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Department of Defense
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

STATEMENT OF
MATTHEW P. DONOVAN
SASC CONFIRMATION HEARING TO BE
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
PERSONNEL AND READINESS
March 10, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for your long-standing and unwavering support for the Department of Defense and for the men and women who defend our great nation. I also thank Secretary Wilkie for his leadership and his kind words here today. If confirmed, it will be my great honor to assist Secretary Esper in leading the DoD's nearly three million Active, Guard, and Reserve service members and Civilians, as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. I thank President Trump and Secretary Esper for their confidence in me, and for this humbling opportunity to continue in service to our nation.

I am joined today by my daughter, Air Force Second Lieutenant Kelsey Hefner, an intelligence integration officer at Offutt AFB, Nebraska; my son, Matthew Donovan II, an aviation management major and pilot as a junior at Auburn University, Alabama; and my son-in-law, Air Force First Lieutenant Cameron Hefner, a pilot also stationed at Offutt AFB.

These young people, and thousands just like them, are the reason I appear before you today. They represent all of America's sons and daughters, many of whom continue to raise their right hands and volunteer to serve their country during a time of war.

Our nation faces an array of threats from near-peer competitors we have not seen in decades, not since before the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the character of warfare has evolved, where grave threats now appear in previously unknown or uncontested domains, such as cyber and space.

To successfully meet these threats, the Department of Defense must also evolve. We must attract and retain people with the right skills to prevail in this environment, properly manage them and meet their expectations using 21st century talent management practices, and ensure all are always treated with dignity and respect. We must also provide them the cutting-edge tools of the trade they need to be successful, and state-of-the-art training technologies and techniques to best hone their skills.

Our Total Force Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Civilians deserve the best leadership, the best policies, the best equipment, the best education and training, and our Service members and their families deserve the best healthcare, best support systems, and best quality of life we can possibly provide, for the sacrifices we ask them to endure.

If confirmed, it will be my honor to work every day with Secretary Esper, the millions of men and women of the Department of Defense, and the Congress, to ensure your Department of Defense sustains the ability to defend and deter, and if necessary, defeat our nation's adversaries. Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions.