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January 8, 2024

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

Dear Chairman Wicker,

As you are aware, the Secretary of Defense's power and authority over our military is second only to the President of the United States, our nation's commander-in-chief. The Secretary of Defense directly impacts our national security and the lives of more than 3.4 million people serving in our military in active duty, reserves, and civilian positions. This nominee is among the most significant to come before the Senate as the new Administration assumes office.

I am deeply concerned that the Senate Armed Services Committee is considering the nomination of Pete Hegseth for this critically significant position without full information regarding his capacity and experience to lead our military and steward a budget of nearly \$850 billion.

I remain particularly disturbed about well-documented allegations of Mr. Hegseth's serious financial abuse and gross misconduct as the Executive Director of V.F.F. from 2007 to 2011 and again as the Executive Director of CVA from 2013 to 2016. I do not see how this committee can, in good conscience, consider Mr. Hegseth's nomination without a full review of his conduct while leading these organizations – the only civilian management experience of his career. Available reports show that he ran those organizations into the ground through mismanagement, financial irresponsibility, and possible self-dealing. It is disappointing that the nominee refuses to make himself available to meet with me and my Democratic colleagues in advance of his nomination hearing.

I have previously requested that the committee receive documents reflecting his involvement with these organizations including credit card transactions and other uses of resources. This committee must also review Mr. Hegseth's FBI background report, as is especially necessary for this nominee. Any concealment of information suggests that more damning facts are being shielded from us and the American public. Already, a significant amount of derogatory information is in the public record, but more apparently remains to be revealed.

This committee should enable not impede transparency and requests for disclosure, showing this nominee's gross incompetence and mismanagement.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

CC:

Senator Fischer
Senator Cotton
Senator Rounds
Senator Ernst
Senator Sullivan
Senator Cramer
Senator Scott
Senator Tuberville
Senator Mullin
Senator Budd
Senator Schmitt
Senator Banks
Senator Sheehy

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