

MICHAEL BROWN
PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

July 13, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin:

I am writing to request that the President withdraw my nomination to be Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. The Under Secretary plays a critical role in delivering and sustaining capabilities for U.S. service members, and our men and women in uniform deserve Senate-confirmed leadership as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, it appears that an ongoing investigation by the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General into personnel practices at the Defense Innovation Unit will delay consideration of my nomination by up to a year. While I am confident the Office of Inspector General will ultimately find no wrongdoing on my part, I know there are other qualified candidates who can focus on the urgent business of making our acquisition processes faster and more cost-effective. I must put the interests of the Department above my own enthusiasm for serving as the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment.

As we enter a renewed period of competition centered around technology that will underlie both national security and our economic prosperity, I look forward to continuing to support rapid acquisition and increased adoption of leading-edge commercial technology in my current role as Director of the Defense Innovation Unit. I am proud of what the DIU team has accomplished in recent years, and we have much important work ahead as we continue to challenge the status quo in delivering new capabilities for the warfighter.

It was an honor to be nominated, and I am very grateful for the confidence you and the President placed in me.

Very respectfully,

/s/ Michael Brown