

December 3, 2020

Dear President-Elect Biden:

We write in strong support of Michèle Flournoy for the nomination of Secretary of Defense. In choosing an individual to lead the Department of Defense, a candidate must be able to run the largest organization in the world, understand the politics of Washington, and have the breadth of policy experience to respond to any security issue our country may face. She has the right combination of experience and vision in each of these areas that is necessary to make our country safer, our military stronger, and reassert American leadership on the global stage.

Ms. Flournoy has a deep understanding of the structure, organization, and operation of the Pentagon and has served our nation with honor for decades. During her service in both the Clinton and Obama Administrations she demonstrated her ability to lead, capacity to manage the bureaucracy at the Pentagon and her strong relationships with both uniformed and civilian leaders at the Department of Defense.

Beyond her civil service, she has guided our national defense policy and built a new generation of leaders through her work founding and leading the Center for New American Security (CNAS). A non-partisan institution that is "grounded in a common-sense pragmatism rather than ideology," the think tank embodies her approach of working with individuals from diverse backgrounds and politics to find the right policies for our nation. Her steadfast leadership has created a deeper reserve of national security professionals and has resulted in national security policies that unite us in a common goal of strengthening the United States.

Ms. Flournoy has the policy experience to successfully guide the Department through the most complex national security environment that we have seen since the end of World War II; from a rising China, to two decades of war against terrorism. She's been at the forefront of ensuring the United States invests in technology to maintain our innovative edge over our adversaries and rise to the challenges of great power competition. Ms. Flournoy was also a key architect in the Obama administration's fight against terrorism, forming the foundation of the policies in our overseas wars and playing a pivotal role in the successful raid to kill Osama bin Laden. Her experience is a necessary prerequisite in establishing a post-Afghanistan regime for counter-terrorism policies.

Ms. Flournoy has been a tireless advocate for diversity and inclusion in national security and ensuring those of diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to compete and thrive within the enterprise. Her nomination as Secretary of Defense would be the realization of these principles: an extremely qualified, dedicated, public servant who is selected not because she is a woman, but because she was given the opportunity to compete and is the right person for the job.

We thank you for your consideration of this recommendation and we look forward to continuing working with you as a dedicated partner in advancing the national security of the United States.

Sincerely,