

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
WILLIAM R. EVANINA FOR CONFIRMATION HEARING BEFORE
THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY CENTER
(15 May 2018)
216 Hart Senate Office Building

Chairman Burr, Vice Chairman Warner, and Members of the Committee.

It's an honor to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to be the first Senate confirmed Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC). I am grateful that the Congress has considered the position I currently hold to be sufficiently important to require Senate confirmation—an acknowledgment of the significant, and growing, challenges being addressed by NCSC to enhance our nation's security.

In my capacity as Director of NCSC over the last several years, I've often appeared before this, and other Congressional committees. I have great respect for the importance of Congress' oversight role, and I have prided myself in keeping Congress fully and currently informed about developments within my cognizance in the counterintelligence and security field. If confirmed, I will continue this important information sharing commitment to Congress.

I am also honored and grateful that the President and the Director of National Intelligence have the trust and confidence in my ability to continue to serve our nation's counterintelligence and security enterprise.

I would first like to express my gratitude to my family; my mother Barbara, father John, brother Stephen, and sister Tanya – and particularly my wife JulieAnne, and my sons Dominic and Will, who are present with me today. Their love and support means everything to me.

I also want to thank the men and women of NCSC and ODNI, who lead and support both the counterintelligence and security mission as we have made NCSC the global leader in both mission areas.

I was born and raised in Peckville, Pennsylvania. There—through my family and neighbors—I learned the value of integrity, hard work, duty, pride in country, and service to others. One of those neighbors—who lived just a few blocks from my family’s house—had a particularly strong influence on me.

Gino Merli was a Private First Class in the U.S. Army during World War II. He landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day, and later fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Mr. Merli was awarded the Medal of Honor for blocking a German advance at a U.S. Army outpost in Belgium.

When I was growing up, he advised my friends and me about the importance of character, citizenship, and service. I also learned from Mr. Merli that we should never take our freedom for granted.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to be a career public servant. I believe that my past service has been solid preparation for the position I hold today, and for which I’m being considered for confirmation.

I’ve been in the federal service for over twenty-nine years—twenty-two of which were spent as a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). And as I’ve described in the Committee’s questionnaire, I’ve held a wide spectrum of leadership roles at the FBI in the law enforcement and national security fields. I have also been the Chief of the CIA’s Counterespionage Group, so I have served in the lead domestic and international CI agencies.

Mr. Chairman, I have led the organization that is now known as the National Counterintelligence and Security Center since June, 2014. If confirmed, I will continue to lead NCSC and serve as the head of counterintelligence for the U.S. Government, and as the principal counterintelligence and security advisor to the Director of National Intelligence.

The foreign intelligence threat is one of the most significant threats to our country. On February 13, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats appeared before this Committee to provide the Intelligence Community's annual threat assessment.

I agree with DNI Coats' assessment that the United States faces a complex global foreign intelligence threat. The most prominent state intelligence threats to U.S. interests will continue to be Russia and China, based on their services' capabilities, intent, and broad operational scope.

As a nation we were not prepared for Russia's intent and action to interfere in U.S. democratic processes and institutions. I believe that the Russian intelligence services will continue their efforts to encourage anti-U.S. political views, create wedges that reduce trust and confidence in democratic processes, weaken U.S. partnerships with European allies, and undermine Western sanctions.

Until fairly recently, China's use of its intelligence services to advance its national development (thereby undermining the economic security of the U.S.) did not receive adequate attention. The U.S. must continue to respond to China's systematic theft of U.S. technology across broad swaths of the U.S. economy, which represents a critical national security threat. Our economic security IS our national security.

The most critical CI threats cut across these threat actors: influence operations, critical infrastructure, supply chain, and traditional as well as economic espionage. Regional actors such as Iran and North Korea, and non-state actors such as terrorist groups, transnational criminal organizations, and hackers/hacktivist are growing in intent and capability.

Advanced technology previously available mainly to leading nation-states is now increasingly available to a wide range of nation-state and non-state actors as well. For example, a growing set of threat actors are now capable of using cyber operations to remotely access traditional intelligence targets, as well as a broader set of U.S. targets including critical infrastructure and supply chain, often without attribution.

Insider threats – sometimes with the encouragement of external actors – are a pernicious intelligence threat to maintaining our secrets and our national security. Unauthorized disclosures also have a devastating impact on the men and women who serve every day to protect our secrets, our data, our systems, and our personnel.

If confirmed, I commit to the continual leadership of the Intelligence Community and the U.S. Government efforts to address these significant, and increasingly complex, global intelligence threats to the United States.

As the Director of NCSC, and as prescribed in your legislation which created my role, I am responsible for leading and supporting the counterintelligence and security activities of the U.S. Intelligence Community, the U.S. Government, and U.S. private sector entities at risk from intelligence collection by foreign adversaries.

And I would like to emphasize that NCSC safeguards privacy and civil liberties, and practices appropriate transparency in all counterintelligence and security programs to ensure accountability to Congress and the American people.

Mr. Chairman, as you, the Vice Chairman, and all Members of this Committee are keenly aware, our government's security clearance process is outdated and inefficient, and requires a comprehensive overhaul. Currently, there are 4 million Americans deployed around the globe – in over 100 agencies and departments – who possess a security clearance. We must develop and implement a business process that results in the expeditious onboarding of highly qualified citizens – both in the U.S. government and cleared industry – with agility and complete reciprocity. At the same time, we must not reduce the quality of the investigations to ensure we are hiring a highly trusted workforce that will protect our nation's secrets. If confirmed, as the executor of the DNI's role as the Security Executive Agent, I am committed to leading this important government-wide effort on behalf of the DNI.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to conclude my remarks by sharing a story that illustrates the commitment to public service that I, along with my colleagues at the National Counterintelligence and Security Center share.

One year ago, NCSC staff traveled to the National Archives to renew our Oath of Office as federal employees. We assembled in the National Archives' Exhibit Hall where our nation's foundational documents—the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence—are on display. To me, these are sacred documents, and this was the most fitting place to renew our Oath and commitment to the laws of this great nation.

As federal civil servants, we pledge our loyalty to the Constitution and the rule of law. Our service to the American people is defined by scrupulous adherence to the law and the ideas and ideals embodied in these important documents.

I am honored to lead the NCSC workforce. I am also humbled that, if confirmed, I would become the first Senate confirmed Director to specifically represent the men and women of that organization who have toiled behind the scenes in the global counterintelligence and security arenas for decades protecting our nation. Our success in protecting our nation's security is based on teamwork in a hard-working, respectful, collaborative, and professional work environment with our partners throughout the government and private sector.

Public service is a tremendous honor as well as an enormous public trust. And as intelligence professionals, we are custodians of our nation's secrets. We have a special responsibility to our fellow citizens. All of us are firmly committed to serving the American people and abiding by the Constitution and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will remain committed to these essential goals.

Chairman Burr, Vice Chairman Warner, and Members of the Committee, thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.