

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for the Honorable Matthew Donovan**  
**Nominee to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness**

**Duties and Qualifications**

**Section 136 of title 10, U.S. Code, describes the duties and powers of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)).**

**1. What background and experience do you have that qualify you for this position of senior leadership in the Department of Defense (DOD)?**

Over thirty years as an active duty member of the Armed Forces, six years as a senior DoD civilian, nearly three years as a professional staff member and policy director on the Senate Committee on Armed Services, nearly three years as the Under Secretary of the Air Force, and five months as the acting Secretary of the Air Force.

**2. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice to the Secretary of Defense on military and civilian personnel matters in the DOD?**

As Under Secretary and acting Secretary of the Air Force, I was intimately involved with matters of military and civilian personnel policy and management, from overseeing the policy, management, and execution of military promotion boards, to senior military leader advancement and placement, to strategic level policy, oversight, and management of our civilian and civilian senior executive workforce.

**3. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice to the Secretary of Defense on matters of military readiness?**

As a combat fighter pilot, I was on the pointed end of military readiness. As a fighter squadron commander, I was personally responsible for the readiness (personnel, training, and equipment) of my forces to respond to higher headquarters direction on specified timelines. As a professional staff member on the committee, the preponderance of my time was spent on policy, guidance, and oversight activities to improve the readiness of the U.S. military. As the Under Secretary and acting Secretary of the Air Force, a primary responsibility was making the appropriate resource allocation decisions to maximize the readiness of the force, both today and into the future, to support the Joint warfighter.

**4. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice to the Secretary of Defense on military health organizations and services?**

Leadership. The key is establishing the vision and executing the strategy to achieve the Secretary of Defense's guidance for improving the readiness and lethality of the force, coupled with Congressional legislation and intent to streamline and optimize the Military Health System, while keeping at the forefront the imperative to ensure all our service members and beneficiaries continue to have access to high quality healthcare.

**5. Specifically, what background and experience do you have that qualify you to provide advice to the Secretary of Defense on Reserve Component matters in the DOD?**

As an Air Force fighter squadron commander leading one of the first Guard Associate fighter squadrons, I gained an intimate understanding of the value our Reserve components provide to the military departments and the execution of their missions. As many Air Force leaders, including myself, have stated in the past, the Air Force is a service that simply could not perform its missions without the assistance of its Guard and Reserve components. That experience, along with my policy and oversight roles of the Guard and Reserve as a professional staff member, and coupled with my leadership of the Air Force, position me well to provide recommendations to improve and normalize the role of the Reserve components across the DoD in support of the National Defense Strategy imperatives.

**6. Are there any actions you would take to enhance your current ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the USD(P&R)?**

If confirmed, a priority for me will be to "walk the battlefield," that is, get out to visit the front end of where our people are performing the business of the defense of the nation. This will be an invaluable way for me to understand how DoD leadership is assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities, as well as to intimately understand their challenges in both the personnel and readiness areas.

**7. If confirmed, what additional duties might you expect the Secretary of Defense to prescribe for you in light of the lines of effort set forth in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS)?**

USD(P&R) plays a large role in the three lines of effort articulated in the National Defense Strategy, most especially in line of effort number one, Restoring the Readiness and Increasing the Lethality of the Force. The Secretary has added a fourth line of effort in his priorities, Taking Care of People and Their Families.

**8. Are there any specific duties and powers you would delegate, if confirmed, to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?**

If confirmed, I will carefully consider specific duties and powers I may delegate, consistent with the law and Department and Executive Branch practice.

## **Major Challenges and Priorities**

### **9. If confirmed, what would be your vision for the OUSD(P&R) of today? For the OUSD(P&R) of the future?**

If confirmed, the vision I would set would align to the Secretary's and the imperatives of the National Defense Strategy. Specifically, we need to be able to comprehensively answer the Secretary's question, "are we ready?" by taking advantage of digital modernization and state-of-the-art data management concepts and technologies. This would provide data-driven analyses to better and more quickly inform Secretary-level decisions required to prepare for and dominate in any future peer conflict.

### **10. What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed as the USD(P&R)? What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?**

The overarching challenge is common across all of DoD's leaders; how to balance the need for readiness to fight tonight to dominate against threats we face today, against the need to modernize our force to be ready to successfully deter or defeat emerging threats in the future. Providing data-driven decision information on both personnel and readiness issues is key to senior leaders making informed decisions. Modernizing our decision support practices and systems is essential to this effort.

### **11. If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense regarding the organization and operations of the OUSD(P&R)?**

If confirmed, I would conduct a comprehensive review of all P&R functions to ensure their continued viability in supporting the National Defense Strategy imperatives, and their effectiveness in enabling and supporting the Military Departments in their Title 10 organize, train, and equip responsibilities. The results of this review would inform my recommendations to the Secretary.

### **12. To the extent that the functions of the OUSD(P&R) overlap with those of other DOD Components, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing unnecessary duplication?**

I see the role of OSD as providing policy, guidance, and oversight to the Department, with the priority toward enabling and supporting the Military Departments in fulfilling their Title 10 organize, train, and equip responsibilities to provide trained and ready forces to our Joint warfighters, the combatant commanders. If confirmed, I will carefully review all USD(P&R) functions to ensure they adhere to that foundational concept.

**The USD(P&R) prescribes policies and establishes programs across the domains of personnel and readiness. Responsibility for executing these policies and programs vests primarily in the Military Departments and Services, elements of the Office of**

**the Secretary of Defense, and the Defense Agencies and Activities, subject to oversight by the USD(P&R).**

**13. What is your view of the scope and importance of the USD(P&R)'s oversight duties and powers?**

I believe the scope and importance of P&R's oversight duties and powers are very important. Associated with OSD's role of providing policy, guidance, and oversight for the various functions of the Department, we must also ensure our primary activities enable and support the Military Departments in fulfillment of their Title 10 organize, train, and equip responsibilities to provide trained and ready forces to the combatant commanders.

**14. If confirmed, how would you allocate OUSD(P&R) resources to ensure rigorous oversight of the implementation and execution of personnel and readiness policies and programs across the DOD?**

If confirmed, I will carefully review all USD(P&R) functions and resources to ensure they adhere to that foundational concept while enhancing the capabilities of the Department to meet National Defense Strategy imperatives.

**Civilian Control of the Military**

**15. If confirmed, how would you ensure that your tenure as USD(P&R) adheres to or furthers the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?**

One of my mantras is, "if you're not present, you're absent." The Department of Defense has broad responsibilities when it comes to the business of the defense of our nation, and it consists of a large bureaucracy required to carry out those responsibilities. If confirmed, I will ensure the appropriate civilian leaders are present at every decision-making level and forum within my purview to ensure civilian control of the military principles are upheld.

**16. In its 2018 report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission observed, "there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues. . . .Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy." Do you agree with this assessment? If confirmed, how would you ensure your inclusion in the discussion, debate, and resolution of U.S. defense and national security issues?**

I have not personally observed the views of that assessment. If confirmed, I will ensure the appropriate civilian leaders are present at every decision-making level and forum within my purview to ensure civilian control of the military principles are upheld.

## **Personnel Policy Implementation**

**17. What is your understanding of your obligation and authority, if confirmed, to implement personnel policies and processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources management—both military and civilian—across the Department?**

I understand the obligation and authority of the USD(P&R) to act on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, as appropriate, to implement personnel policies and processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of military and civilian human resource management.

**18. What is your understanding of your responsibility, if confirmed, to inform and consult with this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress, on the implementation of personnel policies directed by law?**

I understand that if confirmed, I will have an obligation to inform and consult with all appropriate Committees on the implementation of personnel policies directed by law. This includes responding to Congressional Reporting Requirements on programs and policies that would fall under the purview of the USD(P&R).

**19. What is your understanding of the timeframe in which personnel policies directed by law must be implemented by the Department?**

I understand personnel policies directed by law must be implemented by the Department within the statutory timeframes provided. If no such timelines exist, I understand policies must be implemented as soon as feasible to achieve the intent of Congress.

## **Overall Readiness of the Armed Forces**

**20. How would you assess the current readiness of DOD personnel to execute the 2018 NDS and the associated operational plans?**

The Department of Defense presently has the necessary capability, capacity, and readiness to contend with today's threats at an acceptable level of risk, and to implement the NDS priorities. However, the level of risk is increasing as the threat environment evolves, particularly with respect to China's and Russia's growing abilities to contest U.S. military advantages.

**21. In what specific ways has the Department utilized its increased budgetary authority over the past two years to improve personnel and training readiness?**

The Department uses the Readiness Recovery Framework to track the readiness of our most stressed combat force elements, ensuring critical gaps to readiness recovery are identified and addressed. To date, the Department currently tracks 47 Major Force Elements (MFEs) across the Services. We have seen improvements of readiness and

availability in 26 MFEs since the first Quarter of FY2017, including in 13 of 20 Air Force MFEs, 6 of 9 Army MFEs, 4 of 11 Marine Corps MFEs, and 3 of 7 Navy MFEs. An additional 12 MFEs already possessed an adequate level of readiness according to the assessment model.

**22. If confirmed, what actions would you take to restore full spectrum personnel and training readiness, and under what timelines?**

If confirmed, I would continue to improve readiness reporting to identify leading indicators and systemic issues preventing accelerated readiness recovery, and improve the linkage between resources and readiness outcomes to ensure effective allocation of Department funding.

**23. If confirmed, what actions would you take to oversee compliance by the Military Services with such timelines to ensure that personnel and training readiness goals are met?**

If confirmed, I will provide increased oversight by establishing a monthly readiness engagement with the readiness leaders in each Service and the Joint Staff to drive further readiness recovery and mitigation plans. Further, I will work with CAPE to ensure Service training budgets and training strategic plans are aligned to established goals.

**24. In your view, how could the Total Force Fitness program better be leveraged to enhance military personnel readiness?**

I am not familiar with the Total Force Fitness Program. If confirmed, I will review this program to assess its ability to enhance military personnel readiness.

**25. In your view, is the OUSD(P&R) the most appropriate organization under which to align the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness? If so, why do you believe this alignment best serves the Department? If not, under which Principal Staff Assistant to the Secretary of Defense should the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness be aligned for greatest effect, and why?**

Based on my limited experience in P&R, the initial answer is yes. If confirmed, I will continually assess the structure of the organization to ensure it is aligned to NDS imperatives.

**26. How do the functions of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness integrate with the readiness functions of the Military Departments, the Joint Staff, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy?**

The ASD(Readiness) works with readiness stakeholders across the Department to develop, monitor, and improve readiness reporting through data-driven metrics and standardized structures.

**27. In your view, what “value” does the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness add to the generation of the Quarterly Readiness Report to Congress (QRRC), required by section 482 of title 10, United States Code? How do the Military Departments and Services and the Joint Staff contribute to the QRRC? How do the Military Departments and Services and the Joint Staff use the assessments and recommendations set forth in the QRRC to improve readiness going forward?**

The OASD(Readiness) is the Secretary’s primary office for coordinating readiness assessments and monitoring the Department’s progress in meeting readiness recovery milestones. ASD(Readiness) provides an enterprise-wide assessment of readiness goals and progress, and works with the Joint Staff and Military Services to identify the actions needed to improve the associated personnel, training, and equipment readiness levels.

**28. What are your views of the merits of consolidating the QRRC and the Joint Force Readiness Review, established in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3401.01E, *Joint Combat Capability Assessment*, into a single streamlined readiness report that meets the needs of all DOD Components and the Congress?**

These separate reports each provide a unique look at readiness that if combined would be lost. The QRRC assesses readiness from an OSD perspective which takes a strategic view focusing on the military service’s ability to execute the strategy, and includes the Readiness Recovery Framework mitigations for all readiness deficiencies. The JFRR is more operationally focused and does not include the same link between readiness issues and the mitigating actions to improve readiness to meet the strategy.

**29. What is your assessment of the efficacy of current metrics used by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, the Military Departments and Services, and the Joint Staff, to measure personnel and training readiness from both Service and Joint Force perspectives?**

The DRRS-S metrics are sufficient for a strategic-level “snapshot” representation of readiness, but expose the need for an ongoing effort to consolidate and modernize the readiness reporting system. We need to get to near real-time strategic level assessments that can be “drilled-down” by senior leaders to find shortfall areas requiring resources or other senior leader focus. There also needs to be a strategic level system that a leader can change the input variables on to predict outcomes of resourcing decisions; a “sandbox” capability. If confirmed, I will review and assess the requirements and feasibility of developing and fielding such a strategic readiness system.

**30. What is your assessment of the efficacy with which the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness works with the Military Departments and the Joint Staff to address readiness shortfalls and gaps?**

The ASD(Readiness) is a full participant and provides readiness policy inputs into the Joint Staff Global Force Management Process and the Dynamic Force Employment

framework to adhere to the National Defense Strategy and meet pressing operational needs tasked to the Military Departments by the Joint Staff.

**31. Does OUSD(P&R) have the analytic tools and expertise to assist you in evaluating DOD personnel and training readiness across the spectrum of challenges presented by the current strategic environment—from low intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted, high-intensity fights with major-power rivals? Please explain your answer.**

Not yet. We need to get to near real-time strategic level assessments that can be “drilled-down” by senior leaders to find shortfall areas requiring resources or other senior leader focus. There also needs to be a strategic level system that a leader can change the input variables on to predict outcomes of resourcing decisions; a “sandbox” capability. If confirmed, I will review and assess the requirements and feasibility of developing and fielding such a strategic readiness system.

### **Non-Deployable Service members**

**DODI 1332.45, *Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service members*, took effect in October 2018.**

**32. Do you agree that service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from the Service or referral to the Disability Evaluation System?**

Yes. As a general rule, I believe Service members identified as non-deployable for 12 consecutive months should be evaluated for continued service. Each case must be evaluated on its own set of facts. Current Department of Defense policy appropriately balances mission and individual equities, and I am not aware of a need to propose any changes to the current policies.

**33. What are your ideas for addressing the challenges of medical non-deployability in the Reserve Components?**

There is an underlying premise that all Service members are expected to be deployable. Service members who are considered non-deployable for more than 12 months for a medical reason will be referred to the Disability Evaluation System in accordance with current policy. If confirmed, I will work with the Reserve Components to help address and resolve their medical challenges in an effort to increase readiness and lethality within the total force.

**34. DODI 1332.45 provides that the Secretaries of the Military Departments may “retain . . . those service members whose period of non-deployability exceeds the 12 consecutive month limit . . . if determined to be in the best interest of the Military Service.” In your view, under what circumstances might the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the Service”?**

Each case must be evaluated on its own set of facts. What is in the best interest of the Service is dependent on whether the Service member can perform his/her military duties and the needs of the Service at the time the matter is subject to review, and at the discretion of the Service Secretary. One such example might be a Service member whose skill set is in high demand and can perform their duties from a non-deployed environment. Additionally, in general and consistent with the DoDI, pregnant and combat wounded Service members are also exempt from the 12-month Non-deployability Determination Requirements.

**35. In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?**

Readiness is key to having an effective military and our Service members should always be treated with dignity and respect. DoD Instruction 6485.01, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in Military Service members, prescribes procedures for management of Service members with HIV. It is my understanding that Service members with HIV are referred for appropriate medical treatment and medical evaluation of fitness for continued service in the same manner as a Service member with any other chronic or progressive illnesses, including gender dysphoria.

**DODI 1332.45 sets forth the categories and criteria to be applied in determining and tracking whether or not a service member is deployable.**

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

Yes. Each case must be evaluated on its own set of facts and at the discretion of the Service secretary within the bounds of DoD policy. If confirmed, I will evaluate current policy authorities and work to ensure commanders continue to have the legal authorities necessary to accomplish mission while maintaining their readiness.

**37. If confirmed, specifically what more would you do to improve the timeliness of service member referral to, and processing through, the Disability Evaluation System?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Military Departments and continue to collaborate closely with VA to ensure that we are doing everything possible to increase

the efficiency of the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process in an effort to ensure timely, transparent evaluations for ill and/or injured Service members.

### **Close Combat Lethality Task Force**

**In February 2018, the Secretary of Defense designated the USD(P&R) as proponent for the Close Combat Lethality Task Force (CCLTF), a cross-functional task force charged to “strengthen the . . . lethality, survivability, resiliency, and readiness” of U.S. squad-level infantry formations to “ensure close combat overmatch against pacing threats.”**

**38. Do you believe that the CCLTF has met its mandate such that responsibility for CCLTF missions should be shifted fully to the Military Services? Please explain your answer.**

I believe “task forces” are most effective when first stood up to bring focus to a particular issue, but that eventually an effort needs to be institutionalized for greatest effectiveness. I have no doubt Secretary Esper, myself, if confirmed, and the military leadership of the Department will continue the emphasis on increasing the lethality of our land forces, no matter where programs reside.

**39. If confirmed, what role would you play in exercising proponency for the CCLTF?**

If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Services to ensure our close combat capability overmatch against pacing threats, and strengthen the readiness of our forces to execute the National Defense Strategy.

**40. In your view, how might military personnel policies be modified better to facilitate the lethality and survivability of infantry squads?**

The lethality and survivability of infantry squads can be enhanced by military personnel policies which better support the Services’ efforts to increase unit stability such as maximizing personnel manning, and reducing duties unrelated to primary specialties.

**41. What proposals has the CCLTF’s Human Performance line of effort developed that, in your view, could enhance the lethality and survivability of close combat formations?**

It is my understanding that this line of effort is focused on using advances in human performance and cognition to train, educate, and improve lethality and resiliency of the close combat units. In my short tenure in P&R, I had limited opportunity to learn the specifics of any particular proposal. However, if confirmed, I will review initiatives where P&R can support this line of effort.

## Office of People Analytics

**The Department of Defense Office of People Analytics (OPA) was created in 2016 to enhance the capability of the Department and the OUSD(P&R) to utilize data science, qualitative analysis, statistical experiments, and surveys to enhance decision-making on matters affecting DOD military and civilian personnel and to improve the evaluation of DOD personnel- and readiness-related policies and programs.**

**42. In your view, how effective has OPA been in enhancing the capabilities of the OUSD(P&R)? Please describe the areas and functions for which OPA has contributed to OUSD(P&R) missions and functions.**

I understand OPA is effective at enhancing the capabilities of P&R as well as creating efficiencies for the Department in the areas of selection, recruitment, readiness, resiliency suitability, and retention. O-PA conducts rigorous research and advanced analytics to address fundamental shared research needs across the Department required to build and sustain a lethal force; serves as the authoritative research voice on numerous workforce issues rather than each Service conducting duplicative efforts with disparate methodologies and non-comparable results.

**43. If confirmed, how would you use OPA to enhance the military's ability to recruit, retain, and utilize essential *military and civilian* talent?**

If confirmed, I would continue to leverage the data and analytics from OPA to ensure P&R is making data driven solutions.

**44. If confirmed, how would you use OPA to improve personnel suitability, security, and reliability policies and practices?**

If confirmed, I will collaborate with USD(Intelligence and Security) to orient OPA's research on improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of background vetting for military and civilian applicants.

**45. What are the key research projects that OPA has conducted at the request of the Military Departments or other DOD Components, and how does OPA ensure that research findings and recommendations are shared across the DOD research community?**

OPA's scientific surveys, including the Workplace Gender Relations Survey, Status of Forces Survey, Youth Poll, and New Recruit Survey provide the Department's official metrics across a range of crucial personnel topics including sexual harassment, sexual assault, racial/ethnic harassment, suicide awareness, spouse unemployment, propensity to serve, and reasons to join/not to join. These findings are circulated broadly within the Department, to the Hill, and the public. Additionally, P&R and OPA are working closely with the DoD Comptroller and DoD Chief Data Officer to implement Section 912 of

NDAAs FY2018, and include personnel related data in the common enterprise data repository to enhance evidenced-based decision making for the Department.

### **DOD-VA Collaboration**

**The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have in recent years increased their collaborative efforts to support service members as they transition to veteran status. These joint efforts have included the early identification of service members who require medical and behavioral health care services post-discharge, integrated disability evaluation and adjudication processes, and enhanced data sharing to ensure timely award of compensation and other benefits.**

#### **46. What is your view of the effectiveness of DoD/VA collaboration to date?**

The partnership between the VA and DoD is robust. One of the most effective means by which the Departments accomplish critical tasks is via the Joint Executive Committee which is co-chaired by the USD(P&R) and Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs. This entity oversees DoD/VA initiatives and ensures efforts are moving forward with accountability.

#### **47. If confirmed, what new initiatives would you lead DOD in undertaking with the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure a seamless transition for each service member as he/she moves from service member to veteran status?**

If confirmed, I will align all transition support and programs into an overarching framework, and ensure Service members have an understanding of, and access to, the benefits they are entitled to at the point of separation.

#### **48. How can the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)—Goals, Plans, Success, be improved, better to prepare service members to address the challenges they and their families experience in the transition from military to civilian life? How can Veterans' Service Organizations be incorporated more effectively in transition assistance programming? Should DOD do more to connect transitioning service members with states and localities seeking to provide them with services and assistance? If so, what more should be done in your view? Should military spouse transition preparation be better inculcated in the TAP? Please explain your answer.**

I am aware that the FY2019 and FY2020 NDAs brought significant changes to the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The Department has modernized TAP, in collaboration with our interagency partners, to provide transitioning Service members a more tailored, individualized transition experience. TAP is also more inclusive of the family, specifically the spouse and the caregiver. Our relationship with Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) is ongoing and maturing. The unique and important services provided by the VSO is crucial to the career readiness preparation and post-transition success of our Service members and their families. As for connecting transitioning service members with states and localities, and involving military spouses in transition

preparation, I will require additional analysis of the issue. If confirmed, I will review this issue in more detail.

**49. What is your assessment of the efficacy of TAP services and support to members of the Reserve Components as they transition from federalized/mobilized status back to civilian life and participation in their assigned reserve and guard units or positions?**

To support the mobilization, activation, and transition of Reserve Component members, the Department merged the Office of Reintegration Program with the Transition to Veterans Program Office, formalizing the existing collaboration. This new organization is efficiently combining resources and synchronizing the service delivery of mandated benefits to transitioning Service members, members of the National Guard and Reserve, their families, and communities worldwide.

**50. If confirmed, what goals would you establish in your role as the co-chair of the Joint Executive Committee (JEC)?**

If confirmed, as co-chair I will pursue initiatives such as implementation of the Military to Civilian Readiness Framework, integration of DoD and VA's disability processes, enhanced data sharing, and development of a joint system for health care providers that links an individual member or Veteran to exposures of harmful substances.

**51. In your view, what progress have the DOD and VA made in implementing their respective Electronic Health Records? By what metrics does DOD measure and evaluate its progress? Are these same metrics applied to VA progress? What is your level of confidence that, going forward, the complete content of a service member's health record—from enlistment/accession to retirement/discharge—will be reliably available to both Departments?**

The DoD has deployed MHS GENESIS to eight sites and is preparing to deploy to an additional ten in June 2020. The Department is on track to complete full deployment by 2024. We have established, in conjunction with the VA, the Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization office. This will ensure each Department successfully executes their respective electronic health record deployment strategy with minimal risks to cost, performance, and schedule. If confirmed, I will ensure we coordinate all efforts with the VA to ensure we are both successful with our deployments.

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

**Despite significant efforts by the Military Services to enhance their response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the DOD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military for Fiscal Year 2018 documented a statistically significant increase in the past-year prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual contact, primarily for female service**

**members in the 17 to 24 age group. These findings echoed earlier reports of alarming increases in the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault at the Military Service Academies.**

**52. In your view, are the policies, programs, and training that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent sexual assault and respond to sexual assault when it does occur, adequate and effective?**

Between 2006 and 2016, the Department estimates the prevalence of sexual assault was cut in half (from 34K to 15K). In this same time frame, reporting increased four-fold (7% to 32%).

DoD's programs and policies have shown progress; however, as we saw prevalence increase and reporting slightly decrease in 2018, progress in this space is an ongoing endeavor and we must adapt. Our newest data indicates increases in sexual assaults were driven by victimization and perpetration within our youngest age groups – 17 to 24 year-olds. The Department's efforts are currently focused on this population, while maintaining a critical eye on the force at large.

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

Prevention of sexual assault is a critical aspect of the Department's efforts – we must prevent the crime from occurring in the first place. The data tells us that climate plays a key role in prevention.

If confirmed, I will focus on promoting our healthy workplace climate efforts that support all who serve, and ensuring our leaders have the ability to identify pockets of concern and the tools to address them.

In addition, while performing the duties of the USD(P&R), I recently chartered the Prevention Collaboration Forum, chaired by the Executive Director of Force Resiliency. This forum is looking broadly at how the Department can synchronize all violence prevention efforts including sexual assault, harassment, discrimination, hazing and bullying, suicide, intimate partner violence, and drug misuse.

**54. What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove from military commanders case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?**

While military justice is primarily the responsibility of the Military Departments, I can draw from my own experience as an Air Force commander. Commanders must set the example on unit climate, as well as continuously speak to and model good order, appropriate discipline, inclusivity, and healthy relationships. To effectively address a problem like sexual assault, commanders must be more involved in our justice system – not less involved. They need to be properly trained, equipped, and engaged in military

justice. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to improve climate assessment tools to provide commanders the ability to detect trends and take action on leading indicators of sexual assault.

**55. In your view, should the U.S. Air Force Academy's *Safe to Report* policy be applied to the other Military Service Academies or to other types of units and organizations across DOD?**

I am supportive of any effort that removes barriers to reporting and encourages greater help seeking. My understanding is that the Office of General Counsel is currently working on the report back to Congress on the best way forward.

**56. What is your assessment of the Department's implementation of protections against retaliation—most notably social ostracism and reputation damage—for reporting sexual assault?**

DoD has tracked retaliation, and other potential negative reactions to reporting sexual assault, for some time now. I understand that Department surveys indicate retaliation and a range of other unhelpful behaviors undermine our efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assault. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing our efforts to address this, including ensuring leaders at all levels understand their responsibilities to identify and correct problematic behaviors, including retaliation, and to improve our command climate surveys to better identify if and when Service members are not upholding this expectation and hold them accountable.

**57. In your view, do military and civilian leaders in the Department have the training, authorities, and resources needed to hold subordinate commanders and supervisors accountable for the prevention of and response to sexual assault and retaliation? If not, what additional training, authorities, or resources do you believe are needed, and why?**

Yes. I believe we provide commanders with the proper authorities and resources to ensure good order and discipline. I also believe we must be vigilant to ensure they continue to have all they need, and language in the most recent NDAA will assist us with updating how we prepare commanders for their role in the military justice system. If confirmed, I will continue the focus on efforts to promote healthy workplace climates that support all who serve. This includes improving our climate surveys to provide commanders at all levels with accurate, responsive data to better identify, and address, problematic behaviors.

**58. In your view, why are the number of prosecutions for sexual assault and retaliation across DOD so low? Why do you believe conviction rates are so low?**

Operation of the military justice system is the responsibility of the Military Departments, so I defer to the Judge Advocates General of the Military Departments for specifics on prosecutions. If confirmed, I would be responsible for ensuring commanders have an

understanding of the climate in their units, including any retaliatory behaviors. In this capacity, I will focus on efforts to promote healthy workplace climates that support all who serve. This includes improving our climate surveys to provide commanders at all levels with accurate, responsive data to better identify and address problematic behaviors.

**59. In your view, should the role and authority of Special Victims' Counsel be modified in any way? Please explain your answer.**

Operation of the military justice system is the responsibility of the Military Departments, so I defer to the Judge Advocates General of the Military Departments for specifics on how or if the Special Victims' Counsel program should be modified. That said, I understand the Special Victims' Counsel is a widely used and highly satisfying support service for sexual assault victims.

### **Sexual Harassment**

**DODI 1020.03, *Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces*, dated February 18, 2018, establishes a comprehensive harassment prevention and response program for military service members. Although it employs more civilians than any other Federal agency or department, DOD has not updated its civilian workforce harassment prevention and response policy since 1992. Of note, in responding to the inaugural DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey administered in 2016, 14.2 percent of female DOD employees and 5.1 percent of men indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment or gender discrimination by "someone at work" in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.**

**60. Has DODI 1020.03 been fully implemented across all Military Services and the Fourth Estate? If not, why has implementation been delayed and when will full implementation be complete?**

DoDI 1020.03 provides policy for military members only, and the Military Services are in compliance. In addition, harassment data is currently collected on an annual basis, including the estimated prevalence rate of harassment every other year, to monitor our progress.

My understanding is that the Department is examining the issue of civilian harassment and is considering the need for a similar civilian policy, understanding that different rules and regulations apply to the civilian employee population, including the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**61. In your view, do methods for tracking the submission and monitoring the resolution of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with an accurate picture of the systemic prevalence of these adverse behaviors in the military force?**

Yes. Service policies permit informal complaints of harassment and discrimination to address problematic behaviors at the lowest level. The Department's harassment policy, issued in 2018, allows for this process, but also requires the Services to track informal complaints.

**62. Does the Department's method for recording the outcomes of informal complaints of harassment or discrimination provide DOD leaders, supervisors, and managers with a means of identifying repeat perpetrators in the military force?**

Yes. Substantiated complaints are documented in a Service member's personnel file with the intent to track repeat offenders.

**63. What actions has OUSD(P&R) taken to establish a modern, comprehensive harassment prevention and response policy and program for the DOD civilian workforce?**

The Department recognizes the need for an updated civilian policy. If confirmed, I will examine the issue of an overarching civilian harassment policy.

**64. In your view, is civilian workforce harassment prevention and response training across each of the Military Services and the Fourth Estate adequate and useful to employees? How does OUSD(P&R) confirm that civilian employees across the Department have completed such training at appropriate intervals, and what metric does OUSD(P&R) apply to measure the efficacy of such training?**

The Department's most recent survey of the civilian force indicated that the vast majority of DoD civilians did receive training and were able to account for Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities from this training. However, the survey also identified areas of improvement in our civilian response system and experiences of harassment and discrimination. There is a need for an updated civilian policy. If confirmed, I will examine the issue of an overarching civilian harassment policy.

**65. Does the Department's method for responding to complaints of harassment or discrimination in the civilian workforce provide appropriate care and services for victims?**

The Department's most recent survey of the civilian force indicated that the vast majority of DoD civilians were aware of the avenues of redress if they experienced harassment or discrimination. However, the survey also identified areas of improvement in our civilian response system, including how we provide victim care. There is a need for an updated civilian policy. If confirmed, I will examine the issue of an overarching civilian harassment policy.

**66. How could the requirements associated with the DOD Civilian Workplace and Gender Relations survey and report required by title 10, United States Code, section 481a, be improved to generate information of greater utility to DOD and Congress in understanding the prevalence of harassment and discrimination in the DOD civilian workplace, and in developing policies and programs to combat these adverse behaviors?**

We appreciate Congress' support of these critical issues, including the shared understanding that surveys are the best way we can truly understand what is happening when these issues are under-reported. As such, the Civilian Survey is a critical tool we have to understand the scope of these issues, where we have issues, and where we can improve.

The Department is working to release the second survey report to Congress. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing trends across the two data points and where we could use future congressional support.

**67. If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD's program of preventing sexual assault, harassment, and discrimination in the military? In the DOD civilian workforce?**

The consolidation of responsibility for preventing these behaviors, along with other concerning behaviors such as suicide and drug misuse, in the Office of Force Resiliency, reflects our strategy to look more broadly at violence prevention efforts to ensure our programs and policies are synchronized.

While performing the duties of the USD(P&R), I recently chartered the Prevention Collaboration Forum, chaired by the Executive Director of Force Resiliency. This forum is looking broadly at how the Department can synchronize all violence prevention efforts including sexual assault, harassment, discrimination, hazing and bullying, suicide, intimate partner violence, and drug misuse. If confirmed, I will support the efforts of the Prevention Collaboration Forum to ensure we are addressing these issues comprehensively and effectively.

***Executive Order (EO) 13160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs, was issued in 2000, in part to provide students and their parents a specific process by which to make complaints about sexual harassment or other unlawful discrimination experienced in DOD Schools, and to ensure that any such complaints are properly investigated and adjudicated.***

**68. Are you confident that DOD schools have in place the policies and processes to ensure that:**

- **Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment by a student in locations under the jurisdiction of the DOD Education Activity (DODEA) are properly investigated?**

DoDEA formally established a Civil Rights program and implemented a collaborative process designed to assist the organization in taking reasonable steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination in DoDEA schools, programs, activities, and workplaces, as required under Executive Order 13160.

- **Information documenting such misconduct, if substantiated, is recorded in the permanent record of the offending student and that any school to which that student subsequently transfers is made aware of that information, as appropriate?**

DoDEA policy requires the documentation of substantiated misconduct be included in the student record, which transfers upon the student's enrollment into a new school.

**69. If confirmed to be the USD(P&R), what actions would you direct to ensure that DODEA takes all appropriate actions to hold its teachers, other employees, and students accountable for acts of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination?**

No unlawful discrimination, harassment, or assault of any kind is acceptable. If confirmed, I will examine the adequacy of the training and resources currently available to DoDEA teachers, staff, and students, and will work with Congress to address issues that affect the security and well-being of military families and DoD civilians.

### **Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Military Families**

**70. What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the military services, and if confirmed, what actions will you take to address these issues?**

Domestic violence and child abuse are serious public health problems, and military families are not exempt. Aggressive prevention strategies are the best way to address stressors and challenges of military family life before they result in violence.

**71. What benefits have resulted from the centralization in OUSD(P&R) of policy making and oversight authority for the Family Advocacy Program?**

Centralizing policy has improved the standardization of process for preventing and addressing family violence, improved the sharing of research and best practices across all

Family Advocacy Programs, and provided better opportunities for oversight to most effectively direct resources and efforts across programs.

**72. In your view, what more can the Department do to *prevent* child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?**

The Department must continue to emphasize education, and make support services available at all stages of the military member's career and family transition. This allows us to increase those factors that build stronger, healthier, and more resilient family relationships.

**73. Do you believe that the Department's Family Advocacy Program strikes the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?**

The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) provides prevention, education, clinical and support services to victims and abusers. Accountability is addressed through law enforcement, legal, and command components of DOD's coordinated community response to domestic and child abuse. This balanced approach is the best way to address domestic violence and child abuse.

**74. Please describe current DOD programs and policies that address domestic violence in the military.**

In addition to law enforcement and command efforts, the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) provides advocacy and support services to the victim, and rehabilitative services to the abuser. It also provides services to children who may be impacted by domestic abuse. FAP educates command, law enforcement, medical personnel, legal and community partners to ensure there is a coordinated response to serving families and protecting victims, when abuse occurs.

**75. Please describe current DOD programs and policies that address child abuse in military families.**

In addition to the Family Advocacy Program, the New Parent Support Program provides home visits to our most vulnerable new parents with infants and children under the age of three. Given most of our new parents are young and geographically separated from extended family and friends, this program provides important connections to community support and targeted resources to ensure our new families get off to the best possible start.

**DOD Schools**

**76. Should the eligibility requirements for military dependents to attend DOD domestic elementary and secondary schools be modified in any way, in your opinion? If so, what modifications would you propose, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I would support a pilot program that allows the Department to examine the viability and feasibility of expanding eligibility to active duty service members and DoD civilian dependents in the United States who are currently ineligible.

**77. Are there any data that would tend to show how access to DOD elementary and secondary schools—both stateside and overseas—affects service member recruitment, retention, and military family readiness writ large?**

I am unaware of any empirical data; however, a 2018 survey conducted by a military service organization found that 42% of active duty spouses and 34% of active duty members considered child education as a top issue.

I often say that we recruit the individual, but we retain the family. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that we have the resources and authorities needed to assess the impact that access to DoDEA schools has on service member recruitment, retention, and military family readiness.

**Safety and Security of DOD Schools**

**In the wake of several school shootings in 2018, former USD(P&R) Robert Wilkie directed a comprehensive review of DODEA’s readiness to prevent and respond to an active shooter emergency in DOD schools—both inside and outside the United States.**

**78. What were the results of this review?**

In general, the review observed DoDEA school leaders demonstrate a commitment to ensure all students and staff are trained and aware of procedures to follow should an active shooter event occur. Additionally, it was found that the Military Services were able to provide student support including counselors, psychologist, chaplains, and Military Family Life Counselors to those who may be at risk of injuring themselves or others.

**79. How has DODEA utilized the results of this review to improve its readiness to respond to an active shooter emergency?**

DoDEA adopted the Standard Response Protocol (lockout, lockdown, evacuate, and shelter), a school specific all-hazards response for emergencies used by over 25,000 public schools in the United States. Last year, at the request of DoDEA, the Department of Defense formally adopted the Standard Response Protocol in DoD policy.

**80. By what metric would you, if confirmed to the position of USD(P&R), assess and evaluate DODEA’s improvements in this regard?**

Since the Parkland, Florida school shooting, DoDEA has developed partnerships with each of the Military Services and COCOMs, and their installations. DoDEA uses these

partnerships to assist in the observation and evaluation of emergency drills and their effectiveness. If confirmed, I will ensure DoDEA continues its comprehensive review of school security assessments, and develop quantifiable information to determine improvements.

**81. What readiness gaps remain, in your view, and if confirmed, how would you address them?**

ASD (M&RA) established a Joint School Security Working Group (JSSWG) with the Military Services. To date, DoDEA has assessed over 50,000 door locks in our schools, and is establishing a comprehensive plan to repair or replace inadequate lock systems. If confirmed, I will ensure DoDEA has the authority and resources to further their efforts to improve school security.

**DODEA Pupil-to-Teacher Ratios**

**The Defense Wide Review recommends, among other things, increasing pupil-to-teacher ratios in DODEA schools, which would result in a reduction of 172 teachers and aides for school year 2021-2022. Meanwhile, credible studies of student achievement generally conclude that lower ratios lead to higher achievement and better student outcomes.**

**82. What is the justification for reducing the number of teachers and aides in DODEA schools?**

DoDEA adjusted the pupil-to-teacher ratio in 2018 for middle and high schools to better align the workforce to meet student needs, while allowing greater efficiencies to invest in education programs and technology.

**83. Do you believe that reducing the number of teachers and aides by 172 positions will benefit military children? If so, how?**

Well-resourced schools and an appropriate number of teachers in each school is essential to higher levels of student achievement. In keeping with our responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer money, the Department has an obligation to ensure we are using our fiscal resources in a way that is both deliberate and responsible.

**Juvenile Problematic Sexual Behavior**

**A 2018 media exposé asserted that the U.S. military frequently fails to “protect or provide justice to” the children of service members who are sexually assaulted by other children on a military installation.**

**84. What actions has DOD taken to institutionalize policies and programs for responding to, investigating, adjudicating, and documenting allegations of juvenile problematic sexual behavior?**

The Department established an OSD-level “Tiger Team” made up of the key components of a successful coordinated community response (CCR): Family Advocacy Program (FAP), DoDEA, Child and Youth Programs, Law Enforcement, Military Criminal Investigative Organizations, Military Community Support Programs, and Health Affairs.

To date, this team has taken action to include publishing DoD policies addressing this expanded mission, developing cross-cutting training for our personnel, and establishing strong relationships with civilian experts in the field, academic institutions, and our federal partners to ensure we are in synch with best practices. The priorities for the next 12 months are to launch the newly-developed training across the enterprise, develop and issue guidance on the operation of multi-disciplinary response teams, and monitor Service implementation of revised policies.

**85. How does DOD ensure that the victims of juvenile problematic sexual behavior receive the care, treatment, support, and advocacy services they need?**

The Family Advocacy Program now serves as the central focal point across DoD to receive reports of these behaviors, activate the multidisciplinary response team, provide comprehensive assessments for the children involved, and recommend or provide evidence-based treatment. The Department is working through all our child and youth serving agencies to develop parent engagement policies and procedures to ensure all involved, children and parents, receive needed support.

**86. In your view, does DOD have a mechanism to hold accountable, as appropriate, and provide treatment to juveniles who engage in problematic sexual behavior?**

The Department does not have a juvenile justice system and we continue to work with the Department of Justice through a DoD/DOJ working group to address barriers to the appropriate adjudication of these cases. Toward that end, the Military Departments are seeking to establish concurrent jurisdiction in areas of exclusive Federal legislative jurisdiction on military installations, and enter into memoranda of agreements with servicing U.S. Attorneys’ Offices and local authorities to address barriers to adjudication of juvenile criminal offenses.

**87. Will you commit that, if confirmed, you will fully resource DOD’s efforts to address juvenile problematic sexual behavior and communicate regularly with this Committee on DOD’s progress in this regard?**

Yes. I am committed to the safety and well-being of all military children and youth who have been impacted by problematic sexual behavior.

**Federal Voting Assistance Program**

**88. What actions is the OUSD(P&R) taking now to prepare for the 2020 elections for federal offices?**

The Department is supporting the Services in the execution of their respective voting action plans and supporting 3,500 voting assistance officers with carrying out their responsibilities. Specifically, the Federal Voting Assistance Program continues to offer direct voter assistance through their website and push materials into the field to ensure our military, their families and overseas citizens are aware of their absentee voting privileges.

**89. How will DOD ensure that service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to do so successfully—from anywhere in the world?**

The Department is aggressively pointing our members, their families, and overseas citizens to the Federal Voting Assistance Program website through a broad information awareness campaign, consisting of online social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn), digital media (e.g., YouTube) and the release of short instructional videos for ongoing use by various stakeholders.

**90. In your view, how can DOD best ensure the reliability and security of military ballots?**

The Department coordinates all of its postal activities through the Military Postal Service and partners at the United States Postal Service. Using expedited mail at overseas military installations provides our voters the ability to track the status of their ballot as it is returned to the local election official.

**Military Service Academies**

**In 2019, the Department reported that estimated rates of unwanted sexual contact (penetrating and contact sexual assault crimes) at the Military Service Academies had increased in 2018, compared to rates measured in 2014 and 2016. Further, 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. Although the 2018-2019 Report documented 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.”**

**91. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place across the Military Service Academies to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment, and to ensure that cadets and midshipmen who do report assault or harassment are not subject to retaliation—social ostracism and reputation damage—in particular?**

The Military Service Academies have unique challenges as we have seen from our last two assessments. Our prevalence numbers are going in the wrong direction. The Department has seen in the active force an increase in the estimated prevalence of sexual assault among our 17-24 year old populations – as the MSAs comprise this youngest cohort, we recognize our efforts must adjust to better address this unique population.

The Department's focus at the Academies includes efforts to improve command climate, prepare and hold our young leaders accountable for this climate, and to continue to remove barriers to reporting. One effort to increase reporting includes the launch of the CATCH program – modeled after a similar civilian program that found support at colleges and universities – that allows victims to report on an alleged offender via a Restricted Report, but be notified if anyone else reports this same alleged offender. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize this effort.

**In your letter forwarding the *Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies for Academic Program Year 2018-2019* to the Committee, you stated, “I assure you this matter has my closest attention.”**

**92. Specifically, what actions have you already taken to address this matter? If confirmed, what additional actions would you take or direct the Secretaries of the Military Departments to take in regard to their Military Service Academies?**

If confirmed, I will continue focus on the Military Service Academies' efforts to improve command climate, prepare and hold our young leaders appropriately accountable for this climate, and to continue to remove barriers to reporting. One effort to increase reporting includes the launch of the CATCH program – modeled after a similar civilian program that found support at colleges and universities – that allows victims to report on an alleged offender via a Restricted Report, but be notified if anyone else reports this same alleged offender.

**93. In your view, are the Military Service Academies the appropriate organizations in which to pilot an alternative military justice system to test the assertion that were authority to determine the disposition of sexual assault allegations removed from the chain of command, more victims would report their assaults and more sexual assault cases would be prosecuted by courts-martial? Please explain your answer.**

As the operation of the military justice system is the responsibility of the Military Departments, I defer this to the Judge Advocate Generals of the Military Departments and the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

**Section 555 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, requires that the Secretary of each Military Department establish regulations for the timely consideration of an application for transfer of a military service academy cadet or midshipman who is the victim of an alleged sexual assault or**

**related offense, to another military service academy or to a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program affiliated with another institution of higher education.**

**94. In your view, how will such transfer options enhance the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program?**

From my perspective, the Department, the Services, and the Military Service Academies should remain committed to providing options for reporting and assistance that promote recovery such as a change of unit or dormitory; change of class section; or leave of absences.

**95. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the policies and processes in place at each Military Service Academy to ensure cadets' free exercise of religion—to include no religion at all—and the accommodation of religious practices?**

The Department respects the rights of individuals to express their own religious beliefs. DoD policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion, as well as the freedom to practice no religion at all. I believe the Service Academies appropriately implement and enforce this DoD policy.

**96. What is your assessment of the efficacy of suicide prevention programs at each Military Service Academy?**

Each Military Service Academy has a suicide prevention program that aligns with their respective Military Department's program. This includes encouraging cadets and midshipmen to seek help and check on one another, increase access to support, and reduce barriers to seeking help. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to address this issue comprehensively and effectively, along with programs that address other concerning behaviors, such as sexual assault, hazing, and bullying.

**Currently, Military Service Academy graduates are required to serve on active duty for a minimum of five years 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. Meanwhile, the increasingly technical nature of officer careers has increased the length of initial skills training courses. As a result, new officers are spending less time at their duty stations during their initial active duty service obligation.**

**97. Do you believe a five-year minimum active duty service commitment for Military Service Academy graduates is sufficient return on investment for the U.S. military and the American taxpayer?**

The FY 2020 NDAA directed the Department to conduct a review of Military Service Academy active duty service obligations in context with the data cited by the Committee. In the coming year, the Department will use that analysis to make recommendations to the Committee on whether changes are indicated.

**98. In your view, do the Military Service Academies contribute to the pool of military officer accessions commensurate with their attendant costs? Why or why not?**

The Military Academies deliver high quality officers to the operating forces. Additionally, as the Military Services are able to develop curriculum specific to their own Service, they are able to shape academic, training, and leadership development programs to meet their respective Service requirements.

**99. If confirmed, would you support increasing the active duty service commitment for some or all Military Service Academy graduates to a six-year minimum? Please explain your answer.**

The FY 2020 NDAA directed the Department to conduct a review of Military Service Academy active duty service obligations in context with the data cited by the Committee. In the coming year, the Department will use that analysis to make recommendations to the Committee on whether changes are indicated.

**100. Given the provisions of title 10, United States Code, applicable to each of the Military Service Academies, under what conditions would you deem it appropriate, if confirmed, to permit a military officer to play professional sports prior to completing at least two consecutive years of commissioned service following graduation from an Academy?**

The Department has initiated a limited program that permits exceptional athletes with the potential for significant media exposure to defer commissioning following graduation while serving as an enlisted member in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), pending the completion of their active duty service obligation when tendered a commission.

### **Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC)**

**The USD(P&R) establishes overall policy for the administration of ROTC programs. It is well documented that over the past years, a number of Senior ROTC units have failed repeatedly to meet established annual commissioning production requirements. Yet the FY 2020 Department of Defense Appropriations Act includes a recurring provision that effectively prohibits the Department from closing a Senior ROTC detachment, notwithstanding a lack of return on investment.**

**101. In your view, does the SROTC program remain a viable source of officer accessions?**

Yes.

**102. In your view, should the Military Services continue to operate ROTC units at colleges and universities that fail to meet their minimum annual commissioning requirements?**

The Services make significant investments in both manpower and funding to maintain ROTC detachments, and should be allowed to manage them to meet their officer requirements. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to improve this critical resource and the connection to American society it represents.

**103. Has the OUSD(P&R) developed and implemented credible policies and procedures for the assessment and disestablishment of SROTC units—including for the appropriate and timely communication of concerns about SROTC unit efficiency, effectiveness, and performance to the senior leaders of the host educational institution? Please explain your answer.**

DoD Instruction 1215.08, Change 1, 03/07/2018, Sections 3.3 and 3.4, specify policies and procedures for the annual assessments of ROTC units, and for the disestablishment of ROTC units, respectively. Annual assessment criteria are listed in a memorandum provided to the presidents of each institution in a Military Department with ROTC units at least 6 months before the initial assessment, or 6 months before any subsequent assessments, if the criteria have changed since the prior assessment. Institutions with host units approved for disestablishment will be notified at least one full academic year before the actual closure of the ROTC unit.

**104. How does the prohibition on closing an SROTC detachment, notwithstanding the detachment's production deficiencies, affect the overall utility of the Department's SROTC program?**

The prohibition on closing or restructuring ROTC programs inhibits the Department's ability to give every cadet or midshipman the best leadership training experience possible. We have some units operating with a ROTC corps of less than 10 members and no commissioning graduates for several years. If confirmed, I will look closely at this issue and look forward to working with the Military Departments on improvements to delivery of training and leadership opportunities designed to prepare students for commissioning and the rigors of military service.

**105. What are your specific suggestions for modifying the SROTC scholarship program to attract the top talent that our Armed Forces need to meet the requirements of the 2018 NDS?**

Attracting quality applicants is not a limiting factor. Each of the Military Services awards ROTC scholarships on a highly competitive basis and continue to see the quality of applicants increase over time. Applicant pools for ROTC scholarships consistently exceed established baseline requirements for academic, physical, foreign language, community service, and other factors considered during selection. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Military Departments to help increase the viability and production of their ROTC detachments.

**106. In your view, should the Junior ROTC (JROTC) program be expanded to include students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades? Why or why not?**

The FY2020 NDAA allows for participation of 8<sup>th</sup> graders on the condition that the grade level is physically co-located with the 9th grade participating unit. Expanding to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will require additional resources, and the host school and Military Services would need to determine the most effective method.

**107. If confirmed, specifically what actions would you take to increase the number of JROTC programs in operation?**

The Service Secretaries are responsible for how they allocate resources for programs, including JROTC, to meet Service Program Guidance and Defense Planning Guidance.

**Managing the Cost of Health Care**

**108. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take with respect to each of the following:**

- **Eliminating performance variability throughout the MHS.**

DoD's multi-year transition of Military Medical Treatment Facilities from the Military Departments to the Defense Health Agency provides opportunities to maximize efficiencies and enhance improvements in health care quality. The transition provides the ability to unify quality improvement efforts through the elimination of unwarranted duplication, and to reduce unnecessary variation in execution through the application of a singular management authority.

- **Improving health outcomes and the experience of care for all of the Department's beneficiaries—in both the direct and purchased care components of the MHS.**

The FY2017 and FY2019 NDAA enacted significant reforms to TRICARE and the MHS, including changes to the administration and management structure that collectively transforms the MHS into an integrated system of readiness and health, enabling the ability of the MHS to act as a single enterprise delivering an improved experience for all beneficiaries. This enables the MHS to standardize policies, measurement of quality, and the patients' overall experience of care. Through standardization of clinical and business

practices, DHA will improve the MHS readiness mission, while delivering world-class, efficient and accessible healthcare for all beneficiaries

- **Creating a value-based MHS—ensuring the delivery of quality health care at a reasonable cost to both the Department and its beneficiaries.**

DHA is working closely with the Military Departments, Federal Partners, and our civilian partners to intentionally leverage the most effective and efficient practices to unify and advance clinical quality in the MHS. We are running various pilots leveraging value based best practices (e.g. Atlanta pilot with Kaiser) to enhance deliver of quality health care at a reasonable cost to our beneficiaries and the government.

### **Military Health System Reorganization**

**Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as clarified by sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, and sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2020, transferred the administration and management of military treatment facilities (MTFs) from the Military Services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).**

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

Yes.

**110. In your view, are the Military Departments' medical forces properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements set forth in operational plans implementing the 2018 NDS?**

Yes.

**Maintaining a well-trained and adequately staffed military trauma care workforce is crucial given that the volume and degree of trauma found in combat generally will not allow for an on-deployment learning curve.**

**111. In your view, is DOD's current education, training, and career development approach sufficient to ensure a military trauma care workforce that is ready to deliver *expert* health care (including combat casualty care) in support of the full range of military operations, domestically and abroad?**

Improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of our trauma workforce is an on-going process for the Department. If confirmed, I will review and assess our efforts to ensure our medical workforce maintains its capabilities to produce life- and function-saving care.

**112. Would you see value in restructuring the DHA as a new combatant command—a Unified Medical Command?**

We need to fully implement the ongoing reforms before we further examine the value of moving to a Unified Medical Command.

### **Warfighter Brain Health**

**By memorandum of October 1, 2018, then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Shanahan issued a memorandum directing the development of a “comprehensive strategy and plan of action” focused on promoting warfighter brain health and countering traumatic brain injury (TBI).**

**113. If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in overseeing the development and execution of this comprehensive strategy and plan of action?**

If confirmed, my specific role would be to Chair the Comprehensive Strategy for Warfighter Brain Health Executive Committee (EXCOM) that was created to oversee the development and implementation of the strategy and activities. The EXCOM has 23 members representing senior levels of the Department committed to ensuring the health and enhancement of our Warfighters.

**114. Has the longitudinal study on service member blast pressure exposure yielded any novel ideas for the protection of service member brain health and prevention of TBI in training or operational settings? For the integration of passive screenings and secondary active evaluations for brain health in training and operational contexts?**

The longitudinal medical study on service member blast pressure exposure is ongoing. There are 22 studies that support the goal of evaluating the feasibility of monitoring, recording and analyzing blast overpressure in Service members and recording that data into the member's record.

**115. What mechanism has DOD established for reliably tracking service members’ blast exposure and impact/acceleration event history?**

The Department is developing solutions to integrate blast overpressure exposure information into the Defense Occupational and Environmental Health Readiness System. Additionally, both blast exposure and impact/acceleration history are captured with the Military Acute Concussion Evaluation tool during evaluation for a suspected concussion, otherwise known as mild TBI.

**116. In your view, how might DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs better synchronize research into the origins, progression, diagnosis, and treatment of TBI, as well as their surveillance, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of service members who have sustained a TBI?**

The DoD and the Department of Veteran Affairs are synchronizing research findings and care through further advancing current coordination platforms such as the Long term Impact of Military relevant Brain Injury Consortium, which is a large DoD-VA partnership exploring the origins, progression, and treatments for mild TBI.

### **Medical Education**

**117. In light of the multitude of civilian academic institutions offering medical education, is it necessary and appropriate for DOD to operate and sustain its own medical school?**

Yes. The Department assessed the national security need for the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences medical school and found that its continued operation is critical to meet medical readiness requirements.

**118. In your view, what contribution does the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences make to military readiness? By what metrics are these contributions to readiness measured and evaluated?**

The USUHS Medical School provides 180 physicians annually to support the Department's medical mission. In addition, they produce over 160 other advanced practice providers (e.g., nurses, dentists, allied health providers). If confirmed, I will review and assess appropriate metrics.

### **Service of Transgender Persons**

**In January 2019, the Supreme Court issued an order allowing DOD to implement this Administration's policy prohibiting some transgender persons from joining the military. The policy took effect on April 12, 2019.**

**119. If confirmed, what would be your role in implementing the DOD policy on the service of transgender persons in the armed forces?**

If confirmed, I will support the Department's policies on military service by transgender persons and persons with gender dysphoria, consistent with all legal requirements.

**120. In your view, does allowing a service member who accessed into a Military Service in his/her preferred gender or who received a diagnosis of gender dysphoria from a military medical provider before April 12, 2019, to continue to serve under policies and procedures established by then-Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter in 2016, detract from military readiness? Please explain your answer.**

Under Department retention standards, conditions that are deployment limiting must be reviewed by the Service concerned at 12 months with a corresponding decision on retention.

## **Mental and Behavioral Health Care**

**121. If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to service members in theater and to service members and families at home station locations?**

If confirmed, I will ensure DoD continues to provide accessible, quality mental and behavioral health resources to our military service members and their families. This includes inpatient, outpatient, and deployment embedded health care services, supplemented by family programs such as the Military Crisis Line, providing confidential, immediate help 24/7 at no cost to active-duty, Guard and reserve members, and their families.

**122. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to National Guard and Reserve service members and their families who do not reside near a military installation?**

If confirmed, I will review and institute necessary changes to policies to enable the DoD to address unique challenges associated with the deployment pattern of National Guard and Reserve members, and the difficulty such members encounter post-deployment with respect to accessing mental health treatment and resources in civilian communities.

**Although the Department has made great strides in reducing the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors, many service members remain concerned that their military careers will be adversely affected should their chains of command become aware that they are seeking mental or behavioral health care. At the same time, the military chain of command has a legitimate need to be aware of physical and mental health conditions that may affect the readiness of service members under their command.**

**123. As regards the provision of mental and behavioral health care, how does DOD bridge the gap between a service member's desire for confidentiality and the chain of command's legitimate need to know about matters that may affect the readiness of individual service members and the unit?**

Stigma surrounding mental health is pervasive in both civilian and military settings. The goal is to dispel this negative perception, and remove roadblocks for individuals to seek care when needed. Building trust with Service members is an important aspect of promoting help seeking and reducing stigma. If confirmed, I will review and establish policy that enable providers to execute a balance between patient confidentiality and a commander's right to know to build trust with those Service members seeking mental health care.

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

Yes.

**125. In your view, how could the Department better integrate the provision of mental and behavioral health care services and non-medical counseling?**

If confirmed, I will seek to enable mental health professionals to provide the best possible care based on evidence-based best practices, to include integrating compliance with current standard of care clinical practice guidelines and/or recommendations for non-medical counseling and social context support systems.

**Suicide Prevention**

**The number of suicides in each of the Military Services continues to concern the Committee.**

**126. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to maintain a strong focus on preventing suicides across all Active and Reserve Components, and in the families of our service members?**

I share your concern. Last year, the Department released its first Annual Suicide Report. This report provided us information on our populations of greatest concern and identified areas for us to focus increased efforts. Many of these areas also share risk factors with other problematic behaviors we track.

If confirmed, I will continue to focus our efforts on our youngest military members and National Guard members, as well as continuing to support our military families and remove barriers to seeking help. Suicide is a complex interaction of factors – we must address these issues comprehensively.

**127. If confirmed, what specifically would you do to enhance the documentation, reporting, and tracking of the suicides of family members and dependents of service members across all components?**

Last year, the Department released its first Annual Suicide Report, which includes available data on military spouses and dependents. If confirmed, I will continue to report out on this important population annually moving forward. As this population does not fall cleanly under DoD purview, our data tracking systems were bolstered by CDC's National Death Index data to ensure the most comprehensive picture.

**128. What are your ideas for preventing suicides by curtailing the misuse of lethal means by service members and their families?**

The Department's Annual Suicide Report provides information on our populations of greatest concern, and areas where we need to increase focus. We know firearms and medications are key methods by which our members attempt or die by suicide. As such, the Department is working to educate our Force, including families, on the importance of

safe storage of lethal means – including medications and firearms – to put time and distance between an individual in distress and a means by which they could die by suicide.

Suicide is best addressed holistically to reduce all factors. If confirmed, I will work to improve our ability to identify and respond to those in distress, enhance problem-solving skills to cope with everyday life challenges, reduce or eliminate barriers to seeking help, and increase access to support functions such as mental health providers and chaplains.

### **Voluntary Education Programs**

**129. Do you believe DOD’s Voluntary Education Programs contribute to military recruiting and retention, and to military readiness? By what metrics does DOD assess and evaluate the contribution of such programs to recruiting, retention, and readiness? Do you believe such metrics adequate to discern a causal relationship between these programs and desired recruiting and retention outcomes?**

Yes. Many individuals, including myself, join the military for the educational opportunities. Numerous internal DoD and external studies and analyses support strong correlations to recruiting, retention, and readiness. Metrics include entrance surveys, longitudinal studies and periodic program reviews. These tools show that are positive correlations for Tuition Assistance use with promotions, retention, and successful civilian transition.

**130. Should military service obligations incurred through participation in the Tuition Assistance Program run consecutively or concurrently with other incurred service obligations, in your view? Does DOD receive an adequate return on its investment in Tuition Assistance?**

Tuition Assistance (TA) program obligations should run concurrently with other incurred service obligations. TA programs are an incentive program during Service members off-duty time they use to invest in their professional and personnel development. This additional investment of time and energy provides return on investment in the form of enhanced problem solving, critical thinking, and additional skillsets that contribute to mission readiness and effectiveness, in addition to facilitating successful post-Service opportunities.

**131. What is your view of the adequacy of the Department’s mechanisms and processes for protecting service members seeking to make use of Tuition Assistance Program funding from marketing by educational institutions that offer academic programs of dubious rigor and applicability?**

The Department’s policies and mechanisms appropriately protect Service members. The Department instituted a rigorous compliance policy in 2014 that incorporates a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that sets specific conditions and procedures to which educational institutions shall comply. The MOU specifies that the educational

institutions must be accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the Department of Education, have approved VA funding, and are certified to participate in federal student aid programs under Title IV of Public Law 89-329 (The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

**132. What is your assessment of the Department's policies and procedures for reviewing and adjudicating service member complaints against educational institutions that have allegedly failed to comply with the obligations on which their eligibility for receipt of Tuition Assistance funding is contingent?**

The Department has a thorough process, the Postsecondary Education Complaint System, to facilitate the tracking, facilitation, and resolution of student complaints. This is an effective and successful process that fairly evaluates and adjudicates all complaints.

**133. What progress has the Department made in identifying and leveraging credentialing programs, both to enhance a service member's ability to perform his/her official duties, and to qualify the member for meaningful civilian employment on separation from the military?**

The Department has a robust credentialing program through the Services' Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) programs. The COOL programs directly support mission readiness and successful transition to civilian life. Every enlisted military occupation, and to date all Naval officer and Army Warrant Officer career fields, are mapped to appropriate civilian opportunities, to include applicable licenses and certificates. The Department, in coordination with the Veterans Administration and the Department of Labor, has established productive and growing engagements with employers (industry, organized labor, federal and state entities) across the nation that seek to hire veterans.

### **Post-9/11 GI Bill**

**In 2008, Congress passed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (Post-9/11 GI Bill) that provides generous educational benefits for post-9/11 service members who serve at least 90 days on active duty. The Post-9/11 GI Bill differs from past-era GI Bills in that it allows service members to transfer education benefits to eligible dependents in exchange for an additional military service obligation.**

**134. As reflected in data, what effect does the transferability provisions of the Post-9/11 GI Bill have on the recruitment and retention of service members?**

Fifty-two percent of new recruits specifically cited benefits under the GI Bill as influential on their decision to enter the Services. As of September 30, 2019, there were 643,923 career Service members approved to transfer their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to 1,502,495 family members.

**135. How would you respond to assertions that the educational benefits afforded military dependents to whom service members have transferred their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits have contributed to the formation of a generation of citizens with little or no incentive to consider military service?**

DoD data indicates that military dependents have a greater propensity to serve than those without a family association with the military. However, the Department has not conducted an analysis of whether propensity among military dependents was impacted by the introduction of GI Bill benefit transferability.

**136. In your judgment, how can the Department better utilize the GI Bill transferability authority to maximize retention?**

If confirmed, I will continue to track recruit quality and retention metrics carefully, so that we can adjust policy and force management tools to support any major shifts in recruitment or retention trends, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

### **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 2018 NDS.**

**137. How is DOD implementing these authorities today?**

The Department made corresponding changes to its DoD instructions to allow the Military Departments and Services to implement the new authorities.

**138. Which authorities are being used to the most positive effect, in your view?**

It is too early to gauge specific impacts. However, initial feedback from the Military Departments is the additional flexibility was welcomed.

**139. If confirmed, how would you lead the Department in further leveraging these new authorities?**

If confirmed, I will continually review the Departments statutory authorities and officer management policies and, as necessary, will submit additional legislative proposals to allow the Military Departments to effectively manage their officers to meet the demands of accessing, training, developing, and retaining top-notch talent in the 21st century.

**140. In your view, do any of the Military Services—including the U.S. Space Force—need any additional authorities to modernize their management of military personnel?**

The Department routinely reassess whether the Services have enough flexibility to accomplish their missions. If confirmed, I will identify deficiencies or shortcomings, change DoD personnel policies, and, where necessary, collaborate with Congress to amend laws to give the Services authorities they need.

**141. In your view, how can the Military Services' scrolling and appointments processes be improved so as to improve permeability between the Active and Reserve Components?**

A properly structured statutory framework enabling a single commission would create efficiencies, remove barriers to service, and maximize a Service member's ability to transition between components.

**142. Do you believe current DOD and Military Service 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 Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President?**

Yes.

**143. 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.**

Yes. We have standard procedures that apply to all officers to provide fair and equitable treatment throughout the military life cycle.

**Joint Officer Management**

**The NDAA for FY 2017 modified the Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) system established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in two significant ways. First, it broadened the statutory definition of "joint matters" to expand the types of positions for which an officer can receive joint duty credit. Further, it reduced from three years to two the minimum tour length required for joint duty credit.**

**144. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the FY 2017 modifications to the JQO system?**

If confirmed, I will direct a study to assess JQO system alignment with National Defense Strategy imperatives, as the changes in law occurred prior to issuance of the NDS.

**145. In your view, are the requirements associated with becoming a JQO, and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to General/Flag Officer rank, consistent with the operational and professional demands of Service line officers?**

If confirmed, I will direct a study to assess JQO system alignment with National Defense Strategy imperatives, as the changes in law occurred prior to issuance of the NDS.

**146. In your view, what additional modifications, if any, to JQO prerequisites are necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Service-specific leadership experience, as well as adequate professional development?**

If confirmed, I will direct a study to assess JQO system alignment with National Defense Strategy imperatives, as the changes in law occurred prior to issuance of the NDS.

**147. What are your ideas for improving the JQO system better to meet the needs of Reserve Component officers?**

Major changes to the JQO system were made in 2007 to incorporate Reserve Component officers and the Reserve policy was adjusted in 2018 to increase joint qualification opportunities for Reserve Component officers. If confirmed, I will direct a study to assess JQO system alignment with National Defense Strategy imperatives, as the changes in law occurred prior to issuance of the NDS.

**148. Should the requirement to be a JQO be eliminated as a consideration in selecting officers for promotion and assignment?**

My initial inclination is no, however, if confirmed, I will direct a study to assess JQO system alignment with National Defense Strategy imperatives.

### **Professional Military Education**

**The 2018 NDS asserts that Professional Military Education (PME) has stagnated—that it focuses on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity.**

**149. What do you perceive to be the role of the OUSD(P&R) in enhancing DOD's JPME system to ensure that it fosters the education and development of a cadre of strategic thinkers and planners with the intellectual acumen, military leadership proficiency, and sound judgment to lead the Joint Force in a globally integrated, multi-domain fight?**

P&R develops education policies, plans, and programs for the education of all DOD personnel, in close coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and advises the Secretary of Defense on Joint PME matters.

**150. In your view, to what degree does the Secretary of Defense Strategic Thinkers Program, established by Directive-type Memorandum-19-001, address the PME concerns documented in the 2018 NDS? What does this new program add to the current PME system?**

OSD established the Secretary of Defense Strategic Thinkers Program (STP), in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. The program is designed to develop a highly select cohort of the Services top intellectual talent and provide them with a focused education addressing the multiple dimensions of strategic competition with great powers. Follow on assignments will place these officers in key positions where their insights will assist leadership with solving some of the Departments most complex challenges.

**151. How is OUSD(P&R) ensuring that officers who have completed the Secretary of Defense Executive Fellows program are identified and tracked, with a view to ensuring that the knowledge and experience they glean from the fellowship can be applied in follow-on tours of duty?**

The Department issued policy to track post-graduation assignments to assist DoD Components in matching follow-on and subsequent career assignments to best leverage expertise gained in their SDEFP developmental experience.

**152. What changes or reform would you recommend to the PME system to ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the tools necessary to meet the national defense objectives of the future?**

If confirmed, I will conduct a review of the DoD PME system, in close collaboration with Congress, to determine areas for improvement to align with the Secretary's direction to re-focus the Department on the pacing threats of China and Russia, as articulated in the National Defense Strategy.

## **Nuclear Forces**

**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 and their senior leadership. The review generated recommendations to improve the personnel management of nuclear forces, enforce security requirements, increase deliberate senior leader focus and attention, and enact and sustain a change in force culture. More than five years later, responsibility for taking corrective action on these recommendations has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.**

**153. In your view, are the Military Services maintaining appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the Nuclear Enterprise Review?**

Yes. To date, the Services closed out 107 of the 175 recommendations made in the 2014 Nuclear Enterprise Review. Work continues on the remaining recommendations.

**154. If confirmed, what would be your role in ensuring that the Military Services sustain efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of the service members charged to execute and support the Department's nuclear mission?**

If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure the Department supports all our military personnel and prioritizes the operations and maintenance of our nuclear triad, to include the supporting nuclear command, control, and communications.

### **Space Force**

**The FY 2020 NDAA established the United States Space Force as separate armed force within the Department of the Air Force.**

**155. What should be the role of the OUSD(P&R) in identifying the manpower needs and structure of the U.S. Space Force? In supporting the recruitment and retention of warfighters with the requisite capabilities to comprise the Space Force? In establishing a fair and equitable merit-based promotion system? Are there are other key tasks that OUSD(P&R) should undertake to assist in the establishment and sustainment of the U.S. Space Force, in your view?**

If confirmed, I will support the Department of the Air Force to assist in the personnel and readiness areas. This includes providing the policy, guidance, and oversight necessary for the standup of the structure of this historic sixth separate service, and to develop the appropriate metrics to assess and validate the Space Force's ability to provide trained and ready forces to the Joint warfighter.

**156. How could Reserve Component support to the U.S. Space Force best be structured, in your view?**

The Reserve component can be a critical tool for the U.S. Space Force to accomplish its missions, in the same way the other Services capitalize on the use of their reserves. However, large overhead and bureaucracy should not accompany a small reserve component. The Space Force has the opportunity to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century force for the Information Age, and should be flat, rapid, and agile to act as a pathfinder for all the services to transition away from organizational structures and staffs rooted in a bygone era.

### **Military Compensation**

**The Department of Defense has traditionally assessed the competitiveness of military pay by comparing Regular Military Compensation against salaries earned by a comparable civilian demographic.**

**157. Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet the objectives of the 2018 NDS?**

Yes, generally. However, non-compensation incentives need to track along with pay. The Department of Defense will never be able to afford to pay as much as the commercial sector, especially in critical skills. Therefore, non-compensation incentives such as service period flexibility, permeability, assignment stability, personnel tempo, quality of life, and family support programs, and at the core, appealing to patriotism, become very important, and could become the deciding factors for accession or retention decisions by our people.

**158. What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal—particularly given the ever-tightening recruiting market?**

Presently, the pay package appears to be adequate. However, as outside influences such as a strong economy and low unemployment rates have direct impact on DoD's recruiting and retention, continuous review is warranted.

**159. Do you believe the largely “one-size-fits-all” model for military pay adequately rewards individuals for their specialized skills and provides an appropriate incentive to scientists, engineers, and members of other high-value professions to access into the military?**

Given the myriad specialties, occupational groups, technical skills, and special incentive pay and bonuses that exist in today's military, the commonly used “one-size-fits-all” mantra is less descriptive of today's military compensation system than it has been in the past. If confirmed, I am open to considering alternatives and will work with the Congress to support and sustain the All-Volunteer Force into the future.

**160. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the conclusions of the 13th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, currently underway, and will collaborate with Congress on recommended changes.

**Section 612 of the NDAA for FY 2019 directed DOD to evaluate the methodology for awarding hostile fire pay and imminent danger pay. A 2019 RAND report on the subject concluded that although the process is generally effective, it could be improved.**

**161. How could the methodology for awarding hostile fire pay and imminent danger pay best be improved, in your view?**

One of the areas DoD is working to improve is to institutionalize regular, periodic reviews of all imminent danger pay area designations, with the most recent one expected to be completed this year. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to strive for continuous improvement in all our processes.

**162. How would the views of the Geographic Combatant Commanders be included in any improved process?**

Geographic Combatant Commanders already have an integral role in identifying and designating locations for imminent danger pay. Based upon their geographic responsibility and situational awareness of conditions and threats in a given area, any changes must continue their central role in this process.

**The President's Budget Request for the Department of Defense in FY 2021 is roughly the same as the amount appropriated for DOD in FY 2020. Despite a flat DOD topline, military personnel costs (not including healthcare) have grown by more than 6% to a total of nearly \$164 billion in FY 2021.**

**163. Are you concerned with the overall cost of military personnel?**

Yes. The rising cost of personnel will continue to put pressure on the budget, and will consume funding for other priorities such as modernizing our weapons systems for future threats.

**164. In your judgment, will the Department be able to continue to invest in NDS implementation if personnel costs continue to grow at the same rate as reflected in the FY 2021 budget request?**

It will be challenging in the current flat-to-declining budget environment. Secretary Esper and Chairman Milley, and before them, Secretary Mattis and Chairman Dunford, along with the Commission on the National Defense Strategy, have all stressed the need for an annual 3-5% increase in defense spending to effectively meet the imperatives of the National Defense Strategy.

**165. What specific recommendations do you have for controlling the rising cost of military personnel costs and entitlement spending?**

The Department will have no choice but to accelerate digital modernization to take advantage of artificial intelligence and machine learning, and harness the power of big data to reduce the dependence we have on manpower. The Department is far behind this reality that has caused revolutionary approaches in the commercial sector faced with the same rising personnel costs.

## End Strength and Personnel Requirements

**In FY 2019, the Active Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve all failed to achieve their end strength authorizations. The Army Total Force ended the year with more than 20,000 soldiers less than the end strength authorization it requested in the FY 2019 President's Budget. This is of particular importance to Congress, given that the military personnel appropriation is primarily based on the end strength authorizations set forth in the NDAA. Unrealistic end strength requests result in wasted resources that must be reprogrammed with minimal congressional involvement.**

**166. In your judgment, what role should the OUSD(P&R) play in ensuring responsible growth in military manpower across both the active and reserve components?**

If confirmed, in my readiness role P&R would assess manpower requirements measured against the warfighting requirement set forth in warfighting concepts and operations plans. These requirements, added to service institutional requirements for generating forces, should establish end strength requirements.

**167. Is the current military end strength sufficient in the aggregate to implement the 2018 NDS and execute the associated operational plans? If not, what end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Armed Forces by the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?**

Even before the NDS was published, the services were working their way out of a deep readiness hole, including filling vacant manpower positions in their units. While the support of Congress over the past three years has been invaluable to filling those manpower gaps, the Department is still calculating future manpower requirements to meet future warfighting concepts required to meet the imperatives of the National Defense Strategy.

**168. Do you believe military end strength must continue to grow?**

The Military Services planned growth in the Future Years Defense Plan have been validated as necessary growth to meet potential threats in that time frame.

**169. Can the Department afford to continue to grow military end strength?**

It will be challenging in a flat budget environment. The Department will have no choice but to accelerate digital modernization to take advantage of artificial intelligence and machine learning, and harness the power of big data to reduce the dependence we have on manpower.

**170. What is your understanding of the Military Services' need for additional force shaping tools beyond those already available to them?**

We must continually assess force shaping tools to ensure they provide the Services with the flexibility needed to meet current and future operational requirements. If confirmed, I will closely collaborate with the Services and with Congress to ensure the Department has the force management tools needed.

**171. What is your view of the proposal to repeal the authorized officer strength table contained in section 523 of title 10, U.S. Code, and instead enable Congress to authorize annually the number of officers serving in mid-grade officer ranks?**

I have not had an opportunity to review this proposal, but if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Services and with Congress to ensure the Services have the appropriate number of mid-grade officers.

### **Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program**

**172. In your view, do the benefits of the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program (MAVNI)—recruiting and utilizing those with critical skills vital to the national interest—outweigh both the demonstrated risks, and the costs to the Department associated with conducting security, suitability, and reliability screenings of applicants?**

No. Since 2009, more than 10,000 non-citizens with critical language and medical skills joined the U.S. Military through the MAVNI Pilot Program. However, in 2016 a review of the security and suitability screening processes associated with the program resulted in the discovery of significant counterintelligence and security concerns. Due to changes in law and immigration policy, as well as the significant manpower and fiscal cost of requisite security and counterintelligence screening, it is inadvisable to reconstitute the MAVNI Pilot Program in its previous form.

**173. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the program in filling certain hard-to-fill specialties?**

Non-U.S. citizen recruits, to include those enlisted via the MAVNI Pilot Program, are prohibited from performing jobs requiring a security clearance until they have obtained U.S. citizenship. As a result, while MAVNI personnel were recruited for language, cultural or medical skills, many were limited to serving in specialties or units where their ability to use those capabilities was limited. Although, U.S. citizens constitute the majority of military accessions, approximately 6,000-8,000 Lawful Permanent Residents access annually without additional limitations and have greatly contributed to the Department's language, cultural, and other hard-to-fill specialties

**174. If confirmed, would you reactivate the MAVNI program and authorize the enlistment of new applicants? Considering the modifications to section 504(b)(2) of title 10, U.S. Code enacted in the FY 2019 NDAA, what changes would you make to the policies governing the MAVNI program?**

Due to changes in law and immigration policy, as well as the significant manpower and fiscal cost of requisite security and counterintelligence screening, I would not recommend reconstituting the MAVNI Pilot Program in its previous form. However, if confirmed, I will further review the issue.

**175. If confirmed, what specific actions, if any, would you take to address the concern that most MAVNI applicants' legal immigration status expires while they await completion of security and suitability screening and entry on Active Duty?**

It is unfortunate some MAVNI applicants' immigration statuses expired while waiting to begin Active Duty. Those MAVNI who meet security and eligibility standards for military service will be accessed, and once eligible will have their honorable Service certified. The Department has worked closely with our partners at DHS, specifically the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), to ensure these applicants are afforded the opportunity to apply for deferred action while awaiting enlistments.

### **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. But DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service. Further, only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving. The Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies office reports that the top two reasons cited by American youth "not to join" the military are the "possibility of physical injury/death" and "possibility of PTSD or other emotional/psychiatric issues."**

**176. In your view, what are the main reasons that such a small pool of individuals in the 17-24 age bracket are eligible for, and propensed toward, military service?**

It is my understanding that limited eligibility is largely attributed to medical conditions and obesity among today's youth. If we could dispel some of the misperceptions about what it means to serve, we could have a positive effect on propensity to serve.

**177. What recommendations would you have for increasing the pool of eligible and propensed youth?**

It is my understanding that the Department continuously reviews all accession standards to ensure we have the broadest possible pool of eligible recruits.

**178. Do you agree with the premise that such a shortage in the number of American youth eligible and interested in serving in the Armed Forces poses an existential threat to national security?**

The shortage of eligible youth makes the Department's recruiting mission more challenging, however, there are likely a sufficient number of youth available to fill the All-volunteer Force, provided appropriate investments are maintained in marketing and advertising, recruiters, and enlistment bonuses, when warranted.

**179. What percentage of Active and Reserve Component military personnel are likely to experience serious physical injury or death as a direct result of their military service?**

I do not have that information. If confirmed, I will review and provide available data to determine what percentage of Active and Reserve Component military personnel are likely to experience serious physical injury or death that are a direct result of service.

**180. What percentage of Active and Reserve military personnel are likely to experience PTSD or other mental health issues as a direct result of their military service?**

Period prevalence and incident episodes of diagnosed Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for active duty service members, including activated Guard and Reserves was estimated at 1.9% and 1.1%, respectively for 2017.

**181. Do you believe DOD has taken adequate steps to counter prevailing public opinions that serving in the military will almost certainly result in physical or mental injuries? If confirmed, how would you work with the Department to improve its messaging in this regard?**

Consistent messaging along with marketing and advertising strategies by the Department's professional teams are imperative to ensure the delivery of the right message to potential recruits and influencers alike. However, this issue extends beyond DoD. If confirmed, I will work closely with the media and nonprofits to ensure the risks of service are not overemphasized.

**182. What impact do current medical and other criteria for enlistment in the Armed Forces have on the number of individuals eligible for military service? If confirmed, what changes to such criteria, if any, would you recommend to increase the number of individuals eligible for military service, without degrading recruit quality?**

Maintaining a ready and lethal force is the Department's main objective. The Department continuously reviews all accession standards to ensure we have the broadest possible pool of eligible recruits. If confirmed, I will continue to explore all options regarding eligibility while maintaining the highest possible quality recruits.

**183. In your view, should existing medical and other qualification standards be changed to accommodate youth willing to enlist for service in certain high-demand specialties, such as RPA pilots or cyber defenders?**

Accession standards are set to meet the operational needs of the Services for qualified and abled-bodied service members. While these standards are appropriate for all specialties, the Department continues to assess and modify, as appropriate, these standards to ensure we remain an agile and lethal force.

**184. What is your view of increasing the number of individuals eligible for service by recruiting individuals who are older than the typical core recruiting demographic?**

With current authorities allowing the Services to enlist individuals between the ages of 17 and 42, age should not be limiting factor to recruiting America's best and brightest. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to identify ways to expand the pool of eligible individuals, provided those individuals are fully capable of meeting the rigors of military service.

**185. Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative steps would you take, if confirmed, to improve recruiting across the Military Services?**

While compensation is a necessary recruiting tool, the Services have opened doors to new markets by deploying new state-of-the-art technologies such as digital marketing and deploying virtual recruiters, which has exponentially increased their ability to gather quality leads. Exploring new methods of screening applicants through non-cognitive testing and leveraging technology to connect with applicants in a more immediate and interactive manner are other examples of how the Services are being creative to expand the recruiting market. If confirmed, I will explore other creative measures to ensure recruiting success.

**186. In your view, do current recruiting standards, particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits, accurately predict recruit attrition and/or future success in military service?**

Current recruiting standards, specifically education credentialing tiers, provide effective standards to minimize attrition and maximize success in Service. We have observed over time that recruits in Tier II (e.g., GED and attendance-based school certificates) and III (less than High School Diploma or Credential) attrite at higher rates. As the military becomes more technologically advanced, the Services will need to continuously recruit high-quality applicants. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to monitor how the various tiers predict attrition rates and success in the military.

**187. What impact, if any, do you believe the new Blended Retirement System (BRS) will have on recruiting and retention across the Military Services?**

I believe the Blended Retirement System (BRS) will be a positive recruiting tool. We will need more time to collect data to understand the impact of this system on retention.

**188. Why, in your view, did the enlisted service members of each of the Military Services “opt in” to BRS at significantly lower rates than officers?**

I am not aware of that information.. However, I believe all Service members had the necessary tools to make a well-informed decision. The Department views BRS implementation as a major success, and as of today, over 800,000 Service members are taking advantage of this program.

**189. Has the integrated DOD recruiting campaign, *Their Success Tomorrow Begins With Your Support Today*, been successful in increasing the willingness of youth or their influencers to consider military service?**

It is my understanding that since its launch at the end FY2018, the DoD influencer campaign has driven over 3.27M visitors to TodaysMilitary.com, 6.14M page views on the site, and over 215K visitors to Service recruiting websites. Additionally, 42% of influencers recalled seeing at least one of the ads and those influencers who have seen the ads were more likely to recommend service than those who have not seen the ads

**Reserve Components**

**Over the past 18 years, the National Guard and Reserves have experienced their largest and most sustained employment since World War II. The Military Departments continue to emphasize the importance of the “total force.” Yet the overall authorized end-strength of the Selected Reserve declined by nearly 60,000 service members between 2001 and 2019 (874,664 for FY 2001 as compared 817,700 for FY 2019) and time away from home and civilian jobs for these “part-time service members” has increased exponentially. As a result, even though the authorized strength of the selected reserve has decreased, the Reserve Component has failed to achieve its end strength goals for the last several years. In FY 2019, the Reserve Component was more than 16,000 service members short of authorized strength, which results in wasted resources.**

**190. In your judgment, what has been the effect of increased operational tempo on Reserve Component recruiting and retention?**

Increased operational tempo is a factor for retention in both the active and reserve components. The Services are adjusting recruiting and retention resources to meet Service end strength goals in light of NDS requirements. Additionally, the Department is increasing emphasis on personnel tempo tracking to best inform appropriate usage of the Total Force.

**191. If Active Duty end strength is increased, what specific parameters would you recommend to determine what the corresponding Reserve Component end strength should be?**

This depends on many factors, but most importantly are NDS requirements. Concurrently, force element characteristics for meeting NDS requirements may drive changes in active/reserve force mix ratios, among other factors. The Department is in the process of reviewing all these factors.

**192. In your view, do the Reserve Components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the Reserve Components be supported by increased training, improved equipment, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness?**

The Reserve components provide both ready operational capabilities and on-call strategic depth to provide the full spectrum of lethality in support of NDS requirements. The level of each depends on the individual Service reserve component. In general, reserve components must be provided the appropriate levels of equipment, training, and funding commensurate with their slated missions.

**Section 513 of the NDAA for FY 2018 required DOD to deliver a legislative proposal to consolidate authorities for reserve component duty statuses.**

**193. In your view, what are the “pros” and “cons” associated with the Department’s proposal for comprehensive Reserve Component Duty Status Reform?**

The Department’s on-going review fundamentally redesigns the current RC duty status structure by consolidating approximately 30 duty statuses into four distinct categories of work based on the nature of the duties RC members perform. If confirmed, I will continue to work RC Duty Status reforms that fully aligns benefits to the nature of the work RC members perform, while protecting the authorities and prerogatives of governors and States in managing and utilizing their National Guard.

**194. How would you assess the efficacy of the OUSD(P&R) reorganization that eliminated the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and reassigned that office’s authorities and responsibilities to other components of the OUSD(P&R)?**

I have not yet fully assessed the internal structure of P&R. If confirmed, I will undertake a comprehensive review to assess the alignment of the organization to NDS imperatives.

**195. In your view, specifically what value is generated by DOD’s investment in the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program? How could this program be improved, in your opinion?**

I have not fully assessed the value of the program. However, in general, any programs that serve to connect the Department of Defense to local communities while contributing to the betterment of both youth and communities have intrinsic value.

## **Military Lending Act**

**In enacting the Military Lending Act as part of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, Congress sent a clear bipartisan message that protecting service members and their families from predatory and high cost lending was of paramount importance to their financial security and military readiness. In 2015, DOD finalized MLA rules strengthening protections for our service members and their families. The MLA has been extremely effective in curbing predatory lending targeted at our troops.**

**196. If confirmed, will you support these protections and resist efforts to weaken the MLA rules that the Department has carefully crafted and implemented over the past decade?**

Yes. As a squadron commander, I saw first-hand the negative impacts financial issues such as excessive debt can have on Service members, their families, and unit readiness. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor this important area and carefully review any changes that could weaken MLA provisions that protect our Service members.

## **Military Quality of Life**

**The Committee remains concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family advocacy and parenting skills programs; child care; spouse education and employment support; health care; and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.**

**197. If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider to be a priority?**

Secretary Esper is clear that taking care of our Service members and their families is a top priority. If confirmed, I will prioritize quality of life programs that best promote their well-being and resilience.

**198. What metric would you apply in determining which MWR and quality of life programs should be sustained or enriched and which should be eliminated or reduced in scope as ineffective or outmoded?**

The Services continually evaluate the effectiveness of quality of life and MWR programs to ensure they support readiness and retention, and promote the well-being and resilience of Service members and their families. If confirmed, I will work closely with the military departments to complete a comprehensive program and funding review of quality of life and MWR programs to include refining the measures of performance to ensure their effectiveness.

**199. How might the work of the Common Services Task Force be applied in the current environment, in your view?**

The Common Service Task Force has evolved into a common service effort that is now ingrained in our approach to MWR service delivery. This ongoing effort will continue to help achieve efficiencies in MWR back office support such as information technology, accounting, and procurement.

**200. What is your opinion of a proposal that DOD fund MWR programs from the base budget, rather than through exchange dividends?**

Exchange dividends make up only a small portion of MWR funding, approximately 10 percent of total NAF revenues; however, they allow a level of consistent support to all NAF MWR activities and help fund NAF facility replacement. If confirmed, I will continue to examine the appropriate levels of NAF MWR funding balanced with base budget appropriations, as part of the Secretary's overall effort to prioritize funding to the Department's highest warfighting priorities.

**Military Family Readiness and Support**

**201. In your view, what are the key take-aways from the recently released National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report, *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*? How might the Academies' recommendations be applied to strengthen military family readiness programs in the DOD?**

I am not familiar with this report. If confirmed, I will review it for applicability to the Department.

**202. What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families?**

Spouse employment, access to child care, and quality of schools are consistently cited as disincentives to retention.

**203. If confirmed, specifically what actions would you direct to ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?**

The Department has ongoing effort in these areas; working with the Military Departments, and local and state governments to increase spouse employment opportunities, ensuring military children receive child care priority, spouse licensure reciprocity to decrease the time credentialed spouses work to gain employment after a move, and improve the quality of local schools. If confirmed, I will continue focus on these efforts.

**204. What value accrues to the Department through the New Parent Support Program?**

The New Parent Support Program provides home visits to our most vulnerable new parents with infants and children under the age of three. Given most of our new parents are young and geographically separated from extended family and friends, this program provides important connections to community support and targeted resources to ensure our new families get off to the best possible start.

**205. If confirmed, what “first steps” would you recommend to ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Reserve Component families, as well as to Active Duty families who do not reside near a military installation?**

Our Reserve component forces provide critical mission capabilities. When they are not located near installations, we must ensure they have the access to support systems such as Military OneSource, so they can find the programs they need to be ready and resilient. Communication is the key to providing these support mechanisms, and a first step would be to determine, from the reserve forces and geographically dispersed active duty forces themselves, what support they need. Next, each one of our people has a commander, and command involvement is critical to identifying and providing for their needs.

**The Committee often hears that Active Duty families have difficulty obtaining child care on base and that there are thousands of military families on waitlists to receive infant care.**

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

Secretary Esper recently signed a policy change that prioritizes military families above all others outside of direct child care staff. Once this policy change goes into effect on June 1, 2020, we will analyze the efficacy of this change. There is also an ongoing joint-Service working group to explore opportunities to recruit and retain quality child care staff. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts, as well as examine additional public-private partnerships to increase access to child care.

**207. In your view, would there be value in studying the benefits that would accrue with the consolidation of the Military Services’ child care programs under a single system proponent and administrator?**

The Department has taken steps to standardize key aspects of the child care program to include an online child care request management system (MilitaryChildCare.com), the development of a web based child care inspection system, and the deployment of a virtual training platform used by our 27,000 child development program staff (Virtual Lab School). While there are potential benefits to consolidating and centralizing, it is also important for the Services to retain the ability to tailor services to their particular needs.

**Section 580F of the FY 2020 NDAA required the Secretary of Defense to expand the My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) program of the Department of Defense to authorize financial assistance to a military spouse pursuing a license, certification, or Associate's degree in *any* career field or occupation.**

**208. If confirmed, what specific actions would you direct to ensure that eligible military spouses are aware of this expansion of the MyCAA program?**

Spouse employment is one of the Secretary's top priorities. I understand implementation is under way, and the Department is in the process of contacting spouses who are eligible for the expansion. The expansion is also being promoted through communication channels, to include social media. If confirmed, I will continue the emphasis on these actions.

**209. Do you believe that MyCAA eligibility should be expanded to the spouses of service members serving in more senior ranks? Please explain your answer.**

Career support is relevant to all spouses. If confirmed, I am committed to providing all military spouses with career counseling support that is appropriate for all stages of career progression.

**210. By what metric would you evaluate the efficacy of the MyCAA program in enhancing military spouse employment opportunities and military family readiness more broadly?**

I would measure spouse employment, wages, and retention, as military spouse satisfaction with military life plays a significant role in retention. A RAND report evaluating early data from MyCAA found that it improves wages, employment and retention.

**Many military families have communicated with the Committee about the significant hardships they experience during Permanent Changes of Station (PCS), including: unprofessional and untrained household goods packers and movers; unannounced and extensive delays in the pickup and delivery of household goods; extensive damage to personal property; and limited engagement by the Military Services in providing oversight and taking corrective action on complaints.**

**211. If confirmed, what role would you envision for the OUSD(P&R) in establishing and sustaining accountability in the Military Services and U.S. Transportation Command for high quality service and support to military families undergoing a PCS move?**

P&R will continue to support USD(Acquisition & Sustainment), USTRANSCOM, and other stakeholders executing the Department's Personal Property Program Improvement Plan through an enduring cross-functional team. P&R's primary focus areas include developing an integrated PCS/logistics systems interface, improving PCS orders lead

time, smoothing PCS move demand during peak season, where feasible, and evaluating relocation benefits and transportation allowance standardization across the Military Services.

**212. In your view, how might the policies enacted pursuant to the Military Family Stability Act be employed to distribute the demand for PCS moves more evenly across the entire year (rather than concentrating moves in the summer months)?**

The authority provides for additional housing options during “split moves,” separate from the Service member, where a family with special needs, school-age children, or spousal employment, for example, requires a PCS move during different times of the year. If confirmed, I will continue to work across the Department to address concerns around peak season PCS moves.

**213. In light of the challenges associated with privatization of military family housing, should DOD continue to pursue more extensive privatization of the military lodging program, in your view?**

I am aware and concerned with the issues associated with privatized military family housing, and I am cautious about similar challenges under privatization of the DoD military lodging program. If confirmed, I will review this issue more closely, and work with Congress to develop improvement options.

**214. What progress is OUSD(P&R) making in streamlining defense travel regulations to make them easier to understand and apply?**

The Department continues to make significant progress in simplifying the Joint Travel Regulations. We began by combining the Joint Federal Travel Regulations for uniformed service members with the Joint Travel Regulations for civilian employees, and standardizing travel and transportation allowances for both.

**215. What progress is OUSD(P&R) making in replacing and modernizing the Defense Travel System?**

The Department awarded a 24-month Defense Travel Modernization prototype project. The prototype was rolled out to three defense agencies with more than 2,000 current users and over \$1M in travel reimbursements processed to date. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor progress.

**Support for Military Families with Special Needs**

**216. If confirmed, how would you ensure that a service member with a special needs family member is relocated only to a new duty station at which the medical and educational services required by that family member are available?**

If confirmed, I would fully support the standardization efforts underway for travel screening process for family members within the Services. This will enable synchronization of member assignments with ensuring medical and educational services are available for families.

**217. If confirmed, how would you incentivize service member enrollment in the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?**

The Department is committed to ensuring that the special medical and educational needs of families are considered during the assignment process. If confirmed, I would support the education of members and their families on the importance and value of enrolling in the EFMP.

**218. If confirmed, what specific new initiatives would you suggest to assist a service member with a special needs family member in advocating for and accessing 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?**

The Department's priority is the continued support of families by providing education and information on advocacy and the individualized education program process. If confirmed, I will endeavor to better understand the role of the Department of Education in this issue.

**219. If confirmed, how might 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?**

TRICARE provides a very robust benefit for children with special needs, but the system can be complex and difficult to navigate. Transitions of care when families move due to military orders needs to be improved. This includes ensuring that families can identify a provider and set up needed appointments at the new duty location before they arrive, to ensure no break in care. If confirmed, I would direct a needs assessment focused on families with an exceptional family member to identify issues they are facing and how we can best address. I would also look into the feasibility of starting an ombudsman program to provide family members with an advocate to assist their particular situation.

**220. In your view, what would be the appropriate role for the OUSD(P&R) in ensuring that Military Housing Privatization Initiative partners and military commanders consider the needs of service members with an exceptional family member in assigning tenants to military housing?**

If confirmed, I would ensure collaboration with the Military Services and our Military Housing Privatization Initiative Partners to ensure the concerns of our families are addressed to the greatest extent possible.

**221. If confirmed, how would you ensure that EFMP services and support available to service members and their families are consistent across all Military Services? How would you eliminate or reduce the bureaucratic administrative burdens currently experienced by EFMP participants?**

I understand standardization efforts are in full force across the Department to provide families with a consistent family support experience regardless of Service affiliation or location. If confirmed, my priorities would include supporting initiatives where the Military Services work together, and provide standardized services to support the needs of our families.

**222. By what metric would you measure the efficacy of the EFMP in promoting military family readiness and the retention of service members with a special needs family member?**

If confirmed, I would review, assess, and implement the most meaningful metrics needed to track progress of improvement actions.

#### **Review of Decisions of Military Department Boards for the Correction of Military Records and Discharge Review Boards**

**223. What role do you expect the USD(P&R) to play in the implementation of the process for conducting a final review of a request for a discharge upgrade as required by 10 U.S.C. 1553a?**

If confirmed, I will coordinate with the Military Departments and advise the Secretary of Defense to ensure an appropriate process for conducting a final review of a request for a discharge or dismissal upgrade is implemented by the Department as required by 10 U.S.C. 1553a.

#### **Commissary and Military Exchange Systems**

**224. What is your view of proposals to consolidate the commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system?**

Any consolidation must adhere to overarching guiding principles; ensure patrons receive the same or higher level of quality and savings; maintain brand identification, and present efficiencies that offset required investments to achieve.

**225. Why, in your view, have commissary sales decreased so dramatically in recent years?**

The brick and mortar grocery industry nationwide is experiencing pressures from on-line grocery outlets. These outlets, as well as the commissary system, must evolve to give buyers the service and choice they desire.

**226. What is your view of the value that accrues to commissary patrons by including beer and wine among the products offered on commissary shelves? When will beer and wine be made available at *all* commissaries?**

Smart choices must be made as to what items a commissary must displace to offer wine and beer. If confirmed, I will review the different options with a view toward increasing patronage.

**227. How has OUSD(P&R) measured the effects of offering beer and wine to commissary shoppers on overall patron basket size, customer satisfaction, and commissary sales *writ large*? What do these metrics show?**

A third-party study was conducted which did not draw any concrete conclusions. In the 12 commissaries selling beer and wine, sales have been steady but not stellar. The Department has not seen any increase in the size of baskets containing beer and wine and cannot conclude that customer satisfaction at stores carrying beer and wine is higher than stores that do not carry them.

**228. What effect has the commissary's introduction of *Freedom's Choice* private-label products had on overall patron basket size, customer satisfaction, and commissary sales *writ large*?**

If confirmed, I will review the effect of private label products on commissary sales.

**229. What is the plan for expanding Click2Go from the four currently participating commissaries in Virginia to all DOD commissaries, and when will this plan be implemented?**

I understand DoD plans to implement the program at four additional stores in 2020.

**230. What steps have been taken to prepare the commissary to transition to a non-appropriated fund personnel system and when will the first non-appropriated fund employees be hired?**

There would need to be statutory change to allow Defense Resale Optimization to move forward to eliminate the requirement to maintain separate resale systems. In the FY2021 President's Budget request the Chief Management Officer budgeted \$24M for consolidation start-up costs.

**231. Have initiatives designed to enhance the commissary's ability to operate more like a private sector grocery store been effective in reducing commissary reliance on appropriated funds? Please explain your answer.**

Yes. DeCA's 2020 budget is under \$1B for the first time since 2012 due to operational efficiencies, reductions in employees, using variable pricing and private label to generate

margin which is offsetting operating appropriated funds, and the availability of unobligated funds from previous fiscal years.

**232. What total *profit* has been generated by expanding the authorization for on-line shopping at the Military Service Exchanges to all honorably discharged veterans? How much of this total profit has been returned to each of the Military Services in the form of increased MWR dividends?**

I understand the Veterans On-line Shopping Benefit has been well received by our veteran population; however initial sales are less than originally expected. The sales, net profits, and contributions to the MWR dividend from veterans online shopping are accounted for by the military exchange services separately, and therefore I defer to the Departments of the Army and Navy to provide the breakdown of these numbers for each Service.

### **Civilian Human Resources**

**In lieu of the “Workforce Reduction Plan” required of all federal agencies by Office of Management and Budget memorandum M-17-22, *Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce*, in September 2017, DOD submitted a “DOD Workforce Rationalization Plan.”**

**233. What progress have DOD Components made in implementing the DOD Workforce Rationalization Plan?**

I have not studied this plan in detail. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review and assess its implementation.

**234. Which tenets of the Plan have proven most effective?**

I have not studied this plan in detail. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review and assess its implementation.

**235. How has implementation of the Workforce Rationalization Plan generated savings and/or rendered the Department more efficient and productive?**

I have not studied this plan in detail. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review and assess its implementation.

**236. If confirmed, are there particular elements of the Plan on which you would focus the Department’s implementation going forward?**

I have not studied this plan in detail. If confirmed, I will thoroughly review and assess its implementation.

**237. In your view, what is the value of a prohibition on the use of military personnel to perform duties not deemed “military essential”? Are there any adverse consequences associated with such a prohibition? Please explain your answer.**

Prohibiting military personnel from performing non-military essential functions would likely limit the Department’s ability to fully develop its military officers and enlisted force. Skills development in non-military functions would also likely limit opportunities for members in their post-service careers. If confirmed, I will look more deeply into this issue.

**238. In your view, is there value in a prohibition on the use of borrowed military manpower? Are there any adverse consequences associated with such a prohibition?**

A blanket prohibition on the use of borrowed military manpower would likely negatively impact the Services’ abilities to effectively manage their missions at the local level. Although long-term borrowed military manpower can sometimes have negative impacts on the readiness of a unit, or an individual warfighter’s career, the Services have not recently identified it as an ongoing or significant issue. If confirmed, I will look more deeply into this issue.

**239. Would there be any value to the Department, in your view, in eliminating the moratorium on the use of A-76 public/private competitions that has been in effect since 2009?**

Increasing the Department’s flexibility to manage its own workforce would improve its ability to ensure that the labor sources being used to execute missions are the most appropriate, efficient, and effective, and would also enable us to make better use of emerging technologies to modernize the force.

### **Contracting for Services**

**In February 2019, the Congressionally-established Advisory Panel on Streamlining and Codifying Acquisition Regulations (the “809 Panel”) submitted its final report, detailing 98 recommendations to enhance DOD’s ability to acquire and deliver warfighting capability in a cost-effective and timely manner, better to address the concerns raised by the current international security environment. Among these, the 809 Panel recommended that DOD develop a replacement approach for the inventory of contracted services required by title 10, U.S. Code, section 2330a.**

**240. If confirmed, would you implement the recommendation of the 809 Panel in this regard? Please explain your answer.**

Yes. P&R is working with OUSD(A&S) to implement a streamlined solution to fulfill the Panel’s recommendation.

**It is not uncommon for contractor employees—particularly those contracted to provide knowledge-based or administrative services—to work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces, and perform many of the same functions as DOD employees.**

**241. Does OUSD(P&R) have in place adequate oversight mechanisms to ensure that contractor employees do not perform inherently governmental functions and that contractor performance of “closely associated” and critical government functions is minimized? Please explain your answer.**

The Department has a number of tools to assist its personnel in ensuring contractors are always performing appropriate functions. The DoDI 5000.74, Defense Acquisition of Services, dated January 10, 2020, recommends the use of the OUSD(A&S)’s “Handbook of Contract Function Checklists for Services Acquisition.” If confirmed, I will review ways to build on these existing efforts and resources to improve oversight within OUSD(P&R).

### **Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Workforce**

**DOD is the federal government’s largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD civilian personnel policies must adhere to requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Over the years, this Committee has provided numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities applicable to specific segments of the DOD civilian workforce.**

**242. In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the DOD in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?**

The Department’s biggest civilian workforce challenge is the competition for talent in cutting edge fields needed to execute the National Defense Strategy that are also in high demand across the public and private sector.

**243. How will DOD sustain requisite 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?**

The Department will need to use innovative approaches to sustain its workforce. If confirmed, I will collaborate with Congress to ensure we have the advocacy and legislative support to fill our rolls with the most highly qualified people the nation has to offer.

**244. Do you advocate the creation of a new “title 10” civilian workforce and a concomitant body of title 10 personnel authorities applicable only to the DOD**

**civilian workforce? If so, what should be the key components of this new body of personnel law, and how should it improve on title 5, in your view?**

I would need to better understand such a transition. If confirmed, I will work with the DoD components and the Congress to fully assess such an approach.

**245. In your view, how can DOD and its Components better utilize telework, while maintaining supervisory and employee accountability for high quality performance and the appropriate use of official time?**

DoD maintains a robust telework program. We continue to promote telework and its benefits throughout the DoD to, for example, ensure continuity of operations during emergencies such as a pandemic. Telework is also a critical tool to recruit and retain highly qualified employees to DoD's diverse occupations and mission sets. To build a culture of accountability and high performance, we need to frequently communicate expectations to our workforce at all levels, and provide effective, user-friendly technologies that enable mission success.

**246. What progress is DOD making in replacing and modernizing the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System?**

DoD is currently replacing the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) with a new Cloud Commercial Software as a Service (SaaS) System called the Defense Civilian Human Resource Management System (DCHRMS). To date, we have tested and accepted a prototype and are moving toward deployment, while ensuring we have the necessary capabilities to conduct HR processes efficiently and without interruption.

**247. Has the entirety of the Department of Defense migrated to the new Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP)? If not, when will the migration of all DOD Components to DPMAP be complete?**

The Department completed its implementation of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) on October 1, 2018. DPMAP covers approximately 77% of DoD appropriated fund civilian employees. There were 13 phases of implementation that took place over 3 years, beginning in 2016 and ending in 2018.

**248. Has the Department's experience with DPMAP to date evidenced the increased supervisor-employee engagement and meaningful "face-to-face" counseling sessions at the core of the program's objectives?**

DoD Components report that face-to-face discussions are the most popular method for establishing a performance plan, delivering performance feedback and progress reviews, and discussing the performance appraisal.

**249. Has the Department’s experience to date with DPMAP’s 3-tiered rating structure resulted in the rationalization of employee ratings, such that a “3” rating of “fully successful” is now the mode? Please explain your answer.**

DPMAP does not use a forced distribution of performance ratings because doing so would be contrary to government-wide regulations. However, DPMAP emphasizes a high performance culture where truly outstanding work should be recognized by the highest rating. While we are about to close on the first performance cycle at the end of this month with all transitioned Components into DPMAP, previous years indicated nearly equal distribution between ratings of "3" - Fully Successful and "5" - Outstanding.

**One long-standing special civilian personnel management program is the DOD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project (commonly known as AcqDemo). Originally implemented in 1999, AcqDemo provides tremendous flexibility in the compensation, hiring, and overall management of the DOD acquisition workforce. AcqDemo has been deemed a success by the Department and by the employees it covers, yet almost 20 years later, it remains a “temporary” authority.**

**250. What is the role of the OUSD(P&R) in ensuring that DOD Components have an acquisition workforce of the size and capability needed to manage their acquisition challenges?**

P&R has responsibility for the oversight of effective implementation of all civilian human resources authorities, policies, and programs for the DoD, including for the acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I will defer to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), who serves as the Secretary of Defense’s Principal Staff Assistant for acquisition workforce matters, to address matters related to the size and capability of the acquisition workforce needed to manage acquisition challenges.

**251. In your judgment, is there merit in the assertion—advanced by some in DOD—that AcqDemo should continue as a temporary authority?**

No. Permanence will provide acquisition organization leaders increased confidence that converting their organizations to AcqDemo will not be temporary. I defer to the USD(A&S) for additional advice on this matter.

**252. In your view, are there sound reasons for transitioning AcqDemo to a permanent program?**

Yes. Similar to Laboratory Demonstration Project authorities which were made permanent, AcqDemo is a proven major talent management tool for the acquisition workforce and those that provide direct support to the acquisition workforce. I defer to the USD(A&S) for additional advice on this matter.

**253. In your view, could the AcqDemo system be applied successfully—as it currently stands, or with modifications—to other civilian personnel functional communities?**

Yes. AcqDemo hiring and compensation flexibilities and management tools could be applied across other communities to increase workforce motivation and performance.

### **Cyber Excepted Service Workforce**

**Section 1599f of title 10, U.S. Code, authorizes DOD to establish the Cyber Excepted Service as an enterprise-wide approach for managing civilian cyber professionals. OUSD(P&R) continued to play a key role in developing and implementing policies governing this new civilian personnel system.**

**254. In your view, how well postured is the Cyber Excepted Service Workforce to meet the goals outlined in the 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy? What actions would you take, if confirmed, to mitigate any gaps between workforce capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals?**

If confirmed, I will defer to the DoD Chief Information Officer to advise how well the Cyber Excepted Service workforce is postured to meet the goals outline in the 2018 DoD Cyber Strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the CIO to mitigate any gaps between workforce capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals.

**255. How can Cyber Excepted Service Workforce career pathways be enhanced to meet the present and future needs of DOD, in your view?**

If confirmed, I will defer to the DoD Chief Information Officer to advise on enhancements necessary for career pathways to meet DoD's present and future needs

### **Technical Workforce**

**256. In your view, what are the pros and cons of having active duty military personnel trained and working as scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the DOD research, development, and acquisition enterprise?**

I have not had an opportunity to review this issue, but if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to ensure the best mix of our total force across the enterprise.

**257. If confirmed, what advice would you provide to the USD(P&R) in furtherance of efforts to provide the directors of national labs under the purview of DOD with the civilian workforce management tools they need to shape their science, technology, and engineering workforces?**

The Directors of the Science, Technology, and Reinvention Laboratories have authorities to use innovative approaches to civilian personnel management. USD(P&R) should encourage maximum use of these delegations, as the labs continuously pave the way for the Department's management of the civilian workforce. I defer to the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering for additional advice and recommendations.

### **Senior Executive Service**

**The USD(P&R) is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of policies and programs for the DOD Senior Executive Service (SES) [other than Defense Intelligence SES and for SES positions in the Office of the DOD Inspector General].**

**258. 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 a candidate for appointment to the SES?**

If confirmed, I would seek candidates for appointments into the SES that possess a proven record for bringing about strategic change, are viewed by their peers and subordinates as inspirational leaders with uncompromising integrity, and successfully prioritize and manage human and capital resources; all while understanding a broad perspective of the DoD mission and priorities.

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

If confirmed, I will ensure that the performance of the SES under my authority is linked and assessed against individual and organizational results-oriented goals of DoD, Component strategic plans, organizational assessments, and Presidential or other strategic initiatives.

**260. Are you satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs currently available across DOD, including the APEX Senior Executive Orientation and the Vanguard seminar geared at Tier-3 SES? If not, what changes would you make to these programs, if confirmed?**

I am satisfied with the subject matter and rigor of SES professional development programs across the DoD. If confirmed, I will further review and provide recommendations for any necessary changes to these programs.

**261. Are you satisfied that the process employed by the Military Departments and the Fourth Estate for validating whether a vacant SES position should be rehired, restructured, or eliminated is effective in responding to current and emergent mission needs of the OUSD(P&R)? If confirmed as the USD(P&R), what would be your role in this process?**

The annual Component Talent Management Panels and the enterprise-level Biennial workforce review are two comprehensive processes that ensure a thorough and deep analysis of the executive workforce to respond to current and emerging missions and safeguard effective utilization of all existing executive allocations. If confirmed, I plan to be involved both in setting enterprise policy and oversight, and in determining the specific needs of the OUSD(P&R).

### **General/Flag Officer (G/FO) Reductions**

**The FY 2017 NDAA reduced the number of G/FO by about 12%, consistent with plans provided to Congress by the OUSD(P&R). Additionally, the FY 2017 NDAA restored the long-standing limitation on G/FO retired pay.**

**262. What progress has been made by each Military Service and the Joint Staff in reducing the number of G/FO and restructuring the G/FO grade pyramid?**

As provided in our recent annual report on general and flag officer numbers, the Military Services and the Joint Staff are making progress despite changing and emerging mission requirements. The Department has eliminated 43 billets, reducing the overall number of billets from 962 to 919.

**263. What is the impact of the establishment of the Space Force on the authorized number of G/FO positions?**

The establishment of United States Space Force with no increase in G/FO authorizations beyond the single Chief of Space Operations position is a challenge for the Department. Coupled with the recent establishment of United States Space Command, and Senior Military Advisor for Cyber Policy to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Policy and Deputy Principal Cyber Advisor to the Secretary of Defense, and principle cyber advisors in each Military Department, there is significant pressure on G/FO inventories. If confirmed, I will continue to assess G/FO numbers and requirements to ensure the right G/FO leadership is appropriately placed in the Department.

**264. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that DOD is successful in meeting this reduction and restructuring mandate?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs, the Military Departments, and Congress to accommodate new mission requirements.

**265. How has the Department 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?**

At this time, I am not aware of effects of the post-government employment lobbying constraints created by section 1045 of the NDAA for FY2018. If confirmed, I will confer with the Department of Defense Office of the General Counsel on these impacts.

**266. In your view, do OSD, the Joint Staff, and the Military Services have in place sufficient training and resources to provide DOD personnel of all grades and duty positions with the training, advice, and assistance they need to “play the ethical midfield”, particularly in avoiding and addressing conflicts of interest, complying with travel regulations, and ensuring that government resources—including employee time—are used only for official purposes? Please explain your answer.**

Yes. I believe sufficient training and resources are in place to provide DoD personnel of all grades and duty positions with training, advice, and assistance they need. The ethical foundation is laid at the outset of for these individuals' careers and is further developed and reinforced in formal education and training settings throughout their progression through the ranks.

**267. Are you aware of any cases in which a General or Flag officer retired in lieu of accepting promotion to or follow-on assignment in a 3- or 4-star rank due solely to the statutory limitations on retired pay?**

While I have anecdotally heard this is a concern, I am not personally aware of any general or flag officers retiring in lieu of accepting promotion to an assignment in a 3- or 4-star grade due to statutory limitations.

**268. Based on the March 1, 2020 report to Congress the Department of Defense, the Department failed to meet its October 1, 2019 goal of reducing by 48 the number of enlisted aides assigned to assist G/FO. Given that this matter has persisted since FY 2015, what actions would you direct, if confirmed, to ensure that the Department meets its objective for the reduction in enlisted aides?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Services and determine what policy support they need to meet the goal of reducing the number of enlisted aides assigned to G/FO. While I understand emerging requirements such as the United States Space Force and United States Space Command have created challenges for the Services to meet the 2019 goal, we will address this valid concern from Congress.

**Safety**

**269. What is your understanding of the role of the OUSD(P&R) in matters of operational safety and occupational health?**

USD(P&R) is the Chair of the Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) and Principal Enterprise Safety Official (PESO). The PESO is fully empowered as the senior policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense and lead for integrated safety assessment and reporting, trend analysis, and mishap and accident reduction and mitigation activities. The PESO is also responsible for policy and oversight of operational safety and occupational safety and health programs, including aviation, ground, motor vehicle, afloat, space, and risk management in the workplace.

**270. If confirmed, specifically what actions would you recommend be taken to ensure that the Military Service Safety Centers fully and timely share accident-related data with OUSD(P&R)?**

Military Service Safety Centers currently share accident-related data with OUSD(P&R); however this information can likely be provided in a more standardized and real time manner. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to comply with standardized DoD data requirements.

**271. If confirmed, how would you use the forum provided by the Defense Safety Oversight Council to address safety challenges that present across the force?**

If confirmed, as the Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) Chair I would set the tone for the Department's safety culture. Our people are our most important asset, and aside from that damaging our expensive equipment through mishaps is a force structure issue.

**272. What is the role of the USD(P&R) in establishing policies and procedures to protect DOD military and civilian personnel from COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus?**

USD(P&R) is a member of the DoD COVID-19 Task Force established by the Secretary. The Department's top priority is ensuring the health and safety of our Service members, civilians, and their families around the world. During my tenure performing the duties of the USD(P&R), I issued a series of Force Health Protection Guidance memos to meet the evolving situation. This guidance aligned with that from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of State, and also affords location and combatant commands, in consultation with host nations, the variability needed to respond to this outbreak. If confirmed, I will ensure close oversight of the COVID-19 situation to protect the safety and readiness of our force and their families.

### **Drug Demand Reduction**

**273. What role does the OUSD(P&R) play in ensuring that each of the Military Services—including their respective Reserve Components—maintains an effective military personnel drug abuse testing program?**

P&R provides standard guidelines to allow for alignment and implementation of forensic and scientific standards necessary to ensure a legally-defensibly and highly-reliable

readiness tool for commanders, and for efficiencies in budget execution through joint procurement efforts.

**274. In your view, should DOD be doing more to identify and address service members' use of unregulated dietary supplements and their potential effects on force health and readiness?**

P&R and the Services are working to identify areas of improvement in their policies to better address the ever-changing landscape of supplements.

**275. In your view, should the Military Exchanges be permitted to stock and sell unregulated dietary supplements?**

Operation Supplement Safety (OPSS) is the Department of Defense's dietary supplement resource for the military community, leaders, healthcare providers, and DoD civilians. This resource guides Service Members through safety options around supplements. P&R and the Services are working to identify areas of improvement in their policies to better address the ever-changing landscape of supplements.

**276. Should the DOD Drug Demand Reduction program incorporate a prohibition on service member use of products containing hemp and/or CBD oil, in your view?**

While performing the duties of the USD(P&R), I signed a Department-wide policy memorandum prohibiting the use of hemp products. This policy memorandum mirrors similar policies within each of the Services and creates overarching guidance for the Department to ensure the integrity of our drug demand reduction program.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.**

**277. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this Committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress?**

Yes.

**278. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.

**279. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.

**280. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.

**281. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.

**282. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.

**283. Do you agree, 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?**

Yes.