

**OPEN HEARING: NOMINATIONS OF  
ROBIN ASHTON  
TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY;  
AND  
CHRISTINE ABIZAID  
TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE  
NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER**

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
**SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE**  
OF THE  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

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JUNE 9, 2021

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**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021**

U.S. SENATE,  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in Room SH-216 in the Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Mark R. Warner (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Warner, Rubio, Wyden, Heinrich, King, Bennet, Casey, Gillibrand (via WebEx), Burr, Blunt, Cotton, Cornyn, and Sasse.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARK R. WARNER,  
A U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Chairman WARNER. I'd like to call this hearing to order and welcome our witnesses and our extraordinarily distinguished introducer.

My apologies to our witnesses. This is a slightly unusual time for the Committee to meet. And so there will be a number of Members joining us midstream.

I welcome to our nominees Christine Abizaid and Robin Ashton. I believe Robin's husband is here, Dr. Yves Rosenberg. And Ms. Abizaid's wife is also here, Jill Murphy. So glad that your family members are here.

Congratulations on your respective nominations to serve as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, or NCTC, and as Inspector General of the CIA.

Welcome, not only to the members of your family that are here, but those members who are here remotely.

Let me also say on behalf of all of the Committee Members, we really want to welcome back our good friend, former Committee Member, former Director of National Intelligence, Dan Coats, who will be introducing Ms. Ashton.

So, Dan, it is absolutely great to see you. And you can see the news that you were coming in here to introduce a witness really got all the Members back.

[Laughter.]

So these are both key positions in the Nation's Intelligence Community at a time of significant challenges and also opportunities for our Nation. Both of you have distinguished records of national service.

Ms. Ashton, the job of Inspector General is critical to the effective operation of any agency. And should you be confirmed, I think as history has shown, you're going to have one of the most important roles at the CIA, because independent and impartial Inspectors General help to ensure there is robust oversight of an agency that by necessity undertakes its most effective and important work in secrecy.

By statute, the CIA Inspector General is expressly mandated to report not only to the Director, but also to this Committee, which made it specifically accountable to Congress. This is necessary that we are able to conduct robust oversight of the CIA.

This Committee relies upon the Inspectors General of the intelligence agencies to ensure that the IC organizations are both using taxpayer dollars wisely, conducting their activities within the rule and spirit of the law, and supporting and protecting whistleblowers who report waste, fraud, and abuse.

I enjoyed our recent meeting. I believe you would bring significant experience to the role of CIA Inspector General, given your more than 30 years' experience at the Department of Justice, including head of the Department's Office of Professional Responsibility, two decades as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District, and given your recent role as a Principal Deputy IG of the Intelligence Community.

I normally ask nominees for this important post—

[Audio interruption from unknown source: Yes, okay, so now you see now I have—]

Vice Chairman RUBIO. At least it wasn't in Russian.

Chairman WARNER. At least it wasn't in Russian this time.

[Laughter.]

I was going to say that we normally ask IGs, will they speak truth to power? But truthfully, you have shown that record and your willingness to do so and that you will not give in to pressure. That is critically important, and we will need you to maintain that I think critically important record if you are confirmed, and I hope you will be, when you take on the role of IG for the CIA.

One more thing I forgot to mention: you would be the first Senate-confirmed IG at the CIA in seven years. This has been way too long for this important post. And I'd like to hear your ideas about what you hope you can accomplish in this key role in assuming and running this important office. Ms. Ashton, thank you again for being here and agreeing to take on this serious responsibility.

Ms. Abizaid, congratulations on your nomination. You also bring significant experience to your position: as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia; on the National Security Council; in the private sector; and for over

a decade as a senior counterterrorism intelligence officer at the DIA. You've obviously had a number of other roles.

NCTC, as you know, was created in the wake of September 11, 2001, to connect the dots and ensure that a terrorist attack like 9/11 never occurs again on our soil. Twenty years on, although we are increasingly focused on great power competition, our terrorist adversaries continue to operate globally and aspire to attack U.S. interests.

Those of us on this Committee know that plots continue to evolve every day. American interests, allies, and our military men and women deployed remain terrorist targets. And unfortunately, because of those actions, some of them don't make it back to their families.

ISIS is still a threat around the world, not just in Syria. Moreover, the dangerous ideologies of violent extremism, whether jihadist or white supremacists, continue to draw followers around the globe and to inspire attacks against innocent civilians.

As well, we know Al Qaida also remains a threat. I'm concerned that as U.S. forces draw down in Afghanistan and have already withdrawn from Somalia, it will become more difficult to gain actionable intelligence on terrorists who still operate in these locations. So I'd welcome your thoughts on how the CT mission will be undertaken, especially after the Afghan withdrawal is complete. I look forward to understanding how you would define success should you be confirmed and what role with this changing threat environment as well as the, I think, appropriate focus on our traditional great power adversaries, how NCTC will evolve in this world.

Now, after the Vice Chairman and I give our opening statements, Director Coats will say a few words and then our witnesses will be given their statements. After this, Members' questions will be five minutes in order of seniority.

Again, thank you both for agreeing to step forward. I look forward to your testimony. And I now recognize the distinguished Vice Chairman.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO,  
A U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA**

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank both of our nominees for being here today, for their willingness to serve in these critical capacities. I also want to join the Chairman in thanking Ms. Ashton's husband, Ms. Abizaid's wife, for your willingness to also be supportive of this. We all know these jobs involve the strong support of family in that regard. And so we're grateful to all of you for your willingness to step forward and your enthusiasm for the roles that you're about to fulfill, if confirmed.

Let me just say, on Director Coats, I told him this earlier when I saw him. I said he looked substantially more relaxed and much better than he did the last time we had him sitting at that table a couple years ago. So life is good. And we're always happy to see you around again. We have tremendous respect for you and everyone on the Committee that served with you does.

The National Counterterrorism Center was established obviously after 9/11 to ensure better communication and coordination among

the agencies by analyzing and integrating all the intelligence possessed or acquired by our government pertaining to terrorism and to counterterrorism. A key in that language—and that threat remains, even now—as Ms. Abizaïd and I had a brief conversation about this. Even now, as we focus on the growing great power competition, we cannot forget that the threat from terrorism remains and exists.

My own home state of Florida has been impacted by it both in Pensacola and almost five years ago today in Orlando, Florida. So we know that this continues to be an ongoing threat. It's an important enterprise.

But it's interesting that—and as we read through the language that created it—it's very clear that it pertains to terrorism and counterterrorism, accepting intelligence pertaining exclusively to domestic terrorists and domestic counterterrorism. And that's an important topic for two reasons, number one, because we do have a domestic terror problem of individuals who've been radicalized and take action, and that needs to be confronted. I don't know of anyone who would dispute that.

The question is, what role do our foreign-g geared intelligence agencies play in that regard? Because as we've discussed, you know, some of the more troubling moments in the history of our intelligence agencies has been when they've been turned against a solely domestic threat.

So it's a balancing act we're going to have to work through. And I know there'll be some questions about that. Remaining focused on that mission is particularly important, because I said that the counterterrorism threat is there and that work continues, needs to continue to happen.

Ms. Ashton, I look forward to hearing about how you'll lead the IG's office and your vision for a productive and beneficial working relationship with this Committee. Our oversight role and your role that you've been nominated to fill, they share a lot of the same goals. And so as I expressed to you when we met, I think one of the most important things this Committee always aspires to is, particularly when a complaint rises to a level of significance that we should learn about, it's important for this Committee to know about that.

And I think you'll find that in that regard this is a Committee that takes its oversight role very seriously in matters that could undermine the important work that occurs at the Agency.

So, again, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here. We look forward to hearing your testimony and your answers to our questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Rubio.

I now recognize the distinguished former Member of this Committee and former Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats for his statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DAN COATS, A FORMER U.S. SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA, AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF  
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Senator COATS. Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you very much for the introduction of me. It is an honor for me to be here



today to introduce Robin Ashton as President Biden's nominee for the position of Inspector General at the Central Intelligence Agency.

Given my previous membership on this Committee, in term as Director of National Intelligence, I'm keenly aware of the key role played by Inspectors General.

I want to say to my colleagues, though, it's nice to be back. As a private citizen, I want you to know that any interactions or conversations that we have had while I was a Member of the Committee will be classified for as long as I live. I just want to assure people here. But it's fun to be back here with you. And I do think that it was much easier being up there than a witness down here. Robin is someone that I think is an extraordinary individual with an extraordinary background.

And if you have had the opportunity to look through her professional employment as a public servant, it is remarkable. Her journey is amazing. And if you haven't had the chance to read it—I'm sure your staff has—but I urge you to. If you have any questions about her qualities and capabilities, look through what she has accomplished in her life, which is extraordinary.

I would like to spend just a moment or two discussing my personal experience working with Robin during her time as Deputy IC IG. Robin played a very important role in proving the functioning of the IC IG office in her time there. Furthermore, she demonstrated exactly the characteristics desired in an Inspector General.

Her first and foremost priority was always to promote the efficient operation of the ODNI and the broader Intelligence Community. She worked collaboratively with me and my senior leaders and the team to identify and correct issues related to the ODNI. Of course, there's often some tension between agencies and their Inspector Generals. And Robin was never afraid to challenge me and my team when she felt there were areas where we should be doing more to ensure the proper functioning of the ODNI and the IC.

I always felt that she approached every issue in an honest and fair way, with the best interests of the ODNI Intelligence Community at heart. And given my experience with working with her and her exceptional capabilities, I have no doubt that should she be confirmed her integrity, professionalism, and independence to perform her duties of the CIA Inspector General will be done with distinction.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to introduce this exceptional nominee for CIA Inspector General.

Chairman WARNER. Well, thank you, Director Coats. Senator Rubio and I were talking that the last time I believe you testified before this Committee, you did it with such straightforwardness and forthrightness that you very soon lost your job. So I hope your testimony today does not result in the same actions now that you're back as a private citizen.

But, Dan, it is always great to see you. You know, as an alumnus of this Committee that you are somebody who we all have enormous respect for, both from your time on the Committee, but par-

ticularly for your steadfast role as DNI. We thank you for your service. And it's great, great to see you.

Thank you, Sir.

Senator COATS. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. I now ask unanimous consent that the letters of support for the nominees received by the Committee be entered into the record.

[No response.]

Without objection.

[Letters of support for the Witnesses follow:]

June 3, 2021

The Honorable Mark Warner  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
211 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Vice Chairman  
U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
211 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: Nomination of Christine Abizaid to Serve as NCTC Director

Dear Chairman Warner and Vice Chairman Rubio:

We write to offer our strong and unqualified support for the nomination of Christine (Christy) Abizaid to serve as the next director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Each of us has served as NCTC Director, and we believe that Christy has the national security experience, deep subject-matter expertise, exceptional leadership skills, and the personal qualities needed to succeed as NCTC Director at this unique moment in our post-9/11 history. She is a truly outstanding choice for this role.

Christy would bring to NCTC 15+ years of experience from a career in national security in which she worked her way from entry-level analytical roles to senior policymaking positions advising the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Advisor, the Homeland Security Advisor, and, indeed, the President of the United States. Her early experience as a terrorism analyst was focused on some of the most pressing and difficult counterterrorism problems facing the United States. Christy served both in a deployed operational environment and at Defense Intelligence Agency headquarters, earning widespread recognition and respect across the intelligence community as one of the most expert and talented analysts of the full range of terrorism problems emanating from the Middle East to include the threat posed by Shia terrorist groups and state sponsors such as Syria and Iran.

Christy's extended tenure of service as a member of the National Security Council (NSC) staff added immeasurably to her skill set as it provided her direct experience with the interplay between the policy community and the intelligence community where she had first honed her skills. Her subsequent appointment to serve as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense responsible for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia put her squarely in the middle of some of the most difficult national security decisions facing any administration as the United States sought to balance an array of competing and often conflicting interests. It is hard to imagine a more complex operating environment than that concerning policy in Afghanistan, with sound intelligence judgments being a particularly critical component of that process.

Having begun her career as an intelligence officer and having served in senior policy roles, Christy is uniquely situated and qualified to succeed as NCTC Director. She understands the absolute imperative to present intelligence analysis and conclusions to the policy audience in a fair, honest, and unbiased fashion. She will not shy away from the responsibility to speak truth to power, whether that power resides in the White House or in the U.S. Congress. Christy understands the gravity and the seriousness of the terrorism threats facing the United States and the unique role that the NCTC Director must play in assessing those threats.

Christy's experience at the Department of Defense also provided her with unique insight into the critical role that effective congressional oversight must play in national security, and we have every confidence that she will be a true partner to the SSCI and HPSCI as those committees carry out their oversight responsibilities. Lastly, Christy's experience since departing government service has given her firsthand experience working within the technology sector in ways that will prove useful should she be confirmed to lead NCTC. Like other government agencies, NCTC relies on access to cutting-edge technology, and efforts to enhance NCTC's capacity to capitalize on its unique access to data would likely be a centerpiece of her agenda at NCTC should she be confirmed.

If Christy Abizaid's nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, we believe that she will prove to be an extraordinarily successful NCTC Director. Beyond her professional accomplishments, Christy has shown herself across the span of her career to be a leader of exceptional character. Her integrity and her dedication to the mission of protecting and defending the United States are evident from her distinguished career of service to our country. If confirmed, we believe that her absolute fidelity to her oath of office, as well as her commitment to the wellbeing

of the women and men entrusted to her care as leader of NCTC's workforce, would be apparent to all.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with Committee members as part of the confirmation process for this critically important role.

Respectfully,

Michael Leiter  
Director, NCTC  
2007 - 2011

Joseph Maguire  
Director, NCTC  
2018 - 2019

John Brennan  
Director, NCTC  
2004 - 2005

Nicholas Rasmussen  
Director, NCTC  
2014 - 2017

Senator Dan Coats

May 24, 2021

Chairman Mark Warner  
Vice Chair Marco Rubio  
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Chairman Warner and Vice Chair Rubio:

I write to offer my strong support for the nomination of Robin Ashton as Inspector General of the CIA. During my time as Director of National Intelligence, I worked closely with Robin when she served as Principal Deputy Inspector General for the Office of the Intelligence Community Inspector General (ICIG). I found Robin to be exceptionally intelligent and hard working, and she played an important role in improving the functioning of the ICIG office in her time there.

Furthermore, she demonstrated exactly the characteristics desired in an Inspector General. Her first and foremost priority was to promote the efficient operation of the ODNI and the broader intelligence community. She worked collaboratively with me and my senior leadership team to identify and correct problems in areas of interest, whether suggested by me and my team or independently identified by the ICIG team. At the same time, she was never afraid to challenge me and investigate issues when she felt there were areas where I and my team should be doing more to ensure the proper functioning of the ODNI and the IC. There is often some inherent tension between agencies and their Inspectors General, but even when I disagreed with Robin and the ICIG team on certain matters I always felt she approached every issue in an honest and fair way, with the best interests of the ODNI and Intelligence Community at heart.

I believe Robin has the integrity, professionalism and independence to perform the duties of the CIA Inspector General with distinction, and I wholeheartedly support her nomination.

Sincerely,



Dan Coats

With that, we'll proceed to administering the oath. Will the witnesses please stand and raise your right hand?

Do you solemnly swear to give this Committee the truth, the full truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. I do.

Chairman WARNER. Please be seated.

Before we move to your opening statements, I'll ask you to answer five standard questions the Committee poses to each nominee who appears before us. They require a simple yes or no for the record.

First, do you agree to appear before the Committee here or in other venues when invited?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. I do.

Chairman WARNER. If confirmed, do you agree to send officials from your office to appear before the Committee and designated staff when invited?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. Yes.

Chairman WARNER. Do you agree to provide documents or any other materials requested by the Committee in order for it to carry out its oversight and legislative responsibilities?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. Yes.

Chairman WARNER. Will you ensure that your office and your staff provide such materials to the Committee when requested?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. Yes.

Chairman WARNER. Do you agree to inform and fully brief to the fullest extent possible all Members of this Committee of intelligence activities and covert actions, rather than only the Chairman and Vice Chairman?

Ms. ABIZAID. Yes.

Ms. ASHTON. Yes.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much. We'll now proceed to your opening statements, after which I'll recognize Members by seniority for up to five minutes each.

Ms. Ashton, are you going first?

Ms. ASHTON. Yes, Sir.

**STATEMENT OF ROBIN ASHTON, NOMINEE TO BE INSPECTOR  
GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

Ms. ASHTON. Good afternoon. Chairman Warner, Vice Chairman Rubio, and Members of the Intelligence Committee, it is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency. I am grateful to President Biden for placing his trust and confidence in me to lead this important office.

If confirmed, I would be honored to work with all of you and with the courageous, hard-working, and remarkable people of the CIA, including Director Burns and Deputy Director Cohen. I will strive each day to justify the trust placed in me and to uphold the highest standards of the office.

I am also deeply grateful to Dan Coats for his generous introduction. His long history of dedicated public service is not only impressive, but truly inspiring.

I would like to recognize my family and friends who are here today or watching remotely, especially my husband of 26 years, Dr. Yves Rosenberg, my children, Jack and Juliette Rosenberg, and my sister, Ann Riopelle. The love and support of my family and friends has been invaluable to me over the years, as they have taught me through their examples how to weather the bad times and cherish the good.

As noted in my pre-hearing materials, I have spent nearly 35 years in public service, holding numerous positions across both Republican and Democratic administrations, including as a Federal prosecutor working in the U.S. Attorney's office in the District of Columbia, as the Director of the Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility, and as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community.

Over the course of my career, I have had the privilege of serving alongside hard-working Federal employees in numerous capacities, the administrative and personnel staffs, lawyers and paralegals, agents and law enforcement officers, investigators and analysts, as well as those who clean the offices and work in the cafeterias, security personnel, and countless others. They all come to work day after day knowing that they will probably never be publicly recognized for their tireless efforts. They work hard not for recognition, but because they derive satisfaction from working on a shared mission.

After 35 years, I am still inspired by these dedicated public servants whom I am so fortunate to call my friends, my colleagues, and my mentors. Their honorable service and countless acts of kindness toward me and others have taught me how to be a better public servant and a better person.

I know that the brave officers of the CIA have also demonstrated this extraordinary and selfless commitment to public service, and I would be honored to work with them.

However, when you review my resume and hear me speak about my decades-long career as a lawyer in the Federal Government, you cannot fully glean who I am as a person. Before I could embark on my rewarding legal career, I first had to work my way through both college and law school by holding numerous, often grueling jobs, as an assembly line worker with the Ford Motor Company in the Detroit area, as a waitress, and as a custodian working the night shift at the University of Michigan Hospital.

These tough jobs taught me a number of valuable lessons about hard work and respecting those who do these demanding jobs every day, perhaps the most significant being that someone punching the clock at the start of a long shift or wearing a waitress's or custodian's uniform deserves the same level of respect as everyone else, if not more. These experiences have impacted every part of my life, my way of thinking, and the way I view myself and my responsibility toward others.

Living paycheck to paycheck also taught me that the tax dollars of hard-working Americans should not be squandered. I therefore believe that Inspectors General hold some of the most important



positions in the Federal Government. It is through their efforts that waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as mismanagement, abuses of authority, and unlawful practices can be and are detected and prevented and systemic solutions can be and are found.

If confirmed, I will treat my responsibility to identify and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse with the seriousness it deserves. I will highlight the CIA's incredible strengths, while also identifying areas that could benefit from modification or improvement.

I sincerely believe that the American people desire and deserve a government that is effective and accountable. It is important to acknowledge the critical role whistleblowers play in ensuring a responsible and honest government. They are often the first people to witness or learn about wasteful practices or possible wrongdoing. Because members of the Intelligence Community must work in a classified environment in which information about intelligence programs and activities is not available for public review, their duty and ability to lawfully disclose information regarding potential wrongdoing is critical to the oversight process.

I know this Committee supports whistleblowers. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the CIA continues to have an effective whistleblower program. Those who demonstrate the personal ethics and moral courage to bring concerns forward must not fear or suffer from reprisal for speaking up.

I deeply respect this Committee's important oversight role. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with many of you before this hearing so that I could answer your questions, listen to your concerns, and learn from your insights. If confirmed, I pledge to work with this and other intelligence oversight committees in an open and productive way as we engage in our shared effort to ensure continued efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in the programs and activities of the CIA.

I am truly honored to be here today. Thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ashton follows:]

**Statement of Robin C. Ashton  
Nominee for Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency  
Before the United States Senate  
Select Committee on Intelligence**

**June 9, 2021**

Chairman Warner, Vice Chairman Rubio, and Members of the Intelligence Committee, it is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency. I am grateful to President Biden for placing his trust and confidence in me to lead this important office.

If confirmed, I would be honored to work with you, and with the courageous, hardworking, and remarkable people of the CIA, including Director Burns and Deputy Director Cohen. I will strive each day to justify the trust placed in me, and to uphold the highest standards of the office. I am also deeply grateful to Dan Coats for his generous introduction. His long history of dedicated public service is not only impressive, but truly inspiring.

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Over the course of my career I have had the privilege of serving alongside hardworking federal employees in numerous capacities – the administrative and personnel staffs, lawyers and paralegals, agents, law enforcement officers, investigators and analysts, those who clean the offices and work in the cafeterias, security personnel, and countless others. They all come to work, day after day, knowing that they will probably never be publicly recognized for their tireless efforts; they work hard not for recognition, but because they derive satisfaction from

working on a shared mission. After 35 years, I am still inspired by these dedicated public servants whom I am so fortunate to call my friends, colleagues, and mentors. Their honorable service, and countless acts of kindness toward me and others, have taught me how to be a better public servant and a better person. I know that the brave officers of the CIA have also demonstrated this extraordinary and selfless commitment to public service, and I would be honored to work with them.

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Intelligence Community must work in a classified environment in which information about intelligence programs and activities is not available for public review, their duty – and ability – to lawfully disclose information regarding potential wrongdoing is critical to the oversight process.

I know this Committee supports whistleblowers. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the CIA continues to have an effective whistleblower program. Those who demonstrate the personal ethics and moral courage to bring concerns forward must not fear or suffer from reprisal for speaking up.

I deeply respect this Committee's important oversight role. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with many of you before this hearing, so that I could answer your questions, listen to your concerns, and learn from your insights. If confirmed, I pledge to work with this and other intelligence oversight committees in an open and productive way as we engage in our shared effort to ensure continued efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in the programs and activities of the CIA.

I am genuinely honored to be here today. Thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Ms. Ashton.

Ms. Abizaid, before I call on you, I should note that, when we agreed to commit for the record letter of recommendation, Ms. Abizaid has received endorsements from four prior NCTC directors, which I'd urge Committee Members to review.

Ma'am?

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE ABIZAID, NOMINEE TO BE  
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER**

Ms. ABIZAID. Chairman Warner, Vice Chairman Rubio, Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today to be considered for the role of Director of the National Counterterrorism Center. I am both honored and humbled by this opportunity to return to government service, the Intelligence Community, and the counterterrorism field.

I want to thank President Biden and Director Haines for their confidence in my ability to lead the center and to help steer the United States' counterterrorism enterprise at this critical stage.

I want to especially thank my wife for her love and support. Without her encouragement, I would not be here today. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, the burden of keeping our lives running smoothly will fall more squarely on her shoulders even as she pursues her own demanding career.

To our son, what your future holds is in its own way motivation to serve again. We will raise you to value sacrifice for your countrymen just as we both were raised.

Along those lines, I would like to recognize my family for being such a compelling example of public service. My father served for more than 30 years as an officer in the United States Army and later as a diplomat. Growing up, I was always proud of him and the uniform that he wore.

But it was not until I began my own career at the Defense Intelligence Agency that I got to know my father by his professional reputation, as the highly decorated, deeply respected, brilliant, and battle-tested soldier that he is.

My mother also served as an Army and State Department spouse. Her ability to navigate the everyday chaos of Army life with calm, optimism, and grit was an inspiration to me. She is the foundation of our close-knit family.

The example she and my father set for me and my siblings encouraged our own forms of service. My brother enlisted in the Army after high school, and 9/11 was supposed to be his first day of boot camp. And I stand in awe of my sister's resilience as an Army wife in the post-9/11 era. She and her husband, an Army officer and Ranger, have been separated by near constant deployment cycles since 2001.

While he commands on the front lines, she leads on the home front, guiding and inspiring Ranger families in addition to her own.

For my own part, my years of government service were squarely rooted in the attacks on 9/11. And while it has been several years since I was last part of the CT community, even from the outside, it is clear that the terrorist threat to Americans and U.S. interests persists. This is not to say it is unchanged. It has evolved significantly in the last two decades. The threat from groups like Al

Qaida and the Islamic state is in some ways diminished, but it is also more diffuse, active across an ever broadening geographic terrain. These groups appear less organized against the homeland, but also more technologically sophisticated, leveraging social media platforms to widen their appeal.

Meanwhile, the threat from other terrorist elements remains urgent, whether posed by domestic violent extremists, Iranian-sponsored proxies, racially motivated terrorists, or others, we must not lose sight of the diversity of the threats that confront the United States.

Now, while terrorism does remain a challenge, I believe our country's ability to address it is unmatched. Reforms after 9/11, including those led by Members of this Committee, created a counterterrorism and homeland security enterprise that is agile, collaborative, and proactive in mitigating threats to the United States.

In particular, the creation of the National Counterterrorism Center in 2004 institutionalized the integration of CT-related intelligence and has since been a key enabler of the United States' ability to holistically address the evolving threats to our interests. American citizens, they have done their part, too. I believe today we are a country more resilient in the face of terrorism than at any time in our history.

This mature CT capability is even more important at a time of heightened strategic competition, especially related to China, rising cybersecurity threats, and a technological revolution that will present both challenges and opportunities. It is in this environment that the counterterrorism capability we have invested in so steadfastly over the years must be both effective and efficient in protecting our country.

And this is doubly true for an organization like NCTC, purpose-built to prevent, detect, and deter threats to the United States.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the great contribution of all of our national security professionals, but especially those at the National Counterterrorism Center. It would be a distinct honor to lead the men and women who make up the center who have so selflessly devoted their lives to protecting the Nation and who have asked for their family's support in doing so. If confirmed as their director, I commit to doing everything in my power to ensure these public servants have the tools and capabilities necessary to succeed.

I further commit to ensuring that NCTC fulfills its duty to protect the United States with the utmost integrity and a deep appreciation for the trust that has been placed in it by the American people.

Finally, I commit to working with this Committee, among others, to keep Congress fully and currently informed of the center's activities so that you can discharge your critical oversight responsibilities on behalf of the Nation.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Abizaid follows:]

**Statement of Christine Abizaid**  
**Nominee for Director of the National Counterterrorism Center**  
**Senate Select Committee on Intelligence**  
**June 9, 2021**

Chairman Warner, Vice Chairman Rubio, Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today to be considered for the role of Director of the National Counterterrorism Center. I am both honored and humbled by this opportunity to return to Government service, the Intelligence Community, and the field of counterterrorism. I want to thank President Biden and Director Haines for their confidence in my ability to lead the Center and to help steer the United States' counterterrorism enterprise at this critical stage.

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For my own part, my years of government service were squarely rooted in the attacks on 9/11. While it has been several years since I was last part of the CT community, even from the outside, it is clear that the terrorist threat to Americans and U.S. interests persists. This is not to say it is unchanged – it has evolved significantly in the last two decades. The threat from groups like al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State is in some ways diminished; but it is also more diffuse, active across an ever-broadening geographic terrain. These groups appear less organized against the Homeland; but also more technologically sophisticated, leveraging social media platforms to widen their appeal. Meanwhile, the threat from other terrorist elements remains urgent. Whether posed by domestic violent extremists, Iranian-sponsored proxies, racially-motivated terrorists, or others, we must not lose sight of the diversity of the threats that confront the United States.

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Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.



Chairman WARNER. Thank you both.

For planning purposes, any Members of the Committee who wish to submit questions for the record after today's hearing, please do so by 5 p.m. this Friday, June 11th. And then we'll be recognizing Members for five minutes in order of seniority.

Ms. Ashton, first of all, again, I enjoyed our time visiting. And appreciated your presentation both in terms of your background and obviously your caring for your colleagues. And I think that's part of the role of the IG is to not only ferret out waste and abuse, but be that independent voice that can listen to your colleagues should they see inappropriate behavior.

I was going to ask you a question about the role of whistleblowers, but the truth is you've already shown your protection and your willingness to stand up for whistleblowers. As a matter of fact, that also cost you your job as a Principal Deputy IG over the last few years. So I have great faith in your commitment to the whistleblower program.

So my question, instead, is we've not had a Senate-confirmed IG at the CIA for seven years. There are concerns particularly from the last administration about a White House that often ignored the recommendations of the intel community.

And with as much specificity as possible, recognizing you haven't got into this job yet, what steps can you take to both restore the morale and that sense of purpose of the workforce at the Agency and within specifically the Office of the IG?

Ms. ASHTON. Well, thank you, Senator Warner. It was a distinct pleasure for me to be able to meet with you the other day. And I enjoyed our discussion very much. And I appreciated your insights on a number of topics.

I was able when I was the Principal Deputy Inspector General for the Intelligence Community to meet many people in the CIA. And I felt very fortunate to be able to work with them on a lot of different projects. So I very much look forward, if I'm confirmed, to being able to meet the people in the Office of the Inspector General.

And I very much look forward to establishing a relationship with them that I think is so important, because I think that I have to lead by example, so that when they come to me with concerns inside of the Office of Inspector General, I listen to them and I allow dissent and I allow them to be heard.

So, first, I have to establish that kind of trustful relationship with my own people. I might be viewed as somewhat of an outsider because I spent most of my career in the Department of Justice, but I found that when I came to the Intelligence Community for the first time and started my role as the Principal Deputy Inspector General for the Intelligence Community, the people there were so welcoming. They allowed me to enter their world, which was quite new for me, and they helped me learn from them.

And I think that'll be very important when I go, if I'm confirmed to the Inspector General's office for CIA, that I let them know I want to learn from them. Many of these people that I will be working with, if I'm confirmed, have spent their whole careers in the CIA. And I will respect that. I will look forward to working with them and learning from them.

And I also just think that it's so crucial when you're talking about morale to let people know how much I personally respect what they've done with their lives, what they're doing, what their mission is, and that I will always defend them when they are doing the right thing and working so hard and tirelessly. I will protect them and defend them in appropriate ways.

Another thing that I've done that really helped morale—actually, it wasn't me doing it—but the Inspector General and I invited people, for example, from this Committee to speak to our employees at the Inspector General's Office. And for example, Senator King spoke at one of our biggest conferences, hundreds of people from the Intelligence Community, and we had a senator from this Committee speaking to them, and it meant so much to people, because that message of what you do is important to us. We're joined as partners in the oversight process. That resonated and it meant a lot to the people.

And another thing is that Mr. Coats, as the Director of National Intelligence, came and spoke to our people, as well, and again emphasized how important the partnership is between leadership in the Agency itself and with these people in the Office of Inspector General.

So I think all of these things are important in establishing a good morale. But if I'm confirmed, if I'm so fortunate to be confirmed, I look forward to working with the amazingly gifted and talented people of the CIA.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, ma'am.

And, Ms. Abizaid, I will get you on the next round. Senator Rubio?

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Well, Ms. Abizaid, we had an opportunity to talk about this. It's a tricky issue, right, because of this domestic violent extremist issue. I don't think there's any dispute that these people out there—they're dressed up like GI Joe and they think they're going to go out and attack people in the political class or storm the Capitol or any other government building. I don't think anyone would dispute they should be arrested for that. They should be put in jail.

You know, my concern, obviously, is any time, if you look at the history of the Intelligence Community, some of its most troubling moments are when our intelligence capabilities were used to target Americans. And both Republican and Democratic presidents did that, unfortunately. And in fact, that some of that led to the inception and the creation of this very Committee.

So the situation I'm really concerned about—and seeing these lines blurred is a situation in which you have people or an individual that's based and is operating in the United States, no direction, no inspiration from a foreign terror group or a foreign power, and they seek to further their political or social goals through violence or force or things that are not, you know, protected speech and so forth.

In your mind, that clearly—what I've just described—they're operating in the United States, they're not taking direction or inspiration from a foreign power or foreign terror group, and obviously they're furthering their goals through violence. In your mind, is

that in or outside the purview of the job you've been nominated to serve?

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you for the question, Senator. And we did have a chance to discuss this. And I appreciated the time and hearing your views on that.

But this is squarely in the purview of the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. NCTC's role, in my view, would be one of support to those agencies as they take the lead in the homeland on domestic violent extremist threats.

Now, NCTC was granted some unique authorities to have access to both foreign and domestic intelligence around terrorist threats so that we are able to connect the dots. I mean, that was fundamentally the reason for NCTC's founding to be able to connect the dots, integrate intelligence from multiple sources, and ensure we don't miss that very important nexus to a foreign power or foreign terrorist organizations.

So, you know, NCTC's role here is an important role to play. When it is purely domestic terrorism, it should be playing it in support of those lead agencies in the Federal Government, the FBI and DHS. And I share your concerns about the rise in domestic violent extremism. I also share your concerns that we appropriately leverage IC resources in a way that protects privacies and civil liberties.

So that's an important balance to strike. And I look forward, if confirmed, to making sure that we're doing that.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Now, it gets a little bit more complicated now. And again, I'm not asking these as strict questions. It's to highlight sort of the balancing act here and how this can get problematic in a hurry, because, for example, as I said to you, we shouldn't lack imagination in thinking that a foreign adversary could see the existence of these groups and figure out a way to use a third party to funnel money to them, because it helps them to weaken us domestically. So in that sense, it's something we want to be aware of.

So we're coming up on the anniversary of the shooting at Pulse. This was an individual that had not traveled, was not in a terrorist training camp, but clearly was inspired, and said so, by ISIS and Al Qaida. So putting that example aside, which is I think pretty clear-cut, sometimes these individuals in their rants claim to be part of a global movement, anti-globalization movement. Or they're not a member of any group. They're not interacting with anybody directly, but they think they're part of a broader movement. That's a little bit cloudier.

I know it's more of a legal interpretation, but in your mind, does the fact that someone thinks they're part of some sort of a global movement, that they're not a member of—not a membership card or going to meetings of this nature—but just seem to think that they're part of a broader effort globally, does that rise to the level of turning it into a domestic violent extremist group that you would have input on?

Ms. ABIZAID. So, Senator, I think you're raising exactly some of the complexities that we're going to need to work through. But, I mean, ideological alignment with something that you believe is a global movement does not in and of itself make it a foreign terrorist threat.

Obviously, it would all be the particulars of the case. And being aligned to an ideological movement that is something that has protected speech, that's not something that would be in the purview of NCTC's concern.

I think the way that I have understood Director Wray to consider this is if you're engaged in violence against the United States and its citizens, then that is what makes you the target of interest to the FBI, to DHS, and for those of us that care about the security of Americans and inside the United States. And that would be—the focus is the violent behavior, the violent activity that that we seek to thwart.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Wyden?

Senator WYDEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Ashton, we very much appreciate your record of the courage that you've expressed in the past. And as you and I talked about, the CIA has an unfortunate history of striking back at its own Inspector General. Director Hayden did this in response to the Inspector General's investigation of torture.

Director Brennan did this after the Inspector General investigated the CIA's spying on this Committee.

Can you assure us this afternoon that this history will not influence what you choose to review or how you choose to review it?

Ms. ASHTON. Thank you, Senator Wyden, for that very good conversation that we had the other day. I learned a lot from you about that history, and it was very interesting to me. I hadn't known all of those details, to tell you the truth.

But I can assure this Committee that the way I have practiced law for the last 35 years and the way I've handled my career for the last 35 years, mostly as a prosecutor, trying some of the toughest cases that you can try, and when I was at the Office of Professional Responsibility where I was in a somewhat sensitive situation where I was the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, which was responsible for deciding whether assistant U.S. attorneys and the agents working with them had committed misconduct or engaged in any kind of illegal or unlawful practices, whether they should be disciplined, whether they should be fired.

All of those positions and others that I've had required great strength and independence and the ability and the willingness to look at facts and follow the facts, analyze those facts, and if they lead, wherever they lead, you go to that conclusion, that place, without any kind of partiality, bias, or thinking about what happened to prior Inspectors General, for example.

I will not do that. I will focus on the facts and I will analyze them and act appropriately on those facts. But I will not be intimidated by what has happened to my predecessors, because that would just take my eye off the important ball. And the important thing, the goal that we are trying to achieve here is to achieve effective oversight.

I will be a partner with this Committee in that effort. And I will not be distracted by what might have happened to my predecessors.

Senator WYDEN. I was impressed by your past record, and your exemplary statement today is consistent with it. And I look forward to supporting your nomination.

Ms. ASHTON. Thank you.

Senator WYDEN. I have a question for Ms. Abizaid.

Ms. Abizaid, less than three months ago, the National Counterterrorism Center released its own 12333 procedures related to when it can collect, retain, and search for information on Americans.

For example, the Agency can collect, quote, “publicly available information.” Do you believe that includes commercially available data? And if so, do you believe that the Center should be intentionally purchasing the personal data of Americans?

Ms. ABIZAIID. Thank you very much, Senator, for the question. I’m generally aware of the issue. I haven’t engaged in it deeply just because I haven’t been in the Intelligence Community here for the last recent years.

That’s my understanding on this particular issue. Director Haines has also recognized the complexity here and committed to working with this Committee to develop a framework that should guide Intelligence Community procedures, including those of NCTC, on this very important issue.

You know, if I am confirmed, I would commit to working closely with her and with Members of this Committee, with you in particular, to make sure that we’re striking the right balance related to that framework.

Senator WYDEN. All right. I’ll have some additional questions for the record for you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Burr?

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to both of our nominees today. I enjoyed the time that we’ve spent together.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say, these are two excellent nominees. And I would hope that the Committee would move expeditiously at confirming these two nominees. We desperately need them in the jobs. We need them there today.

I’ve got a question for each of you. Christine, I’ve got to say, I’m not sure whether you’re showing your strength in accepting this nomination or your intelligence, given that you’ve got a 15-month-old at home. I’ll let your wife determine which one you’re exercising there. But having raised them and now with three grandchildren, I’m like Dan Coats. I spend a little more time away from them than I need to.

Christine, here’s my question. What are your plans about right-sizing NCTC? And how do you make sure that you’ve got the talent that you need there to perform the mission?

Ms. ABIZAIID. Thank you, Senator. I think it’s a really important question. And, yes, I am deliberately trying to miss the terrible twos by accepting this opportunity.

You know, when I look at the role of the National Counterterrorism Center, it is absolutely essential that it’s got the right expertise. And the right expertise is not just those cadre that are hired directly into ODNI and into the center, but it’s the expertise

that is provided across the community, that we've got a robust counterterrorism community. It's one that at the center, when you mix CIA analysts with FBI analysts with DIA analysts with NCTC analysts, you get the best interagency perspective about what's happening in the world. You get the best ability to communicate across silos in the Federal Government. And I think it's what makes the National Counterterrorism Center excellent at what it does.

So I think that will be a really important piece if confirmed as its director, for me to look into, understand the manning, understand where there are holes, if there are any, and then work with my partners across the counterterrorism enterprise to make sure that we're doing what we can to staff it appropriately.

When I think about the kind of efficiencies that we in the counterterrorism enterprise are going to need to consider, especially as resources are limited and priorities are broad across the national security portfolio, I think the effective use of the Center, investing in it as the place where we narrowly focus on counterterrorism, is going to be to the good of the entire Intelligence Community.

Senator BURR. Great, thanks.

Robin, your role—it sort of requires you to straddle a really tricky line. You need to be independent, but to be successful, the IG needs to know what's going on in the agencies. How do you plan to balance your office's independent role with the need to engage the Agency community?

Ms. ASHTON. Well, thank you so much for that wonderful question. And I did appreciate speaking with you at length last week. It was a very good conversation, and I appreciated your time.

But the question's so important, because of course the need to balance the independence of the Office of Inspector General while also working collaboratively at most times with the Agency itself, it's an important balance to strike. And sometimes, like you just suggested, it can be difficult.

But when I was working at the Inspector General's Office for the Intelligence Community, I believe that the Inspector General and I were able to achieve that balance by doing a lot of outreach events and meetings and training sessions, getting to know as many people in the ODNI as we could, working quite collaboratively and effectively with leadership whenever we could.

Often leadership, such as Mr. Coats, would ask us for our insights about what should be looked at or how things might be looked at, perhaps for our opinions on policy changes or needs, and we appreciated all of those opportunities to give our insights based on what we were doing with our wonderful auditors and analysts and investigators and others, based on the information we were able to gather, how could we help them make the best decisions they could make?

And so ours was one of the voices that they listened to. And we seized on all of those opportunities to work with the ODNI itself whenever we could in a collaborative way.

I don't view the Inspector General as somebody who just comes in with bad news or a "gotcha" moment. I don't think that that's effective at all. We have to understand that the leadership also

wants the very best for its agency. And if we come at it with that view and try to help make it more effective, then I think we can work collaboratively, but always mindful that in the end the Inspector General and her office needs to be independent of the Agency, so that if we find things that are not working well or if we find even mismanagement or unlawful practices, we have to be independent of the leadership and the Agency and be able to speak out and do the right thing based on the facts that we compile in our inspections and audits, et cetera.

Chairman WARNER. Senator King?

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to welcome our old friend Dan Coats, and what a pleasure it is to see you. And you were a distinguished Senator, but I think you were an even more distinguished Director of National Intelligence, because you showed what honesty and courage in public service looks like.

And I've quoted you probably a hundred times on the mission of the intelligence agency. To me, you gave the most succinct definition, which is to seek the truth and tell the truth. And that's exactly what you did. So I want to thank you, Senator Coats, Director Coats, for your service.

Ms. Ashton, normally I spend time with IG nominees talking about independence just as we have done today. I don't think that's really necessary with you, because you've proved it. You showed that you have both the independence and the courage to do the right thing, to meet the obligations of the job.

I just would note that it occurs to me that the IG in a clandestine agency is incredibly important. IGs, I think, are some of the most important jobs in our government, but in a secret agency, it's even more important, because nobody else is watching. And they don't have the level of public scrutiny that might occur for the Department of the Interior, the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture.

So this job is especially weighty in its responsibility. Your job is to be a flea on the dog of the CIA and that means bite them every now and then, and hold them to the highest level of ethical and legal standards.

Ms. Abizaid, in terms of terrorism, my greatest nightmare is not terrorists who get through on an airplane or something like that. It's a terrorist organization that gets hold of a nuclear weapon, whether by development in this technologically advanced age or by purchase from a rogue state.

Talk to me about how we can deter. We have nuclear deterrence for nation-states. Deterrence doesn't work for somebody who would just as soon give up their life. So how do we protect ourselves from that nightmare scenario?

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator.

I share the concern. I think all of us, especially in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, were terribly concerned about the possibility of terrorists having access to weapons of mass destruction.

Senator KING. Those people killed 3,000 people. They would have killed 3 million if they could have.

Ms. ABIZAID. Absolutely. And it's absolutely essential that this is an area where the experts in nuclear security, the experts in non-

proliferation and counter-proliferation, and the experts in counter-terrorism need to work across their different areas of expertise and make sure that we're sharing information, assessing threats, and doing everything we can with the highest degree of priority to deter terrorist access to these kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

Senator KING. I would submit that one of our first lines of defense is intelligence.

Ms. ABIZAIID. Absolutely.

Senator KING. Knowing where this material is, being able to detect how it's being transported, and where it might end up. So I urge you to pay attention to the nonproliferation regime, because this is such a dangerous threat to our country.

Afghanistan-Pakistan—we're in the process of withdrawing. It's been an important counterterrorism base for us over the years. Can we maintain the counterterrorism function in that region without a military presence in Afghanistan? And if so, how?

Ms. ABIZAIID. So this is something that, if I'm confirmed, is going to be one of my early questions and early priorities going into the job. I think that that is absolutely the most important thing that the Intelligence Community develop a strategy for and an approach to, given the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the region.

There will be a diminishment in intelligence collection in the region, no doubt, given the lower footprint from the United States, but determining what kind of over-the-horizon capabilities there are, what kind of access to source networks, et cetera, that's got to be a priority, given the myriad of threats that already exist in the region and our number-one focus being ensuring that that region doesn't become a platform for transnational threats again.

Senator KING. Is that a danger? That we went in, in the first place to eliminate it as a safe haven for terrorists? Now we're going to be gone. How do we keep from being in 2001 all over again?

Ms. ABIZAIID. Well, Senator, I think anywhere that we see a significant terrorist presence, there is a danger of that becoming some kind of platform to threaten the homeland from. And I think that that's always the number-one priority of CT analysts, of the counterterrorism community, is to monitor and assess at what point, you know, we see external plotting from various regions.

I think that that is true for the AFPAK region just as it is true for Iraq-Syria, for North Africa, and various other areas, where both an ISIS and Al Qaida presence in particular remain. And so how we deter it is the way that we've deterred it for years, which is relentless pressure against threats to our interests.

Senator KING. And that relentless pressure has to continue. Just because we've pivoted toward near-peer competition does not mean terrorism is entirely in the rearview mirror, is that correct?

Ms. ABIZAIID. I couldn't agree more, Sir.

Senator KING. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Blunt?

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Chairman.

Ms. Abizaid, obviously one of the purposes of NCTC was to integrate all the terrorist data and analyze it and be sure it doesn't get into that phrase we used so often after 9/11, which was stove piped.



But there's so much data out there now. And you've got great experience in this technical field.

What do we need to be doing to support your efforts in this job, assuming you're confirmed—and I hope you will be—to help provide the resources you need for that. That rapid analyzing, the machine learning, the AI effort to get this down to where a person needs to look at it and to know what they need to look at on any given day?

Ms. ABIZOID. Senator, thanks for the question. We were able to discuss this briefly when we met, and I appreciate your time and the time spent on this topic in particular.

I mentioned in my opening remarks that the technological revolution that we're in presents both challenges and opportunities for us in the counterterrorism world. If confirmed, I'd seek to exploit those opportunities from big data management, artificial intelligence, machine learning. Looking at how those technologies apply to the vast amounts of data that we need to process effectively and efficiently at the National Counterterrorism Center. How can those be best applied to our holdings and create a speed to act against a threat that we all are so focused on every day?

So I don't know exactly how. I haven't gotten into the Center to actually dig into the technologies that we're leveraging today and the technological roadmap that we need to apply. But I think modernization of the IT infrastructure, thinking through fundamentals of the NCTC data lake and how we exploit that data most effectively, while also I think importantly building in some of the protections, the privacy and civil liberty protections, Constitutional protections that can be technologically achieved on the front end of design. All of that I think will be really important when we're thinking about how to modernize the system.

Senator BLUNT. I think this is one of those areas where if our adversaries get a significant breakthrough at any given moment, we could get way behind in a hurry. And we don't want to get way behind in a hurry.

I'd also say that when we were in the process of putting this agency together after 9/11, I think we thought that NCTC would be a pretty lean staff organization. It's about a thousand people now. I'd like to hear your thoughts about what kind of zero-based approach you might be willing to take to go back and look at those thousand jobs and see if actually it's gotten so big you could get information isolated in the Agency that's supposed to be sharing all the information with other agencies.

Ms. ABIZOID. I appreciate the concern, Senator. And I think it's an important thing for any director to consider along the way. Manning challenges but while ensuring that you've got the necessary expertise across the Center is going to be an essential balance to strike.

And I do think, as I mentioned, that technology can play a role in addressing some of the number of staff that we might need, though I don't want to get ahead of myself since I haven't had a chance to really review the roles, the responsibilities, across the Agency. But I would commit to you, Sir, that if confirmed, this would be something that I would certainly prioritize and look at.

Senator BLUNT. And share with us, I would hope.

Ms. ABIZAIID. Absolutely.

Senator BLUNT. Ms. Ashton, I will say, when our good friend, Senator and then Director Coats, said you were never afraid to challenge the team, that was obviously an important thing for an IG anywhere, and probably particularly in the job we're talking about.

But you know, there's a specific waiver, as I would read it, for the CIA IG if the CIA comes to you and says we really think it's better if you don't look too closely at this, or later might say you've looked at it, now we think it's better if you don't share it, can you imagine a circumstance where you might ever use that 50 USC 403 statute that is, I think, largely unique to the CIA?

Ms. ASHTON. Thank you. Thank you, Senator, for that question. Yes, I am familiar with the statute, 50 USC 403, and it does allow the director to step in and indicate that because of a vital national security concern, he can step in and say, "I do not want you to continue with an investigation or an audit or a matter. I don't want you to conclude it. I don't want you to issue a report," and things of that nature. It's pretty specific.

If the Director does that, my understanding is that he would contact this Committee and file either a report or a statement or file a letter and that will be provided to me, as well. I would have an opportunity to comment on that. And I would also do that to the Committee.

So I do understand that that could happen. And I can imagine a circumstance where the Director says, based on information he has that I might not have, that there's a national security issue at stake and that I might have to hold off or stop altogether an activity. I think that would be very rare. The statute seems to indicate that it's considered a very rare occurrence. But, yes, I can imagine that it would happen.

Senator BLUNT. But, in fact, if that happened, you'd insist on notification as the statute anticipates and the ability to even comment on that notification to this Committee?

Ms. ASHTON. Exactly.

Senator BLUNT. All right. Thank you, Chairman.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Senator Heinrich, are you ready?

Senator GILLIBRAND. Senator Gillibrand is on WebEx.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Senator Heinrich, go ahead.

Senator HEINRICH. Is Senator Gillibrand in front of me?

Vice Chairman RUBIO. It's by seniority.

Senator GILLIBRAND. I'm available, but, Martin, I think you're ahead of me if you're there.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. I have been going by seniority at the gavel; so, Senator Heinrich?

Senator HEINRICH. Ms. Ashton, as you know perhaps better than most, the IG community came under quite a bit of pressure during the last Administration. And you and the Intelligence Community IG at the time, Michael Atkinson, spoke truth to power and were fired for it.

What you and Mr. Atkinson did in the fall of 2019 to protect a key whistleblower and get information to Congress cost you your jobs. Going forward, I simply want to make sure that the Intel-

ligence Community IGs are better protected from political pressure and retaliation and that their independence can be assured.

Should you be confirmed, will you commit to sharing with this Committee any recommendations that you might have for legislative reforms to strengthen the CIA IG office and to make sure that you can do that job independently?

Ms. ASHTON. Absolutely, Senator. I very much appreciate the commitment to whistleblowers that you and others in this Committee have shown for so many years. It was very important, during the matter that you just referred to, that many people on this Committee came forward and made very supportive comments about the whistleblower's right to be heard.

I will definitely work with this Committee and share the insights that I gained through the process that we went through so that perhaps proposals can be put in place or new legislation can be put in place to enhance the protections afforded whistleblowers, Inspectors General, and the people who support the whistleblowers. Because a lot of times it's not just the whistleblower coming forward; it's the people who corroborate the whistleblower's complaint or statement. And they, too, could suffer from reprisal or threats of reprisal. And we don't want that to happen.

We want to open the lines of communication so employees can come forward and share their concerns in a legitimate, lawful, classified way. And I would be very happy, because I care so fervently about this process, to work with this Committee and others, who are coming up right now with very good proposals for enhancing whistleblowers' protections.

Senator HEINRICH. I think you just brought up a really, really key point, which is this is a Committee that I'm very proud to say has a history of not being the source of many of the things that we read in the papers around here. And having that official classified process is part of how we avoid those kinds of problems, isn't it?

Ms. ASHTON. Exactly, Senator. It's such an important process. And the reason you all passed the legislation that put that process in place is to ensure that very kind of communication. Can people in the classified Intelligence Community come forward in a lawful way so that there aren't leaks? You know, when people get too frustrated, they might leak information. We don't want that to happen.

And I think the statute is quite brilliant, because it creates a process, an appropriate process and a very, very clear process, for bringing concerns forward but not leaking information. We don't want that kind of unauthorized disclosure. We want people to come forward through the Inspectors General, express themselves, and then have their complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction or fear or worry, have them bring those concerns forward. We'll take them. We'll present them to you in an organized and lawful manner as prescribed by statute.

And that way we get the communication that we need in order to stay aware of what is happening in the entire Intelligence Community, in the classified environment, but not having to deal with unlawful disclosures or leaks.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I'm running a little bit short on time. I think I'll leave my other questions for the record.

Vice Chairman RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator Cornyn?

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I might start by saying, Director Coats, I've never seen you look so tan and rested as you are today. Somebody was asking the other day, have you heard from Dan Coats? And I'm glad to be able to report back we've had a sighting here today and you're doing just great. It's good to see you.

Senator COATS. There is a life after.

Senator CORNYN. You have a big smile on your face, and you're looking good.

So, Ms. Abizaid, I want to continue our conversation from earlier today. Something I'm struggling with a little bit, a conversation I've had with Director Haines, as we talked about earlier. You know, our history includes periods of time in which the U.S. Government has surveilled activity, lawful activity by American citizens. I'm thinking of the civil rights era, the anti-war movement during the Vietnam War, and the like. And I am just a little bit concerned in light of some of the abuses that Inspector Horowitz revealed even in the office of the FBI in making misrepresentations to the FISA court about American citizens in order to get a FISA warrant that—I think this is an area fraught with a lot of danger.

And I know we talked about domestic violent extremism, for example. And you know, we're all very familiar with the elaborate and comprehensive and very effective set of tools the Intelligence Community has in dealing with a foreign threat.

But here in the United States, when you're talking about American citizens, you alluded to the right American citizens have to speak freely and to assemble freely, petition their government for the redress of grievances, in the words of the Constitution. I worry a little bit that because of a lack of clarity and because of ambiguity into exactly where the authorities of the Intelligence Community stops or starts. Traditionally, I would think that if you're talking about American citizens committing crimes or even concerns about intelligence, you'd be talking about the FBI. And I know the Department of Homeland Security has a role to play, too.

But I'd just like for you to talk to us a little bit about whether you share those concerns and if you think there are any bright lines that we ought to observe and that the Intelligence Community of which you will be a part again should observe.

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator Cornyn, for the question and for the conversation that we had earlier today.

Any use of intelligence authorities needs to be consistent with the Constitution and follow the laws of the land. That is a very bright line. And it's one that has to govern all of our activities across the Intelligence Community.

I think domestic violent extremism is a concern. It's concerning in the rise that we've seen over the last several years. It's been a concern for decades, frankly. And I think that the FBI and now DHS have actually played a very effective role and resourced appropriately, given the significance of that threat. And they need to

be in the lead. They are domestic agencies, and they are the ones that that need to take the lead in operating against that threat.

When I look at NCTC and the statute that enshrined it and gave it capabilities, you know, it exists to connect the dots, right? Foreign, domestic sources of intelligence around terrorist threats are important for the National Counterterrorism Center to have access to, to understand whether there is any foreign nexus, and that is the primary mission of the National Counterterrorism Center.

Where FBI and DHS seek the support of NCTC, I would hope, if confirmed as director, that I would be able to provide that, appropriate with—appropriately so with keeping in mind always the Constitution and the laws of the land.

Senator CORNYN. Well, thank you for that answer. It's what I would have expected to hear from you. But I do think that, as I discussed with Director Haines, there needs to be as much clarity as we can possibly provide because of the practical consequences of a lack of trust by the American people in what the Intelligence Community is actually doing.

And we have seen that here, as you and I talked about here in Congress, when it comes to trying to reauthorize some of the most critical tools that the Intelligence Community had, we weren't able to even reauthorize Section 215, which is one of the most basic kind of law enforcement tools not made that available now to the IC because we just simply couldn't get it done, because of a lack of trust in how they would be used.

So I think I've always thought of this as different layers to try to earn the trust of the American people and Congress, and so they would trust us to use these tools appropriately, like you said, and consistent with the Constitution, consistent with the rights of American citizens under the Bill of Rights.

So I look forward to working with you and also Director Haines and others, Director Wray, and anybody else who wants to contribute to that conversation, because I think we're entering into a period where I think unless we are as clear as we can humanly be about where those lines are, where authorities stop and start, and how these tools are used, we are going to jeopardize our ability to use the tools we actually need in the Intelligence Community to keep our Nation safe. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Cornyn. Senator Bennet?

Senator BENNET. Thank you. I'd like to ask Senator Cornyn's question a little bit of a different way, Ms. Abizaid, because I think it's an important point. And how do you—maybe this is the wrong metaphor, but how do you think of the role of NCTC as a bridge between the terrorist threats that are abroad and the threats that are related to domestic terrorism here in the United States?

Obviously, that concern has evolved over time since the Agency was started. And actually, I'll bet you they've evolved since you left government to be in the private sector and are coming back. So I wonder if you could help us think about it in that context.

Ms. ABIZAID. I appreciate the question, Senator. And I think you're right. The threat itself has evolved since I was last deeply engaged in it, particularly related to the domestic violent extremist threat.

And I think this question of balance and this question of ensuring that the American people trust our use of our authorities across the IC but also across all of our agencies is a really important one.

NCTC was established to connect the dots. Integrating intelligence from across an array of sources, whether they're foreign or domestic sources of intelligence, is the mission of the Center. How it does that, the way in which it collaborates with other operating agencies, the way that it provides information to FBI, to DHS, but also State and local authorities, tribal authorities, that's a key kind of dissemination requirement that is enshrined in the statute that created NCTC and I think is an important one for us to follow through at the center.

You know, this idea of integrating intelligence from all sources, providing the best analytic expertise about not just an incident, but the threat and the trajectory of the threat I think is what the National Counterterrorism Center does best. And if we can do that, supporting FBI and DHS as they take the lead against domestic violence extremism, I would look forward to being able to provide that support if confirmed.

Senator BENNET. Can you tell us how you think about the ways in which social media—the role it's playing and the ways it's challenging our counterterrorism mission?

Ms. ABIZAID. I think there are a myriad of challenges associated with social media platforms, whether it's the ways in which terrorist groups and extremists exploit those platforms to inspire others to act, to spread their—not just ideologies that are violent in nature, but also the tactics, techniques, and procedures that they use and would encourage others to use.

I also think the encryption of some of those platforms presents challenges as well, and as terrorist groups, individuals that are moved to violence have access to more ubiquitous technology, we in the Intelligence Community need to work very hard to keep pace and stay ahead of the threat, regardless of whether it is virtual or otherwise.

Senator BENNET. And how do you think about that? I mean, now you're coming back. You've been at Dell for four years. You probably learned some things there that are useful to you coming back, I hope, in public service, as you gain your new position. How are you going to approach the question: Where are we on that learning curve? And have we adopted sort of best in class technologies for what we're trying to do?

And by that I don't literally mean technology, although I guess I do somewhat, but also the organizational structure is probably just as important.

Ms. ABIZAID. I think, Senator, asking those questions right up front is going to be essential, right? Getting a lay of the land, understanding what technologies we employ, understanding what kind of TTPs terrorist organizations are operating with—in what online environments and what technologies I think is an important question to ask.

How we approach that and how we approach that in a whole-of-government way I think is going to be a key question going forward. I don't know exactly the answer today, but it is something

that I would certainly seek to understand very soon after being confirmed.

Senator BENNET. I don't think this Committee understands the answer, either. But we're grappling with it. And I think we look forward to having further conversations with you about it.

And Ms. Ashton, I'm out of time, but I would say that I enjoyed our conversation yesterday and I want to thank you for your courage. And it'll be a real privilege to vote to confirm both of you.

Senator Coats, thank you for your extraordinary leadership, as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Casey?

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. And I want to thank and commend both nominees for your enduring commitment to public service, for taking on the responsibilities you seek to take on, and grateful for the excellence that you bring to your work, and so grateful to see Director Coats here. We're happy to have you back in the Senate, no matter what hat you're wearing. And thank you for that.

Ms. Abizaid, I'll start with you regarding Afghanistan. I know that, as you said, I think, in your testimony today that there would be a diminishment in our efforts to collect intelligence and do counterterrorism. But I know you'd agree with us that we have to continue that work.

What are your thoughts? Or do you have any plans or ideas about how to mitigate the adverse impact of withdrawal—to be able to continue a really robust counterterrorism within Afghanistan and within the region? And what if any partnerships do we have to strengthen or resuscitate to do that?

One, for example, would be Pakistan. How much can we place reliance upon that relationship, as well as others?

But what are your thoughts on that? How to mitigate some of the challenges that will arise?

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you for the question. You know, I don't have all the prescriptions, right? I haven't spent any time in the Intelligence Community in the last couple of years. But I know this is going to be job one for the Intelligence Community.

You know, NCTC itself doesn't have clandestine collection authorities. But it is going to be very concerned about the degree and the fidelity of intelligence from the region about the terrorist threat. And so how we work with our partners at the CIA, at NSA, at various other organizations to ensure that we do maintain a robust focus—and hopefully a priority focus in the region—on understanding the trajectory of the counterterrorism environment, I think that that's got to be key.

How we best do that, again, I think would be better left to classified sessions, if, in fact, I'm confirmed and able to dig into it. But I think it's going to be essential.

Foreign partners are also going to be critical in that. And that's not just regional foreign partners. And Pakistan is an important relationship. They have been an important counterterrorism partner, even if they've been frustrating in some respects, as well. But all the countries in the region matter, and so do those other countries that have interests in the region, and especially our NATO allies

that have such time on the ground shared with us and our U.S. forces, having a collaboration across those foreign partnerships, those foreign alliances, to make sure we all kind of share resources and do our best to understand what's happening in that region, I think will be absolutely essential.

Senator CASEY. Well, thanks. I look forward to working with you on it.

And, Ms. Ashton, I was going to ask a question about your previous experience, but that's already been alluded to, and we appreciate your determined public service under difficult circumstances. I guess I wanted to look to the future in terms of your role as the IG.

This is kind of a particular question about what some would argue would be an obligation. I guess I'll just ask it this way. Do you believe the CIA is obligated upon request to provide direction to a whistleblower on how to contact either of the Congressional intelligence committees?

Ms. ASHTON. Thank you for that question, Senator. Yes, I do believe that. I think the statute is very clear. We have to have a way for people to come forward in a lawful way and share classified information with this Committee. That's absolutely clear.

And if I were confirmed as the Inspector General, I will start day one to ensure that the CIA's whistleblower program is strong and robust, that people have a way to come forward, that they understand how to come forward, and very importantly, that when they do come forward, there are true professionals on the other side of the phone or the computer or the letter to answer questions and to guide the person as they're moving forward in the process.

Because it isn't an easy process always. And we have to not only present—. You know, it's not just a statute. We have to provide steps and guidance and instruction so that people can effectively bring their concerns to the Inspector General's office and that eventually those concerns are delivered, disseminated to this Committee when appropriate.

Senator CASEY. Thanks very much. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator King, you've got another question?

Senator KING. Senator Gillibrand.

Chairman WARNER. Oh, Senator Gillibrand on WebEx.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How are you?

I first want to talk to Ms. Abizaid. You are a bit of a first, so I want to congratulate you. You are a career national security professional, and if confirmed, would be the first woman to lead the NCTC. What does that mean for you? And how do you believe the Intelligence Community could better recruit and retrain and promote women like yourself?

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate the question. I actually am really fortunate to have come up in the Intelligence Community with a number of women who I respect a great deal and who I think would be excellent at this job or any other Senate-confirmed position.

I think there are a number of women that are ready and eager to serve their country and serve it with honor and distinction across the board. And I think that my performance as director, Di-



rector Haines' performance as the DNI, all of that should just be taken as an example that it is very achievable for other women to do the same.

Senator GILLIBRAND. So we've heard testimony over the last several months about how we can recruit and retain the best Intelligence Community members. And one of the ideas we've been talking a bit about is having a cyber academy, particularly for service members and civilians to come into the area of intelligence through something like a service academy, but one that is for a civilian workforce, so they could go into intelligence, they could go into commerce or Treasury or Department of Energy, but particularly in the cyber space, because we are obviously competing with the great industries of the world, of the Googles and the Facebooks, but we want to introduce this idea of public service earlier in people's careers.

Because today I've heard a lot of our recruits come laterally from the DOD. And as you know, DOD is largely male, largely white, largely people who are interested in learning how to shoot a gun and are very physically fit. And not all of those characteristics are necessary for the greatest cyber minds in the world.

So tell me how you would see something like a cyber academy where we could create a pipeline for workforce, particularly in the intelligence careers, through a civilian-type academy, where if they go to school and receive their education, they give back four years?

Ms. ABIZAID. Senator, this is the first I've heard of the idea, but I really like it. I think the opportunity to serve is one that that many people would like to have. Some would choose not to do it merely based on financial or even just a sense that the path doesn't exist for them.

And I think anything that we can do to create those paths and to open it up to a broader array of expertise that exists across a very talented landscape in our country, I think it would be great.

You know, I've spent the last four years in the private sector and have been really impressed with the kind of expertise and commitment to the country to serving the Nation that I see in my colleagues. And so it sounds like a very interesting idea.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you. One of my concerns is that—what should we say—the landscape on which we are playing today tends to be the United States infrastructure. And I'm very concerned that from the counterterrorism perspective that our terrorist opponents are using our own infrastructure as their targets, through cyber-attack.

Whether we're talking about pipelines or we're talking about meat processing facilities or we're talking about computer networks and Microsoft apps, we seem to have vulnerabilities. And in fact, we've had hearings in this Committee where our witnesses have talked about blind spots and how the cyber defense that we need isn't where it needs to be.

Can you talk a little bit about what your vision is to deal with cyberterrorism and counterterrorism when it is actually focused on terrorism here in the United States against U.S. assets and U.S. companies?

Ms. ABIZAID. Thank you for the question, Senator. I think that anything that we can do to enhance the cybersecurity, especially of

critical infrastructure, but across the board is absolutely essential. And it's to protect against those that would have capability, and I think that capability is becoming more ubiquitous, and seek to do the country harm.

To the extent that those that have that capability and want to use that are terrorist groups, that would be of significant interest to the National Counterterrorism Center. Any tactics, techniques, or procedures that terrorists use are something that we need to develop a capability to understand and mitigate.

And we would need in this case to do that in close cooperation with the cyber executive who resides at the ODNI, but also our cyber expertise that resides across government. And this idea of working across silos, that is what NCTC does really well. It's something that I think we could really enhance the cybersecurity and cyber experts across our government. Our processes could actually inform theirs in ways that I think could be very effective.

So to the extent that this is a significant threat posed by terrorist groups, it would be something that would be of paramount focus.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KING. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Warner had a commitment, and so the Constitution is in danger because I'm in charge.

[Laughter.]

Ms. Abizaid, I think we're making this question about domestic violent extremism more complicated than it needs to be. The key word is violent. Terrorism, and I just looked it up, is the unlawful use of violence or intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.

If there was an ISIS cell in Pensacola and information came to you that they were plotting to kidnap and assassinate the Governor of Florida, would that not be squarely in your lane of information-sharing between your agency and the FBI, for example?

Ms. ABIZAID. It absolutely would.

Senator KING. So if that organization in Pensacola was Aryan Americans for the White Race plotting to kidnap the Governor of Florida and assassinate him, would that not be squarely within your jurisdiction that you would then work with the FBI to try to thwart that violent threat against the Governor?

Ms. ABIZAID. If we had that information, we absolutely would work with the FBI. And FBI, I would imagine, would take the lead on thwarting that, absolutely.

Senator KING. I think there's been a lot of talk about bright lines. The bright line is violence. Nobody's talking about snooping on Americans for their political beliefs or how they feel about various provisions of the Constitution.

Your jurisdiction is terrorism. And if it involves threats of violence, your job is to thwart violence against civilians and political figures, if you will, in our country, is it not?

Ms. ABIZAID. It is. That's right.

Senator KING. So, I would urge you that—this question keeps coming up. And there's unease about it. And I understand we don't want to be in the business of spying on Americans.

But we also have to protect ourselves, just as we protect ourselves against criminal enterprises that are conspiring to rob banks or blow up a bridge or whatever the purpose is. So I appreciate your appearance here today, but to me the key phrase is “domestic violent extremists.” It’s not “domestic extremists.” The key question is violence. And if you focus on that, I think that keeps you out of the weeds of this Constitutional unease that we’ve heard expressed here today.

Are there any other questions on WebEx?

Other than that, I appreciate our witnesses being here today. Senator Coats, pleasure to have you. Thank you both for your dedication to this country and your willingness to undertake a new task in public service.

With that, I believe the Chairman said that the record is open until Friday afternoon at the close of business for questions for the record.

Thank you all very much. The hearing is adjourned.  
[Whereupon at 4:05 p.m. the hearing was adjourned.]



## **Supplemental Material**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
INTELLIGENCE**

UNITED STATES SENATE



**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPLETION BY  
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPLETION BY  
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES**

**PART A - BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. FULL NAME: Robin Carol Ashton  
OTHER NAMES USED: Robin Ashton Millen
2. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 12/6/57 Detroit, Michigan  
CITIZENSHIP: U.S.
3. MARITAL STATUS: Married
4. SPOUSE'S NAME: Yves Daniel Rosenberg
5. SPOUSE'S MAIDEN NAME IF APPLICABLE: N/A
6. NAMES AND AGES OF CHILDREN:

**REDACTED**

7. EDUCATION SINCE HIGH SCHOOL:

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>DATES ATTENDED</u>	<u>DEGREE RECEIVED</u>	<u>DATE OF DEGREE</u>
Marshall-Wythe School of Law (College of William and Mary)	8/83-5/86	Juris Doctor	5/86
The University of Michigan	8/78-12-80	BA	12/80
Oakland University	8/76-5/78	None	N/A

8. EMPLOYMENT RECORD (LIST ALL POSITIONS HELD SINCE COLLEGE, INCLUDING MILITARY SERVICE. INDICATE NAME OF EMPLOYER, POSITION, TITLE OR DESCRIPTION, LOCATION, AND DATES OF EMPLOYMENT).

<u>EMPLOYER</u>	<u>POSITION/TITLE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATES</u>
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**Sears Surplus**, store clerk, Laurel, Maryland; approximately 4/82-11/82

**Oakland County Circuit Court**, Research Law Clerk, Pontiac, Michigan, summer 1984

**Office of Administrative Law Judges**, Department of Labor, Attorney, Washington, DC, 1986-1988

**Antitrust Division, Litigation II Section**, Department of Justice, Trial Attorney, Washington, DC, 1988 to 1991

**United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia**, Department of Justice, Assistant United States Attorney Washington, DC, 1991 to 2001

**Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys**, Department of Justice, Deputy Director, Principal Deputy Director, Acting Director, Washington, DC, October 2001 to June 2005

**U.S. Senate, Office of Senator Patrick Leahy**, Senate Judiciary Committee, Staff Attorney, Washington, DC, June 2005 to August 2006

**U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia**, Department of Justice, Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney for Management, Washington, DC, August 2006 to January 2011

**Office of Professional Responsibility**, Department of Justice, Director, Washington, DC, January 2011 to September 2018

**Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community**, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Principal Deputy Inspector General, Reston, VA, September 2018 to May 2020

**Strategic Planning and Performance Staff**, Department of Justice, Senior Counsel, Washington, DC, May 2020 to present

9. GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE (INDICATE EXPERIENCE IN OR ASSOCIATION WITH FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING ADVISORY, CONSULTATIVE, HONORARY, OR OTHER PART-TIME SERVICE OR POSITION. DO NOT REPEAT INFORMATION ALREADY PROVIDED IN QUESTION 8).

All government jobs have been listed in response to Question number 8.

10. INDICATE ANY SPECIALIZED INTELLIGENCE OR NATIONAL SECURITY EXPERTISE YOU HAVE ACQUIRED HAVING SERVED IN THE POSITIONS DESCRIBED IN QUESTIONS 8 AND/OR 9.

I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (ICIG) for nearly two years. During my tenure with the ICIG, I reported directly to and advised the Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed Inspector General on all areas of the ICIG mission. Specifically, my responsibilities included:

- Managing a workforce of special agents, auditors, inspectors, attorneys, and support staff whose mission is to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of programs and activities within the authority of the Director of National Intelligence and the 17 departments and agencies comprising the U.S. Intelligence Community.
- Assisting in managing all aspects of the ICIG's operations, including human capital, resource and budget allocations, information technology improvements, and legislative and public affairs.
- Supervising criminal and administrative investigations related to counterintelligence matters, procurement fraud, unauthorized disclosures of classified information, intelligence oversight abuses, and other potential



violations of laws and regulations, including joint investigations with other law enforcement authorities and Offices of Inspector General.

- Overseeing the planning, supervision, coordination, and performance of audits, inspections, and investigations.
- Participating in the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, which consists of twelve Inspectors General with oversight responsibility for elements of the Intelligence Community.
- Working with the Five Eyes Intelligence Oversight and Review Council, composed of intelligence oversight, review, and security entities of the Five Eyes countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, to exchange views and share best practices on subjects of mutual interest and concern.
- Engaging regularly with the Director of National Intelligence and the Congressional intelligence committees to ensure appropriate awareness of matters before the ICIg.
- Assisting in drafting and responding to Congressional inquiries and letters; providing technical drafting input on pending legislation, as appropriate; and preparing for Member briefings.
- Assisting in creating and supervising the operations of the ICIg's Center for Protected Disclosures, which is the office responsible for receiving, processing, and reviewing whistleblower complaints, including allegations of "urgent concern" under the Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act.
- Serving as the Chair of the Intelligence Community Deputy Inspectors General Forum, which consists of Deputy Inspectors General from the twelve Offices of Inspector General with oversight responsibility for elements of the Intelligence Community.

In addition, while working at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, I was at one point assigned to the federal Transnational and Major Crimes Unit, where I was responsible for investigating, presenting to the grand jury, and handling to disposition several matters that involved national security issues, including violent threats against Members of U.S. Congress, threats against national landmarks, and other important matters.

11. HONORS AND AWARDS (PROVIDE INFORMATION ON SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, HONORARY DEGREES, MILITARY DECORATIONS, CIVILIAN SERVICE CITATIONS, OR ANY OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE OR ACHIEVEMENT).

Department of Justice Attorney General's Claudia J. Flynn Award for Professional Responsibility, 2013  
 Department of Justice Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Management, 2010  
 United States Attorney's Award for Meritorious Service, 2010  
 United States Attorney's STAR Award, 2007 (USAO-DC's highest award)  
 The Department of Justice Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys' Director's Award for Executive Achievement, 2004  
 Multi-year Special Achievement Awards received from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia

12. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS (LIST MEMBERSHIPS IN AND OFFICES HELD WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS IN ANY PROFESSIONAL, CIVIC, FRATERNAL, BUSINESS, SCHOLARLY, CULTURAL, CHARITABLE, OR OTHER SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS).

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>OFFICE HELD</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Virginia State Bar	None.	1986-present
District of Columbia Bar	None.	1994-present

13. PUBLISHED WRITINGS AND SPEECHES (LIST THE TITLES, PUBLISHERS, BLOGS AND PUBLICATION DATES OF ANY BOOKS, ARTICLES, REPORTS, OR OTHER PUBLISHED MATERIALS YOU HAVE AUTHORED. ALSO LIST ANY PUBLIC SPEECHES OR REMARKS YOU HAVE MADE WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS FOR WHICH THERE IS A TEXT, TRANSCRIPT, OR VIDEO). IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE A COPY OF EACH REQUESTED PUBLICATION, TEXT, TRANSCRIPT, OR VIDEO?

None.

**PART B - QUALIFICATIONS**

**14. QUALIFICATIONS (DESCRIBE WHY YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE QUALIFIED TO SERVE AS THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY).**

In addition to the specific, specialized intelligence and national security expertise I discussed in response to Question 10, the experience I have acquired throughout my almost 35-year career in public service makes me uniquely qualified to serve as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I was privileged to work for almost twenty years at the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) for the District of Columbia, first as an Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA), and later as a senior manager. As an AUSA, I handled numerous District of Columbia Superior Court felony jury trials, and numerous jury trials and investigations in federal district court. I personally conducted and directly supervised hundreds of grand jury investigations (including crimes of violence, federal criminal offenses, economic crimes, and several sensitive police misconduct investigations). In addition, while serving as a Senior AUSA in the Appellate Division, I briefed and argued numerous appellate cases before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

While at the USAO, I also served in various supervisory capacities, including as the Executive AUSA for Management. In this front office management role, my responsibilities included managing the administrative, personnel, and budget staffs in an office consisting of more than 700 employees; serving as the USAO's management official on labor relations issues involving Merit Systems Protection Board actions, and Office of Professional Responsibility and Office of the Inspector General matters; and handling attorney issues involving pay, hiring, disciplinary actions, and professional development. Significantly, I also advised the various U.S. Attorneys (the Presidentially- or Court-appointed head of the USAO) for whom I worked on myriad issues relating to complex case preparation and strategy, public relations and community issues, ethics, attorney discipline, professional conduct matters, and law enforcement initiatives.

In addition, I spent nearly eight years as the Director of the Department of Justice Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR). In that role, I reported directly to the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General, and was responsible for ensuring that Department of Justice attorneys performed their duties in accordance with the high professional standards expected of the nation's principal law enforcement agency. I oversaw the work of the attorneys investigating allegations of misconduct involving Department attorneys that related to the exercise of their authority to investigate, litigate, or provide legal advice, as well as allegations of misconduct by law enforcement personnel when related to allegations of attorney misconduct within the jurisdiction of OPR. I guided investigations in numerous high-profile matters to ensure prompt and appropriate identification and resolution of complex factual and legal issues; managed an extensive case review process requiring in-depth substantive knowledge of criminal and civil cases; and ensured that every report issued by OPR was professionally rendered, meticulously reviewed for accuracy, and that all salient facts were uncovered, investigated, and analyzed. These inquiries and investigations into allegations of misconduct were received from the courts, defense attorneys, state bar authorities, Congress, and DOJ component heads, and involved myriad alleged violations of federal laws, rules and regulations, as well as DOJ policies and standards. Based on these investigations, I provided advice to the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General regarding Department of Justice policy and procedures, and recommended training or policy changes designed to address professional responsibility concerns.

In addition to working as a senior manager in the nation's largest U.S. Attorney's Office, and as the Director of OPR, I also managed other extremely large, complex offices with significant, sensitive, and often far-reaching missions. For example, I served for four years as the Principal Deputy Director, and at times the Acting Director, of the Department of Justice Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA), which provides management guidance and support to the 94 United States Attorneys' Offices (USAOs), 93 presidentially-appointed United States Attorneys, and over 10,000 employees, including over 5,000 Assistant United States

Attorneys. In that role, I provided advice on critical policy issues, program considerations, and initiatives impacting the USAOs nationwide. I personally managed the top supervisors for several EOUSA staffs and offices, including: the Office of the General Counsel; Office of Legal Education; Counsel to the Director; Equal Employment Opportunity Office; Evaluation and Review staff; and the FOIA staff.

In many of the positions I have held during my career, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Congress. For example, while at the Office of Professional Responsibility, I responded to Congressional inquiries and provided Congressional briefings relating to professional responsibility and ethical issues concerning Department of Justice attorneys. In addition, I had the opportunity to work as a staff attorney with the Senate Judiciary Committee while detailed from the U.S. Attorney's Office to Senator Patrick Leahy's office. In that role, I was given the opportunity to work closely with Republican and Democratic Committee staff members as we negotiated, drafted, and researched legislation dealing with a wide range of criminal justice issues under consideration by the Committee. I also had the honor of assisting in researching and preparing briefing and hearing materials for the Committee regarding the Supreme Court nominations of John Roberts and Samuel Alito. And finally, while at the Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I worked closely with Congressional staffers, both Republican and Democrat, on the U.S. House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, on numerous issues relating to the Intelligence Community, including whistleblower matters. All of these opportunities to work with Congress on so many different issues have proved tremendous learning experiences.

I believe that my deep and broad investigation, litigation, prosecution, budget, management, leadership, and other experience has made me a better lawyer and public servant, and make me well-qualified to serve as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, if I am so fortunate as to be confirmed.

#### **PART C - POLITICAL AND FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS**

15. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (LIST ANY MEMBERSHIPS OR OFFICES HELD IN OR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OR SERVICES RENDERED TO, ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ELECTION COMMITTEE, POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE, OR INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS).

ACTBLUE MD	11/14/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	10/25/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	10/25/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	10/07/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	10/07/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	09/30/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	09/30/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	09/17/2020	\$150.00
ACTBLUE MD	09/17/2020	\$150.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	08/28/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	08/28/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	08/17/2020	\$46.31
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	08/16/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	08/12/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE MD	07/30/2020	\$150.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	07/30/2020	\$150.00
ACTBLUE MD	06/30/2020	\$100.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	06/30/2020	\$100.00
ACTBLUE	05/30/2020	\$150.00
ACTBLUE	05/30/2020	\$15.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	05/30/2020	\$150.00
BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT	04/15/2020	\$300.00
DSCC	10/17/2016	\$250.00

DNC SERVICES CORP./DEM. NAT'L COMMITTEE	05/10/2016	\$200.00
DNC SERVICES CORP./DEM. NAT'L COMMITTEE	05/05/2016	\$250.00

16. CANDIDACY FOR PUBLIC OFFICE (FURNISH DETAILS OF ANY CANDIDACY FOR ELECTIVE PUBLIC OFFICE).

None.

17. FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS

(NOTE: QUESTIONS 17A AND B ARE NOT LIMITED TO RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRING REGISTRATION UNDER THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT. QUESTIONS 17A, B, AND C DO NOT CALL FOR A POSITIVE RESPONSE IF THE REPRESENTATION OR TRANSACTION WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR OR YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE.)

A. HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER REPRESENTED IN ANY CAPACITY (E.G. EMPLOYEE, ATTORNEY, OR POLITICAL/BUSINESS CONSULTANT), WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR AN ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE FULLY DESCRIBE SUCH RELATIONSHIP.

No.

B. HAVE ANY OF YOUR OR YOUR SPOUSE'S ASSOCIATES REPRESENTED, IN ANY CAPACITY, WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR AN ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE FULLY DESCRIBE SUCH RELATIONSHIP.

No.

C. DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS, HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE RECEIVED ANY COMPENSATION FROM, OR BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS WITH, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR ANY ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

D. HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER REGISTERED UNDER THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

18. DESCRIBE ANY LOBBYING ACTIVITY DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS, OTHER THAN IN AN OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT CAPACITY, IN WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE ENGAGED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY INFLUENCING THE PASSAGE, DEFEAT, OR MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION, OR FOR THE PURPOSE OF AFFECTING THE ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTION OF FEDERAL LAW OR PUBLIC POLICY.

None.

**PART D - FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

19. DESCRIBE ANY EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP, FINANCIAL TRANSACTION, INVESTMENT, ASSOCIATION, OR ACTIVITY (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DEALINGS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON YOUR OWN BEHALF OR ON BEHALF OF A CLIENT), WHICH COULD CREATE, OR APPEAR TO CREATE, A CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED.

None known.

20. DO YOU INTEND TO SEVER ALL BUSINESS CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYERS, FIRMS, BUSINESS ASSOCIATES AND/OR PARTNERSHIPS, OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EVENT THAT YOU ARE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE? IF NOT, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

No. If I am confirmed by the Senate and become the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, there may come a time when I and/or my staff will have to confer with the Department of Justice during the normal course of business.

21. DESCRIBE THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE OR PLAN TO MAKE, IF YOU ARE CONFIRMED, IN CONNECTION WITH SEVERANCE FROM YOUR CURRENT POSITION. PLEASE INCLUDE SEVERANCE PAY, PENSION RIGHTS, STOCK OPTIONS, DEFERRED INCOME ARRANGEMENTS, AND ANY AND ALL COMPENSATION THAT WILL OR MIGHT BE RECEIVED IN THE FUTURE AS A RESULT OF YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

None.

22. DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS, COMMITMENTS, OR AGREEMENTS TO PURSUE OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT, WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, DURING YOUR SERVICE WITH THE GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

23. AS FAR AS CAN BE FORESEEN, STATE YOUR PLANS AFTER COMPLETING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. PLEASE SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBE ANY AGREEMENTS OR UNDERSTANDINGS, WRITTEN OR UNWRITTEN, CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT AFTER LEAVING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. IN PARTICULAR, DESCRIBE ANY AGREEMENTS, UNDERSTANDINGS, OR OPTIONS TO RETURN TO YOUR CURRENT POSITION.

I have no plans to leave government service, and I have no plans, agreements, or understandings regarding possible future employment in the private sector.

24. IF YOU ARE PRESENTLY IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE, DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS OF SUCH SERVICE, HAVE YOU RECEIVED FROM A PERSON OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT AN OFFER OR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO EMPLOY YOUR SERVICES AFTER YOU LEAVE GOVERNMENT SERVICE? IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

25. IS YOUR SPOUSE EMPLOYED? IF YES AND THE NATURE OF THIS EMPLOYMENT IS RELATED IN ANY WAY TO THE POSITION FOR WHICH YOU ARE SEEKING CONFIRMATION, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYER, THE POSITION, AND THE LENGTH OF TIME THE POSITION HAS BEEN HELD. IF YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT IS NOT RELATED TO THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED, PLEASE SO STATE.

My spouse is employed. The nature of his employment is not related to the position for which I am seeking confirmation.

26. LIST BELOW ALL CORPORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, FOUNDATIONS, TRUSTS, OR OTHER ENTITIES TOWARD WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE FIDUCIARY OBLIGATIONS OR IN WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE HELD DIRECTORSHIPS OR OTHER POSITIONS OF TRUST DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

<u>NAME OF ENTITY</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>DATES HELD</u>	<u>SELF OR SPOUSE</u>
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None.

27. LIST ALL GIFTS EXCEEDING \$100 IN VALUE RECEIVED DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS BY YOU, YOUR SPOUSE, OR YOUR DEPENDENTS. (NOTE: GIFTS RECEIVED FROM RELATIVES AND GIFTS GIVEN TO YOUR SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT NEED NOT BE INCLUDED UNLESS THE GIFT WAS GIVEN WITH YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND ACQUIESCENCE AND YOU HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THE GIFT WAS GIVEN BECAUSE OF YOUR OFFICIAL POSITION.)

None.

28. LIST ALL SECURITIES, REAL PROPERTY, PARTNERSHIP INTERESTS, OR OTHER INVESTMENTS OR RECEIVABLES WITH A CURRENT MARKET VALUE (OR, IF MARKET VALUE IS NOT ASCERTAINABLE, ESTIMATED CURRENT FAIR VALUE) IN EXCESS OF \$1,000. (NOTE: THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO SCHEDULE A OF THE DISCLOSURE FORMS OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS MAY BE INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE, PROVIDED THAT CURRENT VALUATIONS ARE USED.)

See Part 6 of my Nominee Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e), forwarded separately by OGE to the Committee, for complete information.

29. LIST ALL LOANS OR OTHER INDEBTEDNESS (INCLUDING ANY CONTINGENT LIABILITIES) IN EXCESS OF \$10,000. EXCLUDE A MORTGAGE ON YOUR PERSONAL RESIDENCE UNLESS IT IS RENTED OUT, AND LOANS SECURED BY AUTOMOBILES, HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, OR APPLIANCES. (NOTE: THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO SCHEDULE C OF THE DISCLOSURE FORM OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS MAY BE INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE, PROVIDED THAT CONTINGENT LIABILITIES ARE ALSO INCLUDED.)

<u>NATURE OF OBLIGATION</u>	<u>NAME OF OBLIGEE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
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None.

30. ARE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE NOW IN DEFAULT ON ANY LOAN, DEBT, OR OTHER FINANCIAL OBLIGATION? HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE BEEN IN DEFAULT ON ANY LOAN, DEBT, OR OTHER FINANCIAL OBLIGATION IN THE PAST TEN YEARS? HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER BEEN

REFUSED CREDIT OR HAD A LOAN APPLICATION DENIED? IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS IS YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

31. LIST THE SPECIFIC SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF ALL INCOME RECEIVED DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS, INCLUDING ALL SALARIES, FEES, DIVIDENDS, INTEREST, GIFTS, RENTS, ROYALTIES, PATENTS, HONORARIA, AND OTHER ITEMS EXCEEDING \$200. (COPIES OF U.S. INCOME TAX RETURNS FOR THESE YEARS MAY BE SUBSTITUTED HERE, BUT THEIR SUBMISSION IS NOT REQUIRED.)

**REDACTED**

32. IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE WITH COPIES OF YOUR AND YOUR SPOUSE'S FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURNS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS?

Yes.

33. LIST ALL JURISDICTIONS IN WHICH YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE FILE ANNUAL INCOME TAX RETURNS.

Maryland and Federal

34. HAVE YOUR FEDERAL OR STATE TAX RETURNS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF AN AUDIT, INVESTIGATION, OR INQUIRY AT ANY TIME? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS, INCLUDING THE RESULT OF ANY SUCH PROCEEDING.

No.

35. IF YOU ARE AN ATTORNEY, ACCOUNTANT, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL, PLEASE LIST ALL CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS WHOM YOU BILLED MORE THAN \$200 WORTH OF SERVICES DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS. ALSO, LIST ALL JURISDICTIONS IN WHICH YOU ARE LICENSED TO PRACTICE.

My entire legal career has been spent as a federal government attorney. I have never billed any clients or customers for attorney or other services during that entire time, and specifically, in the past five years.

I am a member of the Virginia and District of Columbia Bars.

36. DO YOU INTEND TO PLACE YOUR FINANCIAL HOLDINGS AND THOSE OF YOUR SPOUSE AND DEPENDENT MEMBERS OF YOUR IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD IN A BLIND TRUST? IF YES, PLEASE FURNISH DETAILS. IF NO, DESCRIBE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR AVOIDING ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

N/A

37. IF APPLICABLE, LIST THE LAST THREE YEARS OF ANNUAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS YOU HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO FILE WITH YOUR AGENCY, DEPARTMENT, OR BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT. IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE A COPY OF THESE REPORTS?

If asked, I will provide a copy of prior Public Financial Disclosure Reports (OGE Form 278e) that I have filed with the Department of Justice and while serving on detail with the ICIG, including those I have filed for the past three years.

**PART E - ETHICAL MATTERS**

38. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDING OR CITED FOR A BREACH OF ETHICS OR UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT BY, OR BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A COMPLAINT TO, ANY COURT, ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL GROUP? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

39. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVESTIGATED, HELD, ARRESTED, OR CHARGED BY ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY FOR VIOLATION OF ANY FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, OR MUNICIPAL LAW, REGULATION, OR ORDINANCE, OTHER THAN A MINOR TRAFFIC OFFENSE, OR NAMED AS A DEFENDANT OR OTHERWISE IN ANY INDICTMENT OR INFORMATION RELATING TO SUCH VIOLATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

40. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF OR ENTERED A PLEA OF GUILTY OR NOLO CONTENDERE TO ANY CRIMINAL VIOLATION OTHER THAN A MINOR TRAFFIC OFFENSE? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.



No.

41. ARE YOU PRESENTLY OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A PARTY IN INTEREST IN ANY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY PROCEEDING OR CIVIL LITIGATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No. I have not in my personal capacity been a party in interest in an administrative agency proceeding or civil litigation.

I will note, however, that at different times during my career when I served in senior leadership positions -- including when I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (ICIG), as the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, the Principal Deputy Director of the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, and the Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney for Management for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia -- I on occasion acted on behalf of the ICIG and the Department of Justice in various personnel or administrative proceedings. These were not trials or court proceedings; rather, I acted for the ICIG or the Department of Justice in terms of finding or mediating solutions to employees' concerns or complaints.

42. HAVE YOU BEEN INTERVIEWED OR ASKED TO SUPPLY ANY INFORMATION AS A WITNESS OR OTHERWISE IN CONNECTION WITH ANY CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION, FEDERAL, OR STATE AGENCY PROCEEDING, GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION, OR CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LITIGATION IN THE PAST TEN YEARS? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No, not in my personal capacity. However, I will note that in my prior capacity as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I assisted the former Inspector General of the Intelligence Community in compiling and providing to Congress documents and information regarding significant matters. All documents and information provided to Congress regarding such matters were provided under the Inspector General's name on behalf of the Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community. In addition, please see my response to Question #41.

43. HAS ANY BUSINESS OF WHICH YOU ARE OR WERE AN OFFICER, DIRECTOR, OR PARTNER BEEN A PARTY TO ANY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY PROCEEDING OR CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LITIGATION RELEVANT TO THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS. (WITH RESPECT TO A BUSINESS OF WHICH YOU ARE OR WERE AN OFFICER, YOU NEED ONLY CONSIDER PROCEEDINGS AND LITIGATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE YOU WERE AN OFFICER OF THAT BUSINESS.)

No.

44. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF ANY INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No.

#### **PART F - SECURITY INFORMATION**

45. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN DENIED ANY SECURITY CLEARANCE OR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION FOR ANY REASON? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN IN DETAIL.

No.

46. HAVE YOU BEEN REQUIRED TO TAKE A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION FOR ANY SECURITY CLEARANCE OR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Yes. I took and passed a polygraph examination before I started my job in September 2018 as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community.

47. HAVE YOU EVER REFUSED TO SUBMIT TO A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

No.

#### **PART G - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

48. DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS THE CONCEPT OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES. IN PARTICULAR, CHARACTERIZE WHAT YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY AND THE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE OVERSIGHT PROCESS.

As mentioned in some detail above, during my almost 35-year career as a public servant with the federal government, I have had many opportunities to work with Congress – while on detail from the Department of Justice to Senator Patrick Leahy’s office, in my job as the Principal Deputy Director of the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, and when I was the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. Each of these opportunities enhanced my respect for, and increased my understanding of, Congress’ important oversight role throughout the federal government.

However, it was during my recent tenure as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community that I came to truly understand and appreciate the crucial need for Congressional oversight in the Intelligence Community. Because the work of the Intelligence Community, generally, and the Central Intelligence Agency, specifically, must, by necessity, operate largely outside of the public’s view, Congressional oversight becomes increasingly important. The American people must have confidence that while effectively carrying out its vital mission, the Central Intelligence Agency is being held accountable and is adhering to the very highest standards we all expect of it. The Congressional intelligence committees play a critical role in instilling this confidence by fulfilling their oversight obligation to ensure that the operations, programs, and activities of the Central Intelligence Agency are carried out ethically, honestly, and in accordance with law, established policies, and in a manner that reflects our nation’s values. By assuring the American people that, while engaged in activities essential to our national security and defense, the Central Intelligence Agency is being held accountable, Congress through its oversight activities, acts in the public’s interest. By holding classified briefings, scrutinizing relevant paperwork and documents, questioning Central Intelligence Agency leaders and others, Congress is able to fulfill its vital oversight role on behalf of the American people.

The Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency also plays an important role with regard to this oversight responsibility. Because of my recent tenure in the Office of Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I am very familiar with the obligations and responsibilities of the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, as set forth in 50 U.S.C. § 3517. Specifically – and among numerous other responsibilities enumerated by this statute – the Inspector General has a duty to keep the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency “fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies” and “the necessity for and the progress of corrective actions” relating to the administration of the Central Intelligence Agency’s programs and operations. The Inspector General must also ensure that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence “are kept similarly informed of significant problems and deficiencies as well as the necessity for and the progress of corrective actions....” In addition, the statute

delineates specific instances that obligates the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency to notify, and submit reports to, the Congressional intelligence committees so that Congress can fulfill its oversight obligation.

In addition to the duties and responsibilities specifically set forth in 50 U.S.C. § 3517, I believe that it is imperative that the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency establish and maintain a productive, cooperative, and professional relationship with the employees within the Office of the Inspector General, and with the many other people and entities who have crucial oversight roles, as well. These include the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Congressional intelligence committees. These parties share with the Inspector General numerous mutual goals, many overlapping responsibilities, and the desire to make the Central Intelligence Agency as effective as possible, so that its employees can continue to conduct their incredibly important work in the most ethical, efficient, and safest way possible. The employees of the Central Intelligence Agency deserve this, as does the American public.

An effective Inspector General must maintain strong working relationships with these crucially important partners both inside and outside of the Central Intelligence Agency, and ensure that each is treated with respect, listened to, and engaged and consulted with, in a direct, honest, and professional manner. Accomplishing the shared goal of achieving and maintaining the most efficient, productive, and effective intelligence operations, and thereby protecting our national security, can only be realized if the responsibility is shared. If I am confirmed as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, I will work with the Congressional intelligence committees in a respectful and productive manner, and will strive to ensure that they receive salient information in a timely fashion so that they can effectively conduct their significant and indispensable oversight responsibilities. I will also work with all other partners to ensure that communication and information sharing is constructive and productive.

49. EXPLAIN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

The Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency has numerous statutorily enumerated responsibilities, as set forth at 50 U.S.C. § 3517. These responsibilities include, among others, creating an objective and effective Inspector General's Office, being appropriately accountable to Congress, and initiating and conducting independent inspections, investigations, and audits relating to the programs and operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. At all times, due care must be taken to protect intelligence sources and methods in the preparation of all reports issued, and to comply with generally accepted government auditing standards. The Inspector General must provide clear direction for how the inspections, investigations, and audits relating to the programs and operations of the Central Intelligence Agency will be planned, conducted, supervised, and coordinated, to ensure they are conducted efficiently and in accordance with applicable law and regulations. In addition, the Inspector General must provide leadership and guidance to ensure that all policies promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of the Central Intelligence Agency's programs and operations, and to ensure that fraud and abuse are detected and prevented in such programs and operations. The Inspector General must keep the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies relating to the administration of Central Intelligence Agency programs and operations, and the necessity for and progress of corrective actions; and ensure that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence are kept similarly informed of significant problems and deficiencies, as well as the necessity for and the progress of corrective actions.

The Inspector General must report to the Attorney General any information, allegation, or complaint received that relates to violations of federal criminal law involving a program or operation of the Central Intelligence Agency, and provide a copy of all such reports to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Inspector General must report immediately to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency whenever she becomes aware of particularly serious or flagrant problems, abuses, or deficiencies relating to the administration of programs or operations, and follow all statutory rules for handling urgent concerns, including when and how to report such matters to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and to Congress. In addition, the Inspector General must submit to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency timely and sufficiently detailed

semiannual reports. With regard to all reporting responsibilities, the Inspector General must comply with the specific requirements set forth at 50 U.S.C. § 3517.

As with all federal Inspectors General, the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency must work toward detecting, preventing, and helping to eliminate waste, fraud, corruption, mismanagement, and abuses of authority relating to the programs and activities they oversee. When audits, investigations, inspections, or reviews reveal possible wrongdoing of any type, Inspectors General are often the first to receive this information, and they must immediately communicate those issues to appropriate leadership and begin to make recommendations to address those problems. I believe that the Office of Inspector General's findings and recommendations should be clear, well-founded, and carefully analyzed, and should be actionable and effective. My approach to oversight will include developing and fostering strong relationships with the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and other members of the leadership team, the Central Intelligence Agency's workforce, the Director of National Intelligence, and Congress to ensure that I manage my responsibilities in a manner that is as open, inclusive, direct, and transparent as possible.

I respect and admire the people of the Central Intelligence Agency, and their integrity, professionalism, and selfless commitment to their crucial mission. I will work with them to highlight the Central Intelligence Agency's myriad strengths while also identifying areas that could benefit from modification or improvement. I believe that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, its other employees and contractors, the Director of National Intelligence, Congress, and I all share the desire to enhance, wherever and whenever possible, the Central Intelligence Agency's operations by eliminating all waste, fraud, corruption, mismanagement, and abuses of authority. If confirmed, I will work in a pragmatic, cooperative, and constructive manner with all of these crucial partners so that we can address together any significant problems or deficiencies that come to light.

One of the many significant responsibilities of the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency is to ensure that the Central Intelligence Agency has a strong and effective whistleblower program. Particularly in an agency such as the Central Intelligence Agency, which necessarily operates largely in secret, it is imperative that those on the ground, who are quite possibly the first people to observe wasteful or even unlawful activities, be provided a secure, protected, and effective means of disclosing their concerns or observations without fear of reprisal or intimidation. It is essential that whistleblowers be respected as important partners in the oversight process. If confirmed as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, I will take the steps needed to determine whether the Central Intelligence Agency's whistleblower program is sufficiently strong and robust to not only inform people how to lawfully disclose information, but to encourage whistleblowers to come forward with such information. I will also take the requisite steps to ensure that policies are in place to protect whistleblowers from reprisal, or threat of reprisal, if they do come forward in an authorized manner and disclose in good faith allegations of wrongdoing. Whistleblowers are not the enemies, and hiding, burying, or refusing to see a problem does not solve that problem; the delay in addressing the problem simply allows it to fester, replicate, or grow deeper roots.

Working cooperatively with the other Inspectors General throughout the Intelligence Community is also an important responsibility for the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency. For example, active participation in the Inspectors General Forum, which is comprised of the twelve Inspectors General with oversight responsibility for elements of the Intelligence Community, facilitates discussion of shared concerns and challenges, analysis of lessons learned and effective solutions implemented, and an exploration of opportunities to work together to ameliorate or address some of the thorniest issues being faced in the Intelligence Community; such opportunities might include proposing to the Congressional intelligence committees new legislation or legislative modifications to existing legislation.

Because I was fortunate to have served recently as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I am very familiar with and understand the complexity, significance, and multi-faceted quality of the responsibilities and demands I would assume should I be confirmed as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency. One of the most important responsibilities is to ensure that the Office of the Inspector General itself is run efficiently, that its employees are performing to their highest ability, that they feel included and respected, and that they are equipped with the necessary tools to do their jobs effectively. I would take steps to ensure that the employees have the appropriate training, support, and mentoring that they deserve, desire, and require. Having worked with many people in the Central Intelligence Agency and throughout the Intelligence

Community, I know that they are always striving to accomplish even more than they have accomplished previously, and if I can help in that laudable goal, I will. I am also committed – just as they have shown themselves to be – to demonstrating personal integrity, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to the search for truth each and every day.

The Inspector General must encourage a culture in which people feel empowered to speak freely and honestly amongst themselves and to the Inspector General about what they are discovering through their audits, investigations, evaluations, and reviews. And they must feel confident that the Inspector General will in turn deal with those findings in an open and honest way, and make recommendations concerning those findings that are pragmatic, reasonable, and designed not to tear down but to build up and improve the Central Intelligence Agency's effectiveness and efficiency. They must feel confident that no findings will be inappropriately ignored or hidden, but will be analyzed and addressed in a professional and pragmatic manner.

The Inspector General must respect the multiple reporting requirements she has to fulfill, and report findings to the appropriate parties, whether the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Director of National Intelligence, and/or the Congressional oversight committees. Those parties should be viewed as partners in the effort to detect, prevent, and eliminate fraud, waste, abuse of authority, wrongdoing, or illegal activity; the Inspector General must include them fully and directly so that solutions to problems can be found, systemic changes recommended and implemented when warranted, and appropriate steps taken to prevent problems from festering, continuing, or multiplying.

The Inspector General must also not shy away from speaking truth to power – even when that process can be difficult at times. Difficult conversations, however, are not conversations to be avoided, and they are not an end point. In fact, such discussions are the crucial starting point in the process of solving problems. I believe that difficult discussions about identified problems can be conducted in a non-accusatory way that encourages innovative thinking about ways to move forward. Recognizing that dedicated career professionals share the common desire to make an agency the very best it can be often makes even the most difficult discussions not only productive, but invigorating and motivating.

The position of Inspector General is not only multi-faceted and multi-layered, complex, and demanding. It is also one of the most important positions in the federal government. Through the efforts of Inspectors General and their staffs, and the efforts of their many partners, waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as mismanagement, abuses of authority, and unlawful practices, can be and are detected and prevented, and systemic solutions can be and are found. These efforts help deliver to the American people a government that is as effective, productive, and efficient as possible. That is what the American people want; that is what they deserve; and that is what they should have. The Inspector General's responsibility – one that I will accept wholeheartedly should I be so fortunate as to be confirmed as the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency – is to deliver on those rightful demands.

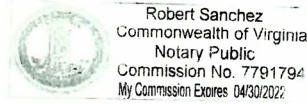
**AFFIRMATION**

I, **ROBIN CAROL ASHTON**, DO SWEAR THAT THE ANSWERS I HAVE PROVIDED TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ARE ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

April 23, 2021  
(Date)

**ROBIN ASHTON SIGNATURE**

**NOTARY SIGNATURE**



TO THE CHAIRMAN, SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

In connection with my nomination to be the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, I hereby express my willingness to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

**ROBIN ASHTON SIGNATURE**

Date: April 23, 2021

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
INTELLIGENCE

UNITED STATES SENATE



**Additional Prehearing Questions  
for  
Ms. Robin C. Ashton  
upon her nomination to be the  
Inspector General of the  
Central Intelligence Agency**



*CIA IG Access to Information***QUESTION 1**

By statute, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Inspector General (IG) “shall have access to any employee or any employee of a contractor of the Agency whose testimony is needed for the performance of his duties. In addition, [she] shall have direct access to all records, reports, audits, reviews, documents, papers, recommendations, or other material which relate to the programs and operations with respect to which the Inspector General has responsibilities under this section.”

**a. What is your understanding of the reach of this provision?**

Congress has clearly and unequivocally stated its intention that the Inspector General shall be granted extremely broad access to information, in whatever format or form, that relates to the programs and operations with respect to which the Inspector General has responsibilities. This extremely broad and wide-reaching provision of 50 U.S.C. § 3517 grants the Inspector General virtually unfettered access to any employee or contractor, the employee’s and contractor’s testimony, as well as all written documentation, papers, reports, records, and other information which the Inspector General needs in order to do her job responsibly, thoroughly, and fairly.

**b. Please describe how you would resolve, including what remedies you would pursue, a situation in which you were refused such access.**

If confirmed, I would take various steps early in my tenure in an effort to prevent a scenario from occurring in which I was prevented from immediately gaining access to information. While participating in different outreach activities with CIA leadership and employees, including training, educational, and informational sessions, I would clearly describe the purpose and mission of the CIA OIG, the relationship between employees and the CIA OIG, and employees’ and contractors’ responsibilities and obligations when dealing with the OIG. I would ask CIA supervisors and leadership to reiterate this information whenever possible and to support their respective teams in cooperating with the OIG.

I understand that some audits, investigations, special reviews, or inspections will relate to highly compartmented programs, and that controlling access and taking extra precautionary steps due to the sensitive nature of the information may at times be appropriate; while the need to take additional precautionary steps is understandable, however, denying access altogether to even the most highly sensitive and critical data, systems, or personnel, is not.

If my staff and I were denied access to the information needed to do our jobs, I would first have my staff work through the employee’s or contractor’s direct supervisory chain to gain access; I would involve OIG supervisors, and personally involve myself in those discussions, if necessary. In the unlikely event that the

problem could not be resolved at a lower level, I would discuss the problem with the Director. If, in what I predict would be the extremely unlikely event that those steps also proved unsuccessful, I would, if necessary, inform the congressional intelligence committees of the issue.

**c. What is your view of the appropriate use of subpoena authority?**

Pursuant to 50 U.S.C. § 3517(e)(5)(A), the OIG can issue subpoenas to obtain information, documents, reports, answers, records, accounts, papers, and other data, in any medium, as necessary to fully perform its mission. Pursuant to 50 U.S.C. § 3517(e)(5)(B), this subpoena authority does not extend to government agencies, for which the Inspector General must employ other procedures and methods to obtain evidence. In addition, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. § 3517(e)(5)(C), the CIA Inspector General may not issue a subpoena for, or on behalf of, any other CIA element or component.

As a former federal prosecutor, I understand that subpoenas are at times a necessary method for obtaining evidence; I also understand that subpoenas can be time-consuming and resource intensive to execute and enforce. That being said, if the circumstances called for their use, I would exercise the subpoena authority granted to the OIG.

**d. What is your view of how the CIA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) balances independent confirmation of information, for example through document review, and accepting CIA representations to OIG personnel? To what extent should IG reports include caveats with regard to information the IG has not independently confirmed?**

If confirmed, I would ensure that the CIA OIG continues to follow guidance issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency when balancing independent confirmation of information through documentary or other evidence, and accepting oral representations to OIG personnel that are not supported by documentary evidence. Although both types of information may prove helpful in understanding a problem or issue, I believe it is the best practice to attempt whenever feasible, to conduct document reviews and present documentary evidence to support oral evidence.

It also is important to note in the file – and if appropriate, in the report itself – what type of evidence is being relied upon when reaching conclusions or making recommendations, whether specific information or statements have or have not been independently confirmed or corroborated, and whether that information or those statements are supported by documentary evidence.

*Sources of Complaints and Protection of Whistleblowers***QUESTION 2**

By statute, the CIA IG “is authorized to receive and investigate complaints or information from any person concerning the existence of an activity constituting a violation of laws, rules, or regulations, or mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to the public health and safety.”

- a. If confirmed, what steps would you take to inform individuals, within or outside of the U.S. Government, of their opportunity to provide such complaints or information to the CIA IG?**

It is imperative that individuals throughout the CIA have a consistent, authorized, effective, and protected means to report their concerns regarding suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or possible wrongdoing. They must also be provided clear information to guide them as they navigate the often confusing and difficult process of bringing their concerns to light. If confirmed, I will work to identify and address any perceived gaps in the CIA’s existing whistleblower programs and procedures to increase the entire workforce’s knowledge about whistleblowing rights and the lawful means for making protected disclosures. I will employ a wide variety of means to inform employees and contractors about how they can bring information to the attention of the CIA OIG, including through the CIA website and OIG Hotline, speaking engagements, training sessions with all employees, and the posting and dissemination of informational materials. I would ask CIA supervisors and leadership to assist in these outreach efforts.

I would also ensure that individuals who take the important and brave step of bringing their concerns to the CIA OIG are appropriately protected, are connected with an OIG staff member that is accessible and knowledgeable, and that the OIG staff member can respond to the individual in an effective, diplomatic, and meaningful way. Establishing and maintaining open lines of communication is critical, particularly if the individual at any time believes that he or she is being, or may be, retaliated or reprised against for making a lawful disclosure to the OIG.

- b. What formal policies and processes are in place to inform employees of their right to provide information to the CIA IG and to detect and protect against reprisal for making complaints or disclosing information to the CIA IG?**

Individuals can only be expected to come forward with information if they believe they can do so without fear of reprisal, recrimination, or retaliation. I am generally aware that the CIA has on its website information concerning how to contact the CIA OIG, how to make a protected disclosure, and what protections are afforded those who make such disclosures. I am also aware that the CIA OIG maintains a Hotline, via which people can report information in a confidential manner. I have not yet had an opportunity, however, to review or examine in detail the formal

policies and processes that are currently in place, or to analyze the effectiveness of those policies and processes.

If confirmed, I will immediately begin the process of reviewing the CIA's whistleblower program, including the OIG's Hotline procedures, to ensure that employees and contractors not only understand how to make authorized disclosures, but also to ensure that once a disclosure is made, adequate processes are in place to protect the whistleblower from being reprised against should his or her identity become known. All employees must be informed of their right to make protected disclosures in a confidential or anonymous manner, and why making disclosures involving waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, or even possible illegality is in fact an important obligation of each employee. Regularly messaging on this matter is important, and I would engage in this effort whenever possible. Having a robust and up-to-date website, as well as providing clear informational materials, are also important ways to ensure that everyone understands when, how, what, and why reports can and should be made, and what protections are afforded to those who bravely speak up.

If confirmed, I will take all steps necessary to deliver the clear message that retaliation in response to whistleblowing will not be tolerated, that the CIA OIG will prioritize all complaints involving retaliation or reprisal, and that appropriate action will be taken in the event that allegations regarding retaliation are substantiated.

**c. Do you see any need for additional actions, policies, or processes to protect whistleblowers?**

Although I have not yet had an opportunity to examine the CIA OIG's specific policies and processes relating to whistleblowers, or the effectiveness of those policies, I believe that throughout the federal government, whistleblowers need greater protections to ensure that they are not reprised against when they in good faith and in an authorized manner bring forward a complaint or other information.

If confirmed, I will work with Congress, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, and whistleblowing experts from inside and outside the government, to explore ways to enhance whistleblower protections.

*CIA IG Review of Covert Actions*

**QUESTION 3**

Under an arrangement between the CIA IG and the congressional intelligence committees begun in 2001, the CIA IG conducts a detailed review on each authorized covert action program every three years, which has been extremely helpful for our congressional oversight.

**a. Do you plan to continue this practice? If not, why not?**

Yes. If confirmed, and assuming resources permit, I plan to continue this longstanding practice. I believe that regularly reviewing each authorized covert action program is crucial to promoting effective oversight and enhancing accountability.

**b. Are there other CIA programs or practices of which you are aware that should have the same kind of regular, periodic, oversight from the CIA IG's Office?**

I have not had an opportunity to determine which programs or practices should have the same type of regular oversight from the CIA OIG, other than the above-mentioned covert action reviews, and the regularly scheduled audits, such as those related to the Federal Information Security Modernization Act, the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act, and the audit of the CIA's Financial Statements. If confirmed, I will consider this question and begin the process of determining what programs or practices should be evaluated on a regular basis.

*Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*

**QUESTION 4**

On May 24, 2016, this Committee passed the *Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*, S. 3017. The bill includes two provisions that affect the CIA IG: section 307 requires the IG for each Intelligence Community element to implement a policy that places limitations on certain employees of IG offices, and section 412 amends the *Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949* to authorize the CIA IG to consider certain positions as law enforcement officers for purposes of calculating retirement eligibility and entitlements.

**a. What are your views of these provisions?**

These provisions of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, S. 3017, Section 307, *Protections for Independent Inspectors General of Elements of the Intelligence Community*, are clearly intended to put pragmatic measures in place to enhance the independence of Intelligence Community Offices of Inspector General. Section 307(a), *Limitation on Activities of Employees of an Office of Inspector General*, requires Intelligence Community OIGs to implement a policy that prohibits employees holding senior level positions from being involved in any matter that affects the interests of an element of the intelligence community that formerly employed the individual for a period of not less than two years after the date the individual left that employment; or individuals who do not hold senior level positions from being involved in any such matter for a period of not less than one year after the date the individual left that employment.

Section 307(b), *Limitation on Rotation of Employees of an Office of Inspector General*, prohibits agencies from requiring intelligence community OIG employees

to rotate to positions in the agency for which that OIG conducts audits, investigations, or reviews, or that may otherwise impact the independence of the OIG.

The provisions cited above are clearly designed to promote independence within the Intelligence Community Offices of Inspectors General, and I support such provisions as a way to avoid conflicts of interest – or even the appearance of a conflict of interest or lack of independence – whenever possible.

With regard to Section 412, if confirmed, I look forward to more fully studying this matter and to more fully considering the various views regarding these entitlements. I do not at this time have an opinion about the fact that certain CIA OIG personnel may be considered law enforcement officers for purposes of calculating retirement eligibility and entitlements. I understand that some other federal OIGs have law enforcement authority and that offering retirement eligibility and other similar benefits might be an important tool for hiring and retaining highly skilled and qualified criminal investigators.

**b. If these provisions are enacted in law, how would they impact your duties and responsibilities, and execution thereof, if confirmed as CIA IG?**

Please see my response to Question #4a, above, regarding Section 307. I support the provisions designed to enhance independence in the CIA OIG. With regard to Section 412, without further study, I do not currently know precisely how Section 412 would impact my duties and responsibilities, and execution thereof. If confirmed, I commit to studying this matter further.

**c. In your view, should CIA OIG officers be armed as law enforcement officers?**

I have not had an opportunity to thoroughly examine this question and to fully consider the various views regarding whether CIA OIG officers should be armed as law enforcement officers. In considering this question, I would like to examine the reasons being offered for needing armed criminal investigators on staff at the CIA OIG, including why relying on Federal Bureau of Investigation or other law enforcement personnel is not viewed as sufficient for those cases for which armed personnel are needed. I would also want to consider and analyze the other implications that having armed personnel on staff would bring into play, including the need for continuous training, equipment and training costs, and safety concerns, among others.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss this topic with current CIA OIG leadership and staff members, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, members of the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, as well as the intelligence oversight committees, so that I can carefully consider their views and insights before formulating and expressing an opinion.

*Personnel and Budgetary Resources***QUESTION 5**

By statute, the CIA IG has “final approval of . . . the selection of internal and external candidates for employment with the Office of Inspector General; and . . . all other personnel decisions concerning personnel permanently assigned to the Office of Inspector General, including selection and appointment to the Senior Intelligence Service, but excluding all security-based determinations that are not within the authority of a head of other Central Intelligence Agency offices.” In addition, the CIA IG “shall transmit a budget estimate and request through the Director to the Director of National Intelligence” specifying certain amounts requested for each fiscal year.

- a. **If confirmed, what changes (if any) would you consider or make in the present CIA OIG, with respect to organization, staff qualifications, training, budget, or other features relevant to the effective performance of the Office?**

I do not presently have sufficient information that would make it possible for me to comment in an informed way concerning the CIA OIG’s current organizational structure, staffing levels and staff qualifications, training needs, or budget. Whenever I have accepted top leadership positions in the past, however, I have immediately focused on all such questions by asking questions of current staff, reviewing relevant documentation, including budget requests, projections, and analyses, reviewing past work product and future project planning documents, and other such information. By immediately focusing on such matters, I can begin the process of determining whether the organizational structure needs to be modified in any way, whether additional training appears to be required or desired, and whether the budget and staffing levels appear adequate to permit the OIG to effectively achieve its mission.

- b. **Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe that the use of contractors to perform such functions is appropriate?**

I believe that having a staff comprised primarily of permanent federal employees, as opposed to contractors, is the optimal staffing model. Having cadre staff enhances stability and continuity in the workforce, which in turn increases the number of staff members who have a high level of expertise, a deep historical perspective concerning their agency, and an in-depth knowledge about their agency’s overall mission, as well as about its specific programs. These qualities are particularly crucial when handling the numerous complex matters comprising the OIG’s workload, including non-routine audits, investigations, and inspections (often involving covert actions and programs), as well as whistleblowing and other mission-critical, inherently governmental functions.

That said, I have personally observed and been the beneficiary of the superb work that was done by highly-skilled and dedicated contractors in myriad capacities. The ability to hire contractors can quickly and effectively augment staffing numbers,

and help fill gaps in certain important areas. Because hiring and onboarding permanent staff in the Intelligence Community can take many months, or even a year or longer, having contractors fill certain positions is often a necessary reality. When I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, the ICIG hired contractors to fill positions in many areas, including IT and administrative support. We also hired contract auditors who worked on financial statement audits, and audits relating to the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA), for example. Using auditor contractors not only filled gaps for hard-to-fill positions, but also made available cadre auditors to work on more complex, less-routine audits. I understand that such use of contractors was a common practice throughout the Intelligence Community.

*Government Accountability Office (GAO)*

**QUESTION 6**

Pursuant to Section 348 of the *Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010*, the Director of National Intelligence has issued a directive on the access of the Comptroller General to information in the possession of an element of the Intelligence Community.

- a. **Please describe your understanding of the role of GAO in assisting Congress in oversight that relates to such information.**

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) plays an important oversight role in helping Congress account for how federal taxpayer dollars are spent, including in relation to Intelligence Community programs and activities. It is important for the CIA to provide GAO access to information pertaining to matters being reviewed by GAO, in a way that is consistent with the need to protect intelligence sources and methods, and national security.

- b. **Please describe your views on what coordination between the CIA IG and GAO would be desirable to assure full coverage of oversight requirements while avoiding conflict or duplication, and while assuring the protection of classified information from inappropriate disclosure.**

I believe that GAO and the CIA OIG must work in a cooperative manner to ensure that each entity can accomplish its respective oversight mission with as little duplication of effort as possible, and while protecting classified information. Having worked effectively with GAO when I was the Director of the Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility, and also while serving as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (ICIG), I know that working in a cooperative way with GAO, including providing access to information and documents when feasible, while simultaneously protecting intelligence sources and methods, can be accomplished through effective communication.



While at the ICIG, I found that engaging in regular meetings with GAO leadership ensured productive communication, prevented the duplication of efforts, and enhanced our mutual understanding of goals, objectives, and methodologies. I found GAO to be an excellent oversight partner, and sometimes a force multiplier, and believe that the ICIG benefited greatly from their insights, deep historical perspective, and their willingness to share information and reports when possible so that we could both more efficiently achieve our oversight responsibilities.

**c. Please describe any concerns you may have regarding the use of GAO to assist in the conduct of oversight of the IC.**

I do not have concerns regarding GAO's mission as it relates to the Intelligence Community. I am confident that GAO and the CIA OIG will find pragmatic ways to cooperatively work together to ensure that the important work of GAO can be done in a timely and effective manner that does not adversely affect the work of the CIA OIG, and in a way that protects sensitive national security information.

***IA IG Work Plan***

**QUESTION 7**

**If confirmed, how will you determine the investigations and reports that are necessary or desirable to complete each year?**

Congressionally Directed Actions, Office of Management and Budget-directed audit requirements, and other similar work will necessarily be prioritized and completed in a timely fashion. To determine the CIA OIG's annual work plan priorities, if confirmed, I will actively engage and consult with, and solicit input from, CIA OIG staff members and leadership, with CIA leadership and supervisors, and the congressional oversight committees. These engagements will be invaluable in determining where and how best to focus OIG resources to most effectively detect and combat waste, fraud, abuse, and possible wrongdoing.

If confirmed, under my leadership the CIA OIG will also prioritize and conduct investigations and reviews that arise from allegations or concerns received from whistleblowers and others that involve allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse in the CIA's programs and activities. We will similarly prioritize any allegations of whistleblower reprisal.

**QUESTION 8**

**a. Will you develop an annual work plan for the OIG?**

Yes. When I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (ICIG), I actively participated in the development of the ICIG's annual work plan, and if confirmed, I will do the same at the CIA OIG. The annual work

plan provides an important means not only for the workforce to understand CIA OIG priorities, but it also provides transparency to the American people into the activities of an otherwise largely secret world.

As discussed in my response to Question #7, developing a work plan also provides an important opportunity for the CIA OIG to engage with and seek input from CIA leadership, Congress, other Intelligence Community elements, and others to identify and discuss possible projects that should be considered for inclusion in the work plan.

**b. If confirmed, would you review with the intent to revise the annual work plan already submitted?**

If confirmed, I will review with great care the current annual work plan. However, since some of the work planned and detailed in the work plan would be well under way, I would not be reviewing the work plan with the specific intent to significantly revise it.

That said, however, while the annual work plan provides a framework for activities that the CIA OIG intends to carry out in the coming fiscal year, by necessity projects may be modified to address changing circumstances and priorities, emerging issues, or unanticipated Congressional inquiries and requests. If I learn of a new matter or area of interest that should be added to the current work plan, or if it becomes clear that planned work needs to be re-prioritized, I will examine and consider those new demands and proceed accordingly.

**c. Will you consult with the intelligence oversight committees in Congress in advance on your work plan? Why or why not?**

Yes. When I helped develop the ICIG's annual work plan, I found it very helpful to consult not only with ICIG staff members, but ODNI leadership, and the congressional oversight committees, as well. Their insights, input, and expertise proved extraordinarily helpful to the ICIG as it developed its work plan. I feel confident that the CIA OIG staff members and I will similarly benefit from consultations with the congressional oversight committees as we develop future work plans.

*Consultations about Reports***QUESTION 9**

**Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it would be appropriate for the CIA IG to consult with officials in the CIA, or other officials of an IC element outside an office of an IG, before issuing a report, regarding the findings and recommendations in the report?**

I understand that it is the practice of the CIA OIG to allow in some circumstances the subjects of audits, inspections, and certain reviews – and at times other appropriate personnel – to read and comment on draft reports before they are finalized and formally issued. When I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, we followed Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency guidelines and best practices, and I anticipate doing so if confirmed as the CIA IG. The goal is to issue the most accurate, clear, and helpful reports possible. By allowing appropriate parties to provide input in this fashion increases the likelihood that the reports are not only accurate, but fair. Providing drafts of classified audits, inspections, or certain special reports in appropriate circumstances to CIA officials or officials of another IC element will also ensure that classified, proprietary, or sensitive information is appropriately protected.

I also believe in consulting or engaging with officials in the CIA – or other officials of an IC element outside the CIA – before issuing a report, in certain other limited circumstances. There are times when the Inspector General may become aware of facts or information during an audit or review that may not be known to CIA officials or others who would benefit from learning of that information in real time, rather than at the time the draft report is ready to be shared. If such circumstances were to arise, I would consider consulting with those individuals before issuing a draft report, particularly if it appeared that their receiving the information might improve their ability to make a better-informed decision on a significant matter, or allow them to address an urgent matter without delay. Similarly, if I became aware of information that affected a different IC element in a significant way, I would consider alerting that element. All of these circumstances would have to be considered and analyzed on a case-by-case basis, and I would do just that.

**QUESTION 10**

**To the extent that you believe such consultation is appropriate, what steps, if any, do you believe the IG should take to keep a record of the consultation and record the results in the text of the report?**

I believe a clear, thorough, and accurate record should be maintained by CIA OIG staff members engaging in such consultations, in accordance with Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency standards.

**QUESTION 11**

**Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it would be appropriate for senior officials to request that the CIA IG not investigate or review a particular matter, as provided in 50 U.S.C. § 403q(b)(3)?**

The law specifically provides that “[t]he Director may prohibit the Inspector General from initiating, carrying out, or completing any audit, inspection, or investigation, or from issuing any subpoena, after the Inspector General has decided to initiate, carry out, or complete such audit, inspection, or investigation or to issue such subpoena, if the Director determines that such prohibition is necessary to protect vital national security interests of the United States.” In such instances, the Director would notify not only the Inspector General, but the congressional intelligence committees, as well. The law clearly limits the instances in which the Director may prohibit the Inspector General from conducting the planned action to only those instances where the prohibition is necessary to protect vital U.S. national security interests.

There may be other circumstances in which senior officials believe that the CIA OIG should not commence or proceed with conducting a review or investigation, such as a perceived lack of jurisdiction, a belief that undertaking a specific review or investigation would duplicate other efforts of which the CIA IG may not be aware, or that launching an investigation might compromise covert operations. I believe it would be appropriate for the Inspector General to respectfully and carefully consider each of these reasons on a case-by-case basis.

**QUESTION 12**

**Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it would be appropriate for senior officials to request that the CIA IG not issue a report on a particular matter, as provided in 50 U.S.C. § 403q(b)(3)?**

Other than the rare instances, as noted above, where the Director prohibits the Inspector General from issuing a report because the Director believes such prohibition is necessary to protect vital national security interests of the United States (the basis for which belief the Director would also be required to share with the congressional intelligence committees), and those reasons briefly touched upon in my response to Question #11, I cannot think of another circumstance where it would be appropriate for a senior official to request that a report not be issued.

**QUESTION 13**

**Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it would be appropriate for senior officials to request that the CIA IG change findings, recommendations, or other pertinent material in a report on a particular matter?**

As stated above, after reviewing a CIA OIG draft report, a senior official may provide input regarding the draft report. If the CIA OIG learns that it has made a mistake in its report concerning its factual recitation or analysis, or new facts come to light, I can envision circumstances where, in the interest of clarity and accuracy, a recommendation or finding might need to be changed or re-worded. Other than those instances, however, I believe it would be extremely rare that the CIA IG would grant a senior official's request to modify or change the findings, recommendations, or other information contained in the report. I would, however, include the official's comments in an appendix to the final report.

It is imperative that the Inspector General make the final decisions regarding OIG reports' content, including findings and recommendations.

**QUESTION 14**

- a. Do you commit to working directly with the congressional intelligence committees and providing information directly to the committees, rather than through the CIA's Office of Congressional Affairs?**

Yes. That was my practice when I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, and if confirmed I will continue that practice.

- b. Do you commit to notifying the congressional intelligence committees of any effort to obstruct or curtail an OIG investigation, delay the issuance of an OIG report, or otherwise interfere in the functioning of the OIG, irrespective of the source of that interference?**

Yes.

**QUESTION 15**

**What is your position on the role of the CIA IG to monitor CIA adherence to congressional intent and direction?**

I believe that the CIA IG has an important role to play in monitoring CIA adherence to congressional intent and direction. In the interest of enhancing the congressional oversight committees' ability to effectuate its significant oversight role, I commit to honoring my responsibility to work with Congress in that regard.

**QUESTION 16**

- a. Do you commit to consult with the intelligence oversight committees in Congress to help determine CIA adherence to congressional intent and direction? Why or why not?**

Yes. During my recent tenure as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community I came to truly understand and appreciate the crucial need for Congressional oversight in the Intelligence Community. Because the work of the Intelligence Community, generally, and the Central Intelligence Agency, specifically, must, by necessity, operate largely outside of the public's view, Congressional oversight becomes increasingly important. The congressional intelligence committees play a critical role in ensuring that the operations, programs, and activities of the CIA (and other IC entities) are carried out ethically, honestly, and in accordance with law, established policies, and in a manner that reflects our nation's values. If confirmed to be the Inspector General of the CIA, I will work to assist Congress in this vital oversight role by helping to determine CIA adherence to congressional intent and direction, as expressed in federal statutes and regulations.

- b. If so, what would your approach be in making these congressional consultations, and how would these consultations inform or revise your annual work plan?**

The Offices of Inspectors General are stronger when they have a strong working relationship with their congressional oversight partners. When I served as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Committee, the Inspector General and I had regular, bipartisan contact with the members of the intelligence oversight committees and their staffs. These interactions included discussions in person, by letter, on the phone, or via email, and concerned legislative proposals, and specific Member concerns, or questions concerning the ICIG's or ODNI's operations or activities. These regular communications were helpful in alerting the Inspector General and me about matters of particular importance to the intelligence committees.

I believe in responding in the most open and transparent manner possible to all inquiries from Congress, and will continue to do so if I am confirmed as the Inspector General of the CIA.

**QUESTION 17**

**Please also describe your views on the appropriate relationship between the CIA IG and the CIA Office of General Counsel with regard to legal issues. Do you commit to independently analyzing legal issues related to the role, responsibilities, and functions of the OIG?**

Yes. I commit to independently analyzing legal issues relating to the role, responsibilities, and functions of the OIG. 50 U.S.C. § 3517(e)(8)(A), specifically mandates that the Inspector General “shall – (i) appoint a Counsel to the Inspector General who shall report to the Inspector General; or (ii) obtain the services of a counsel appointed by and directly reporting to another Inspector General or the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency on a reimbursable basis.” The reason for this clear mandate is to ensure that the work of the CIA’s General Counsel – who reports to the Director of the Agency – is separate and distinct from the work of the Counsel to the IG – who reports directly to the Inspector General. Legal issues arising in connection with the work of the CIA OIG will therefore be analyzed by the OIG’s Counsel.

I can envision that on some occasions, working with the CIA’s General Counsel will be prudent and necessary. For example, there may be times when the CIA OIG through its investigative and other work becomes aware of confusing, unclear, or possibly insufficient legal guidance being given to the workforce. In those instances, a pragmatic and cooperative working relationship between the two Counsels can ensure that clear guidance is provided to the entire workforce on a specific issue. In addition, there may be instances when the two Counsels will need to work together with an outside entity, such as the Department of Justice, on certain litigation matters. I will work in a constructive, collaborative way with the CIA General Counsel in such instances. Significantly, I will work proactively with the CIA General Counsel and his or her staff to ensure that we have a mutual and clear understanding regarding legal matters specifically relating to the OIG, such as OIG access authorities.

However, if confirmed, I will rely on the CIA OIG’s Counsel to provide me legal advice concerning OIG matters.

*Major Challenges, Problems, and Priorities*

**QUESTION 18**

**In your view, what are the major challenges, problems, and priorities facing the CIA IG’s Office?**

I have not had the opportunity to learn of or examine in detail the major challenges, problems, and priorities facing the CIA OIG. However, in my time as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I participated in the

Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum (consisting of twelve IGs with oversight responsibility for elements of the Intelligence Community, including the CIA). One of the widely-shared problems the Forum members discussed was the IC's difficulty in hiring and bringing on board new employees in a timely manner. The length of time between placing of an advertisement for a position, selecting a candidate, and actually bringing the new employee on board was inordinately – and sometimes inexplicably – long. Having numerous vacancies in the ranks burdened other employees and forced supervisors to choose between competing and worthy projects.

Another problem discussed by the Forum members was how best to deal with pandemic-related issues. Such issues not only affected their respective workforces, but also affected the Inspectors General's ability to work with others, particularly those working in a remote, mostly telework, non-SCIF environment.

In addition, it is my understanding that most of the Intelligence Community Inspectors General are currently re-focusing on their whistleblower programs, and are trying to explore and implement best practices to ensure that their programs provide whistleblowers with all appropriate protections. An important part of this challenge is to strengthen employees' trust in their agencies' whistleblower programs; I believe this is true for the CIA, as well. It is crucial that whistleblowers believe that they can bring to light allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse in an authorized manner without fear of retaliation, and that they feel confident that the system will treat them fairly and impartially if they do so.

Because I do not know what other major challenges, problems, and priorities the CIA OIG is currently facing, if confirmed, I will immediately begin the process of identifying those challenges and problems. As part of that process, I will speak not only with those inside the CIA, but will also seek the input of partners outside the CIA, including members of the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, and members of the intelligence oversight committees.

#### **QUESTION 19**

##### **If confirmed, how do you plan to address those challenges, problems, and priorities?**

If confirmed, I will immediately start the process of identifying the challenges facing the CIA OIG, as well as the significance of those challenges. I will then begin the process of determining how most effectively to prioritize, address, and solve the challenges. Throughout that process, I will seek the input of various interested parties, including CIA OIG staff members, CIA leadership, the congressional intelligence committees, the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and others. I will also familiarize myself with recent audit, investigation, and evaluation reports, as well as information concerning specific CIA programs and operations.



I will also begin the process of analyzing the CIA OIG's budget and staffing numbers to determine if both are sufficient to allow the CIA OIG to accomplish its mission. By first gathering information and educating myself in this manner, I will begin to take the requisite steps to identify the most significant challenges and problems currently facing the CIA OIG.

*Whistleblower*

**QUESTION 20**

**To your knowledge, have you ever been the subject of a whistleblower complaint? If yes, please provide dates and content of each complaint of which you are aware.**

No. To my knowledge, I have never been the subject of a whistleblower complaint.

**QUESTION 22**

**What is your view of the role of the CIA IG in managing and investigating whistleblower complaints? How much of a priority will you make managing and investigating whistleblower complaints if confirmed as the CIA IG?**

I believe that one of the most important responsibilities of the CIA IG is to ensure that the CIA has a robust and effective whistleblower program. Whistleblowers must be viewed and treated as essential partners in bringing to light waste, fraud, corruption, mismanagement, and abuses of authority. Because whistleblowers are often the first people to become aware of wasteful practices, ineffective programs, or even wrongdoing, it is imperative that they have a safe and effective way to disclose information in an authorized and appropriate way.

If confirmed, I intend to carefully look at the CIA's whistleblower program and OIG's Hotline processes to ensure that individuals have a safe, clear, and effective way of providing information; that there is an efficient intake and evaluation process; and that effective recordkeeping procedures are in place so that the timeliness and quality of whistleblower investigations can be accurately tracked. Quickly and thoroughly handling whistleblower complaints sends a strong message to whistleblowers about how important the CIA OIG considers their actions in coming forward with information, helps the OIG identify systemic problems, and makes it possible to expeditiously stop or correct the problems the whistleblower has identified.

**QUESTION 23**

**Will you seek to strengthen the CIA IG's role relative to whistleblower protections? If yes, how will you strengthen the whistleblower protection activities of the CIA IG?**

Yes, I will take steps to strengthen the CIA IG's role relative to whistleblower protections. Although I am not personally aware of how effectively the CIA's whistleblower program operates, I believe that any such program can always be improved – and the protections afforded whistleblowers enhanced. If confirmed as the Inspector General of the CIA, I will take the steps needed to determine whether the CIA's whistleblower program is sufficiently strong and robust to not only inform people how they can in an authorized manner disclose information regarding waste, fraud, and abuse, but to encourage whistleblowers to come forward with such information.

In addition to taking the above-described steps, I will also examine whether whistleblower matters are being carefully managed and appropriately prioritized, and whether sufficient resources are being directed toward ensuring that appropriate steps can be taken in a timely manner with regard to each matter.

We cannot, however, encourage individuals to report wrongdoing through appropriate channels, and then fail to protect them when they do so. I believe it is one of the most important responsibilities of the Inspector General to protect whistleblowers from reprisal, or the threat of reprisal, when they disclose allegations of wrongdoing in good faith and in an authorized manner. We must work to ensure that whistleblowers are treated fairly and impartially when they demonstrate the moral courage to alert the CIA OIG about suspected waste, fraud, abuse, or malfeasance.

**QUESTION 24**

**To proactively protect CIA employees and contractors from potential retaliation, do you support providing CIA employees with the same stay authority that is afforded almost every other federal employee?**

As stated above, one of the most significant responsibilities of the CIA IG is to ensure that the CIA has a strong and effective whistleblower program. If confirmed, I will take the requisite steps to ensure that policies are in place to protect whistleblowers from reprisal, or threat of reprisal, if they come forward in an authorized manner and disclose, in good faith, allegations of wrongdoing.

With regard to whether CIA employees should be provided with the same stay authority that is afforded numerous non-Intelligence Community federal employees, I would like to study this issue before providing a definitive response. I can understand the importance of having stay authority as an option so that if a whistleblower fears that a possibly retaliatory action is about to be taken and he or

she requests a stay, the stay can be granted, when appropriate. If I am confirmed, I look forward to exploring this issue further and discussing it with the Intelligence Community Inspectors General Forum, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, members of the intelligence oversight committees, and with CIA OIG staff members.

### *Independence*

#### **QUESTION 25**

**In general, what would be your approach to ensuring the OIG's independence, if you are confirmed as the next CIA IG?**

Throughout my 35 years as a federal government public servant, including my years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, as the Director of the Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility, and as the Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, I have been entrusted with the tremendous responsibility of gathering and analyzing information, and then making recommendations based on that information. These jobs have required that I act in an independent, ethical, unbiased, and impartial manner. If confirmed as the Inspector General of the CIA, I will continue to act in that same way. Inspectors General can only fulfill their vital oversight function because, by law, they are independent of the agencies they oversee. It is imperative that the Inspector General remains independent, is not partisan, acts without a personal agenda, and maintains objectivity at all times.

The Inspector General must encourage a culture in which people feel empowered to speak freely and honestly amongst themselves and to the Inspector General about what they are discovering through their audits, investigations, evaluations, and reviews. They must also feel confident that the Inspector General will in turn deal with those findings in an appropriate way, and make recommendations concerning those findings that are pragmatic, reasonable, and designed not to tear down but to build up and improve the CIA's effectiveness and efficiency.

I believe in working cooperatively and diplomatically at all times and in all work environments. I will be transparent with CIA leadership regarding the OIG's reports, findings, and recommendations. That being said, however, I believe that it is absolutely crucial for the CIA IG to act independently and to never forget that the oath she takes is to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic...." If in order to honor that oath, I find that I must proceed in a direction that puts me on a different path than my peers, colleagues, or those in leadership positions in the CIA or elsewhere, I will do so. Before doing so, I would analyze all options and consider all opposing viewpoints in a careful, thoughtful, and pragmatic way, but I will never bend my will to another's if I believe that by doing so I may dishonor the oath I have taken to uphold

the Constitution, or that I may fail to faithfully and responsibly discharge the duties of my job as the Inspector General of the CIA.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

UNITED STATES SENATE



**Post-hearing Questions for**

**Ms. Robin Ashton upon her nomination to be**

**Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency**

*[From Vice Chairman Rubio]*

1. The Committee has been informed that the Acting-CIA IG has already begun an investigation into the CIA's handling of workforce-reported Anomalous Health Incidents (AHI), with a specific focus on the 2016-2018 time frame. Broadening the scope of review would provide a more complete and informative assessment of the Agency's performance.

- **In your view, is it sufficient to look exclusively at only the first two years of the CIA's handling of the AHI issue?**

I share the Committee's deep interest in examining how the Central Intelligence Agency is handling workforce-reported Anomalous Health Incidents (AHI), and sincerely appreciate the Committee's unwavering commitment to ensuring the health, well-being, and safety of all members of the federal workforce. I agree that we must do all that we can to protect employees from injury or harm resulting from AHI, as there simply is no higher priority than taking care of the brave public servants who sacrifice so much on a daily basis to serve our nation.

I agree with the Committee that issues relating to AHI must be thoroughly examined to determine whether employees' well-being, safety, and health are being proactively, aggressively, and fully protected; and also whether failures, weaknesses, or inadequate processes in responding to such incidents are being swiftly identified, and appropriately addressed and resolved. If confirmed, I will cooperate with the Committee's endeavor to gain a full understanding of the depth and breadth of AHI-related issues. I will also work with CIA's leadership, this Committee, and other partners, as appropriate, to help in the effort to ensure that the most effective measures are being taken to protect CIA's workforce with regard to AHI.

I understand that the Committee has been informed that the CIA-OIG has already commenced a review specifically focusing on a 2016-18 time frame. I appreciate the Committee's question concerning whether the scope of that review is sufficiently broad to provide a complete and informative assessment of the Agency's performance in responding to AHI. I do not presently have sufficient information making it possible for me to comment in a fully informed way on whether the two-year focus of the current review is sufficiently broad in scope. However, if I am confirmed as the Inspector General of the CIA, I will immediately focus on that, and related, questions, and begin the process of independently analyzing whether the scope of the work currently underway should be expanded beyond two years.

I will communicate with this Committee regarding my assessment and plans going forward, as appropriate.

- **Are there any impediments to doing a more expansive review that would cover at least 2016 to present?**

I share the Committee's resolve that any review currently underway concerning AHI – or any additional work that may be subsequently undertaken by CIA-OIG – be sufficiently broad so as to provide meaningful, accurate information and answers to the Committee, the CIA Director, and other oversight and policy-making partners. Possessing such information is crucial to informing effective decision making concerning what steps should be taken to keep employees safe, or how best to provide appropriate assistance and care for those who may have already suffered harm or injury.

As stated above, if confirmed as the Inspector General of the CIA, I will ensure that, without delay, I am fully briefed on the review the CIA-OIG currently has underway. If I determine, based on the information available to me, that an expansion in scope of the current review beyond the two-year time frame presently contemplated is necessary and prudent, I will examine whether any challenges or impediments would prevent, hinder, or delay the CIA-OIG from expanding the focus. I will keep this Committee informed concerning my determinations and conclusions, and the OIG's plans, to the fullest extent possible.

I understand how crucial it is that this Committee obtain salient, accurate, and timely information concerning AHI, and the significant role the CIA-OIG can play in providing such information. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with this Committee and other partners to address issues relating to AHI as we work together to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the nation's public servants.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
INTELLIGENCE

UNITED STATES SENATE



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPLETION BY  
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES



**SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPLETION BY  
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES**

**PART A - BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. FULL NAME: **Christine Sandra Abizaid**  
OTHER NAMES USED: **Christy Abizaid**
2. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: **02/07/1979 Amman, Jordan**  
CITIZENSHIP: **United States**
3. MARITAL STATUS: **Married**
4. SPOUSE'S NAME: **Jill Murphy**
5. SPOUSE'S MAIDEN NAME IF APPLICABLE: **N/A**
6. NAMES AND AGES OF CHILDREN:

**REDACTED**

7. EDUCATION SINCE HIGH SCHOOL:

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>DATES ATTENDED</u>	<u>DEGREE RECEIVED</u>	<u>DATE OF DEGREE</u>
<b>Stanford University</b>	<b>September 2008 – June 2010</b>	<b>MA, International Policy Studies</b>	<b>June 2010</b>
<b>University of California at San Diego</b>	<b>September 1997 – June 2001</b>	<b>BA, Psychology</b>	<b>June 2001</b>

8. EMPLOYMENT RECORD (LIST ALL POSITIONS HELD SINCE COLLEGE, INCLUDING MILITARY SERVICE. INDICATE NAME OF EMPLOYER, POSITION, TITLE OR DESCRIPTION, LOCATION, AND DATES OF EMPLOYMENT).

<u>EMPLOYER</u>	<u>POSITION/TITLE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Dell Technologies	Vice President, Global Operations	Austin, TX and Baltimore, MD	October 2017- present
Independent Contractor	Strategic Advisor	Austin TX	May 2017- September 2017
JPA Partners, LLC	Strategic Advisor	Austin, TX	May 2017- September 2017
Defense Innovation Unit (Experimental), Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense	Austin Presence Lead	Austin, TX	September 2016- January 2017
Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense – Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central Asia	Washington, D.C.	July 2014- August 2016
Defense Intelligence Agency	Senior Intelligence Officer	Washington, D.C.	June 2002-June 2014
Boston Private Bank and Trust Company	Customer Service Representative	Wellesley, MA	December 2001- May 2002

9. GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE (INDICATE EXPERIENCE IN OR ASSOCIATION WITH FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING ADVISORY, CONSULTATIVE, HONORARY, OR OTHER PART-TIME SERVICE OR POSITION. DO NOT REPEAT INFORMATION ALREADY PROVIDED IN QUESTION 8).

In addition to the assignments listed in question 8, during my U.S. Government career, I served in various rotational assignments to other offices and agencies and on deployment to war zones. These assignments included time with:

The Joint Staff, Intelligence Directorate  
The Central Intelligence Agency

**The Joint Special Operations Command  
 Multinational Forces – Iraq Headquarters  
 The National Security Council, Director, Counterterrorism Directorate  
 The National Security Council, Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant to the  
 President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism  
 The White House Chief of Staff**

10. INDICATE ANY SPECIALIZED INTELLIGENCE OR NATIONAL SECURITY EXPERTISE YOU HAVE ACQUIRED HAVING SERVED IN THE POSITIONS DESCRIBED IN QUESTIONS 8 AND/OR 9.

**In the course of the positions in which I have served in the U.S. Government, I have gained significant experience in intelligence and national security matters.**

**The 9/11 terrorist attacks on our nation compelled me to work for the Department of Defense where I served as a counterterrorism intelligence officer, authoring and leading assessments of strategic terrorism trends across the Middle East and Asia Pacific. I wrote numerous strategic intelligence assessments, contributed to various National Intelligence Estimates, provided intelligence support to counterterrorism operations, deployed several times to the Middle East region in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, and led analytic teams assessing the plans, intentions and capabilities of Lebanese Hizballah, Al-Qaida in Iraq/Islamic State in Iraq, Al-Qa'ida Core, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, and other terrorist groups and individuals.**

**In 2011, I transitioned from a producer to a consumer of intelligence by serving at the National Security Council (NSC), where I provided key contributions to the national security decision-making process. My initial NSC assignment focused primarily on terrorism policy and operations in the Middle East and Europe. In this role, I worked closely with NCTC and other Intelligence Community agencies to understand CT trends and task relevant CT assessments that helped drive whole-of-government strategic policy coordination, both across the interagency and with relevant international partners and allies.**

**My assignment at the National Security Council broadened considerably to include serving as the Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHSCT). In this role, I not only tracked global CT threats and policy issues, but also engaged on cyber, intelligence, operational, foreign partner, and homeland security related tasks. I ensured clear, complete, timely, and well-considered support to the NSC staff and APHSCT.**

**In 2014, I transitioned back to the Department of Defense in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy to lead the Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia office. In this role, I established defense policy positions associated with the region, including recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding U.S. and NATO troop levels in Afghanistan. I also provided policy oversight for over \$5 billion in Congressional**

appropriations for regional security cooperation programs; coordinated within the Defense Department and the national security interagency to implement decisions related to the region, including those of the President and the Secretary of Defense; and engaged foreign counterparts, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders to communicate Administration decisions and policy positions relevant to U.S. national security interests. In this policy role, I relied heavily on intelligence assessments from across the community and in theater to formulate key defense policy recommendations and decisions for the region.

My government service concluded in 2017, as the lead for the Defense Innovation Unit (Experimental) (DIUx) in Austin, Texas where I worked with our warfighters to understand their strategic and operational technology needs. In this role, I established a new operating model for DIUx that relied heavily upon a team of military reservists and guardsman with tech know-how, scouted for commercially available technological solutions to warfighter problems; engaged the tech ecosystem across Texas; and fostered ties between innovators and the U.S. military.

11. HONORS AND AWARDS (PROVIDE INFORMATION ON SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, HONORARY DEGREES, MILITARY DECORATIONS, CIVILIAN SERVICE CITATIONS, OR ANY OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE OR ACHIEVEMENT).

**Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service: 2016**

**Council on Foreign Relations Term Member: 2015**

**Office of Director of National Intelligence Award: 2008**

**Defense Intelligence Agency Academic Fellowship to Stanford University: 2008**

**National Military Intelligence Association John T. Hughes Award: 2007**

**U.S. Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service: 2006**

**Defense Civilian Expeditionary Medal for overseas deployment: 2003, 2006, 2008**

12. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS (LIST MEMBERSHIPS IN AND OFFICES HELD WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS IN ANY PROFESSIONAL, CIVIC, FRATERNAL, BUSINESS, SCHOLARLY, CULTURAL, CHARITABLE, OR OTHER SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS).

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>OFFICE HELD</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Middle East Policy Council	Director, Board of Directors	May 2017-present

<b>Responsible Business Alliance</b>	<b>Director, Board of Directors</b>	<b>October 2019-present</b>
<b>Leadership Council for Women in National Security</b>	<b>Steering Committee Member</b>	<b>August 2019-present</b>
<b>Truman Center</b>	<b>Advisor, Board of Advisors</b>	<b>March 2020-present</b>

13. PUBLISHED WRITINGS AND SPEECHES (LIST THE TITLES, PUBLISHERS, BLOGS AND PUBLICATION DATES OF ANY BOOKS, ARTICLES, REPORTS, OR OTHER PUBLISHED MATERIALS YOU HAVE AUTHORED. ALSO LIST ANY PUBLIC SPEECHES OR REMARKS YOU HAVE MADE WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS FOR WHICH THERE IS A TEXT, TRANSCRIPT, OR VIDEO). IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE A COPY OF EACH REQUESTED PUBLICATION, TEXT, TRANSCRIPT, OR VIDEO?

To the best of my ability, I have identified all materials responsive to this question; there may be other materials I do not recall at this time.

Department of Defense Witness, *Assessing the Development of the Afghan National Security Forces*, House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations (Feb 2016)

Department of Defense Witness, *Rebuilding Afghanistan: Oversight of Defense Department Infrastructure Projects*, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives (Mar 2016)

Guest, Bombshell Podcast, Episode: Be Like Shawn (Jan 2018)

Book Review Roundtable: *With Us and Against Us*, "The Imperfect Truth Behind Counterterrorism Partnerships," Texas National Security Review (July 2018)

Dell Technologies Blog: "Working Together for Water and a Cleaner Lake Taihu" (Oct 2018)

Dell Technologies Blog: "At Dell Technologies, People are a Priority" (Dec 2019)

#### **PART B - QUALIFICATIONS**

14. QUALIFICATIONS (DESCRIBE WHY YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE QUALIFIED TO SERVE AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER).

I believe I am qualified to serve as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center based on my extensive service in the U.S. CT community, my experiences in key interagency and Department of Defense national security decision-making roles, and my demonstrated ability to build and lead large, effective, and globally-based teams.

During my 15 years in the U.S. Government, serving across both Republican and Democratic Administrations, I worked key aspects of counterterrorism (CT) intelligence-, operational-, and policy-related missions. Through these experiences, I developed a foundational understanding of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), the value it brings to the wider Intelligence Community, and the essential role it plays in providing decisionmakers a strategic understanding of the threat and what is required to protect the United States, allies and partners from terrorist attacks.

Throughout my government career, I experienced firsthand the critical role NCTC plays in protecting the United States. As an all-source intelligence analyst, I collaborated closely with NCTC colleagues to assess the CT threat landscape, including working alongside men and women in military uniform in Iraq. At the National Security Council, I leveraged NCTC to help develop CT partner strategies and worked with NCTC analysts and leadership to ensure appropriate visibility of current and emerging terrorist threats. Lastly, as DASD-APC, I consumed NCTC analysis on the trajectory of the terrorist threat environment in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which was critical to shaping my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on U.S. defense policy in the region.

My non-CT specific experience is equally relevant to my qualifications to serve as the NCTC Director. Having developed, implemented, and defended defense policy in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, I have a unique insight into the interagency and foreign partner collaborations that are necessary to the execution of successful, whole-of-government policy initiatives. I also understand the responsibility of managing a sizeable Congressional Appropriation aimed at securing the nation, with a clear focus on ethical and effective execution of taxpayer-funded mission sets. As a leader at DIUx, I had a front row seat to the entrepreneurial innovation ecosystems that are engines of growth in the United States and must be central partners as the Intelligence Community leverages open-source data to complete its view of the strategic environment. My executive experience at Dell Technologies has equipped me to lead strategic transformations across global organizations of hundreds of personnel in a way that effectively anticipates risk, organizes decision-making ahead of moments of crises, and puts professional ethics at the forefront of team execution.

Finally, I believe NCTC requires a strong leader to guide the Center through a rapidly changing strategic environment. My experiences at the cutting edge of CT decision-making, leading dynamic teams, and innovating to anticipate and effectively posture for coming challenges will be a key enabler for the Center. Whether developing whole-of-government strategies at the National Security Council, empowering DoD civilians to do their best work as DASD-APC, or expanding my team at Dell to tackle a critical

global assurance mission, organizational planning and effective team-building are core to how I lead teams to have a strategic impact.

If confirmed, I hope to bring my past expertise, experiences, and capabilities to bear to benefit the NCTC mission and its workforce. It would be an honor to serve as the first female Director of an institution critical to the protection of the United States, its citizens, and civilians all over the world.

**PART C - POLITICAL AND FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS**

15. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (LIST ANY MEMBERSHIPS OR OFFICES HELD IN OR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OR SERVICES RENDERED TO, ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ELECTION COMMITTEE, POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE, OR INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS).

**Biden for President, 2020: \$250**  
**Elissa Slotkin, 2017: \$450; 2018: \$1500; 2019: \$250; 2020: \$650**  
**Gina Ortiz Jones, 2018: \$900**  
**Andy Kim: 2018: \$150**  
**Joseph Kopser, 2018: \$150**  
**Beto O'Rourke, 2018: \$100**  
**Jamie Harrison, 2020: \$100**  
**Cal Cunningham, 2020: \$100**

16. CANDIDACY FOR PUBLIC OFFICE (FURNISH DETAILS OF ANY CANDIDACY FOR ELECTIVE PUBLIC OFFICE).

N/A

17. FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS

(NOTE: QUESTIONS 17A AND B ARE NOT LIMITED TO RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRING REGISTRATION UNDER THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT. QUESTIONS 17A, B, AND C DO NOT CALL FOR A POSITIVE RESPONSE IF THE REPRESENTATION OR TRANSACTION WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR OR YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE.)

A. HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER REPRESENTED IN ANY CAPACITY (E.G. EMPLOYEE, ATTORNEY, OR POLITICAL/BUSINESS CONSULTANT), WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR AN ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE FULLY DESCRIBE SUCH RELATIONSHIP.

No

B. HAVE ANY OF YOUR OR YOUR SPOUSE'S ASSOCIATES REPRESENTED, IN ANY CAPACITY, WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR AN ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE FULLY DESCRIBE SUCH RELATIONSHIP.

No

C. DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS, HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE RECEIVED ANY COMPENSATION FROM, OR BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS WITH, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR ANY ENTITY CONTROLLED BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

D. HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER REGISTERED UNDER THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

18. DESCRIBE ANY LOBBYING ACTIVITY DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS, OTHER THAN IN AN OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT CAPACITY, IN WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE ENGAGED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY INFLUENCING THE PASSAGE, DEFEAT, OR MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION, OR FOR THE PURPOSE OF AFFECTING THE ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTION OF FEDERAL LAW OR PUBLIC POLICY.

**I am not and never have been a registered lobbyist. In 2018, in my capacity at Dell, at the request of Dell Government Affairs and accompanied by them, I attended a day-long Industry Association program of staff-level meetings on Capitol Hill to discuss the impact of existing U.S. Government tariffs on U.S. businesses.**

**PART D - FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

19. DESCRIBE ANY EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP, FINANCIAL TRANSACTION, INVESTMENT, ASSOCIATION, OR ACTIVITY (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DEALINGS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON YOUR OWN BEHALF OR ON BEHALF OF A CLIENT), WHICH COULD CREATE, OR APPEAR TO CREATE, A CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED.

**During the nominations process, I have consulted with the designated Ethics Official at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, who has, in turn, consulted with the**



**Office of Government Ethics, to identify potential conflicts of interest. As a result of this process, potential conflicts have been identified in an Ethics Agreement, which has been provided to the Committee. More broadly, I will follow the advice of ethics officials to address any potential conflicts of interest identified, in order to resolve them in a manner that is consistent with the conflicts of interest statutes, applicable standards of conduct, and the terms of my aforementioned Ethics Agreement.**

20. DO YOU INTEND TO SEVER ALL BUSINESS CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYERS, FIRMS, BUSINESS ASSOCIATES AND/OR PARTNERSHIPS, OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EVENT THAT YOU ARE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE? IF NOT, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

**Yes**

21. DESCRIBE THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE OR PLAN TO MAKE, IF YOU ARE CONFIRMED, IN CONNECTION WITH SEVERANCE FROM YOUR CURRENT POSITION. PLEASE INCLUDE SEVERANCE PAY, PENSION RIGHTS, STOCK OPTIONS, DEFERRED INCOME ARRANGEMENTS, AND ANY AND ALL COMPENSATION THAT WILL OR MIGHT BE RECEIVED IN THE FUTURE AS A RESULT OF YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

**During the nominations process, I have consulted with the designated Ethics Official at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, who has, in turn, consulted with the Office of Government Ethics, to identify potential conflicts of interest. As a result of this process, potential conflicts have been identified in an Ethics Agreement, which has been provided to the Committee.**

22. DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS, COMMITMENTS, OR AGREEMENTS TO PURSUE OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT, WITH OR WITHOUT COMPENSATION, DURING YOUR SERVICE WITH THE GOVERNMENT? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

**No**

23. AS FAR AS CAN BE FORESEEN, STATE YOUR PLANS AFTER COMPLETING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. PLEASE SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBE ANY AGREEMENTS OR UNDERSTANDINGS, WRITTEN OR UNWRITTEN, CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT AFTER LEAVING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. IN PARTICULAR, DESCRIBE ANY AGREEMENTS, UNDERSTANDINGS, OR OPTIONS TO RETURN TO YOUR CURRENT POSITION.

**None**

24. IF YOU ARE PRESENTLY IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE, DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS OF SUCH SERVICE, HAVE YOU RECEIVED FROM A PERSON OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT AN OFFER OR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO EMPLOY YOUR SERVICES AFTER YOU LEAVE GOVERNMENT SERVICE? IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

N/A

25. IS YOUR SPOUSE EMPLOYED? IF YES AND THE NATURE OF THIS EMPLOYMENT IS RELATED IN ANY WAY TO THE POSITION FOR WHICH YOU ARE SEEKING CONFIRMATION, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYER, THE POSITION, AND THE LENGTH OF TIME THE POSITION HAS BEEN HELD. IF YOUR SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT IS NOT RELATED TO THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED, PLEASE SO STATE.

**My spouse is a federal government employee and their position is not related to the position to which I have been nominated.**

26. LIST BELOW ALL CORPORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, FOUNDATIONS, TRUSTS, OR OTHER ENTITIES TOWARD WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE FIDUCIARY OBLIGATIONS OR IN WHICH YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAVE HELD DIRECTORSHIPS OR OTHER POSITIONS OF TRUST DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

<u>NAME OF ENTITY</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>DATES HELD</u>	<u>SELF OR SPOUSE</u>
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**REDACTED**

27. LIST ALL GIFTS EXCEEDING \$100 IN VALUE RECEIVED DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS BY YOU, YOUR SPOUSE, OR YOUR DEPENDENTS. (NOTE: GIFTS RECEIVED FROM RELATIVES AND GIFTS GIVEN TO YOUR SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT NEED NOT BE INCLUDED UNLESS THE GIFT WAS GIVEN WITH YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND ACQUIESCENCE AND YOU HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THE GIFT WAS GIVEN BECAUSE OF YOUR OFFICIAL POSITION.)

None

28. LIST ALL SECURITIES, REAL PROPERTY, PARTNERSHIP INTERESTS, OR OTHER INVESTMENTS OR RECEIVABLES WITH A CURRENT MARKET VALUE (OR, IF MARKET VALUE IS NOT ASCERTAINABLE, ESTIMATED CURRENT FAIR VALUE) IN EXCESS OF \$1,000. (NOTE: THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO SCHEDULE A OF THE DISCLOSURE FORMS OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS MAY BE INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE, PROVIDED THAT CURRENT VALUATIONS ARE USED.)

<u>DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY</u>	<u>VALUE</u>	<u>METHOD OF VALUATION</u>
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Please see OGE Form 278e

29. LIST ALL LOANS OR OTHER INDEBTEDNESS (INCLUDING ANY CONTINGENT LIABILITIES) IN EXCESS OF \$10,000. EXCLUDE A MORTGAGE ON YOUR PERSONAL RESIDENCE UNLESS IT IS RENTED OUT, AND LOANS SECURED BY AUTOMOBILES, HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, OR APPLIANCES. (NOTE: THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO SCHEDULE C OF THE DISCLOSURE FORM OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS MAY BE INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE, PROVIDED THAT CONTINGENT LIABILITIES ARE ALSO INCLUDED.)

<u>NATURE OF OBLIGATION</u>	<u>NAME OF OBLIGEE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
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Please see OGE Form 278e

30. ARE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE NOW IN DEFAULT ON ANY LOAN, DEBT, OR OTHER FINANCIAL OBLIGATION? HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE BEEN IN DEFAULT ON ANY LOAN, DEBT, OR OTHER FINANCIAL OBLIGATION IN THE PAST TEN YEARS? HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE EVER BEEN REFUSED CREDIT OR HAD A LOAN APPLICATION DENIED? IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS IS YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

31. LIST THE SPECIFIC SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF ALL INCOME RECEIVED DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS, INCLUDING ALL SALARIES, FEES, DIVIDENDS, INTEREST, GIFTS, RENTS, ROYALTIES, PATENTS, HONORARIA, AND OTHER ITEMS EXCEEDING \$200. (COPIES OF U.S. INCOME TAX RETURNS FOR THESE YEARS MAY BE SUBSTITUTED HERE, BUT THEIR SUBMISSION IS NOT REQUIRED.)

**REDACTED**

32. IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE WITH COPIES OF YOUR AND YOUR SPOUSE'S FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURNS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS?

**Yes**

33. LIST ALL JURISDICTIONS IN WHICH YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE FILE ANNUAL INCOME TAX RETURNS.

**Maryland**

34. HAVE YOUR FEDERAL OR STATE TAX RETURNS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF AN AUDIT, INVESTIGATION, OR INQUIRY AT ANY TIME? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS, INCLUDING THE RESULT OF ANY SUCH PROCEEDING.

**No**

35. IF YOU ARE AN ATTORNEY, ACCOUNTANT, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL, PLEASE LIST ALL CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS WHOM YOU BILLED MORE THAN \$200 WORTH OF SERVICES DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS. ALSO, LIST ALL JURISDICTIONS IN WHICH YOU ARE LICENSED TO PRACTICE.

**I am not an attorney, accountant or other professional. In 2017, when I worked for a period of four months as an independent consultant, I provided services to the Markle Foundation's Rework America Task Force.**

36. DO YOU INTEND TO PLACE YOUR FINANCIAL HOLDINGS AND THOSE OF YOUR SPOUSE AND DEPENDENT MEMBERS OF YOUR IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD IN A BLIND TRUST? IF YES, PLEASE FURNISH DETAILS. IF NO, DESCRIBE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR AVOIDING ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

No.

37. IF APPLICABLE, LIST THE LAST THREE YEARS OF ANNUAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS YOU HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO FILE WITH YOUR AGENCY, DEPARTMENT, OR BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT. IF ASKED, WILL YOU PROVIDE A COPY OF THESE REPORTS?

N/A

**PART E - ETHICAL MATTERS**

38. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDING OR CITED FOR A BREACH OF ETHICS OR UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT BY, OR BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A COMPLAINT TO, ANY COURT, ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL GROUP? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

39. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVESTIGATED, HELD, ARRESTED, OR CHARGED BY ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY FOR VIOLATION OF ANY FEDERAL STATE, COUNTY, OR MUNICIPAL LAW, REGULATION, OR ORDINANCE, OTHER THAN A MINOR TRAFFIC OFFENSE, OR NAMED AS A DEFENDANT OR OTHERWISE IN ANY INDICTMENT OR INFORMATION RELATING TO SUCH VIOLATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

40. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF OR ENTERED A PLEA OF GUILTY OR NOLO CONTENDERE TO ANY CRIMINAL VIOLATION OTHER THAN A MINOR TRAFFIC OFFENSE? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

41. ARE YOU PRESENTLY OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A PARTY IN INTEREST IN ANY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY PROCEEDING OR CIVIL LITIGATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

42. HAVE YOU BEEN INTERVIEWED OR ASKED TO SUPPLY ANY INFORMATION AS A WITNESS OR OTHERWISE IN CONNECTION WITH ANY CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION, FEDERAL, OR STATE AGENCY PROCEEDING, GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION, OR CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LITIGATION IN THE PAST TEN YEARS? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

43. HAS ANY BUSINESS OF WHICH YOU ARE OR WERE AN OFFICER, DIRECTOR, OR PARTNER BEEN A PARTY TO ANY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY PROCEEDING OR CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LITIGATION RELEVANT TO THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS. (WITH RESPECT TO A BUSINESS OF WHICH YOU ARE OR WERE AN OFFICER, YOU NEED ONLY CONSIDER PROCEEDINGS AND LITIGATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE YOU WERE AN OFFICER OF THAT BUSINESS.)

No

44. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF ANY INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS.

No

**PART F - SECURITY INFORMATION**

45. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN DENIED ANY SECURITY CLEARANCE OR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION FOR ANY REASON? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN IN DETAIL.

No

46. HAVE YOU BEEN REQUIRED TO TAKE A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION FOR ANY SECURITY CLEARANCE OR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

**Yes. I have completed a polygraph examination as a requirement to serve in various capacities in the Department of Defense and Intelligence Community.**

47. HAVE YOU EVER REFUSED TO SUBMIT TO A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

No

**PART G - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

48. DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS THE CONCEPT OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES. IN PARTICULAR, CHARACTERIZE WHAT YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE OBLIGATIONS OF YOUR POSITION AND THE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE OVERSIGHT PROCESS.

**The concept of congressional oversight is essential to establishing trust with the American people about the critical and appropriate role the Intelligence Community must play in securing the nation.**

**Much of what the Intelligence Community does cannot be the subject of public discussion, owing to the need to protect sources and methods. This necessary secrecy places a great deal of responsibility on the congressional intelligence committees that oversee the Intelligence Community and whose Members must represent collectively the opinions and perspectives of their constituents and the broader American public. Given this responsibility, the Intelligence Community must stay engaged with oversight committees to ensure they are able to fulfill their duties on behalf of U.S. citizens.**

**As noted by prior nominees to be the Director of NCTC, under sections 501-503 of the National Security Act of 1947 (as amended), the President, and by extension the leaders of the Intelligence Community, have an affirmative obligation to keep the responsible congressional intelligence committees fully and currently informed of significant intelligence activities – including any significant anticipated intelligence activities and significant intelligence failures. This obligation applies to the National Counterterrorism Center and the Director of NCTC.**

**Through briefings, hearings, Member meetings, congressional notifications, budget submissions and various other forms of interactions with Congress, the Intelligence Community not only informs Congress of its activities, but also receives much needed perspective on how to best and most appropriately direct its activities, consistent with Congressional mandates.**

**If confirmed as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, I would commit to ensuring congressional intelligence committees remain informed of NCTC activities, consistent with the requirement of the law. I will be personally available as the situation dictates and will ensure my staff are fully engaged in providing the information necessary to ensure proper oversight of NCTC by the legislative branch.**

49. EXPLAIN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN NOMINATED.

The statutory responsibilities of the National Counterterrorism Center and its Director are delineated in section 1021 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. The law requires the Director to report to the Director of National Intelligence for all counterterrorism related intelligence issues, and to report to the President of the United States when exercising the Center's whole-of-government strategic operational planning functions.

As other nominees to be Director of NCTC have noted, NCTC's mission, and that of its Director, is focused to prevent, detect and disrupt acts of terrorism directed against the United States and its interests, both at home and abroad. NCTC resources are primarily aimed at providing all-source intelligence analysis to decision-makers ranging from the President of the United States to Cabinet Officials, to members of our uniformed services, to state and local authorities. NCTC analysis incorporates source information from across the full spectrum of collection disciplines. The Center's statutory authorities allow its personnel to draw upon both foreign and domestic intelligence to produce analysis, making NCTC uniquely situated to provide a comprehensive and integrated view of the total threat landscape confronting the country.

Beyond its analytical mission, NCTC and its Director are responsible for ensuring that federal departments and agencies are provided with all-source intelligence support to execute assigned counterterrorism activities. NCTC serves as the information sharing and collaboration hub of an Intelligence Community architecture focused on terrorism issues, and was established in part to fulfill this integrative role to protect against gaps that may emerge from seams between different federal departments and agencies. In addition to serving federal partners in the executive branch, NCTC also supports the Congress with a constant flow of information and analysis, both to the appropriate committees of the Congress, as well as to the Capitol Police Executive Board. NCTC also has an increasingly important role to play in providing terrorism information and analysis to the state, local and tribal community of customers, working closely with FBI and DHS to execute this responsibility.

The Center and its Director are responsible for maintaining the central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists (KSTs), international terror groups, as well as the networks of support associated with KSTs and known terrorist groups. NCTC accomplishes this mission through the design, operation and maintenance of a classified database called TIDE, or the Terrorism Identities Datamart Environment.

NCTC also conducts whole-of-government planning to support the government's CT strategies and plans. This area of its mandate extends beyond the bounds of the traditional Intelligence Community. It requires that NCTC planners engage and coordinate with partners across the federal government to ensure that all elements of national power are mobilized to counter the United States' terrorist adversaries. Working in close cooperation with the National Security Council staff, NCTC supports the President in the development of appropriate CT strategies and plans.



**Finally, the Director of NCTC also serves as the National Intelligence Manager on CT intelligence matters for the Director of National Intelligence. In this capacity, NCTC leads the CT Community in identifying knowledge gaps in CT analysis and then focusing collection/production resources on closing those gaps.**

**AFFIRMATION**

I, Christine Abizaad, DO SWEAR THAT THE ANSWERS I HAVE PROVIDED TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ARE ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

**CHRISTINE ABIZAID SIGNATURE**

May 4, 2021  
(Date)

**NOTARY SIGNATURE**

CHAUNCEY ERIC DEWAYNE FORBES  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
REGISTRATION # 367756  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES  
OCTOBER 31, 2021

TO THE CHAIRMAN, SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

In connection with my nomination, I hereby express my willingness to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

**CHRISTINE ABIZAID SIGNATURE**

Date: May 4, 2021

SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
INTELLIGENCE

UNITED STATES SENATE



**Prehearing Questions  
for  
Christine S. Abizaid  
upon her nomination to be the Director of the  
National Counterterrorism Center**

***Responsibilities of the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center***

**QUESTION 1:** What is your understanding of the unique role of NCTC within the Intelligence Community (IC)?

**ANSWER:** The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) is critical to the U.S. Government's (USG) ability to counter terrorism. My understanding of the unique role of the Center within the Intelligence Community (IC) draws directly from the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA) and aligns with the understanding of past Directors. The IRTPA is NCTC's authorizing statute and outlines the Center's mission and role within the IC. Among its provisions, this law directs NCTC to:

- Serve as the primary organization in the USG for analyzing and integrating all intelligence possessed or acquired by the USG pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism (CT), excepting intelligence pertaining exclusively to domestic terrorists and domestic CT.
- Conduct strategic operational planning for CT activities, integrating all instruments of national power, including diplomatic, financial, military, intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement activities within and among agencies.
- Ensure agencies have appropriate access to and receive all-source intelligence support needed to execute their CT plans or perform independent, alternative analysis.
- Serve as the central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists (KSTs) and international terror groups, as well as their goals, strategies, capabilities, and networks of contacts and support.

Accordingly, NCTC's role within the IC flows from its ability to access and integrate CT intelligence. NCTC is the single federal component that has access to all terrorism information collected by the USG, both domestically and abroad, which it harnesses to fulfill its missions, including the conduct of all-source analysis and maintenance of the classified database known as the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE), which supports the USG's CT and watchlisting efforts.

**QUESTION 2:** What is your understanding of the specific statutory

responsibilities of the NCTC Director?

**ANSWER:** My understanding of the Director's role under the statute is consistent with the understanding of past Directors. The IRTPA requires the Director to report to the President when exercising the Center's whole-of-government strategic operational planning functions and to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) for all other activities and functions. NCTC's mission, and that of its Director, is to focus on the prevention, detection, and disruption of acts of terrorism directed against the United States and its interests at home and abroad.

The Director of NCTC serves as the principal advisor to the DNI on CT matters. The Director also advises the DNI on the extent to which the CT program recommendations and budget proposals of the departments, agencies, and elements of the USG conform to the priorities established by the President. Further, the Director is responsible for strategic operational planning and providing federal departments and agencies with all-source intelligence support to execute assigned CT activities. In addition to supporting the Executive Branch, NCTC supports the Congress with information and analysis, and—in close partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS)—provides terrorism information and analysis to state, local, tribal, and territorial partners. NCTC also provides support to the FBI and DHS on domestic terrorism issues when they request assistance and where appropriate.

**QUESTION 3:** Have you discussed with Director of National Intelligence Haines her specific expectations of you, if confirmed as NCTC Director, and her expectations of NCTC as a whole? If so, please describe these expectations.

**ANSWER:** Yes. Director Haines and I have discussed her expectation that, if confirmed as Director of NCTC, I would work to advance NCTC's crucial role in preventing, detecting, and disrupting acts of terrorism against the United States and its interests. She emphasized the importance of NCTC's work as the IC's lead component for integrating and assessing intelligence related to evolving international and transnational terrorist threats, as the coordinator for strategic operational CT planning across all elements of national power, and as the component responsible for maintaining the USG's central and shared database on KSTs and international terror groups. She also stressed the growing importance of the Center's support to the FBI and DHS, consistent with NCTC's legal authorities, as the Government addresses a rise in threats from Domestic Violent Extremists. NCTC has a strong reputation for its consistently sound, thorough, timely, and independent analysis. If confirmed, Director Haines and I will share a

priority on ensuring that reputation is sustained.

***NCTC Mission***

*NCTC was designed to serve as the primary organization in the U.S. Government for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism and to conduct strategic operational planning by integrating all instruments of national power.*

**QUESTION 4:** What are NCTC's unique contributions to IC counterterrorism analysis as compared to counterterrorism analysis produced by other IC components like CIA?

**ANSWER:** NCTC is in several ways uniquely important to the United States' efforts to assess and address terrorist threats to the United States and its interests. NCTC's role as the USG's central and shared knowledge bank on KSTs and international terrorist groups provides the Center with the ability to analyze and integrate all sources of intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism, collected by agencies with both primarily foreign and primarily domestic areas of responsibility. Additionally, because NCTC does not exercise operational or clandestine intelligence collection capabilities that are otherwise native to several other IC components, it is better able to preserve analytic objectivity in its assessments without an over-reliance on any particular source of intelligence. NCTC is also distinct from other IC components, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), because it puts a premium on coordinating its intelligence assessments with partners across the IC. This enables NCTC products to serve as a single voice on CT issues while also reflecting the views of the entire U.S. CT community. Finally, the Director of NCTC has the unique role of performing strategic operational planning for the whole of the U.S. CT community in support of the President through the National Security Council (NSC) Staff.

**QUESTION 5:** More than fifteen years after its establishment, do you believe NCTC is fulfilling its mission as outlined in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA) to serve as the primary organization in the U.S. Government for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism?

**ANSWER:** Over the course of my CT career, I have watched NCTC grow into a recognized leader in the CT community—a leader heavily relied on by national-level policymakers and tactical operators alike—marking significant progress in

fulfilling the vision set forth by the 9/11 Commission and the Congress in 2004. NCTC's established role as the "primary organization" in the USG for analyzing and integrating international and transnational terrorism information, and its corresponding responsibility to ensure that agencies have appropriate all-source intelligence support, are central to the CT enterprise's ability to protect the homeland. While I believe NCTC is fulfilling its mission effectively by leveraging strong partnerships, integrating intelligence, and taking a comprehensive approach to the threat, I also recognize that NCTC must always be ready to adapt to the evolving terrorism challenge. In fulfilling the CT mission, which is complex and comprised of many actors of varying degrees of capabilities and intention, there is always room for innovation, creativity, and greater efficiency and effectiveness. If confirmed as NCTC's Director, I would make it among my chief priorities to ensure the Center remains agile and well-equipped to fulfill its missions.

**QUESTION 6:** What is your assessment of NCTC's current strengths and weaknesses?

**ANSWER:** If confirmed as Director of NCTC, I will assess the Center's strengths and weaknesses on an ongoing basis and work with the DNI, my leadership team, and CT community stakeholders to direct its future course.

I believe NCTC's greatest strength is its people: dedicated public servants who work tirelessly to protect the nation. The NCTC workforce is a cohesive and diverse collection of CT professionals drawn from across the IC and broader interagency. This mix creates a collaborative, inclusive atmosphere where analysts, planners, and other CT professionals can do their best work. If confirmed, I will remain committed to recruiting and growing the next generation of CT talent. In doing so, I will ensure that NCTC continues providing an equitable and safe working environment for all of its employees regardless of their race, gender, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or other protected status.

Another core NCTC strength is its unique access to terrorism data across a spectrum of sources. NCTC's strong relationship with IC counterparts and its position as the only IC component with access to all foreign and domestically collected terrorism data allows its workforce the ability to provide comprehensive, coordinated, and independent all-source analysis. I would also note, as past Directors have reflected, that because NCTC does not engage in or direct CT operations, it can better maintain a neutral perspective for CT analysis and strategic operational planning for the CT enterprise.



One area in which the government can always do better is to manage and fully synthesize the data to which it has access. This imperative is even more essential for the IC whose mission it is to anticipate and evaluate threats to national security, drawing upon both intelligence collection and open-source information to assess the overall environment. For NCTC, this means that the Center must continue to invest in innovative technology to power more comprehensive data-informed insights, increase the speed of information sharing and collaboration, and, where appropriate, automate workflows.

Finally, I believe that more transparency about the nation's CT efforts, where and when appropriate, will help the country better understand the significant progress made in the United States' CT campaign, especially since 9/11, and the importance of continuing a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to address the persistent and evolving terrorism challenge the United States faces, both at home and abroad. If confirmed, in line with the Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community, I would gladly commit to providing the American people information about the threat environment, the successes of the CT enterprise, and examples of the remarkable dedication the country's CT professionals display every day.

**QUESTION 7:** What do you believe are the greatest challenges facing NCTC?

**ANSWER:** From my perspective, the greatest challenge facing not only NCTC, but the IC more generally, is maintaining the ability to innovate and adapt as quickly as our adversaries, especially in an era of rapid technological advancement that has lowered barriers to entry for the use of new, powerful, and far-reaching tools. Terrorists, in particular, continue to make technological advances in fields such as encrypted communications and use of social media that make it more difficult to detect threats, discern significant trends, and understand terrorist communications and networks.

Another challenge I expect NCTC will need to address is one of prioritization for limited IC resources. There is a clear recognition that U.S. national security depends on effectively navigating the long-term strategic competition between the United States and China, while simultaneously addressing a myriad of other national security challenges, CT chief among them.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the ODNI and NCTC's leadership team and staff to advance the Center's ability to meet these and other challenges that emerge.

**QUESTION 8:** Please explain your vision for NCTC, including your views on its current and future priorities and what the organization should look like five years from now.

**ANSWER:** I believe that during this time of shifting national security priorities and the likely resultant reprioritization of limited IC resources, the country will need NCTC to sustain its laser-like focus on preventing, detecting and deterring threats to the United States and its interests, even as other USG entities may need to shift resources to address strategic competition with China and Russia. Unlike other USG entities, NCTC is purpose-built to lead the CT community in the critical yet specific mission of protecting the homeland from catastrophic terrorist attacks. If confirmed as its Director, I will work to ensure NCTC has the resources, partnerships, technology, and expertise required for it to deliver for the American people.

NCTC's ability to succeed in its mission correlates directly to its ability to continue recruiting and retaining a talented, diverse workforce. If confirmed, I will continue to focus on recruiting qualified individuals from within the IC, from the private sector, and from academia. I will also ensure the NCTC management team invests time, energy, and intellectual capital in the NCTC workforce, exposing our CT professionals to developmental opportunities that will advance their careers while they contribute to our nation's CT efforts.

Next, I have always been impressed with the robust partnerships NCTC has forged with Executive Branch agencies, foreign counterparts, as well as state, local, tribal, territorial and private sector partners. If we are to sustain gains made since 9/11 in reducing the threat of terrorism to the United States, we must not lose sight of the importance of CT relationships, both at home and abroad. NCTC must work collaboratively to anticipate the evolving, dynamic terrorist threat landscape. If confirmed, I intend to build on NCTC's past success by seeking to deepen relationships and working closely with key CT partners and stakeholders.

As past Directors have noted, although NCTC has matured and embraced its position as a recognized leader in our nation's CT efforts, the CT community continues to face new and difficult challenges. Complex data management and technical challenges make information analysis and sharing increasingly difficult. NCTC's support for watchlisting and screening and its all-source analytic efforts rely on cutting-edge tools and clear, consistent data management policies to keep pace with the evolving terrorist threat. If confirmed, I would work to ensure NCTC

strengthens and retains a cadre of highly skilled, technology-focused, data-fluent professionals who can help bring valuable knowledge about the challenges of rapidly evolving technology and its impact on our ability to analyze and manage CT data.

Since 9/11, persistent, coordinated CT pressure has removed key terrorist leaders, blunted certain terrorist groups' capabilities, and fundamentally weakened the overall threat posed to the U.S. homeland. However, the underlying drivers of terrorism—such as instability, weak government institutions, and highly connected networks—present conditions terrorists will continue to exploit, whether to threaten regional interests or to reconstitute platforms for transnational attacks. While today's terrorist threat to the United States has evolved, it is no less urgent. It is more ideologically and geographically diffuse, emanating from more groups, in more places, and leveraging more sophisticated technology than in 2001. NCTC will need to remain at the forefront of the fight against terrorism in all its forms, anticipating and detecting groups' and individuals' intentions and capabilities to harm the United States and its interests.

Inside the country, we also face the enduring challenge of Homegrown Violent Extremists inspired by international terrorist groups as well as the growing threat of Domestic Violent Extremists. These lone or loosely organized actors seek to use violence to advance a wide range of extremist agendas, and their diffuse nature adds to the challenge of detecting and disrupting their activities.

My vision is for NCTC to lead and integrate the national CT effort by recruiting and retaining talented, diverse CT professionals, strengthening its partnerships at home and abroad, effectively managing data, and continuing to produce timely, comprehensive assessments of the strategic and evolving terrorist threat.

**QUESTION 9:** What specific benchmarks should be used to assess NCTC's performance?

**ANSWER:** I believe that if an organization is to successfully achieve its objectives, it must regularly measure its performance and evaluate progress against key performance indicators to course correct when necessary. An organization with NCTC's missions of serving as the DNI's principal CT adviser and ensuring that all agencies receive all-source intelligence support must sustain the highest caliber of performance across the full spectrum of its responsibilities. If confirmed as Director of NCTC, I commit to reviewing NCTC's performance metrics and evaluating whether new or different performance indicators should be tracked and

evaluated on a regular basis.

***Intergovernmental and Interagency Cooperation***

**QUESTION 10:** What is NCTC's role in producing and disseminating intelligence for state, local, and tribal partners?

**ANSWER:** My understanding of NCTC's role in producing and disseminating intelligence to state, local, and tribal partners is consistent with the understanding of past Directors. The IRTPA established NCTC to ensure that agencies receive all-source intelligence support needed to execute their CT plans and that such agencies have access to and receive intelligence needed to accomplish their assigned activities. The IRTPA also stipulates that NCTC is to support appropriate agencies in fulfillment of their responsibilities to disseminate terrorism information to state, local, tribal and territorial, and private sector partners.

I understand that one significant vehicle through which NCTC executes this supporting function is the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT), which is located at NCTC and staffed by NCTC, DHS, and FBI personnel as well as state, local, tribal, and territorial government public safety officers. JCAT's mission is to improve information sharing by producing clear, relevant, and coordinated threat information on significant terrorism-related events and terrorist tactics, techniques, and procedures that have the potential to enhance local or regional public safety conditions in the United States.

**QUESTION 11:** How is that role different than that of the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security?

**ANSWER:** The FBI and DHS have independent statutory missions to provide terrorism information directly to state, local, and tribal, and territorial officials. NCTC supports the FBI and DHS in carrying out their missions consistent with its statutory authorities. In so doing, NCTC leverages its access to the full range of USG CT intelligence to inform products for state, local, tribal, and territorial partners. As the primary organization in the USG for analyzing and integrating all international and transnational terrorism information, NCTC is uniquely positioned to ensure the FBI and DHS have access to and receive all-source intelligence support to execute their CT missions.

**QUESTION 12:** What is your understanding of the amount and nature of counterterrorism cooperation among NCTC, FBI, and DHS?

**ANSWER:** NCTC was designed by statute to support the CT missions of other USG components. Perhaps most critically, this mandate ensures NCTC works closely with the FBI and DHS, on a daily basis, to support those organizations' CT activities and collaborate on a range of terrorism-related intelligence production. For example, NCTC regularly co-authors intelligence assessments with the FBI and DHS, particularly on threats inside the United States; collaborates with DHS and the FBI to develop whole-of-government CT plans, strategies, and assessments; and deploys Domestic Representatives across the United States who work hand-in-hand with DHS and FBI field elements.

**QUESTION 13:** If confirmed, what priority would you give intergovernmental and interagency cooperation?

**ANSWER:** The U.S. CT program is built on a foundation of cooperation. NCTC and other USG components with CT missions and those with information relevant to the effective exercise of those missions have worked together over nearly two decades to form critical partnerships for collaboration and information sharing. As many USG components realign mission priorities to meet other pressing national security issues, maintaining these partnerships, and leading their evolution as appropriate, is all the more critical. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to ensure that NCTC continues to maintain and develop such lines of cooperation. The Center's strong relationships within the IC, including with the CIA, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency, are critical to the U.S. CT program. NCTC, DHS, and the FBI must also continue to work together to provide state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners with timely and accurate information on terrorism. This also includes working closely with this Committee and other relevant committees of Congress in furtherance of effective oversight of intelligence and CT activities. If confirmed, I commit to keeping the congressional intelligence oversight committees fully and currently informed consistent with the requirements of Title V of the National Security Act and other federal law.

#### ***Strategic Operational Planning***

**QUESTION 14:** To what extent does the Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning develop interagency plans for counterterrorism operations?

**ANSWER:** My understanding aligns with that of past Directors in that NCTC's Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning (DSOP) develops whole-of-

government CT plans, assessments, and posture reviews to engage in cross-agency collaboration for the CT mission. DSOP supports policy implementation and serves as the integration point for CT intelligence and operations across agency boundaries. NCTC's CT plans address a variety of CT objectives, to include regional and functional issues, such as terrorism prevention and weapons of mass destruction. The strategic operational planning process integrates all phases of the planning cycle—developing a plan, monitoring its implementation, and assessing its effectiveness and resourcing—and creates communities of interest to coordinate and integrate implementation. DSOP-led plans and strategies generally incorporate all instruments of national power—which may include CT operations—into broader CT strategies and plans.

**QUESTION 15:** To what extent does the Directorate coordinate or integrate the IC strategic planning with that of the Department of Defense and other components of the U.S. Government?

**ANSWER:** When the NSC designates DSOP as the lead planning entity for a particular effort, my understanding is that DSOP engages broadly across the Executive Branch to ensure representatives from all relevant departments and agencies are appropriately involved in strategic policy planning that are necessary to achieve the objectives for a particular effort. DSOP-led strategies and plans help guide the implementation of departments' and agencies' CT efforts. Once in effect, DSOP assesses overall progress against the goals of interagency plans and reviews the extent to which resources are in place to achieve the objectives.

**QUESTION 16:** Please describe your assessment of the challenge presented by this responsibility and what should be done to improve NCTC's performance of it.

**ANSWER:** My initial assessment is similar to those of past Directors. Terrorism in all of its forms is becoming increasingly diffuse and complex, requiring DSOP and its interagency partners to develop effective strategies and plans that tailor to different categories of threats, whether they be self-radicalized lone actors, organized international terrorist groups, or domestic violent extremists with ties abroad. The complexity of the threat environment has also led to a greater number and variety of relevant CT partners and interagency tools to integrate and coordinate. I understand DSOP's challenge is to ensure this diverse landscape is well-organized as part of a coherent strategy to posture the United States against whatever form the terrorist threat presents.

Since its creation, DSOP has worked with its interagency partners to integrate USG

CT activities. It is most effective when it serves as an unbiased broker in a diverse CT community, helping to coordinate issues among departments and agencies and integrate what may otherwise seem to be disparate CT efforts. In my experience working with DSOP, I have seen the organization effectively balance the equities of each organization in the CT enterprise and address competing views and requirements in a coherent fashion to provide executable, whole-of-government solution sets. If confirmed as the Director of NCTC, I would look for ways to strengthen NCTC's approach to strategic operational planning and will work closely with my counterparts in the CT enterprise to ensure DSOP is supporting long-term strategic CT planning efforts vital to national security.

**QUESTION 17:** What is the role of the NCTC Director in developing the National Intelligence Priorities Framework with regard to counterterrorism?

**ANSWER:** The Director of NCTC is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the National Intelligence Priorities Framework for Counterterrorism (NIPF-CT) priorities, which inform IC decisions on collection, analysis, and resource allocation. These priorities are updated on a quarterly basis with support from IC elements and integrated into the ODNI's overall NIPF process. If confirmed, I would ensure that NIPF-CT priorities provide clear guidance for the most effective and efficient allocation of our critical, limited resources.

**QUESTION 18:** What is your view of the proper role of Congress in overseeing the activities of the Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning?

**ANSWER:** The congressional intelligence oversight committees have critical oversight roles for all intelligence activities. If confirmed, I would ensure the committees are fully and currently informed of all NCTC intelligence activities consistent with the requirements of Title V of the National Security Act and other federal law.

**QUESTION 19:** Do you believe the Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning is fulfilling its mission as outlined under IRTPA?

**ANSWER:** I had the opportunity to work directly with DSOP during my tenure on the NSC Staff, as well as when I served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia. I saw first-hand the value that the relatively small office had to the NSC and the broader CT community. No other organization has the perspective that DSOP brings to the table. It serves as an

objective, unbiased integrator with insight into how to leverage and coordinate tools from across all elements of national power against what can be some of the most intractable problems in the CT community. DSOP's authorities and mission are unique within the national security community. It is staffed by a collection of ODNI cadre and detailees from across the government who provide an important service in drafting and coordinating interagency strategies and proposals for NSC consideration. It directly supports agencies in identifying and addressing implementation challenges to those strategies, and providing transparency across the departments and agencies while conducting substantive and budget assessments of the CT enterprise. Based on my dealings with DSOP, I believe it plays a critical role in ensuring that national CT efforts are as effective, efficient and well-coordinated as possible, especially during a time of competing national priorities.

*National Intelligence Manager for Counterterrorism*

As the National Intelligence Manager for Counterterrorism, the NCTC Director identifies intelligence gaps and resource constraints and sets collection and analytic priorities.

**QUESTION 20:** What is your vision for fulfilling the role of National Intelligence Manager for Counterterrorism?

**ANSWER:** My vision of the Director's role as the CT mission manager is consistent with that of past Directors. The role of mission manager allows the Director of NCTC to be a proactive leader in the IC and CT community. If confirmed, my top priority would be to ensure that the CT community remains postured to prevent, detect, and deter terrorist threats to the United States and its interests, despite an increasingly diversified threat and other national security concerns that may draw resources away from the CT fight.

The role of the mission manager is to be an honest broker who can work across the CT community to balance risks, find efficiencies and opportunities for collaboration, and communicate sometimes difficult options for senior policymaker decisions. In the IC, there is a tremendous demand placed on our limited national collection platforms, analytic resources, and other capabilities that are shared with other vital national security priorities. The role of the CT mission manager is important because it ensures all those across the CT community understand how to efficiently and effectively leverage collective resources to meet the nation's CT objectives.



Ensuring well-drafted strategies that are monitored and regularly assessed is another important aspect of the mission manager's role. The priorities and overall approach for the IC are set by the National Security Strategy, National Strategy for Counterterrorism, National Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism, and National Intelligence Strategy. If confirmed, I will work closely with the CT community to effectively execute and support those strategies that articulate priority issues and national CT objectives.

**QUESTION 21:** What is the role of the NCTC Director in providing guidance with regard to the allocation of counterterrorism resources among and within elements of the IC? Please also describe how the NCTC Director should identify unnecessary or less critical programs and seek to reallocate funding, within resource constraints.

**ANSWER:** Similar to the views expressed by past Directors, I believe the role of the mission manager is to provide resource guidance to the CT community and serve as the principal adviser to the DNI for CT priorities. To fulfill this role, as outlined in the IRTPA, the Director of NCTC must collaborate with CT program managers across the IC to understand resource priorities, shortfalls, and redundancies. The Director must have the ability to identify critical resource investments and be an effective advocate and leader for the CT community within the intelligence planning, programming, budgeting and execution process. If confirmed, I will ensure close collaboration with interagency partners to drive our singular CT enterprise in a way that best protects the country.

**QUESTION 22:** What are the most important counterterrorism gaps or shortfalls across the IC?

**ANSWER:** As past Directors have noted, terrorism is an adaptive threat and the USG's ability to identify gaps and shortfalls in a timely and efficient manner is vital to continued success. Along these lines, three issues are particularly concerning: adapting to the rapid pace of technological advancement; managing and efficiently exploiting IC data; and improving screening and vetting support capabilities.

First, while rapidly evolving technology has supported the IC's mission, it has also provided the nation's adversaries with new capabilities to use against us. To stay ahead of these adversaries, the IC must find ways to appropriately acquire and adapt new technologies while mitigating the threat of terrorist use of technology.

Second, the IC has the benefit of large datasets; however, it must identify solutions

to effectively standardize, integrate, and process increasingly large holdings. These solutions must include innovative approaches to information sharing and access. Data management and integrity are vital to NCTC's efforts to support watchlisting and other screening mechanisms and to provide international partners the timely, relevant information they need to keep terrorists from reaching the U.S. Homeland.

Additionally, I understand there are a number of challenges related to screening and vetting support. For example, the challenge of integrating biometric data, such as fingerprints and facial images, into screening of biographic data. NCTC will need to be able to address these types of challenges to help the USG enable a persona-based system of performing identity intelligence.

Finally, as I have experienced throughout my CT career, the CT community has developed effective, well-integrated processes across departments and agencies that enable the full force of the community to bring coordinated pressure against identified threats. Many of those CT capabilities are interdependent; when one element makes a decision about its own capabilities or resources, there can often be second- and third-order effects for other CT entities. With this in mind, NCTC's role in supporting the community's collective efforts and providing a strategic view of the nation's CT resource outlook are arguably more important now than ever.

All of these issues are critical for continued IC success in keeping the U.S. homeland protected against major terrorist threats. They will require continued focus, and investments in time and resources.

**QUESTION 23:** The U.S. Government and the IC are refocusing on geopolitical threats like China and Russia. As resources shift, what steps do you believe should be taken to minimize unnecessary analytic redundancy in the IC counterterrorism space?

**ANSWER:** As resources shift to other priority national security issues, I believe that NCTC is well postured to maintain its focus on leading and integrating the CT mission to avoid strategic surprise. If confirmed, as prescribed in the IRTPA, I will partner with leaders across the CT enterprise to ensure we minimize unnecessary analytic redundancy, maximize our use of CT resources, and ensure CT analysis is integrated to support broader national security and foreign policy aims.

**QUESTION 24:** The Committee requested a briefing from the Counterterrorism Mission Management office concerning the use of National Intelligence Program

funds for countering domestic terrorism, and the authorities that govern IC activities related to domestic terrorism. To this point, NCTC has declined to provide a briefing to the Committee's staff. Do you commit to providing the Committee with this briefing and fulfilling future information requests as necessitated by the Committee's IC oversight mandate?

**ANSWER:** If confirmed, I commit to providing the briefing. I believe that communicating with the Congress on a regular and continuing basis enables the USG to further its collective ability to address the threats the nation faces today and prevent further terrorist attacks, while ensuring that parts of the USG such as NCTC are exercising their respective authorities consistent with the law. Given many of the IC's activities must remain classified, this relationship is all the more important. Intelligence oversight is critical to the successful operation of the IC; in this respect, I view the congressional intelligence oversight committees as true partners within the United States' CT community.

#### *Congressional Oversight*

**QUESTION 25:** What do you understand to be the obligation of the NCTC Director, in support of the DNI, to keep the congressional intelligence committees fully and currently informed about matters relating to compliance with the Constitution and laws?

**ANSWER:** Congressional oversight is an essential part of our constitutional system of checks and balances, and I believe it is critical to the success of the IC, and the ODNI, to include NCTC. Under Section 502 of the National Security Act, the DNI and the heads of departments and agencies involved in intelligence activities are required to keep the congressional intelligence committees fully and currently informed of intelligence activities. Previous DNIs have issued IC-wide directives on the subject of congressional notifications to ensure timely reporting to the Congress consistent with the National Security Act. If confirmed as the Director of NCTC, I would abide by these and other applicable requirements. I would also ensure that I remain responsive to the congressional intelligence oversight process, ensure congressional notifications are timely, accurate, and complete, and support the DNI in the same.

#### *Professional Experience*

**QUESTION 26:** Please describe specifically how your experiences will enable you to serve as NCTC Director.

**ANSWER:** My diverse CT background, experiences in both the IC and national security policy arenas, and strong record of leading innovative teams in government and the private sector position me to be an effective NCTC Director, if confirmed.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on our nation compelled me to work for the Department of Defense where I served as a CT intelligence officer, authoring and leading assessments of strategic terrorism trends across the Middle East and Asia Pacific. I wrote numerous strategic intelligence assessments, contributed to various National Intelligence Estimates, provided intelligence support to CT operations, deployed several times to the Middle East region in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, and led analytic teams assessing the plans, intentions and capabilities of Lebanese Hizballah, Al-Qaida in Iraq/Islamic State in Iraq, Al-Qa'ida Core, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, and other terrorist groups and individuals.

In 2011, I transitioned from a producer to a consumer of intelligence by serving at the NSC, where I provided key contributions to the national security decision-making process. At the NSC, I worked closely with NCTC and other IC components to understand CT trends and task relevant CT assessments that helped drive whole-of-government strategic policy coordination, both across the interagency and with relevant international partners and allies. Informed by this whole-of-government process, I crafted for the President, his National Security Advisor, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHSCT), and the Deputy National Security Advisor CT policy recommendations and key background information in advance of critical decisions, summits, and meetings.

My assignment at the NSC broadened considerably when I was asked to serve as the Senior Policy Advisor to the AHSCT. In this role, I not only tracked global CT threats and policy issues, but also engaged on cyber, intelligence, operational, foreign partner, and homeland security related tasks. I ensured clear, complete, timely, and well-considered support to the NSC Staff and AHSCT.

In 2014, I transitioned back to the Department of Defense in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy to lead the Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia office. In this role, I established defense policy positions associated with the region. I made recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding U.S. and NATO troop levels; provided policy oversight for over \$5 billion in congressional appropriations for regional security cooperation programs; and coordinated within

the Defense Department and the national security interagency to implement decisions related to the region, including those of the President and the Secretary of Defense. I also engaged foreign counterparts, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders to communicate Administration decisions and policy positions relevant to U.S. national security interests. In this policy role, as in the others I occupied, I relied heavily on intelligence assessments from across the community and in theater to formulate key Defense policy recommendations and decisions for the region.

My role in government concluded in 2017, as the lead for the Defense Innovation Unit (Experimental) (DIUx) in Austin, Texas, where I worked with our warfighters to understand their strategic and operational needs and the private sector innovation ecosystems that could support them. Later that year, I took on a global leadership role in the private sector, working across time zones and cultures to lead several hundred team members in a mission to develop, implement, and ensure compliance to strategies that fundamentally ensured trust in the company's global manufacturing and procurement operations.

### *Staffing*

**QUESTION 27:** NCTC operates a joint manning model with detailees from across the IC. Do you believe this model is still the best way to staff NCTC, and what do you see as the advantages and challenges associated with this model?

**ANSWER:** Having people with unique knowledge, skills, and backgrounds is critical to fulfilling NCTC's mission; I believe IC detailees are an essential component to ensuring the right mix of talent resides at NCTC. As the hub of the nation's CT efforts, NCTC is at its best when its workforce can seamlessly incorporate perspectives from across the CT community as it executes its mission. I understand that drawing detailees from other departments and agencies has become more challenging as agencies shift staff to address competing priorities. If confirmed, I will focus on attracting detailees by building strong relationships with my interagency partners and conveying the value of a robust, interagency CT workforce at NCTC.

In addition to its detailee program, I understand NCTC has a robust recruitment and training program that brings entry-level employees into the organization to expand the knowledge, skills, and abilities of its diverse workforce. In addition to their work at NCTC, I understand many from this cadre have an opportunity to serve on external rotations throughout the government and on foreign

deployments; these experiences provide value to the Center, the employees, and the overall CT mission.

**QUESTION 28:** Do you believe that NCTC is appropriately organized and staffed to counter the current and emerging terrorist threats? If not, what do you think needs to be changed to better address the threats?

**ANSWER:** Since the Center's resource profile is classified, this is something I would examine in greater detail if confirmed. NCTC has always adapted to meet the terrorist threat picture, and as the Center seeks to support IC, law enforcement, and homeland security partners across a range of terrorism issues, both foreign and domestic, I will work with the ODNI leadership team, CT partners, and the Congress to make sure that the Center is postured to address the challenges of today as well as the emerging threats of the future. This includes having the right mix of permanent cadre and detailee officers to provide both continuity and collaboration across the Community.

#### *Questions from Senator Wyden*

##### *Domestic Terrorism*

**QUESTION 29:** IRTPA, in describing the primary missions of NCTC, excludes "intelligence pertaining exclusively to domestic terrorists and domestic counterterrorism." How should NCTC interpret this provision? What indication of a transnational nexus should be sufficient for NCTC to deem a terrorist threat as part of its primary mission?

**ANSWER:** Generally speaking, under the IRTPA, NCTC's role regarding domestic terrorists and domestic CT is one of providing support to the FBI and DHS, which are the primary agencies responsible for protecting the homeland against domestic terrorist threats. To facilitate this support, NCTC is authorized to receive, retain, and disseminate intelligence pertaining exclusively to domestic counterterrorism. Among NCTC's supporting functions is ensuring that USG agencies have access to and receive all-source intelligence support needed to execute their CT plans or perform independent, alternative analysis. Perhaps most critically, leveraging its primary mission as the USG's central and shared knowledge bank on KSTs and international terrorist groups, I believe NCTC is well-positioned to support the FBI and DHS in working to identify whether threats that present domestically have a nexus to transnational terrorism.

**QUESTION 30:** In the absence of intelligence indicating a transnational nexus, what role should NCTC play in supporting law enforcement investigations into domestic terrorist threats?

**ANSWER:** I believe NCTC is uniquely equipped to assist the FBI and DHS in identifying any nexus to transnational terrorism, consistent with NCTC's primary mission and authorities. Where NCTC identifies no nexus to transnational terrorism, it is my understanding that NCTC's activities, such as partnership on analytic products examining a particular domestic terrorist threat or attack, would be undertaken in support of the FBI and DHS.

***Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE)***

*IRTPA includes among NCTC's primary missions, "[t]o serve as the central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists and international terror groups, as well as their goals, strategies, capabilities, and networks of contacts and support."*

**QUESTION 31:** As counterterrorism data becomes more voluminous, what new policies and technological approaches may be necessary to manage TIDE? What new privacy policies may be necessary to keep up with the expansion of TIDE?

**ANSWER:** I understand that NCTC has focused on technological modernization efforts to improve its CT knowledge, including with respect to identity resolution and biometrics. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about these types of technological advancements. More generally, with respect to the management of TIDE, I believe it is important for NCTC to continue to work closely with the IC and with Civil Liberty and Privacy officers to identify any policy or privacy issues that may arise from new processes and technologies.

**QUESTION 32:** Should U.S. persons or persons in the United States who are not known or suspected terrorists be included in TIDE? If so, what standards and guidelines should apply?

**ANSWER:** As the USG's classified database on KSTs and international terror groups, as well as their goals, strategies, capabilities, and networks of contacts and support, I understand TIDE includes individuals with connections to terrorism who do not meet the definition of a KST, including some U.S. persons. These identities can provide valuable analytic and investigatory leads, but we must ensure that U.S. person information in TIDE is handled appropriately and with the utmost respect

for privacy and civil liberties. I understand any U.S. person information in TIDE is clearly identified and that NCTC works closely with its Civil Liberties and Privacy Officer and General Counsel in this regard.

NCTC is dedicated to the proper handling and protection of this information, and has a well-established, robust compliance program that includes mandatory annual training on the proper handling and protection of information; NCTC's legal authorities for the access, use, and retention of U.S. person information; and NCTC's agreements with its data providers.

If confirmed, I will endeavor to further advance a compliance mindset within NCTC by ensuring these activities continue and are staffed properly. I will also ensure that new IT systems and advanced analytic techniques build into their designs proper data handling and information protection requirements. In addition, I will make sure that the USG CT users of TIDE treat U.S. person information with the same stringent protections as required by Center policy and the law.

***Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (RMVE)***

**QUESTION 33:** What is your view of the international and transnational threat posed by Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (RMVE)?

**ANSWER:** As reflected in the April 9, 2021 ODNI Annual Threat Assessment, violence committed by racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists (RMVEs) is a concerning terrorism threat facing not only the United States but also many of the nation's allies. Regrettably, this is not a new threat. RMVEs have posed a direct threat to U.S. citizens overseas, such as those present during the October 2019 Yom Kippur shooting at a synagogue in Halle, Germany, though thankfully no U.S. citizens were injured in that incident. The March 2019 attack at mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand is an example of a close U.S. ally threatened by RMVEs. If confirmed, I would ensure that NCTC provides appropriate support to the DNI, IC partners, and other relevant departments and agencies in understanding and addressing the transnational RMVE threat.

**QUESTION 34:** What is your view of the appropriate level of NCTC resource allocation toward the international and transnational RMVE threat?

**ANSWER:** RMVE is a significant concern for the Administration, as reflected in the recent ODNI Annual Threat Assessment. If confirmed, I would ensure that NCTC devotes resources to RMVE issues commensurate with the threat and in line



with the President's overall national intelligence and CT priorities.

**QUESTION 35:** The IC's April 2021 Annual Threat Assessment stated: "Australia, Germany, Norway, and the United Kingdom consider white racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists, including Neo-Nazi groups, to be the fastest growing terrorist threat they face." How should the IC engage in bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism cooperation against the RMVE threat?

**ANSWER:** The IC's ability to capitalize on its already strong partnerships with Western counterparts is essential to addressing the increase in the RMVE threat. Information sharing is key to this approach, consistent with the law, Attorney General-approved guidelines for the protection of U.S. person information, and respect for privacy and civil liberties. The IC should help to facilitate the proactive sharing of intelligence on RMVE threats with and among foreign partners, including information on trends in the United States and abroad. Additionally, sharing best practices to address the domestic violent extremist threats and soliciting partners' domestic RMVE strategies would foster CT partnership with foreign counterparts.

In addition to these efforts, the Administration's recent endorsement of the Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online, which is supported by over 50 foreign governments, international organizations, and technology companies, is another example of multilateral and private sector partnership to combat the threat of violent extremism consistent with fundamental protections for freedom of expression and our values as a nation.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

UNITED STATES SENATE



**Post-Hearing Questions for**

**Ms. Christine Abizaid Upon Her Nomination to be**

**Director of the National Counterterrorism Center**

*[From Vice Chairman Rubio]*

1. As of December 2020, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence reported that of the 729 transferred out of Guantanamo Bay, 125 of them were confirmed as having re-engaged in terrorist or insurgent activities. The ODNI also notes that, “some detainees determined to reengage have and will do so regardless of any transfer conditions, albeit at a lower rate than if they were transferred without conditions.”

- **Does the recidivism of these terrorists provide inspiration to terrorist movements, or otherwise benefit them in any way?**

**ANSWER:** In general, recidivism presents risks whether in the form of direct reengagement on the battlefield, more diffuse inspiration, or other reputational or experiential benefit to terrorist groups. If confirmed, I will review current intelligence on former Guantanamo Bay detainees’ recidivism rates and any related issues, and provide that intelligence to policy makers to inform their decisions related to mitigating the risks, as appropriate.

- **If confirmed as Director of NCTC, would you support any effort to transfer the remaining 40 detainees at Guantanamo Bay?**

**ANSWER:** NCTC provides analytic assessments to aid policymakers in their decisions and recommendations concerning the transfer of specific detainees. While the NCTC Director does not make these policy decisions, if confirmed, I would ensure that NCTC provides policymakers with all available intelligence, as informed by NCTC’s analytic expertise, to support their decision process.

- **Do you support the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed, I would defer to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and other senior officials to determine that the Guantanamo Bay detention facility be closed. I would also ensure that NCTC provides timely and robust all-source intelligence assessments to assist in any

policy deliberations and determinations regarding the future of the detention facility.

- **What criteria would inform your recommendation?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed, I would oversee NCTC's analytic support to policymakers regarding the status of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and individual detainees therein. As I understand it, as part of this process NCTC analysts review all-source intelligence on 1) individual detainees to assess the potential threat posed by the detainee, if released; and 2) potential transfer countries' ability to mitigate that threat. I understand that my responsibilities as Director would not include formulating recommendations as to closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility, detainee release, or conditions thereof.

2. The detainee facility at Guantanamo Bay was established in 2002 because the U.S. needed a place to hold terrorists detained in the War on Terror, who were neither prisoners of war, nor criminals.

- **Do you believe terrorists detained on the battlefield are enemy combatants?**

**ANSWER:** My understanding is that the law of armed conflict, as reflected in the Department of Defense (DoD) Law of War Manual, distinguishes between "privileged" and "unprivileged," or "lawful" and "unlawful" combatants. I further understand that the DoD Manual requires that the legal status of an individual "enemy combatant" must be assessed with reference to the specific facts and legal rule at issue. If confirmed as NCTC Director, I would defer to those who have the authority to make these determinations.

- **If Guantanamo Bay were shuttered, where do you believe terrorists detained on the battlefield should be held?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed, I would defer to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and other senior officials charged with identifying lawful and

appropriate detention locations as may be necessary. I would ensure that NCTC provides timely and robust all source intelligence assessments to assist in their determinations.

- **What viable alternatives to Guantanamo Bay currently exist and what would be the impact on our counterterrorism posture if Guantanamo Bay were to close?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed, I would ensure that NCTC provides all appropriate support to any interagency process to examine issues related to the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay.

- **Do you believe terrorists should be tried in U.S. criminal courts on U.S. soil?**

**ANSWER:** I believe that terrorists should be brought to justice. My general understanding is that there can be multiple avenues to do so, depending on the individual and the terrorist act or acts. For example, based on the facts and circumstances and the law, the Department of Defense and the Department of Justice could pursue charges through a military commission, federal court, or other appropriate forum. As to Guantanamo Bay detainees, I am aware that Congress has prohibited the use of funds for the transfer or release of detainees to the United States. If confirmed, I would defer to those who have prosecutorial authority to choose the most appropriate, available option under the circumstances.

3. During your time at the Department of Defense's Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, you established defense policy positions associated with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia. You also made recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding U.S. and NATO troop levels.

- **What were some of the policy positions you established and what impact did they have on U.S. efforts in the region?**

**ANSWER:** As the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia, my office was responsible for a wide range of policy recommendations and for overseeing policy

implementation in the region. Among the issues we tackled were policies related to: U.S. and international funding support for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF); transitioning the Afghan Air Force away from an over-reliance on Russian-made aviation assets; U.S. and NATO force manning levels in Afghanistan; operational authorities for U.S. forces in support of the ANDSF, NATO and tied to U.S. counterterrorism objectives; Coalition Support Funds and security cooperation with Pakistan; security cooperation with Central Asian states. Taken together, the policies the Defense Department implemented in the region during my tenure as DASD strengthened our security partnerships, enabled international cooperation against shared security threats, and protected U.S. forces in the region while supporting the development and growing independence of the ANDSF.

- **What did you recommend and what led you to make those recommendations?**

**ANSWER:** The recommendations I provided through the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy to the Secretary of Defense were typically informed by intelligence assessments; military advice provided by field commanders and the Joint Staff; an analysis of the costs, benefits and risks associated with various policy options; and an analysis of the willingness and effectiveness of security cooperation partners to address vital U.S. national security concerns in the region.

As one example of this, I recommended that the United States sustain a force manning level in Afghanistan above the 1,000 originally planned for the post-2014 environment. The policy debate around sufficient force manning levels occurred several times throughout my tenure. Each time that I recommended sustaining a presence above 1,000, I took into account a number of factors, including: the activity of legacy terrorist groups operating in the region, including al-Qa'ida; the potential threat posed by a new Islamic State-affiliate (ISIS-Khorosan) that had recently emerged in the region; the operational and maintenance support needs of the ANDSF while still in direct conflict with the Taliban; the force protection needs that U.S. military leaders indicated were essential for sustaining an effective U.S. and NATO presence; and the lack of

progress towards a negotiated political reconciliation between the Afghan Government and the Taliban.

4. The National Counterterrorism Center was established following al-Qaeda's attacks on America on September 11, 2001. Al-Qaeda was enabled and grew under Taliban rule of Afghanistan in the 1990s. The administration has committed to pulling American forces completely out of Afghanistan by September 2021.

- **What effect will the disengagement of American military forces have on regional stability and the ability of terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS to threaten the homeland?**

**ANSWER:** While I have not recently evaluated the security landscape in Afghanistan, I understand senior Administration officials assess that Afghan security forces have the capability and capacity to project security and stability in Afghanistan with U.S. and other international financial and advisory support. Concerning threats to U.S. interests abroad and at home, it is my understanding that the Taliban committed in the February 29, 2020 agreement with the United States to prevent any group from using Afghanistan to threaten the security of the United States and its allies; the Taliban must be held accountable to that commitment. While I am aware that terrorist groups in Afghanistan, like ISIS-Khorasan and al-Qa'ida, remain active and have expressed intent to attack U.S. interests both in the region and overseas, it appears the capabilities of these groups have been degraded after years of sustained CT pressure. Following a U.S. and Coalition withdrawal from Afghanistan, I would expect the most direct threat to U.S. interests likely will present itself in the immediate region. Regardless, I believe it will be important for the Intelligence Community to develop a collection strategy that maintains awareness of threat actors in the region, monitors their capabilities and intentions to conduct transnational attacks, and supports policy and operational decisions to deter any threats to the United States.

- **What should we expect to happen to civil society and governance in Afghanistan?**

**ANSWER:** The United States' commitment to the people of Afghanistan is an enduring one, as Secretary Blinken recently reaffirmed on his recent trip to Afghanistan. I believe the United States' and international community's continued support to Afghan civil society will be an important underpinning of a larger strategy toward long-term stability in the country and it will help to protect against terrorists' use of the country as a platform for transnational attack planning.

- **Given that NCTC was effectively established as a consequence of al-Qaeda's dominance under Taliban governance of Afghanistan, how should we expect the predictable power and stability vacuum in Afghanistan to ultimately impact NCTC's workload?**

**ANSWER:** My understanding is NCTC remains well-postured to maintain its focus on leading and integrating the CT mission to avoid strategic surprise. If confirmed, I will lead NCTC's efforts to analyze and integrate all sources of intelligence pertaining to the region. NCTC will coordinate CT community plans, assessments, and posture reviews to engage in cross-agency collaboration, and keep policy makers informed of potential shifts in power.

- **How do you plan to coordinate within the IC and the interagency to maintain sufficient CT pressure in Afghanistan following our withdrawal?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed as NCTC's Director, I will lead the Center in its collaborative efforts within the IC and interagency to mitigate potential intelligence gaps to the fullest extent possible. NCTC also will provide strategic analysis; timely plans, assessments and reviews; as well as duty to warn on potential shifts of power within the region. By keeping policy makers and Congress currently and well informed, NCTC will lead the



CT community and aid our regional partners to maintain sufficient CT pressure in Afghanistan.

5. 9/11 occurred because the Taliban succored al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and Pakistan succored al-Qaeda. The U.S. government has no indication of what the Taliban will do once the U.S. retrograde is complete or if the Taliban were to retake the government.

- **How does NCTC believe the collection it relies on to track Taliban intentions will be affected following the U.S. retrograde, and can NCTC contribute to any mitigation strategies the IC intends to implement? How does NCTC believe its analysis will be affected following the retrograde? Will NCTC be clear to its customers in identifying any growing gaps in its analysis on Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal?**

**ANSWER:** If confirmed as NCTC's Director, I will lead NCTC in its collaborative efforts with the Intelligence Community and U.S. Government counterparts to ensure collection losses are mitigated to the fullest extent possible. NCTC will also continue to provide strategic analysis that reflects the Intelligence Community's views of the terrorist threat from Afghanistan.

6. Prior to 9/11, analysts at the time assessed that the Taliban's motivating ideology was indigenous and focused on the Afghan region, rather than promoting a global vision. However, after being displaced to the tribal regions, the Taliban and a following generation of Taliban foot soldiers spent 20 years commingling with al-Qaeda and its clearly global jihadist aspirations.

- **Do NCTC analysts believe Taliban jihadist ideology is still solely focused on Afghanistan? Ideologically, is today's Taliban more open to al-Qaeda's global aspirations? If NCTC has an assessment on this question, what does it rely on for its assessment and what confidence level does it have on this assessment?**

**ANSWER:** While I have not yet had the opportunity to explore these issues with NCTC's analytic workforce, based on my prior positions, I would expect that Taliban leaders remain focused on establishing an Islamic emirate in Afghanistan and are not significantly motivated by al-Qa'ida's global aspirations. In general, Taliban leaders are not interested in conducting attacks in the West, and likely view such plotting as interfering with their focus on regaining power and influence in the region.

7. Pakistan has long used terrorism as an asymmetrical means to promote its definition of its national interest.

- **How many Sunni terrorist organizations operate in Pakistan today?**
- **How many, and which ones, are tolerated by government, insofar as Pakistani authorities know of them but choose not to challenge them?**
- **How many, and which ones, are actively supported by elements of the Pakistani government?**
- **How many, and which ones, have aspirations to attack U.S. interests, facilities, or citizens? How many and which ones have aspirations to attack the U.S. homeland?**

**ANSWER:** While I am familiar with terrorism related threats affecting the region generally, I do not have specific information at this time concerning the complete landscape of Sunni terrorist organizations operating in Pakistan. In general, I expect that groups like Tehrik e-Taliban Pakistan, al-Qa'ida, al-Qa'ida's South Asian affiliate, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Haqqani network and other Sunni terrorist elements continue to operate inside Pakistan, including in areas where the government's reach is limited.

Many of these groups actively plotted against U.S., Western, and regional interests; committed terrorist attacks against civilian populations; and were actively countered by Pakistani authorities. Pakistan's past approach to Sunni terrorist organizations in the country has been inconsistent, but during my tenure as DASD-APC I noted a more widespread recognition from Pakistan's military of the significant and direct threat such terrorist actors posed to Pakistan's stability and security. If confirmed as NCTC Director, I would look forward to reviewing the current intelligence concerning these complex issues.

8. The debate continues to this day about motivation to join violent Sunni terrorist organizations. Some argue that the motivation is purely sociological (e.g., this is the official position of Saudi Arabia), others argue that propagation of jihadist ideology plays a key role, still others believe it is a combination of factors.
- **How closely does NCTC track the evolution of Sunni terrorist ideology? And how does it do so? How many analysts regularly read, in the original languages, terrorist propaganda? How many analysts track the various media and social media platforms? Do you have plans to change this focus, and if so, how?**

**ANSWER:** As Director Haines highlighted in this year's Annual Threat Assessment, the Intelligence Community assesses that ISIS and al-Qa'ida remain the greatest Sunni terrorist threats to U.S. interests overseas; they also seek to conduct attacks inside the United States, although sustained U.S. and allied CT pressure has broadly degraded their capability to do so. It is my understanding that NCTC produces all-source analysis on terrorist ideology and propaganda, including tactics that terrorists use to disseminate content online. If confirmed, I would seek to determine how many NCTC analysts track media and social media platforms, the approach they take to do so in keeping with protections for privacy and civil liberties, and what

analytic insights they draw from such tracking. I would be guided by our national security priorities in making any changes to this focus.

- **Does NCTC track divisions between propagators of different Sunni terrorist ideologies? E.g., how active – and influential – is the debate within jihadist circles between al-Qaeda and ISIS ideology? Does NCTC analysis reveal divisions that can be exploited by other elements of the IC and USG that would undermine ideological appeals and motivation to susceptible audiences?**

**ANSWER:** I believe that understanding divisions between terrorist groups and identifying opportunities to exploit those divisions serves critical U.S. national security interests. While I am not familiar with NCTC's or the broader USG's current efforts in these areas, if confirmed, I would look forward to engaging with the analysts, NCTC leadership, and interagency partners on these issues.

- **What nation states are the most active in promoting, supporting, and tolerating the dissemination of Sunni terrorist ideology? Can NCTC provide in-depth analysis on this subject, to include resources and platforms supported by nation states for the dissemination of Sunni terrorist ideology? Do you plan on changing or improving NCTC's focus on this subject, and if so, how?**

**ANSWER:** I believe that NCTC is well positioned to provide in depth-analysis on state promotion, support, and tolerance of Sunni terrorist ideology, and I believe NCTC's generally collaborative approach to analysis would incorporate views from regional and country experts on these topics. If confirmed, I would look forward to engaging on these issues. Any changes or improvements to NCTC's focus would be guided by our national security priorities.

9. Since leaving government service in May 2017 and before starting at Dell in October 2017, you were employed as a Strategic Advisor with both JPA Partners, LLC and as an independent contractor. Please provide answers to the following questions for your work with JPA Partners and as an independent contractor:

- **What was the nature of the work?**

**ANSWER:** JPA Partners, LLC: I served as a strategic advisor for a period of four months in 2017. During this time, my primary responsibilities were internal to the firm. I advised the principal on matters ranging from operational efficiency, geopolitical risk analysis, and business development opportunities. I also accompanied the principal to several meetings with clients or potential clients.

Independent Contractor: Concurrent with my work at JPA Partners, I also served as an independent contractor. During this time, my primary work was on behalf of the Markle Foundation on a project to establish and organize the Rework America Task Force, a task force to drive multi-disciplinary collaboration around policy recommendations to guide the future of America's labor market.

- **Who were your clients?**

**ANSWER:** As an independent contractor, my client was the Markle Foundation. I did not have direct clients at JPA Partners, other than the firm's principal. The several meetings I attended alongside the principal were with companies or organizations involved in artificial intelligence and machine learning; aerospace and defense technology; financial services; and economic, political, and business advisory services.

- **Did you or the firm represent or affiliate with any foreign clients? If so, please provide a list of clients or affiliations, including the country where the client is based and the nature of the work on behalf of the client or affiliate.**

**ANSWER:** No.

**10. What are the top three national security threats we face today?**

- **ANSWER:** As Director Haines highlighted in this year's Annual Threat Assessment, the United States and its allies will face a diverse array of threats that are playing out amidst the global disruption resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and against the backdrop of strategic competition with China and Russia, the disruptive effects of ecological degradation and a changing climate, an increasing number of empowered non-state actors, and rapidly evolving technology. The complexity of the threats, their intersections, and the potential for cascading events in an increasingly interconnected and mobile world create new challenges for the Intelligence Community. More specifically, my view of the top three national security priority areas to address as part of this complexity are 1) the United States' geostrategic competition – and, where prudent, collaboration – with China; 2) the United States' ability to deter and become more resilient in the face of dynamic cybersecurity threats from state and non-state actors, alike; 3) the United States' leadership in technological advancement and global norms to govern the power enabled by technology. As many components of the Intelligence Community realign resources to address these and other threats, I believe NCTC's sustained, singular focus on preventing, detecting, and deterring counterterrorism threats will be a critical component to the national security framework. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that NCTC has the resources, partnerships, technology, and expertise required for it to deliver for the American people.

**11. What are the top three foreign terrorist threats we face today?**

- **ANSWER:** My views closely align with those of Director Haines as reflected in the ODNI's recently issued Annual Threat Assessment. I believe that ISIS and al-Qa'ida and their affiliates pose an enduring and persistent threat to the United States and to other Western interests

globally in 2021, although sustained U.S. and allied CT pressure has broadly degraded their capability. The U.S. also faces an intensifying confrontation with Iran, which remains the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism. Tehran views terrorism as a key tool to counter U.S. influence and uses the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Forces (IRGC-QF) to provide weapons, funding, and training to a range of terrorist and militant proxies throughout the Middle East.

*[From Senator Wyden]*

1. **NCTC's March 22, 2021, Implementation Procedures for the ODNI Intelligence Activities Procedures Approved by the Attorney General Pursuant to Executive Order 12333 ("NCTC's 12333 Procedures") make distinctions between terrorism information and domestic counterterrorism intelligence. NCTC's 12333 Procedures define domestic counterterrorism intelligence according to 18 U.S.C. § 2331(5), which includes activities that "occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States." For purposes of adhering to the NCTC's 12333 Procedures, does that definition include terrorists or suspected terrorists inside the United States with no ties to or communications with terrorist organizations, regardless of ideology or inspiration?**
  - **ANSWER:** I have reviewed the recently-issued ODNI Intelligence Activities Procedures Approved by the Attorney General Pursuant to Executive Order 12333 (ODNI Attorney General Guidelines), as well as the NCTC Implementation Procedures to the ODNI Intelligence Activities Procedures Approved by the Attorney General Pursuant to Executive Order 12333 (NCTC Implementation Procedures). I understand that NCTC's incorporation of the Title 18 criminal code definition of "domestic terrorism" into the Implementation Procedures definition of "domestic counterterrorism intelligence" would extend that term to terrorists or suspected terrorists within the United States who commit unlawful acts of violence that satisfy the statute's criteria, potentially including individuals with no ties to or communication with terrorist organizations, regardless of their ideology or inspiration. I further understand that NCTC defers to the Federal Bureau of

Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as lead domestic counterterrorism agencies, to determine whether particular acts satisfy the definition of domestic terrorism.

**2. Section 3(A) of NCTC's 12333 Procedures allows NCTC to collect "publicly available sources." Do NCTC's 12333 Procedures incorporate the definition of "publicly available" in Section 10.17 of the ODNI's December 23, 2020, Intelligence Activities Procedures Approved by the Attorney General Pursuant to Executive Order 12333 ("ODNI's 12333 Procedures")?**

- **If yes, do you believe NCTC should intentionally collect U.S. person information by purchasing commercially available data sets? Under what circumstances would that be necessary and appropriate?**

**ANSWER:** I understand the NCTC Implementation Procedures incorporate the definitions contained in the ODNI Attorney General Guidelines, to include the definition of publicly available information. NCTC is authorized to collect information overtly or through publicly available sources, which I believe could include commercially available data sets. Director Haines has committed to developing a framework to address the acquisition of commercially available data and I look forward to working with her on that effort, if confirmed.

**3. Section 3(A) of NCTC's 12333 Procedures allows NCTC to collect information "overtly." Do NCTC's 12333 Procedures incorporate the definition of "overt collection" described in Section 10.14 of ODNI's 12333 Procedures?**

- **If yes, is NCTC authorized to collect information from or about U.S. persons without volunteering the collector's affiliation with NCTC or the U.S. Intelligence Community? Under what circumstances would that be necessary and appropriate? Is NCTC authorized to collect information from or about U.S. persons without volunteering the collector's affiliation with the**



**U.S. Government? Under what circumstances would that be necessary and appropriate?**

**ANSWER:** I understand the NCTC Implementation Procedures incorporate the definitions contained in the ODNI Attorney General Guidelines, to include the definition of overt collection. NCTC is authorized to collect information overtly or through publicly available sources only in accordance with the ODNI Attorney General Guidelines and NCTC Implementation Procedures. I understand broadly that overt collection requires acknowledgment or attribution to the U.S. Government and forbids concealment of the collection activity. If confirmed, I would work closely with the ODNI Office of General Counsel to deepen my understanding of how this and other provisions of the ODNI Attorney General Guidelines and NCTC Implementation Procedures operate to protect U.S. person information in the conduct of NCTC's critical mission to protect the Homeland from terrorists.

**4. Section 5(B) of NCTC's 12333 guidelines refers to "[u]nevaluated information NCTC collects or obtains *solely* for the purpose of identifying domestic counterterrorism intelligence in support of an agency with an authorized domestic counterterrorism mission...." (emphasis in the original) Under what circumstances, if any, would NCTC collect from external sources (as opposed to from DHS or FBI) information solely for identifying domestic counterterrorism information? Would those circumstances include bulk collection?**

- **ANSWER:** NCTC is an entity purpose-born to identify connections to and among foreign or international terrorist groups and transnational terrorist actors. Its primary missions are to analyze and integrate U.S. Government information concerning this terrorist threat, disseminate relevant intelligence to the President, DNI, other executive branch officials, and the Congress, and to support the missions of other departments and agencies to engage state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, to detect, deter, and prevent foreign terrorist attacks. I believe perhaps now more than ever, NCTC must maintain focus on these critical responsibilities. When NCTC provides domestic counterterrorism intelligence support to FBI and

DHS counterparts, to include partnering with them to author analytic assessments on issues concerning domestic terrorism, my understanding is that it does so primarily to identify such linkages. Accordingly, while I have not yet had the opportunity to study the specific parameters of NCTC's domestic counterterrorism support to FBI and DHS, I expect the circumstances in which NCTC would collect or obtain information solely for the purpose of identifying domestic counterterrorism intelligence would be of limited nature and reflective of NCTC's role as a supporting entity to other agencies with primary responsibilities for domestic counterterrorism. If confirmed, I would work closely with the ODNI Offices of General Counsel and Civil Liberties, Privacy, and Transparency to deepen my understanding of how this and other provisions of the ODNI Attorney General Guidelines and NCTC Implementation Procedures operate to protect U.S. person information and respect privacy and civil liberties interests.

**5. Do you believe that the aggregate number of U.S. person queries of information collected pursuant to Executive Order 12333, by NCTC or the Intelligence Community as a whole, should be made public?**

- **ANSWER:** In earning and maintaining the public trust, I believe it is critically important for the Intelligence Community to be transparent, consistent with the need to protect classified or otherwise sensitive information. I share Director Haines' commitment to public transparency, and if confirmed, I look forward to supporting her efforts. I understand that a USA FREEDOM Act amendment to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (FISA) requires that the Intelligence Community maintain and the DNI publicly report on the number of U.S. person terms used to query raw FISA Section 702-acquired data, but I am not aware whether similar records are maintained, or feasibly could be maintained, concerning queries of information collected pursuant to Executive Order 12333. If confirmed, I would seek to understand this issue and work with the ODNI Civil Liberties Protection Officer and other ODNI officials to ensure that NCTC's transparency efforts are timely, robust, and meaningful.