

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
DR. L. ROGER MASON, JR
NOMINATED TO BE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
BEFORE THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Chairman Cotton, Vice Chairman Warner and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and to consider my nomination to be the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office.

I want thank President Trump, Secretary Hegseth, and Director Gabbard for their trust and confidence in me to return to government service and fulfill such an important national security position.

Family is my bedrock and I am grateful beyond words for their support, sacrifice, and unconditional love. First, I want to thank my parents who instilled in me the importance of being accountable, the value of hard work, and promise of education. I am here today with my remarkable wife of 30 years—Colleen. She inspires me every day and sets the example of selfless service to others for our family. Together, we are incredibly proud of our three children, John, Joseph, and Caroline who are now beginning new chapters in their own lives built on those same values.

I was born only a few miles from here in Alexandria and have since been a life-long resident of Virginia. Growing up, my parents pressed the importance of education with my sister and I and we became the first-generation college graduates on either side of the family. For me, applying science to solve hard problems across numerous disciplines was the passion for learning. This drive resulted in earning a PhD in engineering physics from the University of Virginia which gave me a strong base to begin a career in national security. In my first job after graduate school, I led teams to develop and deploy remote sensors into a global system linked by satellites for national security missions. Simply put, I fell in love with the mission and devoted the next thirty-two years to serving it through government and industry.

Over these three decades, I honed my leadership experience, skills, and abilities to enable me to bring the right leadership for this moment in time to the National Reconnaissance Office.

As president of a space and intelligence business, I led a multi-billion-dollar organization with over 4,500 employees that provided advanced manufacturing, products, services, and solutions for every phase of space-based missions.

I was honored to serve as the first Assistant Director of National Intelligence for Systems and Resource Analyses, driving strategic capability investments, developing intelligence community requirements, and conducting independent cost analyses for all major systems acquisitions. In that role, I gained valuable insight across all intelligence missions from the strategic to the tactical, from counterterrorism to foreign military combat capabilities, and everything in between.

Today marks an incredibly exciting time for space not seen since the NRO began the dawn of space intelligence in the 1960s. We are in a space renaissance where the pace of technology advancement, speed of innovation, and promise of the future has drawn unprecedented investments from many sectors. The future of space and how our Nation can use it for good seems limitless. Today, NRO embarks on a new journey to fundamentally change how space-based intelligence is done.

The future of space, however, is also contested. Adversaries are in a race to build their own capabilities as well as counter-space measures capable of denying our Nation's critical space missions.

If confirmed, my priorities will focus on elevating NRO's strengths and emphasizing three major areas: (1) Accelerate the next generation space architecture that combines proliferated and exquisite capabilities to produce integrated intelligence data at mission speed; (2) Enable NRO to push the leading edge of space technology and innovate faster; and (3) Ensure enterprise-wide resilience from space vehicles to the ground and everything that connects the agency.

These priorities will only be achieved with a vibrant, mission-focused workforce and critical strategic partnerships. The NRO workforce is the heartbeat of the organization and demands the full attention of its leadership to attract, develop, grow, and retain its world class talent. To deliver success, NRO strategic partnerships with the military, intelligence agencies, and our allies are essential. And, we must continue to work closely with an expanding space industry. All of these relationships must be built with strong communications, transparent processes, and a spirit of problem-solving.

Chairman Cotton, Vice Chairman Warner, and distinguished members of the committee, I conclude these remarks by giving you my commitment that, if confirmed, I will bring the best of energy and skills in service to the Nation, to lead the NRO with the strength it deserves and the future vision it demands. Thank you for your time today and I look forward to answering your questions.