

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 8, 2024

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker,

I write in full support of the nomination of Pete Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense and to urge the Senate Armed Services Committee to convene his nomination hearing as scheduled on January 14, 2025. As you are aware, Senators who are going to oppose the Hegseth nomination no matter what are seeking to delay and deny President Trump his Secretary of Defense being confirmed quickly. If they are successful, this will harm America's national security during the crucial transition of power later this month.

Senator Blumenthal's letter to you and the rest of the Committee is the latest attempt to accomplish their goal. In his letter, he raises unsubstantiated and anonymous accusations against Mr. Hegseth about his time as a leader of two organizations that advocated for America's veterans. Senator Blumenthal's letter purposely omits the fact that veterans who have worked with Mr. Hegseth professionally are on the record supporting his nomination.

The Armed Services Committee's critical work in confirming nominations sent to the Senate by the President of the United States cannot be derailed with anonymous sources stating false accusations or unreasonable demands for receipts from a non-profit organization's operations over a decade ago. Senator Blumenthal, despite being a Member of this Committee, says he wants to ask questions of Mr. Hegseth while calling to delay the committee hearing that will allow him to do so.

Senator Blumenthal retains the right to oppose the Hegseth nomination on the Senate floor as well as ask his questions of the nominee. He does not have the right to delay the Armed Services Committee's important work for the national security of the United States. Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Banks
United States Senator

CC: Ranking Member Reed