflects a commitment to continued U.S. naval dominance, including a properly sized and well-positioned defense industrial base. Today, the Navy and Marine Corps, as part of the Joint Force, stand ready to deter conflict in any domain and, if necessary, to fight and win against any challenger. Much has changed since I served in uniform; if confirmed, I will work closely with the Service Chiefs to understand the classified analysis that informs future budget requests and ensure that we remain the world's preeminent naval power.

20. Given the President's FY 2022 budget request, will Navy and Marine Corps' budgets be adequate to execute operations, maintain readiness, procure needed weapons and equipment, modernize capabilities, and sustain sailor, Marine, and family quality of life? Please explain your answer.

As I currently understand, the FY 2022 President's Budget is sufficient to meet current mission requirements. Developing a properly prioritized balance between readiness, modernization and capacity, while ensuring a healthy defense industrial base, will be critical in future budgets as the Department keeps pace with China and its regional ambitions. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for the resources needed to sustain naval forces and will work with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Service Chiefs to strike the correct balance in our investments.

Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that not later than 10 days after the President's submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief must submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of his or her armed force.

21. If confirmed, would you agree to support the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps in providing their unfunded priorities lists to Congress in a timely manner?

Yes.

Alliances and Partnerships

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are one of our greatest comparative advantages in competition with near-peer rivals.

22. What do you see as the role of the Department of the Navy in building relationships and interoperability with allies and partners?

In order to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges, we must have allies and partners who are aligned with our national security objectives and interoperable with our own maritime forces. The Department of the Navy should work closely with allies and partners through bilateral and multilateral engagements to strengthen their maritime capabilities and to increase our ability to operate effectively together to deter threats and defeat our adversaries. The Department of the Navy has many tools available to strengthen relationships with allies and partners and to ensure the United States is and remains their security partner of choice in the face of growing foreign influence from our strategic competitors, especially China.

23. If confirmed as Secretary of the Navy, what specific actions would you take to prioritize and strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships, and take advantage of opportunities for international cooperation?

If confirmed, I will focus the Department of the Navy's security cooperation efforts on strengthening our maritime partnerships and alliances, and empowering allies and partners to improve their maritime capabilities as well as to increase their interoperability with us and among one another. Through a range of Security Cooperation opportunities -- bilateral and multilateral exercises; cooperative deployments, key leader engagements, support to armament cooperation, and training and education of and with our partner and allied military personnel -- we can strengthen our partnerships and enable our allies and partners to face regional and global threats alongside our own maritime forces. Using these and other means, we can also build new partnerships with others and enable them to contribute to our collective effort to deter threats and counter our strategic competitors.

24. What would you do, if confirmed, to support the seamless integration of partner nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB)?

It is my understanding that the defense industrial base relies on both domestic production and material and components from other nations within the National Technology and Industrial Base (NTIB), and that the Navy is responsible to ensure programs are procured in a cost efficient manner while also ensuring that critical industrial capabilities are maintained domestically or within the NTIB for national security purposes. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for cooperative programs between the DoD and partner nations within the NTIB in order to accomplish the Navy mission.

Indo-Pacific Region

25. What are the key areas in which the Department of the Navy must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to deter Chinese aggression and, if necessary, prevail in a potential conflict with China?

China continues to develop sophisticated military capabilities to include surface, air, and undersea platforms, while demonstrating aggressive behavior that flouts the rules-based order, and threatens regional stability and security. Meeting this challenge will require a combination of greater investment and increased actions: Investment in modernization of

weapons and systems; force posture assessment and infrastructure investment; focusing priorities to the Indo-Pacific region; and continued engagement with allies and partners.

If confirmed, I will lead the Department of the Navy's efforts to support the joint force to meet the challenges presented by China. I pledge to work with the Congress to develop, field, and maintain a robust, integrated Navy and Marine Corps team of combat-ready forces.

26. How would you assess the threat to Navy forces and facilities from Chinese missile forces? In your assessment, have Navy investments, posture shifts and/or new operational concepts sufficiently addressed this threat?

I would assess it as significant. However, a more detailed response to this question requires specific information to which I do not currently have access. I am aware that China continues to develop and field sophisticated military capabilities to include an increasingly sizable and sophisticated conventional missile force. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are increasing emphasis on controlling the seas in conflict to provide joint and allied forces with the freedom of maneuver to protect our national interests. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to thoroughly examine this topic in order to make informed decisions and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

27. In your assessment, what are the priority investments the Department of the Navy could make that would help implement the NDS in the Indo-Pacific?

I believe conducting forward operations; gaining greater access to operational and logistics bases and gaining the right force posture in Indo-Pacific region are essential to preserving the international order and maintaining our deterrence position. Investments in a relevant force structure with the right capabilities and capacities to deter and defeat adversaries are also critical. In addition, we must prioritize the training and exercising of naval forces, especially in concert with regional allies to establish strategic maritime partnerships and enhance interoperability with our allies in support of a free and open system in the Indo-Pacific.

28. What is your current assessment of the risk of operational failure in a conflict with China as a result of a critical logistics failure?

I am unable to address the specific operational risks in a conflict with China; however, I recognize that our logistics capabilities and capacity are critical to any successful campaign and especially in a denied environment against peer competitors. Assessing naval logistics capabilities in support of naval and joint operations will be one of my top priorities if I am confirmed.

Europe

29. What are the key areas in which the Navy must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to deter Russian aggression and, if necessary, prevail in a potential conflict with Russia?

Russia remains determined to enhance its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage. As it continues to develop its military capabilities, the Russian pattern has been to apply military force and coercion to destabilize international order.

In the face of strategic challenges from an increasingly destabilizing Russia, we will assess the appropriate structure, capabilities, and sizing of the force, and, working with Congress, shift our emphasis from unneeded legacy platforms and weapons systems to free up resources for investments in the cutting-edge technologies and capabilities that will determine our competitive advantage in the future.

30. In your view, are there investments the Navy should prioritize for the competition with Russia below the level of direct military conflict in order to counter Russian malign influence and hybrid warfare operations?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. I am aware that the maritime domain is particularly vulnerable to malign behavior below the threshold of war and our competitors are exploiting new approaches to advance their interests, to include using social media, infiltrating global supply chains, and leveraging space and cyber. I believe it is important that we recognize these threats and compete in these spaces. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to thoroughly examine this topic in order to make informed decisions and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

Acquisition

Congress expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the other Service Chiefs.

31. If confirmed, how would you synchronize your acquisition-related responsibilities and those of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, with those of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy's acquisition process is codified in the Department of the Navy's Gate Review process, which leverages the authority and expertise of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (ASN RD&A), the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to provide for the warfighting needs of Sailors and Marines. This collaboration enables the accurate translation of warfighting requirements into technical requirements that are executable and affordable. If confirmed, I will work with the key stakeholders within the Department to ensure that the Gate Review process effectively manages the trade-offs between requirements, cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and total ownership cost and ensure accountability in DON acquisitions.

Section 804 of the FY 2016 NDAA authorized DOD to employ an acquisition approach ("Middle Tier Acquisition") that was intended to support the rapid delivery of new capability to meet emerging operational needs.

32. In your view, what benefit has the Department of the Navy derived from its utilization

of Section 804 authority?

The speed of technology development today is greater than any point in our history. As I understand it, Section 804 authorities provide the Department the authority to conduct middle-tier acquisitions through specially tailored requirements and acquisition processes. It enables the Department to accelerate the prototyping of selective technologies or equipment to inform requirements, acquisition, and concepts of operations as well as rapidly field systems where the requirements and capabilities are mature. As a result, I understand that the Department has been able to accelerate the development of capabilities in advance or parallel to the development of the formal requirements, enabling learning at the speed of relevance to meet emerging threats.

33. What risks accrued?

As I have come to understand, the use of Section 804 authorities does not add risk to the acquisition process or program as the Department continues to ensure these efforts are managed properly. By prototyping early in the development of requirements, and in some cases, building a small quantity rapidly, Middle Tier of Acquisition has the opportunity to reduce risk versus a traditional acquisition approach in which technologies are not proven until major resources are committed. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department judiciously use authorities such as Section 804, consistent with Congressional direction and the Department's review and oversight processes.

34. If confirmed, what processes would you put in place to ensure appropriate oversight of the Department's use of 804 authorities? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will be committed to continuing appropriate oversight of Middle Tier of Acquisition Programs in alignment with the intent of Congress and OSD policy. This includes a focus on ensuring programs entering into Middle Tier of Acquisition are using the appropriate adaptive acquisition pathway, management rigor is maintained, and lessons learned continue to be shared across the Department's enterprise.

35. What best practices can the Navy and Marine Corps employ to generate realistic and technically achievable specifications, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas such as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence?

I believe the Department must continue to leverage the entire Research Development Test & Engineering enterprise to develop realistic specifications in rapidly-evolving areas as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence. Ensuring close collaboration between the requirements, technical, and acquisition teams will enable the Department to develop technically achievable capabilities for the Navy and Marine Corps. If confirmed, I will continue to review best practices and leverage the work of the S&T enterprise to reach the most promising technologically advanced solutions at pace to meet warfighter need.

36. In your view, would the Navy and/or Marine Corps derive benefit from participating in a greater number of joint acquisition programs? Please explain your answer.

I believe that where there are common requirements that meet Service specific needs, Joint

programs can save money by eliminating duplicative research, development, test, and evaluation and by realizing economies of scale in procurement, operations and support. I believe the DON should consider all options when establishing new acquisition programs, including joint solutions with other Services. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of the Navy pursues opportunities to participate in Joint Programs where the Services involved have studied their requirements and determined that requirements are well aligned.

One long-standing special civilian personnel management program is the DOD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project (commonly known as AcqDemo).

37. Should AcqDemo continue as a temporary authority or be made a permanent program?

Highly educated, skilled, and experienced acquisition professionals are key to providing the warfighters the products they need to compete and win. In my view the flexibilities inherent in AcqDemo, such as simplified hiring processes and job classifications, help the Department achieve its mission by ensuring there is a highly qualified workforce able to respond to evolving mission needs. If confirmed, I will consult with organizations currently using this authority and work with Congress to ensure the Department has the necessary tools to recruit and retain a professional acquisition workforce to support Navy programs.

38. In either case, should AcqDemo be expanded?

If confirmed, I will consult with the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness as well as organizations currently using this authority and work with Congress to ensure the Department has the necessary tools to recruit and retain a professional acquisition workforce to support Navy programs.

39. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the Department of the Navy has an acquisition workforce of the size and capability required?

It is my understanding that the Navy has developed an Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan that establishes the vision for shaping the future acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I will review this plan to ensure the Navy has the necessary tools to attract, develop, retain, and incentivize a diverse workforce. Leveraging commercial best practices, existing hiring authorities, and data-driven solutions, as well as modern training tools, expanded training opportunities and increased experiential learning will be essential to meet current and future workforce needs.

Test and Evaluation

40. Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapons systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, and operationally suitable?

It is critical that weapons systems and equipment undergo rigorous testing to certify their safety, effectiveness, and suitability for operational use. It is my understanding that the Department of Defense has an Urgent Capability Acquisition process to fulfill urgent operational needs, as in the case of impending or ongoing conflict, with minimal testing. If confirmed, I will ensure Navy weapons systems are thoroughly tested and evaluated to meet the needs of the warfighter.

41. What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other streamlined acquisition processes?

If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen the Department's efforts to ensure developmental and operational test and evaluation communities are fully integrated into rapid acquisition and streamlined acquisition processes. These communities play an important role in supporting streamlined acquisition processes by informing program decisions and ensuring these systems are tested and evaluated according to their intended use. If confirmed, I will make informed program decisions based on system performance data, and that risks are clearly documented and understood.

42. Are you satisfied with Department of the Navy test and evaluation capabilities?

It is my understanding that the Navy is continuously assessing the adequacy of test and evaluation capabilities to support current and future acquisition programs. The Navy has significant critical test capabilities that must be maintained, but as new technologies mature into programs of record there will be a need to invest in new capabilities. Prioritization and balancing legacy and future test requirements will continue to be a challenge. If confirmed, I will leverage existing forums and processes such as budget development, acquisition program reviews, Navy/Joint test and evaluation investment processes, to identify test capability gaps and make informed investment decisions.

43. In which areas, if any, do you feel the Navy should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?

In my view, the Navy must continue to make investments across the enterprise in modeling and simulation test capabilities that will support collecting performance data earlier in the acquisition process and build a more efficient and effective approach to test and evaluation. The Navy needs to continue to make investments in cybersecurity test capabilities, directed energy and autonomy. If confirmed, I will support continued investment in the modernization of legacy test capabilities to ensure they are ready and adequate to support customer requirements.

Audit

44. Do you support efforts to drive the Navy to obtain a clean financial audit opinion?

I absolutely support the requirement for the Department of the Navy to obtain a clean financial audit opinion. Annual financial statement audits enhance transparency, validate an organization's accountability of the resources entrusted to it, and drive business process efficiencies and stronger internal controls. If confirmed, I will support efforts that push the Department of the Navy to earn and sustain a clean audit opinion.

45. Do you think the Navy should invest funding as needed in audit activities and audit remediation activities to achieve the goal of obtaining a clean financial audit opinion?

I support the Department of the Navy obtaining a clean audit opinion. My experience in the business world, where my company had a long history of clean audits, provides me practical, first-hand experience in the process of undergoing an audit and obtaining an opinion. Audit and the outcomes of a clean financial audit opinion -- improved and more efficient business processes, better internal controls, data-driven decision making, and sustained effective stewardship of our resources -- pays dividends beyond the financial management and comptroller organizations. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of the Navy makes additional investments to drive necessary business process re-engineering and system modernization efforts to correct audit findings. My experience shows me there will be a positive return on investment from obtaining a clean audit opinion.

46. If confirmed, how would you hold Department of the Navy civilian and military leadership accountable for achieving Navy and Department audit goals?

If confirmed, I would hold leaders and process owners accountable for audit progress by having clearly stated, prioritized, and actionable remediation plans and goals. My "tone-from-the-top" would make it clear that I expect leaders to use audit and audit remediation as management tools to pinpoint and fix our problem areas. I intend to use robust governance, data supported metrics, and frequent performance assessments/metrics to hold leaders and process owners accountable for audit progress. What gets measured also gets done, so if confirmed, I will monitor and push for progress by using and emphasizing metrics that enable the Department to quantify progress throughout the year.

Reform of DOD Business Operations

47. What ideas would you explore and implement, if confirmed, further to reform the Navy's business operations?

If confirmed, I will explore lean and agile governance to remain ahead of rapid technological advances, enabling immediate access to enterprise data for informed decision-making, and measuring performance based on mission-derived outcomes. I will leverage business intelligence and data analytics tool to ensure all business decisions are data driven, derived from information collected, stored, and managed from a secured and centralized platform. I would develop a plan to sunset all redundant business capabilities and transition to a dynamic visualization platform. I will invest in the modernization of technologies, skills and processes such as advanced data analytics, cloud computing and continuous process improvement to keep pace with our business partners, our allies and our adversaries. This approach will enable a continuous performance improvement loop where we design,

measure, analyze, and improve upon established performance objectives. It is vital that this living management framework be agile enough to maintain alignment with evolving technology.

48. Why is the reform of business operations relevant to Navy missions, in your view?

The need to reform our business processes and respond with urgency to emerging global events is inextricably driven by the Navy and Marine Corps missions to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval force that is capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas. Just as we modernize the naval warfighting strategies, our business operations need to be relevant, and agile enough to support the combat-ready Sailors and Marines.

Safety

The Department of the Navy continues to experience non-combat related injuries, fatalities, and mishaps that undermine its ability to execute mission-critical taskings, even when its Sailors and Marines are successfully trained.

49. What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that all Department of the Navy personnel are protected from coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for reporting mishaps, hazards, and near misses?

Developing and implementing a culture of safety is paramount in the military to identify, and put into place, mitigations to reduce or eliminate safety risks to personnel and/or equipment. From my experience as a Commanding Officer of a Navy ship, I fully understand the risks to our Sailors and Marines. The environment we ask our Sailors and Marines to operate in is dangerous. Critical and honest feedback is vital in an organization that values safety. Any attempts to coerce, discriminate, or retaliate against individuals that report mishaps, hazards, or near misses should be dealt with aggressively and swiftly to remove that bias from the organization. If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough review the Department's safety policies, practices, and reporting procedures to ensure there is a consistent standard and means for our Sailors, Marines, and civilians to report safety issues across the Department.

50. What is your understanding of the root causes and corrective actions related to the tragic sinking of an Amphibious Assault Vehicle in July 2020, as well as the June 2017 and August 2017 collisions of *USS Fitzgerald* and *USS John S. McCain*?

My understanding is that root causes related to these incidents were associated with materiel readiness of the equipment, inadequacy of the training and certifications, and a false sense of urgency to complete assigned tasks. All three of these mishaps were completely avoidable and should never have happened, and in my view, directly represent a failure of leadership (across all echelons) to ensure the safety of their units. My understanding is that both the United States Marine Corps and United States Navy have conducted a thorough review of these mishaps and have implemented recommendations to strengthen training and certifications, reinforced or implemented new procedures to report safety issues, mishaps, or near misses, as well as, reviewed materiel issues that may have contributed to the mishaps. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the

Commandant of the Marine Corps to review the Department's safety culture, practices, and procedures to ensure there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, a consistent standard, and the means of reporting across the Department to capture critical feedback from our Sailors and Marines.

Cost of Recapitalizing the Fleet

Despite the Navy's existing 355-ship requirement and Secretary Esper's goal of having a fleet of 400-500 ships, the Navy is currently operating with approximately 297 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that the Navy has underestimated recent shipbuilding costs.

51. How would you characterize the risks to NDS implementation posed by the current shortfall in battle force ships and tactical aircraft?

Having the right amount of battle force ships and tactical aircraft is an important component to achieving Navy and Marine Corps goals in support of the President's Interim National Security Strategy objectives. Our peer competitors are expanding their naval forces as well as their global reach and areas of operation. It is my understanding that the Navy's goal for its future fleet structure is an innovative, distributed architecture, to include a combination of manned ships and unmanned vessels. I also understand the Navy is exploring alternative "future fleet" designs that support the NDS. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Congress on this effort.

52. Do you agree with CBO's assessment that there is significant cost risk associated with the Navy's shipbuilding plan?

It is my understanding that there is cost risk associated with any procurement program, particularly those that incorporate new designs and capabilities. I further understand that the Navy and CBO use different estimating methods and make different assumptions about the design and capabilities of some future ships, which have resulted in higher cost estimates from CBO. If confirmed, I will work to better understand the two different cost-estimating practices and reconcile these differences, to ensure the Department is accurately capturing cost risk to procurement programs.

53. What adjustments to individual shipbuilding programs are necessary and appropriate to reduce the risk of erosion in cost, schedule, or performance?

While each shipbuilding program is unique, eliminating erosion in cost, schedule, or performance requires a properly structured acquisition strategy, a fair and reasonable contract, and stability in shipbuilding planning and budgets. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy leverages all existing authorities to develop acquisition strategies appropriate to the specific shipbuilding program, including Multi-Year Procurement and Economic Ordering Quantity funds. In addition, I will support efforts to drive workload stability and predictability for the shipbuilding industrial base and execute supplier development efforts as directed by Congress.

54. To reduce the operational risk?

In my view, improving on-time delivery of ships is essential to reducing operational risk. It is my understanding that the Navy is working with the shipbuilding enterprise to identify areas for improvements in the shipbuilding yards, such as capital expenditure for facility improvements, workforce development and producibility improvements in manufacturing, to increase on-time performance trends. If confirmed I will support these efforts to increase productivity in both public and private shipyards.

Improving Government Technical Control in Shipbuilding

A June 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than the initial budget; were delivered at least six months late; and were marked by dozens of deficiencies. As an example, the first procurement dollar for the *Ford*-class was spent in 2001. Twenty years later, construction on the lead ship is \$2.8 billion over the original budget estimate, the ship was delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.

55. Do you believe acquisition performance on recent lead ships has been satisfactory?

Although I understand that lead ship development in any class comes with complex challenges in technology development and integration, design, ship construction, and testing, I believe that the Department must do better. It is my understanding that the Department is addressing these challenges through processes that leverage the expertise of the requirements and acquisition communities to reduce overall risk and improve business cases for upcoming lead ships, and through designation of Senior Technical Authorities to provide oversight and risk management of new classes of ships. If confirmed, I will continue to build on these efforts to improve performance and establish more effective processes for working with industry to deliver capability to the Fleet.

In a March 27, 2019 hearing before the Seapower Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition acknowledged the challenges of building lead ships and highlighted four initiatives to improve performance: (1) better integration of requirements and acquisition; (2) improved sub-system prototyping; (3) matching necessary government talent to program needs; and (4) investing in the right technologies.

56. Where does the Department of the Navy stand on implementation of each of these four initiatives, and what metric is the Navy applying to assess the effectiveness of each initiative on its performance in building lead ships? Please explain your answer.

Although I do not have any specific details, my understanding is that the Department is implementing the initiatives to improve shipbuilding performance. I believe that the four pillars highlighted are consistent with a systems engineering approach adopted by Admiral Rickover in the development of the Nuclear Navy, and with Admiral Wayne E. Myer when he developed the AEGIS program. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the Department implements these initiatives to improve performance in shipbuilding programs and to develop additional approaches to meet the challenges associated with lead ship construction.

57. If confirmed, what other options would you explore for improving lead ship performance?

If confirmed, I will work to better control “requirements creep,” create more efficient processes and support more cost effective contracting approaches. In addition, I will look to collaborate with industry early in the design stages to understand any production challenges that may not be obvious to Navy designers. I will work to ensure the Navy has the appropriate focus on mitigating technical risks in ship design efforts to improve shipbuilding cost, schedule, and performance outcomes.

Force Structure Reviews

The former Secretary of Defense reviewed the Department of the Navy’s Integrated Naval Force Structure Assessment, which was intended to re-validate or update the previous 355-ship requirement.

58. What do you consider to be appropriate requirement for fleet size, given the current and future strategic environment?

Although I am aware of the Department’s Integrated Naval Force Structure Assessment and the subsequent Office of Secretary of Defense Force Naval Force Structure Assessment (2020), I have not had access to the studies due to the classification associated with the studies. As a general comment, the United States Navy and Marine Corps must be sized appropriately to support the Joint force today and in the future, to deter and if required, defeat strategic competitors such as China and Russia. In order to do this, the Navy and Marine Corps must have enough ships, submarines, aircraft, and amphibious platforms to project power from the sea. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps team is sized appropriately to carry out assigned missions in support of the National Defense Strategy.

In March 2020, the Acting Secretary of the Navy chartered the Future Carrier-2030 Task Force—a 6 month study designed to examine the future of the aircraft carrier and carrier-based aviation (manned and unmanned) for 2030 and beyond. Former Secretary Esper’s plan for the fleet included having as many as 6 light carriers and 100 unmanned surface vessels.

59. What are your views on the need to considering alternative aircraft carrier designs and the advantages such new designs might bring to bear in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

The strategic environment is rapidly changing due to the pace and fielding of technologically advanced missiles and other weapons, such as cyber and space, designed to reduce the United States Navy’s advantages at sea. As such, I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps team should critically look at all alternative platforms, to include alternative aircraft carrier designs, as well as, practices, techniques, and procedures to enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps team retain the advantage at sea.

60. In your view, to what extent will unmanned systems, air, surface and undersea, contribute to the Navy's vision of distributed operations and how will unmanned platforms augment and amplify the ability of a distributed naval force to successfully compete against a near-peer competitor fleet?

I believe the development and integration of Unmanned Systems in all warfighting domains, as a part of the Department of the Navy's force architecture, is already providing key enablers and is a force multiplier for providing combat capacity against peer competitors and adversaries. It is important to develop a seamlessly integrated manned/unmanned force, with unmanned systems contributing the unique and disruptive elements that they can provide. In any competition against peer competitors who enjoy numerical advantages, the augmenting value and cost effectiveness of teaming with Unmanned Systems cannot be overstated.

In his *Force Design 2030*, the Commandant of the Marine Corps stated unequivocally, "I assess that the current force is unsuited to future requirements in size, capacity, and specific capability."

61. Do you agree with the Commandant's assessment and his plans for reshaping the Marine Corps?

I believe that the Marine Corps Force Design 2030 represents a transformational change that recognizes the new operating environment and which aligns to the Interim National Security Strategy as well as Secretary Austin's goals and objectives for the Department of Defense. I support the Commandant's vision and his bold efforts to transform this Service. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant and the Congress on this effort.

62. In light of the Commandant's assessment, should the Navy and Marine Corps' requirement for amphibious ships remain the same, or be decremented, in your view?

Amphibious ships and the forces they deliver provide the nation with a crisis response capability that remains forward deployed and ready. Amphibious ships carry USMC F-35Bs to locations unreachable by other assets, and provide credible conventional deterrence on a daily basis. I understand the Navy and Marine Corps worked closely together to determine that a mix of 28-31 amphibious ships, as well as 35 Light Amphibious Warships, best supports global presence demands and is necessary to conduct crisis response. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations to ensure that our fleets remain in balance to deter or defeat a peer adversary.

Ford-class Aircraft Carriers

The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's most recent annual reports cited the reliability of four systems: the electromagnetic aircraft launching system; advanced arresting gear; dual band radar; and advanced weapons elevators, as the most significant risks to the performance of the *Ford*-class program. Only 7 of the 11 elevators on the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN-78) have been turned over to the Navy due to ongoing technical issues, notwithstanding the Navy's acceptance of the ship in May 2017. The reports also noted that the demonstrated reliability of the catapults, arresting gear, weapons elevators,

and radar is either orders of magnitude below the requirement or remains unknown.

63. What are your views on the acquisition program for the *Ford*-class aircraft carrier?

While the FORD Class has faced challenges with development and construction delays, the program incorporates advances in technology such as a new reactor plant, propulsion system, electric plant, Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Advanced Arresting Gear, machinery control, and integrated warfare systems that are expected to increase lethality, and lower life cycle costs through reductions in maintenance and manning requirements. Although I believe the FORD Class carrier will prove to be a critical combat enabler, future acquisition programs must take a deliberative systems engineering approach to assessing the maturity of new technologies prior to a construction decision.

64. What is your understanding of the current capability and reliability of each of the key systems on CVN-78?

It is my understanding that the FORD Class program continues to show significant progress and has improved system reliability for new technologies such as Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Advanced Arresting Gear, Dual Band Radar, and Advanced Weapons Elevator. Although I understand some work is still required to complete the elevators, the systems turned over to the ship are making good progress with at-sea testing with the Air Wing onboard. If confirmed, I will review the Navy's strategy to improve system reliability growth for key systems to ensure they meet operational performance parameters.

65. What is your view of the sufficiency and efficacy of the measures being taken to ensure these key systems are stable for the next *Ford*-class aircraft carrier, *USS John F. Kennedy* (CVN-79), and those that follow?

It is my understanding that the reliability growth of key systems will increase as those systems continue to mature and operate during at-sea periods. If confirmed, I will examine the Navy's strategy to improve system reliability growth for key systems and review how the Navy and industry are addressing lessons learned to ensure they are being applied to the fullest extent to increase reliability drive down costs of follow-on ships.

Columbia-class Submarines

Navy leaders have testified that if a higher Navy topline or outside funding is not provided, the investment required by the *Columbia*-class program will result in equivalent reductions elsewhere within the Navy budget.

66. If confirmed, what would be your recommendation for funding the *Columbia*-class program?

If confirmed, COLUMBIA would remain my #1 acquisition priority. Continuing to fully fund the program will be essential to ensure on time delivery of the COLUMBIA Class, so that the nation's sea based strategic deterrent requirements continue to be met as the OHIO class is retired. I would also continue to prioritize efforts to reduce cost and schedule risk, strengthen the industrial base, and improve affordability.

67. If confirmed, what mitigation options would you consider in the event the *Columbia*-class program incurs schedule delays that prevent the lead ship from deploying in 2031?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure COLUMBIA delivers on time. Near term action to mitigate COLUMBIA deployment delays must be focused on removing risks to the on-time delivery of COLUMBIA SSBNs. As risks to delivery arise, I will consider all mitigation options and work with the relevant teams involved to manage risk.

Attack Submarine Force Levels

The Navy's current requirement for attack submarines is at least 66. However, the Navy currently has just 50 attack submarines in the fleet inventory.

68. What options, including improved maintenance and life extensions of current submarines, as well as increased new construction, exist to ensure the Navy deploys attack submarines sufficient to meet the combatant commanders' requirements and other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) needs?

I understand the Navy's attack submarine force will be below its target strength in the late 2020s. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy evaluates all options to improve maintenance execution, extend the service life of the remainder of the LOS ANGELES class, and improve new construction performance to meet the combatant commanders' needs. Additionally, if confirmed, I will continue the Department's evaluation of strategies to increase the production rate of VIRGINIA Class submarines in the future.

Ship Maintenance

The Navy has experienced continuing problems maintaining the current fleet of some 296 ships, including experiencing cost overruns and delays in schedules. These problems have plagued both public and private shipyards.

To update and improve the capability of the Navy-owned public shipyards, the Navy has been pursuing a Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP). The Committee is not aware of a specific plan to expand the capacity or improve the efficiency of private sector shipyards.

69. If you are confirmed, what steps would you take to improve the capability and capacity of the industrial base to perform maintenance for Navy ships?

I understand the importance of the private ship repair industry in maintaining the Navy the nation needs. If confirmed, I will work to look for opportunities to partner with industry to leverage private investment to improve private shipyard capacity.

Missile Defense

Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) ships perform their mission in support of

other Navy assets, as well as in defense of U.S., allied, and partner forces on land. There continues to be higher demand for Aegis BMD ships than the number of ships available at any given time.

70. Do you view BMD as a core Navy mission?

Yes, I believe that BMD is a core mission of the U.S. Navy. The Aegis ships in the United States Navy have a unique and proven capability to defeat ballistic missiles from the sea in protection of the Battle Force or if required, in defense of a land-based target.

71. How would you balance the competing demands for Aegis BMD ships?

Navy BMD units are multi-mission platforms that support the Combatant Commander missions as part of the Joint Force. As such, the Joint Force resource allocation process balances the day-to-day apportionment available. However, if confirmed, I will look to understand the demands being placed on our Aegis BMD fleet, and to determine if there are sufficient number of platforms to support the Combatant Commander requirements in support of the National Defense Strategy.

72. Are there opportunities to transition some of the defense of land-based forces to other Navy or land-based assets, with a view to freeing up Aegis BMD ships for maritime-focused missions?

Aegis BMD ships are only one element of the broader U.S. ballistic missile defense architecture. These forces include Ground-based Midcourse Defense, Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, and Patriot Advanced Capability. Depending on the scenario, land-based capabilities may provide a more enduring and holistic approach in defending land targets. As an example, Aegis Ashore in Romania and Poland are excellent examples of a land-based assets that provides the same BMD capabilities resident in the Navy ships, protecting vital areas of Europe.

Nuclear Enterprise

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed the importance of all three legs of the nuclear triad, and recommended two supplemental capabilities to strengthen deterrence against Russia, in particular. This past winter, the Department announced deployment of the W76-2 low-yield submarine-launched ballistic missile, and the Navy is currently studying the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the fleet.

73. Do you support full funding for the modernization of each leg of the nuclear triad and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) weapons complex?

Yes. I support full funding for the modernization of the nuclear triad and the associated weapons design and production capabilities of the National Nuclear Security Administration. Updating our nation's nuclear forces is a critical national security priority and will be key to providing the flexibility and adaptability to meet future adversarial threats.

74. Do you believe the current Navy program of record is sufficient to support the

modernization of the sea-based leg of the nuclear triad? Please explain your answer.

Sea Based Strategic Deterrence is the most survivable leg of the Nuclear Triad, and the COLUMBIA Class is the Navy's number one acquisition priority. It is my understanding that the COLUMBIA must be on patrol in FY 2031 in order to meet U.S. Strategic Command requirements. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Navy's program of record remains on scheduled and fully supports the modernization of the sea-base leg of the nuclear triad.

75. If confirmed, would you advocate for the NNSA's W93 warhead program, which is driven by the Navy's requirements?

It is my understanding that the Navy is responsible for over 70 percent of the nation's deployable warheads. If confirmed, I will advocate for the Navy programs necessary to meet NNSA and U.S. Strategic Command requirements.

Recently, the Acting Secretary of the Navy stated that he directed the Navy not to fund development of the nuclear sea launched cruise missile in FY 2023 budget. He gave this direction without consulting any other senior DOD officials. This action appears to contradict assurances provided by Secretary Austin that no programmatic decisions on nuclear forces would be made prior to the department's review of U.S. nuclear policies was completed.

76. Do you agree that any changes to U.S. nuclear modernization plans should occur only once a thorough review of US nuclear policies has been completed?

Yes. I believe it would be premature to make any decisions until the Administration's Nuclear Policy Review is completed.

77. If confirmed, would you rescind the Acting Secretary of the Navy's direction to defund this program in FY 2023 and honor Secretary Austin's commitment to deferring action on any programmatic decisions relating to the nuclear sea launched cruise missile until after such a review is completed?

If confirmed, I am committed to deferring action on any programmatic decisions related to the nuclear sea launched cruise missile until the Nuclear Posture Review is completed.

In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to adverse incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces. The review yielded recommendations to improve personnel management, enforce security requirements, increase deliberate senior leader focus and attention, enact and sustain a change in culture, and address numerous other concerns. More than five years later, responsibility for addressing these recommendations and monitoring implementation of corrective actions has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.

78. In your view, is the Navy maintaining appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the 2014 nuclear enterprise review?

It is my understanding that the Navy conducts continuous self-assessments to maintain the

appropriate focus on the entirety of the nuclear enterprise and its strategic mission, and communicates the results of these performance evaluations to OSD leadership through the Nuclear Deterrence Senior Oversight Group and Nuclear Deterrence Enterprise Review Group. If confirmed, I will continue this effort to ensure the Navy is maintaining the appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the 2014 nuclear enterprise review.

79. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy continues its efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of the Sailors charged to execute and support the Navy's nuclear mission?

The U.S. Navy's contribution to the nation's nuclear deterrent has been steadfast for over 61 years. Ensuring Sailors and the families that support them, have the training and support they need to carry out their important and demanding missions must be a foundational element of leadership. One area that concerns me is the ability to recruit and retain the highly skilled men and women that the Navy requires to serve in our nuclear force and the Navy and Marine Corps writ large. Given the all-volunteer force, the Navy and Marine Corps must be an employer of choice, and a place where people want to be part of the Navy and Marine Corps team. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the CNO and CMC to look for opportunities to improve and develop a culture where our Sailors and Marines feel empowered, have the necessary and required training, have competitive salaries, have opportunities for advancement and leadership, and support for their families.

Amphibious Fleet Requirements

80. What is your view of the need for and size of the Navy's amphibious fleet?

The Navy's amphibious fleet is the cornerstone of the Naval Force's ability to maneuver from the sea to land, in-stride and seamlessly. I understand that the most recent force analysis has identified between 28-31 traditional amphibious ships, as well as a number of other non-traditional amphibious ships, such as the future Light Amphibious Warship. I have not been able to review the underlying assessments due to the classification of the analysis. If confirmed, I am committed to conducting a thorough review of the analysis with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and make recommendations to ensure the Naval Force has the required number of ships to execute the National Defense Strategy.

81. What alternatives would you consider to augment amphibious ships in providing lift to Marine Corps units?

It is my understanding that the Department is examining several options to augment traditional amphibious ships. These include the Light Amphibious Warship and Next Generation Logistics ships. In addition, current platforms such as the Expeditionary Staging Base and Expeditionary Platform Fast vessels are providing lift opportunities for the Marine Corps. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to discuss and review alternative lift (both sea and air) platforms that will enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations.

82. In what scenarios would you envision these alternatives being necessary and appropriate?

I do not yet have access to information necessary to make these assessments at this time. However, it is my understanding that the Light Amphibious Warship and Next Generation Logistics Ships will augment traditional amphibious ships, and are key enablers that will enable Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to conduct a deep dive with the CNO and CMC to understand the assumptions, assessment, and analysis to determine the future lift requirement that supports Naval maneuver from the sea.

Ready Reserve Force (RRF) recapitalization

DOD has developed a three-pronged recapitalization strategy for the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) and Military Sealift Command surge fleet consisting of a combination of constructing new vessels, extending the service life of certain vessels, and acquiring used vessels.

83. What is your understanding of the Navy's recapitalization strategy for the RRF and the affordability of acquiring more than 40 sealift vessels as outlined in the latest 30-year shipbuilding plan?

My understanding is that the Navy's plans to buy used commercial vessels to replace the aging sealift fleet seems to be a very affordable way to maintain required sealift capability in support of the Joint Force. If confirmed, I am dedicated to continuing to work with our joint partners and Congress to ensure we acquire the right capability at the best value for the taxpayer, as we proceed with our multi-faceted approach to extend the service life of selected ships, buy used, and acquire new construction.

84. To what extent do you believe the Navy has identified the appropriate mix of used and new ships to meet sealift and auxiliary requirements?

I am aware that the Navy has several recapitalization programs underway to meet the sealift and auxiliary force requirements. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing Navy's plans so that I can make a personal assessment of the force structure planned for strategic sealift and combat logistics force fleets.

Unmanned Systems

The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment's report on Future Carrier Air Wings makes recommendations for the use of unmanned aircraft to augment "5th Gen" fighters. The FY 2022 budget request includes significant investment in Navy unmanned aerial (e.g., MQ-25), surface (e.g., LUSV and MUSV), and undersea systems (e.g., Orca and Snakehead).

85. To what extent will these unmanned systems be interoperable with manned naval

platforms and utilize existing Navy and Marine Corps communication links?

The assurance of interoperability is an imperative across existing and future naval and joint platforms and systems. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to see that all air, surface, undersea and land-based manned and unmanned systems are interoperable, which I understand is a key tenant of the Department of the Navy's Unmanned Campaign Framework. I will work with the Service Chiefs to determine which legacy communications links can be leveraged for manned/unmanned interoperability.

86. Do you believe these links will be sufficient to conduct operations in a near-peer conflict, as envisioned by the NDS?

While I am not completely familiar with all communications links that are available or necessary to execute manned and unmanned teaming, if confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs to assess legacy communications links to determine if they are sufficient to conduct operations during conflict.

87. How do you envision such manned-unmanned teaming manifesting in naval aviation, and with strike-fighters in particular?

In my view, these technologies offer significant opportunity for developing a continuum of manned and unmanned teaming across all warfighting domains. In regards to strike-fighter aviation, unmanned assets can significantly enhance and act as a force multiplier by increasing range, weapons capabilities, ISR enhancements and distribution of the strike force in contested environments. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs to mature or expand such capabilities to address warfighting threats.

88. How will this affect the make-up of a carrier air wing?

The carrier air-wing continues to evolve with the successful development and demonstration of the MQ-25A unmanned aircraft system. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to assess requirements to determine the structure of the future carrier air-wing as the Navy moves forward with programs such as the Next Generation Air Dominance program.

89. If confirmed, what would be your vision for the increased role of unmanned combat systems in the Navy?

It is my understanding that the Department is committed to developing and integrating unmanned and autonomous systems to the Fleet as a component of the Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advance Base Operations concepts. This includes capabilities such as communications; intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, targeting; refueling; and logistics. Integration of such systems with manned systems will reduce risk to the force, provide access to areas otherwise denied to manned platforms, increase force capability and provide distributed intelligent battlespace awareness. If confirmed, I am committed to fully assessing the potential for unmanned systems for the Navy and Marine Corps.

90. What do you envision as the appropriate balance between manned and unmanned combat aircraft in the Navy's future force structure?

The Department of the Navy must develop and field unmanned systems to ensure the naval forces have the necessary capabilities to address future threats. It is my understanding that the Department has begun development of key unmanned systems and enabling technologies. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department carefully assesses, develops, fields and sustains the required unmanned capabilities to ensure success in any future conflict.

The Navy spent approximately \$1 billion on 10 Remote Multi-Mission Vehicles (RMMVs), semi-submersible USVs, prior to cancelling the program in 2016, primarily due to unacceptable reliability.

91. What lessons learned should the Navy take from the RMMV program?

The RMMV program and similar programs that have experienced similar outcomes, demonstrates the importance of increasing collaboration between all stakeholders to ensure appropriate linkages between the warfighting requirements, technical requirements, acquisition processes and industry. If confirmed, I will encourage an enterprise approach that focuses on resolving technical, testing, and integration issues while prioritizing reliability and maintainability in earlier program stages.

92. Do you believe that new unmanned systems and subsystems should be prototyped and proven in a real-world environment prior to procurement?

Yes.

The Navy divested all legacy Hornets (F/A-18C/D) from its active component squadrons, and has stopped buying Super Hornets.

93. What priority has the Navy set for transition to the Super Hornet (F/A-18E/F): in what order will Reserve squadrons, the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center, test squadrons, and the general fleet inventory be transitioned?

I understand the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron (Blue Angels) is transitioning this year to the F/A-18E/F Block 1 Super Hornet first, followed by the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center (NAWDC) and the Reserve Force.

94. What is your understanding of the rationale for this order of prioritization?

It is my understanding that the Blue Angels, the NAWDC, and Reserve Component squadrons are following in this respective order based on active component demand and reserve squadron transitions.

95. What is the Navy doing to improve depot throughput for legacy Hornets and to apply lessons learned to the looming service life extension program for the Super Hornet?

As I currently understand, improving depot throughput for legacy Hornets is one of the areas where the Marine Corps and Navy have had the most success in recovering readiness through reform efforts. These efforts implemented industry best practices, applied data analytics, re-focused performance based on outcomes, and drove efficiencies throughout the system to successfully address systemic depot throughput issues that led to reduced aircraft availability. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to apply lessons learned from reform efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the Service Life Modification program and increase efficiency across the Department.

96. What is the Navy's plan for upgrading and maintaining its Super Hornet fleet and on what timeline will this plan be executed?

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy completed procurement of the F/A-18E/F Naval Strike Fighter in FY 2021, with a total of 678 aircraft, and that delivery of the remaining new production aircraft will complete in FY 2025. I also understand, the Navy intends to use capability upgrades and Service Life Modification to enhance inventory and maintain tactical relevance of the aircraft. If confirmed, I will review the plan and timeline for upgrading and maintaining the Super Hornet fleet to ensure the Navy has the proper mechanisms in place to manage Strike Fighter inventory risk.

97. What capabilities are being added or should be added to maintain the Super Hornet's relevance in the high-end fight?

It is my understanding that upgrades, including Beyond Line of Sight communications, passive survivability systems, and future weapons capabilities, will deliver lethality and survivability, while ensuring that it can provide the capacity to augment the capability provided by the F-35C. Should I be confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department maintains the right mix of combat aircraft, and is making the required investments in capability and sustainment to maintain the Super Hornet's tactical relevance to carry out required missions as articulated in the National Defense Strategy.

The Air Force is moving to a disaggregated architecture for air battle management. The Navy, on the other hand, is investing heavily in the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye and P-8 Poseidon to perform the naval battle management function.

98. Why are the Air Force and the Navy pursuing different strategies?

I believe that all Services should fully integrate into the Joint architecture and pursue mutually supporting strategies where it makes sense in carrying out Service designated tasks as outlined by the National Defense Strategy. It is my understanding that the Chief of Naval Operations recently certified that the Navy's multi-domain command and control efforts are compatible with the Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADC2) Reference Architecture, and align with the JADC2 Strategy. If confirmed, I am committed to working more closely with the other Service Secretaries to align our efforts in support of the Secretary of Defense's objectives.

99. Is the Joint All-Domain Command and Control effort compatible with the Navy plan?

It is my understanding that in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, the Chief of Naval Operations recently certified that the Navy's multi-domain command and control efforts are compatible with the Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADC2) Reference Architecture, and align with the JADC2 Strategy. The Naval Operational Architecture is the maritime element of JADC2, and is being worked closely with the Marine Corps and is integrated fully with JADC2 efforts, as well as the Air Force's Advanced Battle Management System and the Army's Project Convergence.

100. What is the Navy's approach to air battle management and how do the Navy and Air Force intend to execute joint air battle management in a high-end fight?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Air Force continue to share command and control of operational air forces in combat environments. It is also my understanding that Navy and Air Force platforms are integrated and are fully capable of executing air battle management in a high-end fight. If confirmed, I would work to maximize unity of effort and develop the required joint capabilities and concepts that support the Joint Force to succeed in a high-end fight.

101. Given the new capabilities the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye will bring to the battlespace, and the new tactics and concepts of operation it will enable, does the Navy perceive a need for expeditionary squadrons of E-2Ds? Why or why not?

It is my understanding that there are currently no plans or supporting requirements for expeditionary E-2D operations. If confirmed, I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's contribution to the Joint Force and the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Defense Strategy.

102. In your view, what would be the benefits and/or drawbacks of establishing expeditionary E-2D squadrons, similar to those for the EA-18G Growler?

This is an issue I would need to review more, but if confirmed, I would commit to continued assessment of Navy's contribution to the Joint Force and the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Defense Strategy.

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program

The follow-on modernization of the F-35 is scheduled to bring key warfighting capabilities to the fleet, but the budget and schedule remain in flux. The total number of F-35s planned for the Department of the Navy was set at 680, but the Marine Corps alone has articulated a requirement for 420 F-35Bs.

103. Do you believe that the plan for 680 aircraft can fully accommodate the needs of both the Navy and the Marine Corps?

I am not fully familiar with all requirements outlined by each respective service, but I have been made aware of Department objectives in procuring the goal of 680 aircraft. If

confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the planned buy of 680 total aircraft and working to ensure that number is adequate to meet the challenges faced by the nation.

104. How many of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs will not be upgraded to Block 4?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps plans to upgrade the current F-35 fleet. This will include retrofits back through Lot 11 for both F-35B and the F-35C. A small number of the Marine Corps' current F-35Bs and F-35Cs will remain in training squadrons, do not require upgrade, and therefore will not be upgraded to a Block 4 configuration.

105. What do you view as the biggest challenges to successful integration of the F-35 into the carrier air wing?

I understand that the first Navy F-35C deployment occurs this summer, and next year the second F-35C deployment will be the first Marine Corps F-35C Tactical Aircraft Integration squadron. I understand that one of the biggest challenges to successful integration of F-35 aircraft into the carrier air wing is the sustainment of the current procurement schedule to include on-time deliveries.

The F-35B brings new capabilities and operational possibilities to the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). There has been much discussion of linking MEUs more closely with the Joint Force. However, such new capabilities and operating concepts require investment in shipboard infrastructure, including upgraded data links.

106. What is your vision for amphibious assault ship connectivity?

I believe that in order to take full advantage of the cutting edge capabilities, the objective should be for all amphibious ships to have the capability to downlink and share F-35 data.

107. What are the Navy's current plans to achieve that vision?

It is my understanding that the Navy has installed the Ship Self-Defense System (SSDS) on all Landing Helicopter Assault (LHA) ships and all but two of the Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) ships. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to field the necessary upgrades and infrastructure to support integration of F-35Bs.

There has been much discussion about the importance of networking and connecting all Navy and Marine Corps capabilities across air, land, and sea platforms.

108. What is the Navy/Marine Corps team doing to make machine-to-machine command and control, across multiple domains, a reality?

It is my understanding that the Department is looking to support operational concepts such as Distributed Maritime Operations, by delivering a Naval Operational Architecture that will integrate with Joint All-Domain Command and Control to allow forces to connect with each other and coordinate actions across multiple domains. If confirmed, I will support this critical effort that will ultimately enable machine speed decision making across the Naval

force and in conjunction with the Joint Force and our mission partners.

109. Have the Navy and Marine Corps developed and refined the joint operational concepts that will govern this integrated fight?

I understand that to support the successful implementation of the concepts within the Navigation Plan and Force Design 2030 the Marine Corps and the Navy work closely together to align joint operational concepts, identify current gaps, and develop appropriate modernization efforts to support operational requirements. If confirmed, I commit to a fully integrated Navy-Marine Corps Team.

110. What is being done to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps airborne data links are interoperable—not only with each other—but also with the Air Force and Army platforms, as well as resilient, against peer competitors?

It is my understanding that there are multiple efforts across the Services to ensure that airborne data links are interoperable and resilient against peer competitors. Project Overmatch is the Navy's initiative to allow forces to connect with each other more seamlessly and coordinate actions across a widely distributed force. If confirmed, I will work within the Department and with the other Services to ensure the Navy can deliver on this critical capability in alignment with Joint Staff-led Joint All Domain Command and Control initiative.

Current technologies allow “low probability of intercept/low probability of detection” datalinks to connect 4th and 5th generation aircraft. As well, other platforms, operating across multiple domains can be networked.

111. Who is leading this effort for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and across the Joint Force, and what progress is being made?

It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are developing datalink capabilities connecting multiple platforms that will feed into the Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) concept. JADC2, led by Joint Staff, will identify commonalities and gaps in interoperability as well as coordinate technology demonstrations and exercises to test and refine technologies and concepts. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the other Services to protect interoperability across all domains.

Naval Surface Fire Support

The DDG-1000 program was initiated to fill the capability gap for naval surface fire support. The original requirement for 24 to 32 DDG-1000 ships, each with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems, was reduced to 12 ships, then to 10 ships, then to 7, and finally to 3. The FY 2022 budget request funds the DDG-1000 program as the first ship class to be integrated with the Conventional Prompt Strike weapons system.

112. In your view, what capabilities and missions should DDG-1000, 1001, and 1002 be equipped to perform?

I believe these unique stealth destroyers have potential to serve as part of the Navy's fleet architecture. I understand the Navy is exploring alternatives for this platform, to include the ability to deliver new and lethal deterrent capabilities. If confirmed, I will work with the CNO to explore options to leverage Zumwalt class capabilities for Great Power Competition.

113. Do you support CPS integration on the DDG-1000 program?

Conventional Prompt Strike is an important capability and I would support integration on multiple platforms in order to provide a credible surface capability to deter and defeat adversaries. This credible deterrence is particularly vital in our era of Great Power Competition where our peer competitors are quickly increasing the sophistication and capacity of their military capabilities. If confirmed, I intend to discuss the types of platforms envisioned for this capability with the CNO.

114. If confirmed, on what other capabilities would be relied on to meet naval surface fire support requirements?

The Department should avoid limiting itself to a single solution for any important warfighting capability, and that certainly includes this critical mission. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department considers modifying traditional technologies as well as adapting emerging technologies to satisfy naval surface fire support mission requirements.

115. Will the Army's Long Range Precision Fires programs meet the need, in your view?

I understand the Navy and Marine Corps team is looking for lethal solutions that can be adapted to the naval environment quickly and affordably. If confirmed, I would support assessing all options to meet warfighting requirements and especially those options that could be modified and fielded quickly and affordably.

Ground-based Anti-ship Missile (GBASM) and Remotely Operated Ground Unit Expeditionary (ROGUE) Fires Vehicle

The push for a way for Marines to strike and sink ships—shooting from land to sea—has been a recent priority for the Corps.

116. How does this weapons system fit into the Marine Corps' war fighting concept?

The Marine Corps is uniquely suited to provide precision fires from land-to-sea to contribute to sea denial operations and enable Fleet maneuver. While this is a significant change from the past two decades of land-based operations, the Marine Corps is implementing this change to maximize its deterrent and combat capabilities in support of future naval campaigns. It is my understanding that this capability is the Marine Corps' number one modernization priority, has immense value to the Fleet Commanders, and will support and reassure our allies and partners.

117. Where does the Corps stand in the process of testing and fielding this system?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps is on track to field an initial operational capability in FY 2023. The anti-ship missile and its unmanned platform were successfully tested in November 2020. The Marine Corps refers to the initial solution for this capability as the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS), which consists of the same Naval Strike Missile fired by the United States Navy and a robotic version of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. The use of existing systems ensures minimal technical risk to this vital program.

Ground-based Air Defense (GBAD) and Medium Range Intercept Capability (MRIC)

The Marine Corps is pursuing several unique air and missile defense capabilities under its GBAD program.

118. Why is an integrated and layered approach to air and missile defense important, in your view?

Strategic competitors and rogue actors maintain robust and varied anti-access and area denial weapons, and these threats dictate an integrated approach to air and missile defense for the Navy and Marine Corps. Because the Marine Corps is committed to operating within the range of enemy weapons, it is my understanding that the Marine Corps will invest in capabilities that can detect, track, identify, and defeat adversary threats. These investments will support the Marine Corps and the Joint Force. It is important to note that as a highly mobile force, the Marine Corps must find air and missile defense systems that have sufficient range to protect assets but are also light enough to be moved by Navy and Marine Corps organic lift.

119. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Marine Corps systems like MRIC are integrated into the larger air and missile defense architecture?

If confirmed, I will work with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations to ensure that service systems are complementary and not duplicative. The Joint Force can best function when range or capability overlaps are sufficient to cover seams and gaps in coverage from one service to the next. Close coordination between the services is required in this area, and I am committed to ensuring that coordination happens.

Recapitalization

The Marine Corps intends to concurrently recapitalize several of its front line systems. The MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and the Joint Strike Fighter are both in production now.

120. Do you believe that these production plans are realistic in light of the demands on resources associated with maintaining current readiness?

I understand the FY 2022 budget request balances procurement, modernization, readiness recovery and preparing the Marine Corps to invest in the capabilities needed to support future naval and joint operations. The Marine Corps is nearly complete with MV-22 deliveries and

continues to ramp up deliveries across the FYDP for the F-35 in order to meet transition timelines and modernize legacy tactical air capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Marine Corps Leadership to ensure that modernization and recapitalization efforts are synchronized and affordable.

121. Have MV-22 readiness rates—both deployed and in garrison/ship-borne—achieved desired levels?

It is my understanding the readiness rates for MV-22s have increased steadily over the previous year. While forward deployed units will always be the priority for parts and support, garrison units in training have also seen increases in their readiness rates along with deployed units and are expected to see these rates climb as long as readiness accounts are funded to current levels. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Marine Corps to continue to assess and evaluate progress in attaining full mission readiness for these important programs.

122. Will the Common Configuration Reliability and Maintainability program increase overall readiness, in your view?

I believe that completion of Common Configuration-Readiness and Modernization efforts is one of the critical USMC efforts to improve MV-22 fleet readiness. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Marine Corps to continue to assess and evaluate progress in attaining full mission readiness for these important programs.

123. In your view, will the MV-22 be sustainable over time at an acceptable cost?

Like all programs at inception, the cost per unit to produce such an advanced aircraft like the MV-22 is high. However, the U.S. history of aircraft procurement has proven that programs are more cost effective as they mature. It's my understanding that the Department has undertaken a number of efforts focused on driving sustainment costs to more affordable levels, but this will require vigilance. In my view, no other aircraft can match the unique capabilities of the MV-22. It has revolutionized the way the USMC operates and influences future modernization efforts for other Marine aviation platforms. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to work with industry partners to identify ways to lower the cost of the MV-22 sustainment program.

CH-53

CH-53K testing is behind schedule and over budget, requiring an additional \$158 million to fund continued testing. In addition, the development program has significant deficiencies that must be corrected before testing can be finished.

124. What is your assessment of the current status of the CH-53K program?

As the only fully heavy-lift rotorcraft operating in marine environments that supports current and future Joint warfighting concepts, the CH-53K remains a critical enabler for the Marine Corps. I understand the CH-53K will enter Initial Operational Test and Evaluation this

summer, and is on track to meet Initial Operational Capability. If confirmed I will monitor this program to ensure that it supports service requirements while being cost efficient.

125. Does it remain on track to achieve initial operational capability and meet the proposed deployment timeline?

Yes, it is my understanding that the CH-53K program is tracking to Initial Operational Capability and proposed deployment metrics.

126. What is the effect of CH-53K delays on the CH-53E fleet?

I understand that the CH-53E continues to support the Marine Corps requirements for heavy-lift, and has sufficient remaining airframe life to absorb the CH-53K program delays to date. Recent efforts like the CH-53E Reset program will ensure that fleet readiness continues to improve. If confirmed, I will work closely with service leadership and industry to minimize any additional delays and ensure the continued readiness and availability of the CH-53E to execute the heavy lift mission.

127. On overall Marine Corps readiness?

I understand delays may affect the heavy-lift capacity shortfall and the Marine Corps' ability to effectively execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS). If confirmed, I will work closely with service leadership and industry to minimize any additional delays and ensure the continued readiness and availability of the CH-53E to execute the heavy lift mission.

The Commandant has articulated the need for the Corps to move away from “exquisite and costly systems”.

128. Is the CH-53K one such system, in your view?

The CH-53K is the only heavy lift helicopter in the Department of Defense capable of meeting the challenges associated with the Marine Corps' distributed maritime operations. A heavy lift helicopter is required to deliver equipment, personnel, and bulk liquids in support of Expeditionary Advance Base Operations (EABO). If confirmed, I will continue to work with the service and industry to bring the cost curve down throughout procurement of the CH-53K.

129. What is the total fleet size the Corps needs?

I understand the Marine Corps continues to refine the support required for Force Design 2030. If confirmed I will work closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that the Service has the appropriate number of aircraft to carryout assigned missions.

130. How many can the Corps afford?

It is my understanding that the Marine Corps supports the program of record and the

requirement based on Force Design 2030.

131. In your view, what role does the CH-53 play in battlefield mobility, particularly given the Corps' requirement to move and sustain ground forces that have become heavier due to the evolving need for additional armor on the modern battlefield?

As the only fully heavy-lift rotorcraft operating in marine environments, the CH-53K will support Joint and Coalition Forces in a range of future maritime missions. The CH-53K is able to lift a greater payload at sea level and high-altitude conditions, addressing connector shortfalls of the future Marine Air Ground Task Force, such as lifting the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. With a distributed force conducting Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations, the CH-53K is a critical logistical connector.

Modernization of Marine Corps Capabilities

The Marine Corps' current concepts for modernization of its amphibious capabilities includes ships, ship-to-shore connectors—such as the Landing Craft Air Cushion—and armored amphibious combat vehicles. Modernization across these systems is complex, technically challenging, and costly.

132. What is your assessment of the current capability of amphibious maneuver and assault systems in the Navy and Marine Corps?

In my view, the Navy and Marine Corps' amphibious capabilities, including ships, connectors, and combat vehicles, will be able to meet the needs of the nation if the replacement of legacy systems, to include Amphibious Ships, Amphibious Combat Vehicle, Ship to Shore Connector, and Landing Craft Utility, remain on track. If confirmed, I will work with Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Marine Corps, as well as the Office of Secretary of Defense, on the amphibious requirements to support the National Defense Strategy.

133. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the development and acquisition of capabilities required for sea basing, connectors, and armored amphibious assault and tactical mobility ashore to achieve a full spectrum capability in the Marine Corps?

I understand the Marine Corps has prioritized the procurement of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as fast as fiscally possible and at a level that industry can support, and that the Navy and Marine Corps have worked closely together on developing the Department's amphibious capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure integrated capability development and acquisition efforts continue.

134. In your view, what is necessary to ensure that modernization of the amphibious force—ships, connectors, and vehicles—is achievable and affordable in both the near and long terms?

I believe that the Navy and Marine Corps need to modernize to retain overmatch against the pacing threat. The amphibious force is a critical element of the Nation's maritime force

because it is a ready, lethal, and forward deployed force that can perform a variety of missions. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a sound investment plan to field the necessary amphibious forces to meet current and future threats.

135. Given the future envisioned by the NDS, high-intensity combined arms combat inland against a peer- or near-peer opponent, are current Marine Corps modernization plans and budgets adequate?

I believe the Commandant has set the Marine Corps on a path to modernization by judiciously reallocating resources from within his own budget. By investing in capabilities such as long-range precision fires, sensors, resilient communication networks, and mobility assets, I understand that the Marine Corps will be able to compete and, if required, defeat strategic competitors and rogue actors. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commandant and Congress to ensure sustained and adequate funding to achieve this modernization plan.

Amphibious Combat Vehicle

Current Navy and Marine Corps amphibious assault capability includes a large number of self-deploying amphibious assault vehicles (AAV-7) to carry infantry ashore, and a lesser number of small vessels—connectors—that can ferry other vehicles, such as tanks, artillery, and supplies from ship to shore. The Marine Corps is procuring the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as a modernized platform to replace the aging AAV-7 fleet. Despite originally planning for two increments: an ACV 1.1 and ACV 1.2, the Marine Corps made the decision to combine all variants into one program.

136. In your view, where does armored amphibious assault fit in the set of capabilities required to field a credible amphibious operations capability?

It is my understanding armored amphibious assault is a critical requirement to execute the Expeditionary Advance Base Operation concept and USMC missions. I understand the Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACVs) are performing very well and meeting the Marine Corps' requirements, and that the initial increment, known as 1.1, was so successful that it met almost every requirement, so there was no need to have two versions. If confirmed, I look to understand the details of this procurement program, and to work closely with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the Service has the necessary platforms to carryout assigned missions.

Munitions

Navy munitions inventories—particularly for precision guided munitions and air to air missiles—have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, poor program execution, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies.

137. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Navy has sufficient inventories of munitions to meet the needs of combatant commanders?

If confirmed I will work with the Combatant Commanders, the Secretary of Defense's staff, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure all weapons and munition warfighting requirements are understood and properly resourced.

138. If confirmed, what changes in budgeting and acquisition processes would you recommend to facilitate faster and more accurate Navy munitions replenishment rates?

While I am not currently aware of concerns with munition replenishment rates, if confirmed, I will work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure we are adequately replenishing munitions.

139. How will the Navy adapt to self-imposed DOD restrictions on area attack and denial munitions, consistent with the Ottawa Agreements?

If confirmed, I will work closely with DoD leadership to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are equipped with the capabilities required by the Joint Force to deter potential adversaries and to fight and win wars. I will ensure that these capabilities comply with all applicable law and policy.

Freedom of Navigation

140. In your view, what role should the Navy play in supporting the freedom of navigation in international waters, including in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

The Navy plays a crucial role in ensuring international waters and airspace are free and open, and this freedom of navigation and overflight is vital to the flow of global commerce. Through presence and its global operations, the Department of the Navy plays a pivotal role in preserving these navigational rights. Protecting this freedom of access is especially important in the strategically contested areas of the South China Sea and the Arctic.

141. If confirmed, how would you lead the Navy in engaging our allies in the common cause of ensuring freedom of navigation?

Freedom of Navigation and overflight is fundamental to the prosperity and economic security of all nations. As President Biden's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance lays out, the United States will continue to defend access to the global commons, including freedom of navigation and overflight rights. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to ensure a shared understanding of the necessity of freedom of navigation, to promote a rules-based order, and to vigilantly assert and preserve the navigation and overflight rights guaranteed to all nations under international law.

Cyber and Electronic Warfare

Section 1657 of the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) directed the appointment of an independent Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) for each Military Department, to act as the principal advisor to the Secretary concerned on all cyber matters affecting that Department.

142. What do you see as the role of this position in the Department of the Navy?

I am overall supportive and appreciative of the initiative to standup a PCA within each military department. I agree a dedicated office to coordinate cyber requirements and resources seems prudent given the complexity of fully integrating all facets of cyber within the Department of the Navy. It is my understanding the PCA will oversee the execution of Departmental policies and programs including: (1) the recruitment, resourcing, and training of military cyberspace operations forces, (2) acquisition of cybersecurity tools and capabilities, and (3) cybersecurity and related supply chain risk management of the industrial base. I also understand, the PCA will advise senior leadership on the full spectrum of cyberspace activities and information operations and the threat from adversary activities.

143. If confirmed, how would you plan to utilize the Navy PCA as part of your leadership structure?

If I am confirmed, the PCA would be part of my direct leadership team to keep me informed on cyber issues and threats that may affect the Department and the ability to meet obligations in defending the homeland or competing with adversaries. In addition, the PCA would be integral in developing, monitoring, and executing the Department's implementation of the DOD Cyber Strategy. I would also look to work with the PCA to determine how to integrate cyber as a warfighting domain, with the more traditional means and methods of warfare.

144. What are the Department of the Navy's top 3 Cyber Challenges, and how will you use the Principal Cyber Advisor to address them?

I believe the top three cyber challenges with the Department of the Navy are: (1) embracing Zero Trust principles across our traditional information technology, critical infrastructure and weapon systems, and the Defense Industrial Base (DIB); (2) truly embracing cyber as a warfighting domain and expanding our scope of thinking well beyond simply cybersecurity to ensuring we can credibly deliver effects against adversary information systems, critical infrastructure and weapons systems; and finally, (3) the readiness of the Department's cyber mission forces entrusted with not only the protection of DON systems but holding adversary systems at risk with organic non-kinetic cyber capabilities. If confirmed, I would empower the PCA to engage with the organization responsible for acquiring and delivering these capabilities, and recruiting and training the workforce, to ensure our cyber ecosystem is adequately resourced and supported.

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy.

145. In your view, how well postured are the Navy and the Marine Corps to meet the goals outlined in the 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy?

It is my understanding that Navy and Marine Corps activities and investments have improved the Department's cybersecurity and cyber resiliency posture while also supporting the DoD Cyber Strategy objective to "secure DoD information and systems against malicious cyber activities, including such activity on non-DoD-owned networks." The Department of the Navy continues to pursue initiatives to improve our cyber defense posture and increase

resilience through the DON Information Superiority Vision “Defend” line of effort including: (1) measuring cyber risk, (2) driving active monitoring, (3) promoting a cybersecurity culture, and (4) securing the Defense Industrial Base (DIB). These strategic objectives are aligned to the DoD Cyber Strategy. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are postured correctly to detect, protect, and respond to cyberattacks and intrusions. I will also integrate cyber operations into operations to build a lethal joint force to deter and defeat adversaries in cyberspace.

146. What actions would you take, if confirmed, to remediate any gaps between Navy and Marine Corps capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals?

If confirmed, full spectrum cyber operations will be an area of priority for me. The Department must not only fully embrace cybersecurity and cyber resiliency principles but it must also fully embrace cyber as a means of warfare integrated with how it will project power from the sea as a combined Navy and Marine Corps team. I support the creation of the Joint Cyber Warfighting Architecture (JCWA) to ensure Navy and Marine Corps equities are addressed and incorporated into the DOD future warfighting construct. Also, as identified in the Department’s 2019 Cybersecurity Readiness Review, there is an urgent need to improve Defense Industrial Base (DIB) cybersecurity for the protection of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI). I will emphasize efforts to increase accountability and accelerate the pace at which we attain complete cyber integration with our warfighting capabilities.

147. In your view, should the Navy and Marine Corps expand acceptable professional qualifications for their cyber workforces to include non-traditional professional credentialing and schooling from so-called technology boot camps and massive online open courses (MOOCs) as an alternative to traditional education, provided candidates meet the necessary technical standards?

The Department should look for innovative ways to train a highly skilled workforce shaped for today, but prepared for tomorrow’s needs. Technology boot camps prepare attendees for industry certifications, some of which are accepted qualifications for certain cyber workforce roles. However, I would need to conduct further review to determine if non-traditional credentialing can replace the foundational requirements currently provided by formal education or professional certification. If confirmed, I will look into the educational and technical standards required to determine if non-traditional forms of credentialing can reduce barriers to entry into this work space.

148. If confirmed, what will you do to enhance Navy and Marine Corps information dominance capabilities?

If confirmed, I will continue support for the Department of the Navy’s Information Superiority Vision, which aims to securely move information from anywhere to anywhere when needed, resulting in improved readiness and our ability to observe, orient, decide, and act faster than our adversaries. Guided by this vision, I understand that the Department will build information superiority by modernizing infrastructure, innovating and deploying new capabilities, and defending networks, systems and data.

149. Given the difficulty in defining where cyber operations and electronic warfare merge, if confirmed, how you would organize, train, and equip the Navy to minimize gaps and seams in these two critical mission areas?

If confirmed, I will commit to refining how our Naval forces approach the convergence of not just cyberspace operations and electronic warfare but also space and operations in the information environment. It is imperative that the Navy and Marine Corps must implement the right technologies in these mission areas. The Department must also organize and train with the other Services, including allies and partners, to operate in the multi-domain environment of tomorrow, while staying aligned with DOD regarding organizing, training, and equipping Naval cyber and electronic warfare forces.

150. What progress has the Department of the Navy made in implementing the recommendation of the “Cyber Readiness Review” it conducted 2019?

As I understand, the Department’s 2019 Cybersecurity Readiness Review (CRR) highlighted the need to treat data and information as a strategic asset and warfighting capability. The report organized recommendations into five key areas: structure, culture, people, process, and resources. In response to findings in the CRR, the Secretary of the Navy established an empowered CIO responsible for closing a 10-15 year technology gap, leveraging emerging technology to deliver transformative capability, and securing Department of the Navy data regardless of where it resides. I also understand that in the last two years, the Department of the Navy has made substantial progress in modernizing our infrastructure and securing our information for competitive advantage. If confirmed, I will look to understand how the Department is implementing the recommendations, and if any adjustments are required.

Navy-related Defense Industrial Base

151. What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Navy's organic and commercial defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?

The Navy continually assesses the health and resiliency of the entire defense industrial base, which includes munitions. It is my understanding that the Navy has worked to identify risks and address supply chain disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and has put in place new processes to identify future risks and issues within the supply chains. If confirmed, I look forward to working across the Department and with OSD to leverage existing authorities and funding, such as the Defense Production Act, to strengthen the supply chain.

152. How should Navy acquisition leaders weigh impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions?

In my view, Navy acquisition leaders must weigh the effects of program decisions on the industrial base when balancing resources and requirements, and should emphasize continued collaboration with industry to improve the health of the industrial base. It is my understanding that the Navy has worked diligently to coordinate government and industry efforts to keep the nation’s industrial base healthy and functioning during the coronavirus pandemic by balancing

worker safety, economic wellness and National Defense imperatives. If confirmed, I will continue efforts maximize the use of the American workforce to build and sustain our forces.

153. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to ensure that risk in the Navy-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to enable the development, production, and sustainment of technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?

If confirmed, I will assess the Department's systems and processes for managing risk within the defense industrial base and work with industry to develop recommendations to strengthen partnerships and ensure the health of the industrial base.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

154. Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

Freedom of navigation and overflight are essential to our defense and other national security interests. The Convention's provisions on navigation and overflight rights and freedoms reflect customary international law, and it is in the United States' interest to support these rights and freedoms. Accession to the convention would increase our credibility when we act to protect the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace above.

If confirmed, I will strive to preserve and protect the global mobility of our Naval forces, to include supporting the navigational freedom provisions of the Convention.

155. How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

U.S. military operations benefit from the navigational freedoms provided by the Law of the Sea Convention. The Convention's provisions on freedom of navigation and overflight reflect customary international law. Our nation supports these rights and freedoms. Accession to the convention would increase our credibility when we act to protect the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace above. If confirmed, I will continue to support the navigation and overflight provisions of the Convention as I believe they are vital to U.S. national security interests.

156. In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

All nations have the right to engage in the lawful use of the sea and airspace as provided by international law. If confirmed, I will support and promote our national interest of freedom of the seas. Acceding to the Law of the Sea Convention would strengthen our strategic ability to protect free and open access in the South China Sea and the Arctic.

Operational Energy and Energy Resilience

The Department defines *operational energy* as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems and generators. Department of Defense energy requirements are projected to increase due to technological advances in weapons systems and the execution of distributed operations over longer operating distances.

157. If confirmed, how would you lead the Navy in harnessing innovations in operational energy and linking them with emerging joint operational concepts in order to reduce contested logistics vulnerabilities for warfighters?

As I understand it, the Navy's and Marine Corps' operational energy investment is focused on increasing range and time-on-station of naval platforms and advancing technologies that support distributed maritime operations, as well as increasing the capabilities of advanced weapon systems and sensors. These technologies provide increased warfighting capabilities to the warfighter while also focusing on reducing the logistics demand of our forward deployed naval forces.

158. In what specific areas, if any, do you believe the Navy needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations and alternative energy resources into the strategic planning processes?

I believe the Navy and Marine Corps should incorporate energy planning and risk assessments into all relevant programs as part of their strategic planning process, always thinking of ways to save energy-related costs to maximize combat effectiveness. Energy considerations should be seriously addressed in developing effective supply chains for component and warfighting commands. Such assessments are critical to understanding their ability to meet the capabilities required to succeed at their missions.

159. In your view, how can Navy acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms to decrease risks to warfighters?

It is my understanding the Navy and Marine Corps are currently working to improve energy performance, storage, distribution, and controls to both reduce costs and better support advanced weapon systems and sensors. If confirmed, I will prioritize a continued focus on hybridization platforms and energy management in DON acquisition programs, enabling a more lethal force with greater reach and agility.

160. How can energy supportability that reduces contested logistics vulnerabilities become a key performance parameter in the requirements process beyond just a "check the box" consideration?

I believe the energy key performance parameter already requires an operational energy supportability analysis. If confirmed, I will ensure Navy and Marine Corps leadership conduct supportability analyses using contested logistics scenarios to maximize strike capability while reducing logistics in contested environments.

It is essential that DOD maintain capability to sustain critical operations in the event of an energy disruption—including commercial grid outages.

- 161. If confirmed, specifically how would you inculcate energy resilience as a mission assurance priority for the Department of the Navy, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to support mission critical functions and address known vulnerabilities?**

I believe both mission assurance and energy resilience are inextricably linked. Mission assurance assessments are a critical input into the development of the DON's Installation Energy Plans (IEPs) and inform the governance process for mitigating the installations' most critical energy security vulnerabilities. If confirmed, I will focus on addressing the most critical energy security gaps laid out in the IEPs through efforts that enhance the DON's sustainability and deploy renewable energy solutions that work towards accomplishing the President's goals.

- 162. What progress has the Department of the Navy made in creating individualized Installation Energy Plans to identify and remediate resilience gaps on and off Navy and Marine Corps installations?**

It is my understanding that in December 2020, the Navy completed IEPs for all 70 Navy bases, and the Marine Corps completed 7 IEPs and is working towards completing IEPs for the remainder of its installations by March 2022. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the DON completes all outstanding IEPs and focuses on the most critical installation resilience gaps.

- 163. How can the Department of the Navy better integrate energy security and resilience as standard components of its Military Construction (MILCON) programs, in your view?**

I understand that, through its IEPs, the DON is creating energy security roadmaps for each installation reflecting evolving mission requirements and resilience gaps both on and off installation. I am also aware the DON has expanded its shore mission integration governance processes to use IEPs to identify and address critical energy security and resilience gaps, using funds available to it under various programs. If confirmed, I will work to continue to facilitate multiple integration points between energy security and resilience within the MILCON process.

Installation Modernization and Resilience

Decades of underinvestment in Department of Defense installations has led to substantial backlogs in facilities maintenance, and substandard living and working conditions for sailors and Marines.

- 164. In your view, how is the readiness of navy shore installations linked to the readiness**

and lethality of naval power?

I believe naval installations are central to our Nation's military power; they are a key element of the capabilities required to create ready, deployable forces. Every base plays an important role, supporting the need to generate, project, employ, and sustain forces as part of the DON's warfighting readiness measures.

165. In your view, does the Department of the Navy receive adequate funding for base operations support, writ large? Please explain your answer.

I understand the DON requires the Navy and Marine Corps to prioritize and balance base operations investments among competing requirements. I realize there are always unfunded requirements for which the DON could use additional investments. If confirmed, I will work closely with my Assistant Secretaries, the DON's Service Chiefs, and the DOD to ensure the DON budgets appropriately meet as many of its base operation requirements as possible within existing funding authorities.

166. Do you have any specific plans to leverage infrastructure modernization to improve the quality of life for Navy and Marine Corps service members and their families, who are under considerable strain as a result of repeated deployments?

Quality of life for our Sailors, Marines, and their families is of the upmost importance to me. People are the DON's greatest asset and should be treated as such. If confirmed, I plan to continue the infrastructure modernization already in progress, and push to identify and support other efforts to enhance Service member and family quality of life.

167. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the resourcing of Navy shipyard modernization going forward, in light of other competing priorities?

I understand the importance of recapitalizing our public shipyards and fully appreciate the challenges presented by the competing priorities between shipyard modernization and other Navy requirements. If confirmed, I will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the Department is focused on timely funding of public shipyard infrastructure.

168. In your view, has the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program achieved its objective of streamlining local project reviews, resulting in more predictable timelines and solutions for shipyard projects?

I understand the Department of the Navy is conducting an industrial engineering analysis that will inform the final optimized production plant at each shipyard. Once these plans are completed, and if confirmed, I would work with the relevant stakeholders to identify all required infrastructure investments.

169. If not, how would you adjust the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, if confirmed, to achieve these paramount objectives?

I understand the importance of the public shipyards in maintaining the Navy the nation needs. If confirmed, I will work with all stakeholders to evaluate the program to ensure it is meeting its

objectives and I will make all necessary changes to keep it focused on improving the efficiency of our public shipyards.

170. How will shipyard modernization assist the Navy in achieving its goal of eliminating “lost operational days”?

I understand modernizing the Naval Shipyards will enable the Navy to improve production capacity, increase throughput and reduce the number of maintenance days so ships can return to the Fleet faster.

Environment

According to the GAO, the Navy has identified 127 installations with known or suspected releases of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

171. What is your understanding of the Department of the Navy’s strategy for monitoring drinking water on Navy and Marine Corps installations, as well as public and private drinking water off-installation, for PFOS, PFOA, and other contaminants?

I understand the DON proactively tested all drinking water systems and supplies on Navy and Marine Corps installations and took actions, where needed, to ensure no water supplied for drinking water on these installations contains PFOS and/or PFOA above EPA’s lifetime health advisory levels. Additionally, where the DON suspected potential PFOS and/or PFOA migration off an installation, it obtained well owner permission, sampled those wells, and provided alternative water in cases where there was an EPA lifetime health advisory level exceedance. I understand the DON plans to continue this proactive approach, which I will support if confirmed.

172. If confirmed, how would you further efforts to identify and remediate PFOS/PFOA contamination on Navy installations, including reserve component locations?

If confirmed, I would meet with the DON’s environmental program leadership to assess strategies, successes, and challenges to date and take action to remove barriers to support investigation and remediation efforts across the portfolio.

173. If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing the health concerns of service members and their families regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on Navy installations and in the context of performing military duties?

The safety of all Service members, civilians, and their family members who live and work on DON installations is of paramount importance. I understand the DON maintains a robust safety and occupational health program that works to identify and control exposures to personnel during execution of their military duties and maintains environmental programs to address potentially harmful contaminants on and migrating off installation. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of health and safety to mission readiness, ensuring commanders comply with recommendations for control measures, including wearing personal protective equipment and advancing technologies and products to minimize or

eliminate exposures overall. I would also ensure DON installations address any potentially harmful contaminants that may affect the health of those living and working there.

174. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that Navy and Marine Corps personnel at all levels comply with environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

If confirmed, I will verify that DON environmental policy is aligned with current environmental protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency. I will ensure DON environmental practitioners and military personnel have the necessary resources and training to ensure compliance with the latest standards.

175. What are your ideas for improving collaboration with the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness while protecting the environment on and around installations?

I am aware the DON works closely with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to identify collaboration opportunities in support of both agencies' missions. I believe both agencies work to preserve undeveloped lands adjacent to military installations and ranges, and have a long history of partnering to conserve and protect military readiness and important environmental resources. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to push innovative solutions such as those under the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, the Recovery and Sustainment Partnership (RASP) initiative, and the Sentinel Landscapes program, and to also seek new authorities, where appropriate, to help streamline collaboration opportunities.

Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather

176. How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on the Navy from recent extreme weather events?

Given the DON's mission link to the sea, I recognize many DON facilities will continue to be present in flood and hurricane-prone areas. I am aware that more recently constructed buildings perform better under extreme weather and environmental conditions than those that were built many years ago. If confirmed, I will work with DON senior leaders to ensure mission assurance programs identify and address risks to DON installations from extreme weather, storm surge, and sea level rise.

177. Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in Navy infrastructure?

Yes, I believe the DON must continue to incorporate more resilient designs, as they evolve, into its infrastructure. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring the DON continues to incorporate resilient designs, including appropriate hurricane and seismic unified facilities criteria into its master planning processes.

178. How can the Navy better use existing authorities on extreme weather mitigation

granted by Congress in the last few NDAsAs?

From my understanding, the DON has been working with Congress to leverage Title 10 authorities to increase energy security as well as tackle issues related to climate change which the President has deemed a national security threat. If confirmed, I will continue to foster the collaborative effort between the DON and Congress to achieve the Administration's goals for both energy and climate change.

Encroachment on Military Installations

Competition for space and other forms of encroachment continue to challenge the resiliency of DOD ranges and amplify the need for larger hazard areas to execute training, testing, and operations to meet NDS requirements. One issue of particular significance for the Navy has been the potential interference with aircraft radars by wind farms installed around military installations and ranges.

179. In your view, what is the gap between “as is” testing and training range capabilities, and current requirements?

If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure Navy and Marine Corps test and training ranges are able to support training as well as test and evaluation of new platforms and weapon systems. As the DON modernizes its force, I will ensure the Navy and Marine Corps continue to assess the adequacy of test and training range capabilities, to include land, air, and sea space, required to support the Department's modernization efforts and enable training in realistic environments with these platforms and weapon systems.

180. Specifically, what has the Department of the Navy done to secure or expand operations, testing, and training capabilities at key aviation ranges (e.g., El Centro, Fallon, Barry M. Goldwater Range)?

I am aware the Navy is focused on protecting and modernizing key capabilities at aviation ranges to accommodate development of new warfighting capabilities and create realistic training environments to ensure Sailors and Marines are proficient at employing these capabilities. As I understand, the DON prioritized the modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex as imperative for realistic Navy training with advanced platforms. If confirmed, I commit to looking into this range, and across all aviation ranges, and working with Congress to advocate for the necessary authorities and resources to enable ready forces. Further, I commit to working with all stakeholders including, but not limited to federal, state, Tribal, and local partners to understand their concerns and develop equitable solutions for access to land, air, and sea space.

181. If confirmed, how would you balance the trade-off between energy development and impact on Navy and Marine Corps operations and training?

If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps are the best trained and equipped force in the world. Training and testing will remain an irreplaceable component of reaching that goal. However, climate change is a national security issue that must be addressed, and threatens the resilience of our military operations. I will support both

of these national priorities by working closely with our sister services, federal agency partners, and energy stakeholders to enable the development of renewable energy compatible with Navy and Marine Corps readiness requirements.

Science, Technology, and Innovation

182. What are the key technologies that the Navy should be focused on to support modernization activities?

The 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance outlines a clear approach to regaining and maintaining technical advantage through investments in key modernization priorities: space, autonomy, cyber, quantum science, microelectronics, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and machine learning (AI/ML), and fully-networked command, control, and communication. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department focuses Science and Technology (S&T) funding on critical needs of the Navy and Marine Corps.

183. What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to the development of these key technologies for application to Navy and Marine Corps warfighting capabilities?

The Department of the Navy continues to emphasize acceleration and agility to keep technological advantage and to deliver capabilities faster than our adversaries. It is my understanding that authorities provided by Congress have been particularly beneficial, allowing the Department to develop innovative methods for effective management and mission execution at warfare centers and laboratories. If confirmed, I am committed to prioritizing investments in people, tools, and infrastructure to enable continuous learning, collaboration, agility, and cutting-edge capability to delivery at speed for our Naval Forces will ensure the preservation of national security and the maintenance of future naval power.

184. How well has the Department of the Navy prioritized limited research and development funding across its technology focus areas?

I believe S&T research is vital to provide for future technologies that support innovative capabilities in shipbuilding, aviation, weapons, and expeditionary equipment. It is my understanding that the Navy's FY 2022 budget request prioritizes research and development, with a 12.4% increase to the RDT&E account, in order to innovate and modernize the force while maintaining and enhancing readiness. Specifically, I understand that the Department's S&T budget request includes investments in fundamental research to support continual advancements in many cutting-edge areas to include AI, quantum sciences and computing, advanced autonomy, cyber security; as well as advanced operational prototypes for the next generation of directed energy weapons and autonomous systems. If confirmed, I will look to continue prioritizing key research that provides the Navy and Marine Corps a competitive warfighting advantage.

185. How is the Navy balancing revolutionary capability advancements, including

investments in basic research, as compared to “quick win” incremental improvements that can be rapidly fielded?

I understand the naval S&T portfolio is balanced across the following areas: basic research to build the scientific foundation for future technologies; initiatives that can provide disruptive technologies to the warfighter; transitioning S&T programs to the acquisition community and the Fleet; and prototype development and experimentation with the Fleet and Force to rapidly learn and revise.

I believe it is important to maintain dedicated investment in basic research programs to not only lay the groundwork for future scientific innovation but also develop the next generation of the scientific and technological workforce. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Navy continues to employ a combination of basic research investment, Future Naval Capabilities (FNCs), Innovative Naval Prototypes (INPs), Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfers (SBIR/STTR) processes and prototyping to transition technology to programs of record and directly to the warfighter, both today and into the future.

186. In your view, what steps must DOD and the Navy take to ensure that critical technical information is protected by Navy organizations, industry, and academia?

I believe that it is absolutely critical that the Department take proper steps to protect American intellectual property and technology. It is my understanding that the Office of Naval Research (ONR) is taking steps to develop security and information management procedures built on partnerships with academia and industry. These procedures focus on a shared understanding of the specific research requiring protection and seek to protect research which is deemed critical by the Navy due to potential military application, as well as patents and intellectual property owned by the performer. If confirmed, I will ensure the Navy remains partnered closely with other DoD and federal security, intelligence, counterintelligence, law enforcement agencies to implement innovative, enhanced protection methodologies to guard the military technological capability advantages of the future.

187. If confirmed, how would you ensure that a greater percentage of the technologies being developed by Navy labs transition into programs of record for deployment to the warfighter?

The Department of the Navy has an impressive technical workforce in the Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE) that works closely with industry, academia and across the government to ensure Sailors and Marines have the most advanced capabilities. It is my understanding that the NR&DE supports a number of programs to assist the transition existing research investments into homegrown technology development, including partnerships with programs such as FedTech’s Defense Innovation Accelerator. If confirmed, I will leverage this strong technical base and encourage the use of existing tools such as Future Naval Capabilities (FNCs), Innovative Naval Prototypes (INPs), Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfers (SBIR/STTR) processes and prototyping to transition technology to programs of record and to the warfighter.

188. How would you ensure that appropriate technologies are transitioning more quickly

into programs of record?

Successful transition of technologies from a prototype or demonstration to an operationally relevant, sustainable capability involves numerous challenges in areas such as transition planning, cost of transition, and time required to mature technology. It is my understanding that the Navy is leveraging accelerated acquisition tools and resident expertise in the warfare centers to identify potential solutions and promising technologies. If confirmed, I will encourage efforts across the entire Navy Research and Development Enterprise to identify actions that will reduce the cost, schedule, and technical risk associated with transition and increase the probability of successful transition to a program of record.

189. What efforts is the Department of the Navy making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to military and national security purposes?

I understand that the Department of the Navy has a number of initiatives that leverage commercial technologies for military applications. NavalX Tech Bridges build networks and connections with the private sector, innovation organizations, local industry, and small business to identify and accelerate technologies for the warfighter. Contracting mechanisms such as cooperative research and development agreements (CRADAs) and Other Transaction Authority (OTAs) have expanded the vendor base. If confirmed, I will continue to work across the Department to reduce the barriers between the DON and industry partners, including nontraditional defense contractors and startup companies.

190. In your view, what steps must DOD take to protect and strengthen our National Security Innovation Base to ensure that critical information is protected?

I certainly recognize the serious nature of evolving cyber threats, which extend to all facets of the workforce and the industrial base. It is my understanding that the Navy is approaching this issue with a sense of urgency, working closely with DoD and partners in the National Security Innovation Base to accurately assess and smartly improve the security posture of the industrial base and protect Navy data. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with OSD and across the Services to address these challenges in a systematic way and in consideration of constantly evolving technologies.

Recent budget requests for defense Science and Technology (S&T) have fallen short of the Defense Science Board's recommended goal of dedicating 3% of the total defense budget to S&T. Robust investment in S&T underpins technological advances in our military capabilities and is vital to maintaining our military technological superiority over emerging adversaries. However, over the past few years, the Navy has prioritized near-term research and development over long-term S&T.

191. If confirmed, what metrics would you use to assess whether the Navy is investing adequately in S&T programs and whether the Navy has achieved the proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T?

In my view maintaining a proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T is

absolutely critical to maintaining the long-term technological superiority of the Department of the Navy and the Nation. Many of the technologies available today are enabled by five to fifteen years of basic and applied research. These investments also play a role in developing the next generation of the American technical workforce. For that reason, if confirmed, I will seek to inspire, engage and educate the next generation of scientists and engineers.

Military Health System (MHS) Reform

192. Do you support the implementation of the MHS reforms mandated by the NDAAs for FYs 2017, 2019, and 2020?

Yes. I support these reform efforts and recognize the important role that the Military Health System has in keeping our service members healthy and ready to meet their demanding missions, as well as ensuring access to health care for families.

193. If confirmed, how would you ensure the efficient transfer of the administration and management of remaining Navy military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency?

If confirmed, I will continue the progress that the Department of Navy has made in the efficient transfer of Navy military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency.

194. Will you ensure that the Navy continues to provide the military medical personnel needed to provide care in these facilities?

Yes. I will continue the ongoing collaborative reform efforts between the Department of Navy and the Defense Health Agency. I understand that this work includes assessment of the military health care personnel requirements for supporting the medical treatment facilities.

The committee has learned that the Navy has not assigned medical personnel in certain medical specialties to provide full support to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). The committee intends for WRNMMC to be the premier medical center in the MHS, but without the full support of the military departments to provide key medical staff, the center will not meet this intent.

195. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy assigns the personnel required to meet the staffing requirements at WRNMMC and at other military medical treatment facilities in the future?

If confirmed, I will continue the efforts to ensure an efficient transfer of the military treatment facilities to the Defense Health Agency, including assessment of the military health care personnel requirements at WRNMMC and other military treatment facilities.

196. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Navy reduces its medical headquarters' staffs and infrastructure to reflect the more limited roles and responsibilities of the Navy Surgeon General?

If confirmed, I will continue the current efforts to optimize Navy Medicine headquarters consistent with their readiness responsibilities in support of the Navy and Marine Corps.

End Strength

The Navy's active duty end strength grew from 323,600 in FY 2015 to 347,800 in FY 2021. The FY 2022 President's budget would cut 1600 Sailors. The Marine Corps' active duty end strength authorization is also shrinking from 186,200 in FY 2020 to 178,500 requested for FY 2022.

197. Do you believe that Navy and Marine Corps end strengths are appropriate and sufficient to meet national defense objections? Please explain your answer.

At this time, I do not have enough information on the operational plans and Navy and Marine Corps requirements to support them. If confirmed, I will work closely with the CNO and CMC to ensure our naval force structure is appropriate and sufficient to meet our national defense objectives.

Navy and Marine Corps Reserves

198. What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves?

Our Navy and Marine Corps Reserves play a vital role in supporting our national interests by providing strategic depth and operational capacity to our active forces. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we fully leverage the strategic and operational capabilities within our reserve components. Both the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve are integral to ensuring our Nation's security.

199. If confirmed, what objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the organization, force structure, and end strength of the Navy Reserve?

Before I can make a true assessment of the Navy Reserve's organization, force structure, and end strength, I will need to understand better its capabilities, capacity, and where it can best support the Department of the Navy's Total Force. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Navy to ensure we are fully leveraging the strategic depth and operational capacity within the Navy Reserve.

200. Of the Marine Corps Reserve?

Likewise, it would be premature for me to provide an assessment of the Marine Corps Reserve's organization, force structure, and end strength. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Marine Corps to ensure we are fully leveraging the strategic depth and operational capacity within the Marine Reserve.

201. Do you expect to meet prior service accession goals for the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves this fiscal year? Please explain your answer.

At this time, I do not have sufficient information to make an assessment on whether the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves will meet their prior service accession goals. Accessioning Sailors and Marines and leading the active force into our reserve components is a key component of maintaining readiness, as those Sailors and Marines bring the benefits of extensive training and years of experience. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we are committed to meeting the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves prior service accession goals.

Recruiting and Retention

The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service, and only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

202. Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative initiatives would you implement, if confirmed, to expand the pool of eligible recruits and improve Navy and Marine Corps recruiting?

I understand that both Navy and Marine Corps have been successful in meeting their recruiting objectives; however, attracting today's youth will require that the Navy and Marine Corps recruiting continue to adapt to attract this new generation of potential recruits to remain successful. It is my understanding that the services are working to transform recruiting efforts to meet the challenges faced with attracting recruits from a newer generation. Recruiting is focused on both new technologies in advertising and personnel processing and both Services are complementing existing recruiting practices with greater use of social media in an effort to extend their reach and expand their recruiting markets into all communities. If confirmed, I will continue support for the Navy and Marine Corps in their efforts to expand their recruiting marketing by leveraging technology to educate today's youth on value and the benefits of service in our Navy and Marine Corps.

203. In your view, what effect do current recruiting standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—have on recruit attrition and/or future success in the Navy and the Marine Corps?

I understand that the Navy and Marine Corps review recruiting and retention data routinely to ensure that recruiting standards align with the Services' needs, and that data shows that tier-one recruits are a good value for both because tier-one recruits tend to have lower attrition and greater likelihood to succeed in technical training pipelines. If confirmed, I look forward to gaining a deeper understanding of the Department's military manpower data and to ensure that the Services balance recruiting standards and retention to enable readiness within the Fleet.

204. What monetary and non-monetary incentives are the Navy and the Marine Corps employing in an effort to retain aviators?

It is my firm belief that the men and women serving in the Navy and Marine Corps today seek, in addition to fair and adequate compensation, a balance between professional fulfillment, quality of service, and work/life balance. With that in mind, it is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps offer both monetary and non-monetary incentives for aviators. Beyond just specialty pay and bonuses, this would include advanced training and certifications, quality of life initiatives, and, most importantly, certainty in their operational assignments. If confirmed, I'll consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to fully understand the scope of this retention challenge. I also believe dialogue with our aviation leaders and the aviators themselves is essential to understanding the motivators behind a stay or go decision and, if confirmed, I will seek out these additional insights to the aviator retention challenge.

205. Which incentives or combinations thereof have proven most effective?

While I don't have access to the data needed to respond to this question, I do believe it is the combination of both monetary and non-monetary incentives, coupled with quality of life initiatives that allow the Department of the Navy to retain the aviators required to accomplish their assigned missions. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that the Navy has a realistic plan for aviator retention.

206. What recommendations would you have for increasing the pool of youth who are both eligible and propensed for military service?

Increasing the pool of youth, both eligible and with a propensity for military service, is certainly a challenge today as there are fewer ties to military service than there were for prior generations. Furthermore, we cannot limit our recruiting efforts to those Americans who already have a relationship with someone in the military or those with an expressed desire to serve. I believe it important that we aggressively work to expand the youth market by focusing our advertising on educating today's youth on the benefits and value of service in the Navy or Marine Corps. We need to communicate that being part of the Navy-Marine Corps team will allow them to be part of something bigger than themselves, and that their service will help them achieve more than they might otherwise. Also, we need to ensure we reach out to communities like where I grew up to ensure we attract young men and women from underserved communities who would otherwise be unaware of the opportunities the Navy and Marine Corps can provide.

Military Compensation

207. What is your assessment of the adequacy of military compensation?

Attracting and maintaining a highly skilled, well-trained volunteer workforce is essential to mission accomplishment, and, while today's military compensation is competitive with the civilian sector, there is certainly competition for many of the highly-skilled, well trained personnel who are serving in both the Navy and Marine Corps. If confirmed, I will work

closely with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure we continue to compensate all Sailors and Marines competitively for their sacrifice and service. Additionally, we will need to ensure we offer appropriate incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, to retain those Sailors and Marines with high demand skills that are critical to mission success.

208. What recommendations would you have for controlling the rising cost of personnel?

Just like in the private sector, personnel costs consume the highest portion of overall operating costs. I understand military compensation, relative to the civilian marketplace, remains very competitive—and this is as it should be if the Navy and Marine Corps want to attract, access, and retain talent. I do, however, believe there are opportunities to improve the way we compensate our Service members that will help to control the rising costs of military personnel. If confirmed, I'll consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to assess our personnel costs to ensure that our compensation programs (including special and incentive pays) that target key skillsets critical to today's Naval force are retained, while seeking to eliminate or modify those programs that do not contribute to mission success.

The GI Bill, Voluntary Education, and Credentialing Programs

209. Do Navy and Marine Corps Voluntary Education Programs contribute to military readiness, in your view? Please explain your answer.

I believe that Voluntary Education Programs contribute greatly to military readiness. An educated force is a diverse, skilled, adaptable, and flexible force that is more capable of tackling emerging threats and challenges around the globe. Voluntary Education Programs also function as talent management tools by enabling Sailors and Marines to become more competitive for promotion, assignment, and retention. An educated force will help the Department to accomplish any mission the Nation demands.

210. What progress have the Navy and Marine Corps made in identifying and leveraging credentialing programs, both to enhance a sailor or Marine's ability to perform his/her official duties, and to qualify the sailor or Marine for meaningful civilian employment on separation from the military?

The Department of the Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) program provides Sailors, Marines, and DON civilians opportunities to obtain licenses and certifications to validate their knowledge and experience and open doors to new opportunities in the Navy and in the civilian community. It is my understanding that Navy COOL currently funds over 2,700 certificates/licenses with opportunities for Sailors in every rating. These certifications both professionalize the workforce and can assist Sailors in qualifying for meaningful civilian employment upon transition. It is also my understanding that the Marine Corps COOL program provides Marines with similar opportunities to attain certification and licenses related to their Military Occupational Specialties. These credentials are tied to civilian certificates and can be carried into the civilian world when Marines transition. The majority of Marine Corps COOL users access the site through a mobile device, a unique aspect of Marine Corps COOL. I understand, Navy has also developed a mobile app for smart phone and other portable data devices.

211. What is your vision of the role and mission of the Naval Community College?

The Naval Community College will allow the Department the ability to become a better-educated and more capable force. The degree programs offered by the Naval Community College's general education curriculum will help Sailors and Marines to develop better critical-thinking skills, while the NCC's professional concentrations will boost readiness by increasing the competence, knowledge, and abilities of Sailors and Marines in areas that are relevant to mission-critical naval operations

Non-Deployable Service members

212. In your view, should Sailors and Marines who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months be subject either to separation from the service or referral to the Disability Evaluation System, as is current Department policy?

The Navy and Marine Corps are expeditionary forces. As such, Sailors and Marines should be capable of deploying. I do recognize, however, that there will be situations where it may be in the best interest of the service for a Sailor or Marine who is non-deployable to be retained. I understand the current policy allows the Secretaries of the Military Departments to retain service members who are non-deployable in excess of 12 consecutive months, on a case-by-case basis, if determined to be in the best interest of the service. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop policies that will enable everyone who enters the Navy or Marine Corps, and those already serving, to remain deployable.

213. Under what circumstances would the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be "in the best interest of the service"?

My understanding of the current policy is that service members who are non-deployable in excess of 12 consecutive months may be retained, on a case-by-case basis, if determined to be in the best interest of the service. The policy makes sense because there can be myriad circumstances that may warrant an exception. Perhaps a Sailor or Marines requires more than 12 months to recover fully from an injury or wound that caused their non-deployable status. There could be a situation where a Sailor or Marine possesses special skills that can be performed from their homeport or base. In both of these examples, it might be worthwhile or necessary to retain the Sailor or Marine rather than to separate them and have to access and train a replacement. If confirmed, I will ensure that retention determinations for non-deployability are made judiciously and fairly within the Navy and Marine Corps.

214. In your view, should a Sailor or Marine's readiness to perform the required specific missions, functions, and tasks in the context of a particular deployment also be considered in determining whether that service member is deployable?

Without addressing a specific situation, I would say, yes; generally, a Sailor or Marine's readiness to perform the required missions, functions, and tasks of a particular deployment should be considered in determining whether that service member is deployable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop

policies that will enable everyone who enters the Navy or Marine Corps, and those already serving, to remain deployable.

215. What are your ideas for addressing the challenges of medical non-deployability in the reserve components?

I do not have specific information or data on the challenges of medical non-deployability within the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve, but, if confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand the issue and its impact on the reserve components and to ensure Reserve Sailors and Marines are ready to deploy when needed.

The new DOD transgender policy (set forth in DODI 1300.28) states “any determination that a transgender Service member is non-deployable at any time will be consistent with established Military Department and Service standards, as applied to other Service members whose deployability is similarly affected in comparable circumstances unrelated to gender transition.” The same policy requires commanders to review and approve service member requests to transition gender in a manner that “maintains military readiness by minimizing impacts to the mission (including deployment, operational, training, and exercise schedules, and critical skills availability).

216. What Department of the Navy standards and policies related to a Sailor or Marine’s ability to deploy will be applied to transgender service members undergoing gender transition procedures or treatment?

While I have not had an opportunity to become fully informed on the Department of the Navy’s standards and policies regarding deployability, my understanding is that a transgender Sailor or Marine’s ability to deploy will be handled in the same way as any other Sailor or Marine undergoing comparable medical procedures or treatment unrelated to gender transition. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy and Marine Corps leadership to develop a full understanding of current standards.

217. As the Navy implements the DOD policy, what level of commander will be responsible for balancing service member requests to transition gender while maintaining military readiness?

I understand the Department of the Navy is in the process of updating its policy to comply with DoD policy. I do not have access to DON-internal deliberations, so I do not know what current level of command will be responsible for that decision. If confirmed, I will work with Department leaders to understand what level of command has been identified and, if necessary, direct revisions to the Department of the Navy policy.

218. If confirmed, how would you ensure that commanders are permitted to deny or delay gender transition requests if it such a request would degrade unit readiness and deployability?

If confirmed, I would work with Department of the Navy (DON) leaders, as well as the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery medical professionals, to ensure DON policies balance the medical needs of affected Sailors and Marines with a unit’s readiness and ability to deploy.

Military Family Readiness and Support

219. What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for sailors, Marines, and their families?

Military families serve alongside our Sailors and Marines, and I believe that family readiness is inherently tied to unit readiness and our ability to achieve the National Defense Strategy mission. It is crucial that service members can deploy far from home and know that programs and services are in place to support their families during these absences. As a former Naval Officer who spent a significant amount of time deployed away from my family, I am cognizant of the many sacrifices military families make on a daily basis. If confirmed, I will be steadfast in my support for programs that support spouses and families, from child care to personal financial readiness and other life skills to quality privatized housing.

220. If confirmed, how would you ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?

If confirmed, I will meet with Navy and Marine Corps leaders as well as military families, to learn about the effectiveness of our family readiness programs. Both the Navy and the Marine Corps offer a wide-ranging assortment of programs and resources to address issues these issues. I am also a firm believer in exercising strong oversight. Family readiness will be one of my main concerns if I am confirmed.

Of all Military Services, the Navy has the largest and longest waitlist for service members to receive military childcare services.

221. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that military families are provided with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?

I recall firsthand the importance of childcare while I was on active duty. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps are exploring a multi-pronged approach to address the high demand of childcare, to include expanding fee assistance, renovating older facilities, and nurturing community partnerships that may more rapidly provide capacity. I understand some installations are collaborating with local municipalities to expand daycare, providing a benefit for military families and their civilian neighbors. If confirmed, I will further consider these approaches and explore other innovative ways to address this critical issue.

222. If confirmed, how would you reduce the wait time for Sailors to receive access to military childcare in a timely fashion?

Childcare is a critical issue for military families, especially in the current environment and challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will review the current wait time mitigations being employed by the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as their sister Services, to develop an innovative strategy that addresses identified shortfalls. I would want to include recommendations by Senior Enlisted Advisors and hear directly from families to understand their needs and their ideas.

223. If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as to active Navy and Marine families who do not reside near a military installation?

Support for Navy and Marine Reserve Component families presents obstacles not faced by those who reside near a military installation. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership, both active and reserve, to make sure these components are benefitting from appropriate support structures. I will also engage families to confirm that their needs are being met. Furthermore, the pandemic caused many industries to use technology for delivery of programs and services. If confirmed, I would ensure that any innovative best practices are incorporated into the delivery of family readiness programs for Navy and Marine Reserve Component families, as well as those who do not reside near a military installation.

224. In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting readiness of the force and family?

Non-medical counseling promotes readiness of the force and family by addressing day to day stressors of military life through supportive, solution-focused counseling. Although I am not familiar with current Department of Navy processes used to determine when it is appropriate to utilize a DOD Military Family Life Counselor, in lieu of other Family Readiness counseling services, I do know non-medical counseling is a key resource. If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand how that determination is made, the current scope of work performed by DOD Military Family Life Counselors, and how best to utilize all resources moving forward.

Support for Military Families with Special Needs

225. What is your view of the overall effectiveness of the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?

As the parent of a former EFMP spouse and child, I understand the importance of the Exceptional Family Member Program. It is extremely important that Sailors and Marines are assigned to locations where the required medical services and educational support are available for spouses and children with special needs. I do not have current Navy or Marine Corps internal data regarding the objectives and measures of effectiveness for the EFMP program, so it would be premature for me to provide an assessment at this point. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure this program is poised to best support Sailors, Marines and their families.

226. If confirmed, how would you incentivize service member enrollment in EFMP?

If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand barriers to enrollment and to consider whether incentives may be needed and how best to address them. Our commanding officers and senior enlisted advisors are essential to this process in ensuring our Sailors and Marines are aware.

227. If confirmed, how would you empower military families to advocate and access individualized educational programs and other support to which their family member is entitled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including from public schools in the vicinity of military installations?

Both Navy and Marine Corps provide legal assistance to families when additional educational support is required. I understand the services have hired several skilled attorneys and other professionals, locating them in Fleet concentration areas to support families who encounter challenges. As a parent of children who have both benefited from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and personally experienced the challenges that do exist, I am most sensitive to the existing concerns of our military families impacted by these situations. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to better understand the current challenges service members and their families face in accessing their entitlements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As necessary, I will enlist the support and expertise of others within the U.S. government, and, as needed, members of Congress, to ensure our military families' rights are protected.

228. If confirmed, how would you enhance support to a service member in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs, regardless of where that family member is located?

I do not have Department of the Navy internal data that would help me understand the current challenges Sailors and Marines and their families face in navigating the TRICARE system to obtain the medical services and support required by a family member with special needs. I am, however, a beneficiary of TRICARE and, if confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to understand the scope of the challenges and potential solutions to ensure our service members and their families have the support they deserve, regardless of their location.

229. If confirmed, how would work with Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners and military commanders to ensure that the needs of service members with an exceptional family member are considered in the military housing assignment process?

If confirmed, I will engage with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to better understand the current issues and challenges faced by our families with special needs and to ensure that our Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners meet the housing needs of these families in compliance with all fair housing and disability laws.

230. If confirmed, how would you eliminate or reduce the bureaucratic administrative burdens currently experienced by EFMP participants, and ensure that EFMP services are consistent across services?

I greatly appreciate Congress' FY 2021 NDAA directed standardization of the EFMP across the Military Departments. It is my understanding that the Navy and Marine Corps, along with their sister Services, are participating on an Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and

Readiness-led working group to increase standardization and expand communication methods for families with special needs. If confirmed, I will engage with Navy and Marine Corps leaders and EFMP participants to review administrative requirements and understand potential areas to reduce administrative requirements while maintaining data needed to measure program effectiveness and ensure accountability.

Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI)

In the FY 1996 NDAA, Congress established the MHPI, providing DOD with the authority to obtain private-sector financing and management to repair, renovate, construct, and operate military housing. DOD has since privatized 99 percent of its domestic housing. The Senate Armed Services Committee held three hearings to address concerns voiced by military families living in privatized housing that the program had been grossly mismanaged by certain private partners; that military and chain of command oversight were non-existent; and that in speaking out about the appalling condition of the quarters in which they lived, they were opening themselves and their military sponsors to reprisal.

231. What have the Navy and the Marine Corps done to address sailor, Marine, and family member concerns regarding the untenable living conditions prevalent in certain privatized housing locales?

It is my understanding the DON has increased active leadership by installation, regional, and unit Commanders; improved oversight of project owner compliance with Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) agreements, and improved communications to regain resident trust. Of significant importance, in June, the Department reported that all MHPI companies at all DON installations have fully implemented all 18 Tenant Bill of Rights contained in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020.

232. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to reinforce the accountability of the Navy and Marine Corps chains of command for oversight of the MHPI program as it affects their sailors, Marines, and military families?

The DON must provide safe, high-quality, well-maintained homes to its Service members and their families. If confirmed, I will ensure sustained chain-of-command involvement and oversight. I will drive continued identification of systemic issues and process improvements. In so doing, I will leverage, and remain consistent with, the efforts of the DOD Chief Housing Office and the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force to enhance the quality of life for the DON's most important asset – its people.

233. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to establish accountability in MHPI “contractors”, for strict adherence to the terms of their “partnership agreements” with the Navy or Marine Corps?

If confirmed, I will ensure the requirements contained in the NDAA for FYs 2020 and 2021 are incorporated in the business agreements with MHPI project companies creating additional accountability for the MHPI project companies.

The FY 2020 NDAA was clear—the Tenants Bill of Rights for military personnel living in privatized housing must include three basic items: the right to dispute resolution, the ability to withhold rent, and access to a home’s maintenance history. Yet DOD’s recently released Tenant Bill of Rights included none of these things.

234. If confirmed, what would you do to address these omissions?

I understand that in June, the DON reported that all MHPI companies at all DON installations have voluntarily fully implemented the 18 Tenant Bill of Rights contained in the NDAA for FY 2020, including the right to dispute resolution, the ability to withhold rent, and access to a home’s maintenance history. If confirmed, I will work with the MHPI companies to incorporate these rights in the business agreements with MHPI project companies.

235. Given the challenges associated with the MHPI, what value do you perceive in the FY 2020 NDAA’s codification in law of the position of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment?

I believe Secretariat-level leadership is essential to promulgating effective policy and the guidance necessary to address the challenges associated with oversight of MHPI housing. Congressional codification of the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment ensures the continuity and stability of that leadership.

Suicide Prevention

The number of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee. Over the past two years, five sailors assigned to the *U.S.S. George H.W. Bush* committed suicide.

236. Has the Navy conducted a comprehensive review of the *Bush* suicides to determine whether there were any common causal factors?

Suicide is a complex problem. Regarding the tragic deaths on the *Bush*, it is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating Sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all Sailors and Marines and continue to support the Department’s current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

237. If so, what did the Navy find?

It is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating Sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. I have not reviewed the report and cannot comment on the individual findings or initiatives. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all Sailors, Marines, and civilians and continue to support the Department’s current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate

stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

238. What actions has the Navy taken to prevent the suicides of other sailors assigned to the *Bush*?

It is my understanding that the Navy conducted a comprehensive review and has launched several initiatives aimed at educating Sailors on how to recognize stressors and risk factors, and where to access supportive services. I have not reviewed the report and cannot comment on the individual findings or initiatives. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all Sailors, Marines, and civilians and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care.

239. If confirmed, what would you do to maintain a strong focus on preventing suicides in the active Navy and Marine Corps, the Navy and Marine Reserve, and in the families of your sailors and Marines?

The loss of any Sailor, Marine, or civilian to suicide is one too many, and we must remain committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being for all members of our military community. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of all Sailors, Marines and civilians and continue to support the Department's current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care. In addition to prioritizing suicide prevention strategies that are evidence-based and grounded in data, if confirmed, I will address the health of our unit climates to promote connectedness among Sailors and Marines as well as providing tools to commanders to enhance unit cohesion, maintain a continued sense of purpose and promote peer support.

240. What are your ideas for preventing suicides by curtailing the misuse of lethal means by sailors, Marines, and their families?

I understand that practicing lethal means safety reduces the probability of a suicide attempt. If confirmed, I will raise awareness of the importance of lethal means safety, for example, by encouraging the use of gun locks and proper storage of personally-owned firearms, especially during times of increased stress, as well as promoting a proactive position in disposing unused medications. Also, if confirmed, I will work to ensure family members have access to the same lethal means safety material, recognizing the important role families play in intervention and promoting needed mental health services. I will also work with experts to ensure the Department is doing everything possible to prevent suicides.

241. If confirmed, what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of sailors and Marines across all Components?

I am not familiar with the level of reporting that the Navy and Marine Corps presently follow. If confirmed, I will review what reporting and tracking tools are used by the Navy and Marine Corps and work with the Services to leverage military and civilian data to assess areas where the Department can improve. Further, if confirmed, I will collaborate with key stakeholders across the Department of Defense and other federal agencies such as the

Department of Veterans Affairs, gleaning best practices, identifying trends and sharing resources.

Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention and Response Programs

242. In your view, are the policies, programs, and training that the Department of the Navy has put in place to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault adequate and effective?

Sexual assault and other harmful behaviors must never be tolerated. Offenders must be held accountable and Marine, Sailor and civilian victims should have access to the support they need. I understand that both services within the Department are unyielding in their pursuit to reduce the prevalence of these behaviors and ensuring comprehensive care to those who seek help. I understand the Department's commitment to prevention of sexual harassment and assault is comprehensive and includes focus on the culture and climate within the Navy and Marine Corps. There is more to be done and, if confirmed, I will prioritize these programs, ensuring they have the support and resources they need to succeed. I will focus on healthy and positive environments, where leaders at all levels foster a climate in which service members and civilians have the opportunity to thrive.

243. If confirmed, what would you do to increase focus on the prevention of sexual assaults?

If confirmed, I will focus on innovative and evidenced-based prevention programs and use data to assess for high risk behaviors. I will increase emphasis on addressing emerging problematic behaviors before they escalate. That includes early interventions to eliminate gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and workplace hostility. I will continue to prioritize professional development, promoting the enduring proficiencies to foster positive behaviors. I will also continue to create policies that support those who come forward and/or are in need of help.

244. What is your view of the necessity of affording a victim both restricted and unrestricted options to report sexual harassment?

We know sexual harassment is underreported. I believe the Department of the Navy should explore all avenues to reduce barriers for Marines, Sailors and civilians to come forward and report sexual harassment. This includes promoting awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment in order for leaders and peers to intervene early and often. I am aware that Secretary Austin's Independent Review Commission recommended several additional mechanisms to improve sexual harassment prevention, response, and reporting and, if confirmed, will work to make those needed improvements. Increased awareness of the true prevalence of sexual harassment, through enhanced reporting options, will better protect our people and inform our training and policies.

245. If confirmed, what actions would you take to improve the quality of investigations into allegations of sexual harassment?

Allegations of sexual harassment must always be taken seriously, as harassing behaviors harm our people and can often precede other negative and criminal behaviors, like sexual assault. I have not yet seen Department of the Navy specific data on the quality of the investigations but, if confirmed, will review existing processes and implement necessary improvements to ensure high quality, fair, and thorough investigations are conducted.

246. What is your understanding of the adequacy of Navy and Marine Corps resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

I understand the Department of the Navy has a comprehensive and multi-faceted response system for victims but we will continue to evolve and enhance existing policies, training and processes as needed. If confirmed, I will underscore the high priority for care and support, as well as explore best practices and services. In addition, we must ensure that all Service members—both in the active and reserve components-- and civilians are aware of and have access to of all resources available to them. Access to the Victims' Legal Counsel and 24/7 medical and supportive services are critical to taking care of our Marines, Sailors and civilians and they must be appropriately resourced and promoted.

247. What is your assessment of protections against retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault and/or harassment?

Retaliation and reprisal are detrimental actions that negatively impact the well-being of our people. In addition to the harm done to the individual, there is a degradation of trust within a unit and a substantial setback to overall mission readiness. We have a responsibility to hold our leaders accountable. I understand that there is greater emphasis being placed on assessing for retaliatory behaviors among first responders and key stakeholders and those instances are highlighted at monthly case management group meetings to be swiftly addressed. More needs to be done to bring awareness to what comprises these behaviors, and how to report them should they arise.

248. What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove Navy and Marine Corps commanders from case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

Despite previous efforts, sexual assault and harassment remain persistent and corrosive problems. The Secretary of Defense committed that we must do more to counter them and in so doing, consider outside views and ideas, and be transparent where we have fallen short. I agree with him. I am committed to exploring all promising ideas to address these problems. Having said that, military commanders are responsible for everything that happens in their units. As such, they play a key role in the disciplinary process. We must have a military justice system that is effective in an operational and forward deployed environment. While I will always remain open minded about changes to the system, I remain cautious about changes that could negatively impact a commander's ability to lead. If confirmed, I will remain committed to having an open mind and will work towards the effective implementation of any directed reforms.

Juvenile Problematic Sexual Behavior:

249. What actions has the Department of the Navy taken to regularize policies and programs for responding to, investigating, adjudicating, and documenting allegations of juvenile problematic sexual behavior on Navy and Marine Corps installations?

I am aware that the Navy and Marine Corps have developed resources for parents regarding healthy sexual development and have issued policies requiring the investigation of juvenile misconduct and referral of allegations of problematic sexual behavior of children and youth to Family Advocacy for assessment, treatment, and victim assistance. It is my understanding that the Family Advocacy Program expanded its portfolio to address problematic sexual behavior in children and youth through a coordinated community response. The ultimate goal of this expansion is to develop the capacity to identify, report, respond, and intervene with appropriate treatment and services to help military-affiliated children, youth, and their families who have been impacted. The most serious cases may warrant referral to civilian authorities for further investigation and/or determination of disposition. If confirmed, I will fully support this policy.

250. How does the Department of the Navy ensure that the victims of juvenile problematic sexual behavior receive the care, treatment, support, and advocacy services they need?

I understand that the Department of the Navy Family Advocacy multi-disciplinary teams engage a community approach to intervene and provide services to children and families impacted by problematic sexual behaviors. These teams provide an array of services in a child-focused setting through collaborative relationships with system and community partners and are well-suited to address the needs of children and families impacted by problematic sexual behaviors. If confirmed, I will continue to support this approach to ensure the best care, treatment, and support is readily available in an effort to reduce the risk of problematic sexual behaviors from reoccurring.

251. In your view, does the Department of the Navy have a mechanism to hold accountable, as appropriate, and provide treatment to juveniles who engage in problematic sexual behavior?

I am aware that the Family Advocacy Program reports incidents of problematic sexual behavior to law enforcement to determine whether a separate criminal investigation is warranted. Family Advocacy also provides comprehensive assessments for any impacted children, and recommends or provides evidence-based treatment. If confirmed, I will ensure relationships are established with the Department of Justice and other appropriate civilian authorities to work through issues of jurisdictional authority for prosecution, if and when appropriate.

252. Does the Department of the Navy require any additional authorities to establish and maintain the centralized database on child and youth problematic sexual behavior required by section 1089 of the FY 2019 NDAA?

I do not have sufficient information to answer this question; however, if confirmed, I will work closely with the Navy and Marine Corps leadership and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to determine whether additional authorities are needed to ensure we are meeting the

requirements established in section 1089 of the FY 2019 NDAA. The well-being and safety of service families, including and especially their children is extremely important to me. Further, I will revise, as necessary, policies and procedures to reflect best practices to meet the needs of all the families and children served.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Navy and Marine Corps Families

253. What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the Navy and Marine Corps, and, if confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?

Domestic violence and child abuse are intolerable and incompatible with service in the Navy and Marine Corps. My understanding is that the data concerning these cases is reflective of national trends. Even one incident of abuse is one too many. Understanding the unique pressures of deployment, extended family separations, and our national security mission are vital to addressing these issues. If confirmed, I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to ensure that we equip Sailors and Marines and their families with the tools necessary to deal with military life stressors in order to reduce domestic violence and child abuse.

254. In your view, what more can the Navy and Marine Corps do to prevent child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?

The youthful demographics of the Navy and Marine Corps, coupled with the demands of the military lifestyle, indicate to me that one of the most important things to do is to engage early and often in order to provide life skills. Teaching Sailors, Marines, and their family members how to recognize and deal positively with high-tempo operations and the unique stressors associated with military service is key to combating domestic violence and child abuse. If confirmed, I am committed to working with our Navy and Marine Corps leaders to determine which programs make a difference and provide all possible support to our Sailors, Marines and their families.

255. Do you believe that the Family Advocacy Programs in the Navy and Marine Corps strike the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?

It is my understanding that the Family Advocacy Program provides a wide range of services aimed at preventing and responding to violence and other harmful behaviors in relationships and that the program focuses on advocacy, treatment and rehabilitation, and is not disciplinary or punitive in nature. Accountability is handled through the military justice system, which allows the Family Advocacy Program to focus on prevention and treatment. If confirmed, I pledge to work to ensure that we are doing everything possible to address these incidents and that cases of criminal abuse are subject to review and action by the appropriate entities.

Sexual Harassment in the Civilian Workforce:

In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender

Relations survey, 14.1 percent of female and 5.1 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

256. In your view, do Navy and Marine Corps policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide leaders, supervisors, and managers, with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the Navy and Marine Corps?

I understand there are several avenues available for DON civilians and military members to report complaints of harassment and discrimination. Each of these avenues include both formal and informal procedures. The EEO program has a complaints tracking system which EEO officials review, monitor and assess. If confirmed, I will review the DON policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of harassment or discrimination complaints, whether formal or informal, through all programs to ensure the DON has an accurate picture of the prevalence of these adverse behaviors and explore ways to prevent them.

257. Do the Navy and Marine Corps policies and processes for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide leaders, supervisors, and managers, with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators?

I understand the EEO program has a complaints tracking system which EEO officials review, monitor and assess. The system contains a variety of data fields, including the names of the alleged perpetrators. If confirmed, I will review the DON policies and processes for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of harassment or discrimination complaints, whether formal or informal, through all programs, not just EEO, to ensure the DON has a means of identifying repeat perpetrators.

258. What actions has the Navy and Marine Corps taken to establish a modern, comprehensive harassment prevention and response policy and program for the Department of the Navy civilian workforce?

Harassment jeopardizes combat readiness and mission accomplishment, weakens trust, and erodes organizational cohesion. Harassment is fundamentally at odds with the obligations of Service members and civilian employees to treat others with dignity and respect. I understand there are several avenues available for DON civilians and military members to report complaints of harassment and discrimination. I am not aware of specific actions that the Navy and Marine Corps have taken to address harassment in a comprehensive manner for the civilian workforce. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of the Navy does not tolerate or condone harassment and I will review the DON policies and processes to ensure the policies comprehensively address harassment prevention and response and comply with applicable laws, regulations and policies.

U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) and the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

Currently, USNA graduates incur a five-year active duty service commitment following graduation. Congress last revised initial active duty service obligations for

Academy graduates in 1996. Since then, the average real cost per graduate has increased by nearly 20 percent according to the Congressional Research Service. Additionally, recent studies suggest that Service Academy graduates have the lowest junior officer retention rates of all officer commissioning sources, despite being the most expensive.

259. Do you believe the five-year active duty service commitment required of USNA graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?

As a Naval Academy graduate and someone who has many years of leadership experience in the military and the private sector, I understand and appreciate the American taxpayer's investment in the Academy and its graduates, and I believe the investment is well worth the cost. Our Service Academies provide exceptional education and training for many of the future leaders of our military, both those serving in uniform and those serving in our outstanding civilian workforce.

260. In your view, does USNA contribute to the pool of Navy and Marine Corps officer accessions commensurate with the attendant costs? Please explain your answer.

As a graduate of the Naval Academy, I believe it is certainly an invaluable asset to the Nation. The Naval Academy was established in 1845 to produce professional officers in the Naval Service. The Department of the Navy's current triad of major officer accession programs (Naval Academy, NROTC, and OCS) dates back to 1946 and has served the Navy and Marine Corps well. My understanding is that when factoring in the cost of post-commissioning accession training (i.e. flight school, nuclear power school) and the historically longer retention rates of USNA-sourced officers, the Naval Academy has proven to be an extremely effective commissioning source that is representative of the entire country due to the congressional nomination process. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff to examine the associated costs of running the Naval Academy and look for potential efficiencies without sacrificing the quality of the education and training the midshipmen receive.

261. If confirmed, would you support increasing the active duty service obligation for USNA graduates by one year, to a six-year minimum?

I have not had the opportunity to assess the impacts of increasing the active duty service commitment to a six-year minimum. As you know, I am a graduate of the Naval Academy and served well beyond my five-year obligation. I would have to consider the potential impact a longer minimum commitment might have on recruiting the best of America's youth. If confirmed, I would be willing to explore the potential benefits and impacts of increasing the active duty service obligation of Naval Academy graduates.

262. What is the Naval ROTC Preparatory Program and is such a program necessary, in your view?

Although I am not well informed on the specifics of the Naval ROTC Preparatory Program, I believe it is similar to the Naval Academy Preparatory School, except that it provides a pre-college preparatory program for Naval ROTC candidates. If confirmed, I will consult with

service leadership to learn the specifics of this program and determine whether it is necessary.

***The Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies for Academic Program Year 2018-2019* documented another increase in the number of sexual assault reports by and against Military Service Academy cadets and midshipmen. While noting that the Academies had implemented a variety of activities aimed at the prevention of sexual assault, it called out “little evidence of change in long-standing attitudes that deter reporting and help-seeking.”**

263. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault, and to ensure that those who report harassment or assault are not subject to retaliation or reprisal—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage?

I believe the USNA and its current Superintendent are highly dedicated to preventing sexual harassment and assault and protecting those who report such conduct. If confirmed, I will remain committed to ensuring a Department where all members can be free from sexual harassment and assault and are protected from retaliation and reprisal for reporting this conduct. This is especially true at the USNA where the Department’s future leaders are being developed. From my own experiences at USNA, I recognize that the value of our service academies is not just producing college graduates; the far more important value is producing the future leaders of the armed forces and our Nation. These future leaders must be committed to our values and expectations. This includes eradicating sexual harassment and sexual assault and ensuring that victims of harassment or assault are not ostracized and their reputations are not damaged. Stopping retaliation and reprisal is critical and we must continue to focus on it. There is no place in the service for a toxic culture that degrades our readiness.

264. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at USNA to ensure the free exercise of religion and the accommodation of religious practices?

I believe that the USNA provides for the free exercise of religion to the maximum extent possible by all Midshipmen who choose to exercise that right in concert with applicable laws, regulations and policies. My view is shaped by my own experience at the USNA, and I understand the USNA has remained consistent in this approach.

265. What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at USNA?

Suicide is a complex problem. If confirmed, I will stay committed to ensuring the wellness of Midshipmen as well as all Sailors, Marines, and civilians, and continue to support the Department’s current efforts to encourage individuals to ask for support when they need it, eliminate stigma associated with help-seeking and reduce barriers to accessing care. Increasing the awareness of available resources and educating leaders at all levels on risk factors for suicide can help to ensure sustained connection and prevent suicide deaths from occurring.

In 2019, the Secretary of Defense signed Directive-type Memorandum (DTM)-19-011, which established a new policy for handling Military Service Academy graduate requests to participate in professional sports. The policy allows graduates to delay their appointment as an active duty officer if the Secretary of the Military Department concerned and the Secretary of Defense approve. This policy would appear to circumvent the requirements of title 10, which requires graduates to complete two years of service on active duty as an officer before being able to request permission to pursue professional sports as a member of the selected reserve.

266. What is your opinion of Military Service Academy graduates who request to delay their active duty commissioned service obligation in order to pursue professional sports?

As a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, I can attest to the positive benefit that the sports program can bring to the institution, the Services, Midshipmen, their families, the alumni, and the community. The sports program has a positive impact upon the esprit de corps, it is a valuable recruiting tool and reaches broader potential applicant pools. An avenue for truly exceptional athletes to pursue professional sports immediately can potentially improve the quality of athlete recruited to the USNA with corresponding positive impacts upon the entire brigade. While the sports program has an extremely positive impact upon the Academy, the Academy exists to prepare young women and men to become professional officers of competence, character, and compassion in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. The young people who enter the Academy and receive the benefit of the taxpayer provided education, understand, as did I, the commitment that entering any military academy entails. If confirmed, I would endeavor to take the time to examine the policy and fully understand the benefits and challenges of the policy.

267. Do you agree that for every Naval Academy graduate who is allowed to postpone his service obligation there are many other USNA applicants who were not appointed as a midshipman, who would have gladly accepted an immediate commission in order to serve their country?

As a proud graduate of the USNA, I can unequivocally say “yes.” Admission to the USNA is extremely competitive and is a testament to the quality of the program that generates young officers of character for the Navy and Marine Corps.

Last year, one USNA graduate was allowed to delay his commission to play professional football.

268. If confirmed, under what circumstances would you recall him to active duty to fulfil his active duty service obligation?

I am not familiar with the specific circumstances of the delay of any individual Midshipman’s commission. I have not had an opportunity to fully review the DTM related to professional sports; however, it is my understanding that the policy requires DOD to annually review each individual case with input from the Service Secretaries. If confirmed, I would fully examine the policy, consult with the senior leadership of the DON, and consider each case individually consistent with the law and the policy.

Recently, the Acting Secretary of the Navy denied a request for a USNA graduate to delay his commission to play professional football.

269. Do you support this decision?

While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by Acting Secretary Harker related to a Midshipman's request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of any individual request, any circumstances related to any request, nor any pertinent factors that Acting Secretary Harker may have considered in making any such decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision, I cannot express an opinion.

270. Do you believe the decision made by the Acting Secretary of the Navy in this recent case was an error or an injustice to the affected officer?

While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by Acting Secretary Harker related to a Midshipman's request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of any individual request, any circumstances related to any request, or any pertinent factors that Acting Secretary Harker may have considered in making any such decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision, I cannot express an opinion.

271. In your judgment, is it appropriate for the Board for Correction of Naval Records to undo the Acting Secretary of the Navy's decision in this recent matter?

Generally, I understand that the Board for Correction of Naval Records is a statutory Board of civilians who consider requests of service members (Sailors, Marines, Reservists, and Veterans) to correct errors and remove injustices with respect to any Department of the Navy records. While I am generally familiar with public media accounts of a recent decision by the Secretary of Defense related to a Midshipman's request to play professional sports, I have no knowledge of that particular request, any circumstances related to that request, nor any pertinent factors that the Board for Correction of Naval Records may have considered in making their decision. Without knowing the detailed facts and full context of the decision and the Board processes, I cannot express an opinion.

Gender Integrated Training in the Marine Corps

In 2019, the Marine Corps integrated 50 female recruits into a historically all-male training battalion aboard recruit depot Parris Island. The FY 2020 NDAA requires the Marine Corps to gender integrate basic training at Parris Island within five years, and at San Diego within eight years.

272. In your view, can the Marine Corps fully execute the gender integrated basic training mandate, on the timeline prescribed by the NDAA, while maintaining the readiness and lethality of the Corps?

Although I do not know the details of the Marine Corps plans to integrate its recruit training at both Parris Island and San Diego, I understand the first gender-integrated company of Marines graduated from Boot Camp in San Diego this past May. Based on this one data point and the Marine Corps' record of accomplishing its missions, I expect the Marine Corps has a deliberate plan to complete gender-integration at both recruit depots on time. If confirmed, I will consult with the Commandant of the Marine Corps to understand the Marine Corps plan and to ensure its plans comply with the FY 2020 NDAA requirements.

Whistleblower Protection

Section 1034 of title 10, U.S. Code, prohibits taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action against a member of the armed forces in retaliation for making a protected communication. Section 2302 of title 5, U.S. Code, provides similar protections to Federal civilian employees. By definition, protected communications include communications to certain individuals and organizations outside of the chain of command, including the Congress.

273. If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sailors, Marines, and civilian employees of the Department of the Navy who report fraud, waste, and abuse, or gross mismanagement to appropriate authorities within or outside the chain of command, are protected from reprisal and retaliation, including from the very highest levels of the Executive Branch?

If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of reporting fraud, waste, abuse, and gross mismanagement and protecting personnel who make such reports from reprisal or retaliation. The Department of the Navy benefits from investigations and reviews based on protected communications; and, whistleblower protections for personnel are essential to the integrity of the Department of the Navy and its programs. I believe that the Department of the Navy takes whistleblower allegations seriously and adheres to applicable law, regulations, and rules regarding whistleblower protections. If confirmed, I will ensure that those who are responsible for investigating retaliation, conduct these investigations thoroughly, that personnel who make protected communications are afforded the protections to which they are entitled under the law, and that appropriate administrative or disciplinary actions are taken against personnel who have engaged in illegal retaliation, in accordance with law, regulation, and policy.

General/Flag Officer (G/FO) Reductions

The FY17 NDAA reduced the number of G/FOs by about 12% Service-wide. Only the Marine Corps was unaffected by these cuts—gaining one GO billet.

274. What progress has the Navy made in reducing the number of flag officers and restructuring the flag officer grade pyramid?

I understand that the Department of the Navy is on track to meet the reduction in general /flag officers mandated by the FY 2017 NDAA. If confirmed, I will continue to implement the FY 2017 NDAA and work to ensure we have the right number of general/flag officers in both the Navy and Marine Corps to best accomplish our mission.

275. How have Navy and Marine Corps G/FOs been affected by the layering of post-government employment constraints, including the enactment of section 1045 of the NDAA for FY 2017—applicable only to DOD?

I am personally unaware of any impacts of the enactment of section 1045 of the FY 2017 NDAA. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps senior leadership to determine if this statute has had any adverse impacts on the retention of their general and flag officers. If so, I am willing work with the Services' leaders and Congress to explore potential solutions to remedy the impacts of the statute.

276. In your view, are caps on G/FO retired pay adversely affecting Navy and Marine Corps senior officer promotions, assignments, and retention at the 3- and 4-star grades? Please explain your answer.

I have not seen any data on this subject. Although I do not believe officers enter the Service to get wealthy, I suspect that there are some who view the caps on G/FO retired pay as unnecessary barriers to retention. Our most senior general and flag officers assume tremendous responsibility, and I understand that compensation should be commensurate with the significance of these responsibilities. If confirmed, I will consult with the Navy and Marine Corps senior leaders to determine whether existing retired pay caps adversely affect retention at the 3- and 4-star grades.

277. In your view, do the Navy and Marine Corps have in place sufficient training and resources to provide its G/FOs with the training, advice, and assistance they need to avoid and address conflicts of interest, comply with travel regulations, and ensure that government resources—including employee time—are used only for official purposes? Please explain your answer.

I believe our G/FOs should embody the highest ideals of integrity and ethics. If confirmed, I will review the existing training and resources to ensure both Navy and Marine Corps provide their general and flag officers with the training, advice, and assistance they need to maintain the highest standards of conduct. If there are any deficiencies, I will ensure we resolve them immediately.

Officer Personnel Management System Reforms

The John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 contained several provisions to modernize the officer personnel management system. These reforms were designed to align officer career management with the priorities outlined in the NDS.

278. How are the Navy and the Marine Corps implementing these authorities and to what effect?

I understand the authorities granted by the FY 2019 NDAA have given the Department of the Navy more flexibility to better manage its officer corps. I am aware that the Navy and Marine Corps have used the authority to merit-reorder promotion selection lists; that Navy has allowed officers to “opt out” of promotion screening to accommodate opportunities for

career broadening assignments, instituted “up and stay” policies, and expanded its spot promotions in accordance with the FY 2019 NDAA authorities. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Secretariat staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to understand the impacts of these changes. In this ever-competitive talent market place, I would support pursuit of additional flexibilities for the Department of the Navy to manage its officers, if needed.

279. Are there other authorities that the Navy or the Marine Corps need to modernize the management of their officer personnel?

At this point, I do not have enough knowledge of the current state of officer management policies to make an informed recommendation. However, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a full understanding of authorities available to the Department in manage its officer personnel. If needed, I would support pursuit of additional authorities that would provide more flexibility for the Department of the Navy to manage its officers.

280. In your view, how could the Navy and the Marine Corps’ scrolling and appointments processes be improved so as to improve permeability between the Active and Reserve Components?

I do not have enough information on the scrolling and appointments process to provide an informed recommendation. I do believe, however, that our policies should allow greater permeability for officers to move between the active (regular) and reserve components without excessive delays for administrative processing. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretariat staff and the Services’ leadership to explore potential solutions that would allow for increased and more efficient permeability between the active (regular) and reserve components.

Joint Officer Management

281. In your view, do the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO), and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to General Officer, continue to be consistent with the operational and professional demands of military service line officers?

I believe that modern warfighting, under the command of our combatant commanders, significantly increases the need for our senior officers to have joint perspectives and experience. To be successful, Navy and Marine Corps officers must have a firm grasp on how the other services operate. In my view, the introduction of Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) qualification is invaluable in developing that knowledge. If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure the requirements for JQO qualification continue to best prepare our officers to operate in a joint environment and for promotion to General / Flag Officer.

282. What additional modifications, if any, would you recommend to JQO prerequisites necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Service-specific leadership experience, as well as adequate professional development?

At this time, I do not have sufficient knowledge of the current specific JQO prerequisites to make any meaningful recommendations. However, if confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop a full understanding of the JQO qualification prerequisites, and should I see a need for modifications, make appropriate recommendations at that time.

283. What are your ideas for improving the JQO system better to meet the needs of reserve component officers?

At this time, I do not have sufficient knowledge of the current JQO system and its implications on reserve component officers. However, I do believe that modern warfighting, under the command of our combatant commanders, significantly increases the need for our senior officers to have joint perspectives and experience. To be successful, all Navy and Marine Corps officers, active and reserve, must have a firm grasp on how the other services operate. If confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to determine whether the current JQO system supports the specific needs of their reserve component officers. If it does not, I will work with them to recommend improvements to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense.

284. In your view, should the requirement to be a JQO be eliminated as a consideration in selecting officers for promotion and assignment?

I believe being a JQO can be an essential qualification for most officers. Our Nation fights and operates jointly under the command of our combatant commanders, so understanding how the other services operate is key to success in a joint environment. Working on a joint staff and completing the required joint professional military education will enable Navy and Marine officers, especially as they become more senior, to effectively integrate naval forces into a joint force. If confirmed, I will consult with the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps to assess the need for officers to be JQOs for promotion and assignment. Should we desire to change that requirement, I will work the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense to propose statutory and policy changes as appropriate.

Officer Promotion Policies and Processes

285. If confirmed, how would you ensure compliance with the requirements of law and regulation regarding the investigation and promotion board consideration of adverse and reportable information in the context of both general and flag officer and O-6 and below promotion selection processes?

If confirmed, I will ensure all Navy and Marine Corps officers nominated for promotion meet the required standard of exemplary conduct in accordance with Title 10, U.S. Code and DoD policy. Toward this end, I will ensure compliance with law and policy regarding promotion selection board consideration of adverse and reportable information for general and flag officers, as well as officers in the grades of O-6 and below. I understand that applicable law and DoD policy require substantiated adverse information pertaining to an officer's record be considered as part of the promotion selection board process. I further understand that the

record of each board-selected officer undergoes additional, post-board screening to ensure decisions made by Navy and Marine Corps leadership and the Secretary of the Navy are appropriately and fully informed.

- 286. Do you believe Navy and Marine Corps procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?**

It is my understanding that the Department of the Navy procedures and practices for reviewing records of officers pending the President's nomination for promotion or assignment are sufficient to enable fully-informed decisions by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President. If confirmed, I will make sure that all Navy and Marine Corps officers nominated for promotion meet the required standard of exemplary conduct in accordance with Title 10, U.S. Code and DoD policy.

- 287. In your view, are these procedures and practices fair to the individual military officers proceeding through the promotion or assignment process? Please explain your answer.**

To the best of my knowledge, the current processes for promotion and assignment in both Navy and Marine Corps are designed to be fair to the individual officer and to the benefit of the service. Promotions are governed by statute and well-developed policies to select the best and fully qualified officers. It is my understanding the assignment processes attempt to match an officer's experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities with billets requiring the same. If confirmed, I will engage both the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure their promotion and assignment (talent management) processes are both fair in design and in execution.

Professional Military Education (PME)

- 288. What is your view of the Commandant of the Marine Corps' proposal to replace "non-observed academic fitness reports" with an evaluation that documents how well a Marine did at a professional school, assigns the Marine a class rank, and differentiates high-performing Marines from low performers?**

I support the Commandant's proposal to require a thorough performance evaluation for Marines attending professional schools. We should expect 100% effort and acknowledge exemplary performance from Marines attending professional schools. By sending a Marine to a professional school, the Commandant is making an investment in their professional development. The requirement for an evaluation that documents the Marine's performance can be useful in determining future assignments.

- 289. What changes or reform would you recommend to the PME system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the intellectual acumen, military leadership proficiency, and emotional maturity necessary to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps meet the national defense objectives of the future?**

As a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval War College, I understand the importance of, and I have benefited from, professional military education. PME is a necessary investment by the Department of the Navy to improve readiness across the force. PME reforms should concentrate on creating a relevant and challenging learning environment for officers and enlisted Sailors and Marines that is responsive to emerging threats. What is required is an information age approach that is focused on active, student-centered learning where students work problems in groups, as they would in real situations, allowing them to learn by doing and also from each other. In the end, our Marines and Sailors must be able to think critically, recognize when change is needed, and possess a bias for action without waiting to be told what to do.

Extremism

290. What is your view of the prevalence and effect of extremism in the Navy and Marine Corps?

Extremism is incompatible with the DON's core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. I believe that the vast majority of Department of Navy personnel – Sailors, Marines, active and reserve, and civilians – serve consistently and adhere to their oaths to uphold and defend the U.S. Constitution. I agree with Secretary Austin, General Milley, Admiral Gilday and General Berger that extremism in the military undermines good order and discipline in the force and is detrimental to unit cohesion, morale, and, ultimately, mission accomplishment. I understand that, at the Secretary of Defense's direction, the Department of Navy conducted a series of stand-downs for all personnel to raise awareness, is supporting the Department of Defense Countering Extreme Activity Working Group, and is pursuing efforts internally to counter extremist behaviors. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's support of those efforts.

291. In your view, what beliefs and actions should constitute "extremism?"

It is my understanding that the Department of Defense is presently revising and clarifying its policy pertaining to defining "extremism" and corresponding prohibited extremist activity in order to provide clear guidance to Department personnel. I regard extremism as including activities which would constitute advocacy or use of violence or other illegal means to deprive individuals of their legally guaranteed rights or advocacy or use of violence against the government. I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter extremism while avoiding infringing on constitutionally protected liberties that our service members commit to defending. If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to implement clarified policy pertaining to extremism, to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Navy and Marine Corps.

292. In light of ongoing efforts to combat extremism, what are your views on the current DOD policy that states, "A Service member's right of expression should be preserved to the maximum extent possible?"

Generally, I agree with the policy because I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter extremism while avoiding infringing on the constitutionally protected

liberties that our service members commit to defending. If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to revise and clarify its policy pertaining to extremism, to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Navy and Marine Corps.

293. If confirmed, what actions would you take to eliminate extremism within the ranks?

If confirmed, I will support the holistic efforts already underway across the Department to counter extremist activity in our ranks, and I will work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to promote a culture of respect, trust and professionalism in the Services. I believe there has to be a balance between the need to counter extremist activity while avoiding infringing on constitutionally protected liberties that the service members commit to defending.

Identifying and Addressing Conflicts of Interest

In the fallout of the Glenn Defense Marine Asia (GDMA) scandal, numerous Navy personnel, including a significant number of Navy admirals, were investigated for bribery, corruption, and violations of criminal conflict of interest laws and executive branch ethics regulations. Some were prosecuted and convicted in federal or military courts, and many more were subject to public censure and forced into early retirement from the Navy.

294. Are you satisfied with the actions the Navy has taken in response to the GDMA scandal to ensure that its officers and other personnel are trained—throughout their careers—on objective ethics and the Navy’s core values?

I believe that the vast majority of Department of Navy personnel – Sailors, Marines, active and reserve, and civilians – serve honorably and ethically consistent with the DON’s core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. The illegal and unethical behavior involved in the GDMA scandal was inexcusable and antithetical to the DON core values. I am not aware of all the actions the DON has taken in response to the activities discovered as a result of GDMA; however, if confirmed, I am committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards for myself and all DON personnel, particularly, military and civilian leadership.

Department of the Navy Civilian Personnel Workforce

295. In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Navy and Marine Corps in effectively and efficiently managing their civilian workforce?

I believe the impact of unprecedented global disruption in people and technology affects our Navy and Marine Corps workforce just as much as any other organization. To that end, I believe the biggest challenge facing the Department of the Navy is to attract and retain a professional, technical, and industrial trade skill civilian workforce with the right skills to meet the demands of the Department of Navy’s mission. We must access and curate the best talent, develop skills for the future, ensure our workforce understands how to harness the power of data, and we must enable them to use technology. If confirmed, I will look to bring my experience from the private sector and review approaches to talent acquisition,

workforce development, and compensation practices. Transforming the way the Department performs its work will demand modernization to address the shifting landscape in which our workforce continually operates and it will necessitate having an agile workforce to meet the changing global environment.

296. In your view, do Navy supervisors have adequate authorities to address and remediate employee misconduct and poor duty performance, and ultimately to divest of a civilian employee who fails to meet requisite standards of conduct and performance?

I understand that many authorities exist to address misconduct and poor performance. At this time, I am not aware of any current authorities that are inadequate to discipline or separate employees should they fail to meet the appropriate standard of conduct or performance. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness as well as Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure civilian employees have clear standards of conduct and performance, and supervisors have the appropriate training and authorities to address misconduct and poor performance.

297. If not, what additional authorities or training do Navy supervisors require?

At this time, I am not aware of any additional authorities or training required of Department supervisors. If confirmed, I will seek to understand where additional training may be needed to ensure civilian and military supervisors understand the scope of their authorities, and if needed, I will support the pursuit of additional authorities.

298. How will the Navy and Marine Corps sustain requisite civilian workforce capacity and capability during the impending workforce “bath tub”—a descriptor often used to graphically illustrate the impending loss of civilian workforce expertise due to the retirement of large numbers of baby boomers and the lack of experienced personnel to fill the resulting vacancies?

I have not seen the internal data to know the specifics of these challenges. If confirmed I will listen to Department of the Navy’s leaders to understand where the talent gaps may exist and may impact the DON mission. I am informed that the implementation of the Department of the Navy’s 2019-2030 Civilian Human Capital Strategy will move the Department toward enhanced mission readiness by ensuring the Department’s civilians have the right training and are serving in the right places at the right time. The civilian workforce is a key enabler to warfighting capability--critical to lethality, toughness, and sustainability of our DON operating forces now and in the future.

299. Have the Navy and Marine Corps’ experiences to date with the new Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) evidenced the increased supervisor-employee engagement and meaningful “face-to-face” counseling sessions at the core of the program’s objectives?

If confirmed, I will work with DON leaders to focus on accountability, engagement, and feedback, key elements from what I know of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP). I understand that the Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey (FEVS) results show an increasing percentage of Department of the Navy employees indicate

their supervisors have had conversations about their performance in their last six months, a positive indicator to be sure. I look forward to working with Navy and Marine Corps leaders to ensure that the DPMAP is working as intended with employees clearly understanding of expectations, receiving constructive feedback, and ultimately being recognized for successful performance.

Senior Executive Service

300. Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant factors in shaping a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed, what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting candidates for appointment to the Senior Executive Service?

If confirmed, I will examine the current Senior Executive Service recruitment, selection and development programs, focusing on selecting leaders who possess technical skills as well as strong leadership and business skills to lead with competence and compassion and deliver results. I will also examine the diversity of the Senior Executive Service, to identify and mitigate any barriers to underrepresented groups attaining these important leadership positions.

301. If confirmed, how would you ensure that SES under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?

SES members are accountable for their performance and the performance of the teams they lead by delivering results aligned to the strategic goals of the Department. Strong accountability starts with the performance management system with measurable objectives for every SES. If confirmed, I will ensure SES members have clear and measurable goals and objectives to ensure this critical part of the Navy leadership is driving positive organizational performance.

302. Are you satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs currently available across DOD?

I am not familiar with the specifics of SES professional development within the DON. If confirmed, I will fully support the development of the SES and all civilian employees. I will work to understand the array of development programs available with the hopes of enhancing the strengths of the SES corps to lead today and into the future in support of the warfighter.

303. If not, what changes would you make to these programs, if confirmed?

It would be premature for me to identify changes without an assessment of SES development programs. If confirmed, an assessment will help me obtain information on these programs to make informed decisions.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that

this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications) and other information from the Department.

304. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

305. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications), and other information as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

306. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

307. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

308. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

309. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

310. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

