



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

6/13/2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL,

I am writing to you to request your assistance and support in confirming senior Department of Defense nominees. I appreciate your recent efforts to confirm the Navy's Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and other key positions in the Department. Nevertheless, nearly 16 months into this administration, many of the Senate-confirmed leadership positions on my staff remain vacant. Two nominees who will directly report to me have languished on the Senate Executive Calendar for a combined 335 days. As the Department executes combat operations and manages the largest discretionary spending accounts in the Federal Government, it is essential to have my full leadership team in place.

I request the Senate's consideration, in priority order, the following nominations:

Paul Ney to be General Counsel for the Department of Defense. This position has been vacant since January 20, 2017. It is imperative my top legal counsel be Senate confirmed as he advises me and the rest of the Department on the myriad of complex legal issues we face on a daily basis. He was nominated on January 10, 2018, favorably voted out of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) on February 13, 2018, and has been sitting on the Senate Executive Calendar for 123 Days.

Tony Kurta to be the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The Personnel and Readiness directorate takes care of our service men and women and is responsible for answering most constituent inquiries from Congress. He was nominated on July 25, 2017, favorably voted out of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) on November 16, 2017, and has been stalled on the Senate Executive Calendar for 212 Days. Under Secretary Robert Wilkie, recently nominated by the President to be the Secretary of the Veterans Administration, is our single Senate-confirmed Secretary on my Personnel and Readiness team.

Cully Stimson to be General Counsel of the Navy. This position has been vacant since January 2017 and the Navy and Marine Corps team needs their most senior attorney confirmed in order to deal with many responsibilities and challenges they face today. He was favorably voted out of the SASC on July 20, 2017, and has been languishing on the Senate Executive Calendar 331 days.

Additionally, the following nominees need to be confirmed in order to assume positions which have either been vacant for long periods of time or are required to implement and execute recent congressionally mandated reforms within the Department of Defense:



Lisa Porter to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering. She was favorably voted out of the SASC on May 23, 2018, and has been on the Senate Executive Calendar 20 days.

James Stewart to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. He was favorably voted out of the SASC on May 23, 2018, and has been on the Senate Executive Calendar 20 days.

James Anderson to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities. He was favorably voted out of the SASC on May 23, 2018, and has been on the Senate Executive Calendar 20 days.

John Whitley to be Assistant Secretary of the Army Financial Management and Comptroller. He was favorably voted out of the SASC on April 2, 2018. His nomination is privileged and is meant to streamline the process but even his nomination has been stalled on the Senate Executive Calendar for over 71 days.

While I understand some of these nominees may need a roll call vote, moving forward, I appreciate your careful consideration of these and all of our future nominated leaders. This same letter is being provided to Minority Leader Schumer and Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed.

Your assistance with moving these nominees is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,


cc:

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman, SASC
The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking, Member, SASC