

**TRAINING THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S
WORKFORCE FOR 21ST CENTURY DIPLOMACY**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE
DEPARTMENT AND USAID
MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL
OPERATIONS, AND BILATERAL
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OF THE

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TRAINING THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S WORKFORCE FOR 21ST CENTURY DIPLOMACY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID
MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND
BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin J. Cardin presiding.

Present: Senators Cardin [presiding], Kaine, and Hagerty.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

Senator CARDIN. State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development.

It is a pleasure to welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses on this subject, and as I was explaining before we got started, there is a series of votes on the floor of the Senate. Senator Hagerty and I will do our best to proceed as far as we possibly can. We will see how the timing works. We will ask for all of your cooperation.

Today, the subcommittee intends to continue its exploration of issues affecting the performance of the State Department, focusing on the necessary training and professional development to recruit and retain a high-performing workforce.

I want to thank Ranking Member Hagerty for his support in developing this hearing and advancing the important work of this subcommittee.

Senator Hagerty has repeatedly utilized his valuable experience as the former Ambassador to Japan, giving us insight as to how diplomacy works and what areas need to improve in order for the United States to compete successfully in this ever-complex global environment.

In addition to his diplomatic experience, Senator Hagerty brings private sector experience that is also critical in addressing these challenges. As I pointed out before we started the hearing, he is a graduate from the training program. I understand his exact grades are kept confidential and we cannot do a release of that information.

I was pleased to see Secretary of State Antony Blinken weigh in last week on the topic of today's hearing when he issued his five pillars for modernizing American diplomacy. He hit on many of the

important themes that we raised at our July hearing on modernizing the State Department for the 21st century, including building the Department's capacity and expertise, creating a climate for initiative and innovation, modernizing technology and communications, and deepening overseas engagement.

The most important pillar he noted, which is essential to today's discussion, is building and retaining a diverse, dynamic, and entrepreneurial workforce and empowering and equipping the State Department employees to succeed.

I look forward to seeing a concrete plan for the rebuilding effort Mr. Blinken spoke about, which will require significantly increasing investments of time and resources in the development of the Department's greatest assets; its people.

Many of the most serious international challenges the United States faces in 2021 will require the State Department personnel to take the lead, calling for improved and expanded training and professional development opportunities for Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel.

The level of challenges the Department faces now around the world are almost unprecedented. The return of great power competition, the rise of authoritarianism, the collapse of Afghanistan, addressing climate change, conflicts, leading a global response to the pandemic and, most importantly, assisting American citizens around the world.

In light of this, professional education and training must be top priorities at the State Department and we must strengthen the professionalism of our diplomats through a vastly expanded career-long program of education and training that focuses on the mastery of substantive foreign policy issues, diplomatic expertise, and leadership.

There is also a critical need for increased preparation of ambassadors and other senior leaders for their high-level positions beyond the minimal 3-week training they receive, known around the Department as the charm school, before representing the United States at home and overseas.

The State Department must be seen as the lead agency in executing American foreign policy overseas, ensuring that each chief of mission's role is clear, paramount, safeguarded, and unsalable.

I support the President's proposal to increase the budget of the Department of State and USAID by 10 percent. If enacted, and I hope it will be, this would provide the largest increase in personnel in over a decade, allowing for more flexibility and training and the much-needed training float that former Secretary of State Colin Powell dreamed of so many years ago.

Yet, I wonder if it is enough. In order for the State Department to make the changes that experts have called for and that Secretary Blinken has acknowledged, the Department must embrace a dramatic turnaround in its current culture.

This will require replacing the old culture that stalls careers at mid-level and sees training as an impediment with a new culture of education being career enhancing.

Employees and leaders throughout the Department must be empowered to make these changes and given the resources to do it. If handled correctly, we will see a State Department that has

transformed its approach to diplomacy, once again positioning the United States as the leader in the international arena.

With that, let me turn it over to my distinguished ranking member, Senator Hagerty.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much, Chairman Cardin. Thank you for convening this hearing and thank you for your insightful and thoughtful remarks as we open up here.

I also want to recognize our witnesses. I know we have broken this into two parts, but I am looking forward to a very fruitful discussion and I appreciate your being here with us today.

Before I begin, I would just like to say this. I am disappointed that the Bureau of Global Talent Management did not join us today. As a former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I recognize that the issues of training and personnel management go hand in hand.

I hope to work with Senator Cardin to make significant progress on personnel-related matters over the near future. Today, we are focusing on the important subject of training in the State Department's workforce.

In July, this subcommittee held a hearing on the topic of modernizing the State Department for the 21st century. At that time, all three of our witnesses agreed that change is desperately needed at the State Department, and each of our witnesses spent a considerable amount of time with us discussing the need to improve training at the Department of State.

We can all agree that the development of our diplomats, their education, their training, their professionalization, must be among the highest priorities for the State Department.

This is a particularly glaring problem considering that, in my view, the State Department attracts some of the most talented individuals in the United States Government. According to a study, people join the State Department, on average, with a graduate education and 11 years of work experience.

Yet, the same study noted that State, and I quote, "treats education as a prerequisite for hiring and not a continuing requirement to prepare personnel for their subsequent responsibilities."

In essence, when diplomats come in the door, they are treated as though they have the knowledge and skills necessary for the profession, yet, really what they depend on, for the most part, in terms of their leadership instruction is mentoring from senior diplomats.

I think we can do better. As part of addressing the training deficiency of the State Department, Secretary Blinken specifically announced his intent to implement Secretary Powell's idea for a training float that Senator Cardin just mentioned, a set number of employees who are receiving professional training at any given time, and structured in a manner that does not sacrifice the State Department's readiness.

I think that the idea, in principle, is something I certainly support as well, but Congress should ask hard questions and hold the Department accountable on personnel and training-related issues.

I raise the point because Congress has provided the Department with significant resources over the past 15 years, enough resources

to establish a training float. Since 2007, the State Department has added a combined 3,500 Foreign Service and Civil Service employees.

This amounts to approximately a 20 percent increase in the number of employees over that period of time, and certainly with a 20 percent increase in the number of Foreign and Civil Service employees the Department could have faithfully implemented Secretary Powell's vision for a training float with 15 percent of that workforce dedicated to training at all times. Yet, here we are in 2021 attempting to address that same issue.

To echo Senator Cardin's statement earlier, I look forward to seeing a concrete plan on the issue from the State Department. We will need to be bold in reimagining how the department approaches training, recognizing that the Department must embrace a new culture, just as Chairman Cardin said.

We must also incentivize and reward our diplomats to seek further education and professional development opportunities, and we must develop a cohesive program that identifies the skills our diplomats will need as their responsibilities escalate over the course of their careers.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about this subject and to hear their specific recommendations to improve training at the State Department.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty. I very much appreciate your comments and your joint leadership of our effort to make the State Department as strong and responsive as we possibly can.

As I indicated earlier, we have two panels today. For all the witnesses, your statements, without objection, will be made part of our record and you will be able to proceed.

We ask you to stay within approximately 5 minutes in your prepared remarks and leave time for questions.

It is my pleasure, first, to introduce in panel one, Ambassador Joan Polaschik, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service who is currently the Deputy Director of the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute.

Ambassador Polaschik's career has focused on the Middle East and North Africa, with assignments ranging from the U.S. Ambassador to Algeria, and I understand I was present during her confirmation hearing, to Director of the Office of Israel and Palestinian Affairs. During her distinguished career she also served in Libya, Jordan, Tunisia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan.

It is a real pleasure to have you before us and I will look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOAN POLASCHIK, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. POLASCHIK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to appear before you again.

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I have provided written testimony that outlines the full range of measures the Foreign Service Institute has taken to better

prepare U.S. diplomats for the challenges of 21st century diplomacy. I ask that my written statement also be submitted for the record and will highlight a few key areas.

In this October 27 speech at the Foreign Service Institute, also known as FSI, Secretary Blinken outlined his vision to modernize American diplomacy, stressing the need to strengthen the Department of State's expertise in areas that are increasingly at the forefront of global affairs.

He identified climate change, public health, cyber issues, and emerging technologies as areas of particular focus. Training, of course, must be at the center of our efforts.

In support of the Secretary's initiative, FSI will launch a new Cyber Diplomacy Tradecraft course that will cover U.S. national security, human rights, and economic imperatives.

To enhance capacity to engage on climate change, sustainability, and emerging technologies, FSI is conducting needs assessments to identify training requirements. FSI also is conducting a needs assessment to strengthen commercial diplomacy training.

Separately, we are developing a mid-level course that will strengthen the analytical, communication, and advocacy skills of Foreign and Civil Service personnel.

With strong support from Congress, the Department of State has invested heavily in recent years to improve what we train and how we train. We are completing construction of a new building at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center and are upgrading FSI's three main educational management systems.

My written testimony highlights new curriculum in area studies that we developed with Ambassador Miller and the U.S. Diplomatic Studies Foundation, data analytics, information technology, leadership, and orientation training, including the One Team course that brings together all categories of State Department employees for the first time ever to break down barriers and instill values of respect and inclusion.

We partnered with external organizations on many of these initiatives, including Harvard Business School, for the Secretary's leadership seminar. We are leveraging the expertise of the State Department's Office of the Historian, which moved to FSI in 2019, and FSI's Center for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy to bring real-world examples into the classroom.

We have conducted reviews of training for locally-employed staff and of our language testing program, and are implementing wide-ranging reforms in both areas. Outside the classroom, we are working to bring information to people when and where they need it through a new lecture series on global issues, as well as on the intersection of technology and foreign affairs, and regular webinars on leadership and resilience.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated our use of technology as we shifted 94 percent of our course offerings into the virtual world. We are assessing the lessons learned from this pivot to emergency virtual instruction to determine which classes should remain virtual and how we can further strengthen our overall content and delivery. Virtual training has expanded our reach and effectiveness.

As Secretary Blinken underscored, the State Department needs a workforce that is representative of the United States of America

and an organizational culture anchored in inclusiveness. In 2019, FSI launched Mitigating Unconscious Bias Training, a course that helps employees become aware of their own biases and begin addressing them. More than 17,000 people have taken the course.

Mitigating Unconscious Bias is a prerequisite for the State Department's mandatory leadership courses and, in addition to EEO training, is the foundation for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility modules in a range of courses.

In coordination with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, we are launching a State Department wide assessment of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility training needs.

To accelerate our efforts, FSI established a new position, the Senior Advisor for DEIA.

Mr. Chairman, preparing U.S. diplomats for the challenges of 21st century diplomacy is a broad-based effort to which FSI is deeply committed and which has the support of the Department's senior leadership.

We are very grateful for the ongoing interest and support of the Senate and of FSI's many partners. I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Polaschik follows:]

Prepared Statement of Ambassador Joan Polaschik

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

As President Biden has emphasized, diplomacy must be the tool of first resort of American leadership in an interconnected and competitive world. In his October 27 speech at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), Secretary Blinken outlined his vision to modernize American diplomacy, stressing the need to further strengthen and institutionalize the Department of State's expertise in the areas that will be increasingly at the forefront of global affairs. He identified climate change, public health, cyber issues, and emerging technologies as areas of particular focus. Training, of course, must be at the center of our efforts to build and strengthen expertise in all these areas.

In support of this modernization initiative, FSI will launch a new cyber diplomacy tradecraft course next year that will cover a range of international cyber issues affecting U.S. national security, human rights, and economic imperatives. To enhance U.S. diplomatic skills and abilities to engage on rapidly changing policy priorities such as climate change, sustainability, and emerging technologies, FSI is conducting full needs assessments of training options to develop a broad range of courses in these areas. Similarly, FSI is conducting a needs assessment to expand and strengthen its course offerings on commercial diplomacy, ensuring foreign and civil service officers, as well as locally employed staff, at all levels can effectively advocate on behalf of U.S. commercial interests. We also are developing a mid-level training course that will strengthen the analytical, communication, and advocacy skills of Foreign and Civil Service personnel and enhance their operational effectiveness in areas ranging from multilateral diplomacy to working collaboratively with Congress. We expect to offer that course next summer.

Thanks to strong support from Congress, the Department of State has invested heavily in recent years in improving both what we train and how we train.

We are completing construction of a new building at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center that will provide state-of-the-art facilities for our School of Professional and Area Studies and Leadership and Management School and allow us to house the entire School of Language Studies once again on our main campus. The new facility also can double as much-needed space for major Department conferences and events. We would welcome your visit to tour the site.

Separately, we are working internally within FSI and collaborating with Department of State partners, such as the Chief Information Officer and the Acting Under Secretary for Public Affairs, to build "classrooms of the future." We are purchasing and launching three new major educational management systems. One hosts online courses and educational content to provide the latest technological training and self-study development worldwide to our Foreign Service, Civil Service, and Locally Em-

ployed Staff. Another system allows FSI to gather and analyze student feedback about courses to constantly improve training. The final system manages student registrations and records and integrates them with personnel databases. These information technology upgrades—replacing badly obsolete systems—will improve both our internal administrative processes and the student experience, making for an all-around better learning environment.

FSI is equally focused on strengthening the substance and delivery of our training programs. In 2016, FSI developed and adopted new policies and standards to bring adult education best practices into our curriculum development, training evaluation, and educational technology work. As a result, FSI embraced a more experiential approach to training that has increased the effectiveness, relevance, reach, and impact of our programs. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated our use of technology in the classroom, as we shifted 575 of our 613 course offerings—94 percent—into the virtual world. We are assessing the lessons learned from our pivot to emergency virtual instruction, to determine which classes should remain virtual or hybrid and how we can further professionalize their content and delivery.

I'd like to highlight a few developments in our tradecraft, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), language, and leadership training. I note that FSI's tradecraft, area studies, DEIA, and leadership courses are open to both civil service and foreign service employees, and we are working with the Global Talent Management Bureau to further increase training opportunities for civil service colleagues.

Starting in 2019, FSI completely revamped our flagship area studies program. In partnership with the U.S. Diplomatic Studies Foundation, we have developed entirely new curricula for our regional studies classes, launched thematic global studies courses, and re-integrated area studies with our long-term language training. We are developing additional global studies courses focused on propaganda and disinformation and social movements. Additionally, we've launched a global issues speakers series that brings leading academics, via virtual platforms, to engage the State Department workforce on topics ranging from making the case for democratic renewal to how change happens in societies. This hugely popular series, attracting an average of 150 participants per session, is an example of how our new initiatives bring information and training to people when and where they need it.

In partnership with the State Department's Center for Data Analytics, FSI developed a series of data literacy courses to support the Department's efforts to bring data-driven decision-making into all aspects of our foreign policy and internal operations. Since 2017, 2,981 employees have taken these courses. This training supports implementation of the Department of State's new Enterprise Data Strategy. As someone who has taken this training, I can attest that it is highly effective in empowering non-technical employees to tackle problems from an entirely new perspective.

Similarly, the rapidly changing information technology world requires us to equip our IT professionals with new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to better advance U.S. interests. To that end, FSI developed a new suite of courses, *Solutions@State*, that empowers IT professionals to contribute to whole-of-mission efforts to solve problems. For example, IT professionals overseas now work with political and economic officers to efficiently capture and track open-source information on issues such as trafficking in persons or sanctions violations. Given the critical importance of technology in national security, our training breaks down the barriers between IT experts and the generalists who need to advance technology policy issues. In 2019, FSI launched a new *Tech in Focus* lecture series that examines the relationship between emerging technology and foreign affairs. Past topics have included artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and the future of the internet. This year, *Tech in Focus* will tackle U.S. leadership in emerging technology, the malicious use of technology, and human rights. This lecture series is yet another example of FSI relaying information to people when and where they need it.

As Secretary Blinken underscored in his October 27 speech, the State Department needs a workforce that is representative of the United States of America and an organizational culture anchored in inclusiveness. In 2019, the Foreign Service Institute developed and launched Mitigating Unconscious Bias training, a foundational course that helps employees become aware of their own inherent biases and begin addressing them. More than 17,000 people have taken the course in-person or in the distance-learning format. It is so well regarded that three other federal agencies asked us to share the curriculum with them. Mitigating Unconscious Bias is a prerequisite for the State Department's mandatory leadership courses and, in addition to longstanding mandatory EEO training, is the foundation for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility modules in our orientation, consular, and executive-level leadership courses. Gender and LGBTQ awareness have long been part of our curriculum, with courses on "Promoting Gender Equality to Advance Foreign Policy"

and “LGBT at State,” among others. We are launching a Department-wide assessment of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility training needs and, although we can’t predict the outcome at this point, expect that the assessment will point to the need for further training, such as an allyship or bystander training course. In support of both our training agenda and our own, internal DEIA needs—particularly with respect to recruitment, retention, and professional development—FSI established a new position, the Senior Advisor for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, and strengthened and formalized our DEIA Council, which works with the Senior Advisor on programming for our staff and students.

To further promote a culture of inclusiveness, we have made significant changes to our orientation training. In 2019, FSI developed and launched a pilot course, One Team, to break down barriers among the Department’s multiple employment categories and instill values of respect and inclusion. One Team orientation training, which is open to civil service, foreign service, locally employed staff, political appointees, and contractors, has reached over 1,400 employees since its launch and is now part of our regular course offerings, including during the first week of mandatory Foreign Service orientation.

Since May 2020, we have conducted joint orientation programs for Foreign Service generalists and specialists. This initiative, driven by the exigencies of the pandemic, has created an environment in which all Foreign Service employees understand the value of their colleagues’ work and see each other as equals.

We also are strengthening the training provided to the State Department’s 50,000 locally employed staff (LE staff). FSI conducted a comprehensive review of local staff training in 2020, and we are now working with the State Department’s four regional training centers—which provide the bulk of our LE staff training—to implement the review’s recommendations and increase the quality and reach of LE Staff training. To that end, the Department has developed digital tools and training plans that help LE Staff identify appropriate training courses and meet professional development needs. FSI has leveraged virtual training to expand the numbers of LE Staff who can participate in training, overcoming the financial constraints that traditionally limited in-person training.

Foreign language instruction has long been at the heart of FSI’s mission. Experience has shown that addressing foreign publics in their own languages is highly effective in advancing America’s interests in all corners of the world. FSI provides instruction to an average of 5,000 students per year in more than 60 languages. The pandemic forced us to convert all our training to the virtual world, adapting new technologies and techniques to deliver our world-class training. As health conditions permit, we are gradually phasing in more in-person activities but plan to continue a hybrid model of instruction in the future. Blended instruction will allow us to optimize the most effective aspects of each mode of delivery, for example, by expanding opportunities to connect with native speakers globally via virtual platforms and completing hands-on and experiential task-based activities in-person.

Secretary Powell’s commitment to leadership training inspired generations of U.S. diplomats, and FSI strives to live up to his legacy. In this area, too, we have made important changes in recent years. In October 2020, FSI launched the Department’s redesigned mandatory leadership courses. These redesigned courses provide employees with a learning experience that is linked closer to the real-world challenges they face on the job; address current and long-standing leadership challenges; enhance feedback through a new leadership 360 assessment; and provide progressive skill building and continuity across the courses. Separately, with support from a private philanthropist and in partnership with the Harvard Business School (HBS), we launched a new mid-level professional development program in 2020, The Secretary’s Leadership Seminar. The Seminar, which reaches 50 mid-level employees per year—divided equally between foreign service and civil service—aims to develop a diverse group of emerging enterprise leaders who will advance the mission of the Department by taking innovative approaches to enterprise-wide challenges in an inclusive and collaborative culture. The program provides these employees with an opportunity to explore leadership through a private sector lens and work with senior Department leaders and HBS to provide innovative and creative solutions to Department challenges.

Partnerships with external organizations have been central to many of our new programs and approaches. In addition to the work with the U.S. Diplomatic Studies Foundation and the Harvard Business School that I highlighted earlier, we have a long-standing partnership with the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, which among other activities, provides funding to FSI to assess emerging needs and develop pilot courses. Much of our work on commercial diplomacy training, for example, is funded by the Una Chapman Cox Foundation. We have further integrated export promotion and commercial advocacy into training for our senior leaders, up to and including

ambassadors. Separately, the American Academy of Diplomacy funded the creation of a new risk mitigation exercise that FSI now uses for the Ambassadorial Seminar, to create an immersive environment for prospective ambassadors to demonstrate and practice pre-crisis decision making, including how to consider and draw upon resources available at their Embassy and in Washington. We are planning on introducing a version of this exercise for the deputy chief of mission/principal officer seminar.

Finally, I'd like to highlight that, as part of the Department of State's reorganization of its public affairs functions, the Office of the Historian became part of the Foreign Service Institute in 2019. This move increased FSI's capacity to include historical context and lessons learned in training at every level and in every school. In addition to its Congressional mandate to produce and publish the Foreign Relations of the United States series, the Office of the Historian recently created a new position for a senior historian and project manager who will oversee development of training curricula for a wide range of U.S. diplomatic history, foreign policy, and institutional history courses and sessions to be delivered to FSI students. This new position, along with FSI's Center for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy, helps bring real world examples and case studies—a critical component of experiential learning—to FSI classrooms.

Underlying all these activities is a renewed focus on resilience and taking care of our people. As Secretary Blinken recently remarked, "We must take care of our people and their families—because the bottom line is that it doesn't matter how much we invest or how much we innovate if we can't retain, develop, and fully empower and utilize the incredible talent and expertise we already have." FSI's Center of Excellence for Foreign Affairs Resilience works to support employees and their family members who are dealing with the trauma and stress of a foreign affairs lifestyle. During the pandemic, we've increased our enrollment in resilience and related workforce support offerings by 80 percent in 1 year (that includes an increase of over 10,000 participants) and shifted 95 percent of our services to the virtual environment. We intend to keep the majority of our resilience offerings virtual even as pandemic conditions improve, as it's clear this is a more effective way to equip the workforce with tools where and when they need it.

As you can see from this broad range of activities, preparing U.S. diplomats for the challenges of 21st century diplomacy is a broad based effort to which FSI is deeply committed and which has the support of the Department's senior leadership. We are very grateful for the ongoing interest and support of the U.S. Congress and of FSI's many partners for this effort. Thank you for the opportunity to highlight some examples of how FSI has adapted its programs and platforms to better meet the needs of 21st century diplomacy. I look forward to your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Ambassador, thank you very much.

I wanted to ask you first about the Foreign Service Institute as an institution and whether there are lessons to be learned from the other institutions that we have that deal with national security and similar types of issues such as the National Defense University or the Army War College, or the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown's University School of Foreign Service.

Are there lessons to be learned? Is there coordination between any of the programs that are offered at these different institutions? How can we look at this from a coordinated point of view to try to improve our capacity for career training?

Ms. POLASCHIK. Thank you, Senator. That is such an important question and it is one that we are asking ourselves every day.

I think you are probably familiar with what we call National Security Memo No. 3, the directive issued by President Biden on February 3 with a mandate to strengthen the national security workforce, and the State Department is participating in this interagency policy process.

At State we have FSI and the Bureau of Global Talent Management in the lead, and we are looking long and hard at what we do internally in terms of recruitment, hiring, training, professional development, and sharing our experiences and initiatives with the interagency community.

As part of that process, President Biden directed the interagency to create a National Security Education Consortium, and FSI has the lead on that for the State Department, and we have had some initial meetings chaired by the National Security Council. We are now in the process of working with our partners at the Department of Defense to figure out how best we can operationalize that vision from FSI's perspective, from the State Department's perspective.

It would be extremely valuable to have a process whereby all of the national security agencies can catalogue their strengths and their weaknesses. We have started under the leadership of the National Security Council to do that. So once we identify those gaps we can look at ways that we could partner with other agencies to share curriculum, to train the trainers, hopefully, to make training more accessible across the interagency.

We, of course, are constrained by the limits of U.S. law and, for example, FSI is required to charge tuition to other agencies for the trainings that we offer and I think it is a vice versa arrangement.

There is a lot of thought going into this question now and I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that we are committed to working with our partners to do all that we can to strengthen training and professional development.

Senator CARDIN. If the interagency cost issues become an obstacle to further coordination and involvement and learning from each other, please let us know because that is something, obviously, Congress could rectify.

The bottom line cost is not going to be different. It is just a matter of an accounting. If that is at all hampering the cross-use of these facilities, we would want to know about that.

As I understand it, you do not have a formal grading system at the institute although you do rank proficiencies in foreign language, which is one of the areas that we are deeply concerned about, our competency in other languages.

I am just curious as to how you determine how effective your programs are operating and how you evaluate for future promotions those who have benefited from the program if there is not a formal way of evaluating their progress.

Ms. POLASCHIK. We actually do grade some of our classes. There are certain classes where people need to pass exams in order, for example, to receive a consular commission. They have to pass an exam at the end of the basic consular course.

There are also certain courses for people in order to have a contracting officer's warrant, for example, to award contracts and oversee grants. We have found, by the way, in this virtual world where we are doing training quite differently that people are passing those exams at higher rates and with higher scores, which is fascinating.

Our takeaway—we are, of course, still assessing the lessons learned—our takeaway is that this adoption of something that is more like university style education where people work on their own—reading, studying, and group projects—and then come back together as a group it is helpful.

That is just a minor data point, but how do we evaluate ourselves? We do it a lot. We do it every day. Beginning back in 2016, FSI adopted new policies and standards which reflect the best prac-

tices in adult education systems throughout the United States—universities, our partner government training institutions—and as part of these policies and standards, we began using something called the Kirkpatrick Model evaluation.

There are four stages to that and two of them, basically, are the feedback from the students when they have been in the course. Did they feel that they were getting information delivered in a positive way—it was helpful? Did they understand what they needed to do to meet their learning objectives to do their jobs?

Then we have a follow-on stage evaluation, phases three and four, or levels three and four, that is after people are out in the field. Let us say someone passed their consular course and 6 months later they are working in Azerbaijan, one of my postings, and we will reach back out and we will ask them and we will ask their supervisors how did the training do in terms of preparing them to do their jobs. All of our programs throughout the Foreign Service Institute are required to have an annual evaluation plan and all of these four steps feed into that.

Senator CARDIN. I will ask one more question. Then I will yield to Senator Hagerty, and that deals with the expertise in different areas.

President Biden recognized that corruption is a core national security interest. What capacity do we have in our missions to understand the challenges of corruption in the host country and to provide the type of information we need to assess U.S. involvement in that country?

The same thing is true in climate change. The same thing is true in so many different areas where we need to have that local expertise in order to be able to carry out our missions.

There are a lot of different areas that we have expressed concerns about over time. We have done this for trafficking in humans. It has been an area that we have been involved in where the local mission has a specific responsibility in our rating systems.

Tell me how the training is focused on providing the type of expertise in our missions to deal with the more complex missions that we are now asking our missions to carry out.

Ms. POLASCHIK. Thank you, Senator. I know anti-corruption is a huge priority for you and I recall in my confirmation hearing you asked me to affirm that I would work on it, and I am pleased to report that I did during my tenure in Algeria.

Senator CARDIN. We are getting very close to passing legislation that will set up a tier rating system. It has been in both the House and Senate bills. We expect it may very well be included in the National Defense Authorization Act. It is going to be, I think, a requirement, and you are going to need to have that capacity in mission.

Ms. POLASCHIK. Thanks for the heads up on that, and I am pleased to report that we do have anti-corruption training. It is a course that we developed with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

We also tackle issues related to anti-corruption in our Political Economic Tradecraft course and also the training for political economic chiefs. With the Bureau of European Affairs over the last few years, we have done workshops, which are not formal FSI

training, but they are a really good way to get information and skills to people in the field when they need it and where they need it, and we are shifting to more of that kind of a format in addition to FSI-hosted training.

To answer your broader question about how do we make sure that people have the skills, the background, the expertise that they need to deal with these 21st century challenges, it is a hugely important question, and as I mentioned in my opening remarks, we have been working on this for a while.

So we are about to roll out a new course on Cyber Diplomacy Tradecraft that will start in January. This is brand new for us. We are excited about that and we developed that with the Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues.

I mentioned that we are also doing needs assessments now for climate and emerging technology. We do offer training in both those areas, but they are woven into specific courses.

So we know that we need to do more. Our first step in accordance with our policies and standards is to talk to the policymakers in the State Department, talk to people out in the field. What do they need to know? We have to define the business need and then build the training around that.

We also have a needs assessment underway right now of commercial diplomacy training, which is a huge priority in the foreign policy for the middle class and there is a separate GAO review that we are eagerly awaiting the results for that and we will use that then to strengthen our already robust commercial advocacy training.

In the last couple of years, we have started training on data analytics, which is a very important field and one that, I think, admittedly, the State Department has not been great at in the past, and so far we have trained 3,000 people there in that area.

We have also developed new approaches to information technology training. We have a course called Solutions at State that is training our IT specialists not to think of themselves as technicians but as consultants and problem solvers.

For instance, Mr. Chairman, you highlighted anti-corruption. If we are working on that issue in an embassy overseas, how can we leverage technology to read the newspapers for us, to build the cases, to do something that it might take a human weeks to do, but if we leverage technology we can do that in a more effective way and, perhaps, a more rigorously analytical way.

That is an area for growth, I think, leveraging artificial intelligence. We also have developed new courses in our Global Area Studies program that focus on these cross-cutting issues, and lecture series, again, so we can bring information to people when and where they need it.

We have a Global Area Studies issue speaker series, and also technology and focus, which is another area we are trying to merge technical information with foreign affairs generalists so that people can understand these broad-brush issues, and they have been very popular.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that information. It is really helpful.

Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you so much, Senator Cardin.

Ambassador Polaschik, I would like to come back to a quote from Ambassadors Bill Burns and Linda Thomas-Greenfield, if I might.

In 2020, they published an article in Foreign Affairs criticizing the lack of, and I quote, “A rigorous doctrinal approach to the art of diplomacy in the State Department.” I agree with their assessment, considering the State Department does not provide or require mandatory training on the very basic fundamentals of American diplomacy.

Former Secretary of State George Schultz advocated for all incoming State Department employees to spend a full academic year of professional education to address this problem.

From my perspective, beyond entry level training and as a business person, I feel certain that we would benefit from education for mid- to senior-level employees as well.

Ambassador, do you agree that the State Department should require all employees, both Foreign and Civil Service, to receive a more rigorous doctrinal approach to the art of diplomacy and that they do this through varied points as their career advances?

Ms. POLASCHIK. Senator, I do agree, and this is something that I personally began working on almost 2 years ago when I joined the FSI team as the dean of the School of Professional and Area Studies.

Like you, I really deeply regretted the opportunities for more training between that entry level and the ambassadorial level, and we have been working hard to address that challenge.

We have a new pilot course in the works, mid-level training and, again, using that business model where we have gone out to our customers—policy practitioners in the field, the heads of regional bureaus—to ask them what do they see as the gaps in our mid-level workforce. This is Foreign Service and Civil Service together, by the way.

We have identified strategic analysis, effective communication with a range of audiences, effective adaptation to various operating environments, and mentoring subordinates as key gaps.

So we are developing a week-long course that will address those gaps and also interlocking modules in both the hard skills, negotiations, and also these new areas that people need to become familiar with, whether it is climate or emerging technologies, to build out a curriculum.

We are really excited about it. We will launch the pilot next summer, and we are also talking with the Bureau of Global Talent Management about how we could operationalize this.

Both of you highlighted the training float, and God rest Secretary Powell’s soul. He left such an important legacy for the State Department in terms of his commitment not just to training, but to the people of the Department.

We hoped—I mean, FSI—we had really hoped to live up to that legacy and look at ways that we could create some meaningful professional development for that training float once we fully have it in place.

I think you are familiar with Secretary Blinken’s request that we add 500 people in the coming year, including a first ever 100-person Civil Service training float.

This will come incrementally with time, and as we build out this pilot course and, hopefully, have support from the Senate and the House of Representatives to fund it, I think there is quite a lot of exciting work that we could do to build that capacity at the mid-level and beyond.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate the direction that you are articulating. I also note that it is not going to be easy if you think about the operational aspects of this. Just think about the housing component itself.

It frustrated me to no end waiting on staff because we did not have the overlapping housing capacity to deal with the fact that folks really did need to overlap, but we did not have the housing capacity for them to do it.

I am certain that that is part of the aspect that you are focused on.

I am also curious what sort of metrics or standards that you would use, what you would apply, to know that you are being successful as you develop this curriculum.

Ms. POLASCHIK. We would use the same Kirkpatrick level of evaluations. What we do is we look at the learning objectives that are set as part of the course development process and then see how we are meeting them. Again, it is feedback, first from the students in the classroom, but then once people are out in the field 6 months later has this really enhanced their capacity to perform effectively.

Senator HAGERTY. Let me turn to another area here quickly, if I might, and talk to you about what I perceive is a relative issue with the State Department versus other agencies that deal with national security.

I want to just share some statistics with you for a minute because I think it underscores the difference in terms of emphasis that the State Department puts on hard training versus language training.

There is a great deal of emphasis, as you know, on language training, but according to U.S. Diplomatic Studies Foundation, the State Department provides only 6 weeks of nonresidential nonlanguage training.

By comparison, the CIA provides 6 months of residential nonlanguage training. The FBI provides 20 weeks of residential nonlanguage training. The DEA provides 20 weeks of residential nonlanguage training, and Army officers spend 6 months in officers' training course in addition to basic training beyond language training. The length of training, I think, likely reflects the priority that the organization places on the tenets of and the art of diplomacy or the activity in their department.

In your view, do you see the discrepancy there? Do you have a sense that we have a lot of room to cover?

Ms. POLASCHIK. Senator, it is a complicated comparison to make, and I would note that one thing that came very clear to me through our discussions with the interagency as we were working on this National Security Education Consortium is that every agency has a unique mandate and unique training needs associated with that mandate.

I would disagree with the information put forward by the U.S. Diplomatic Studies Foundation. Yes, our basic orientation course

for a Foreign Service officer or a specialist is 6 weeks, but beyond that 6 weeks, there is a heck of a lot more.

To take my own case, which was admittedly quite some time ago, when I joined I then went into training that was specific to my onward assignment, my first assignment.

I did the orientation class. I did 3 months of GSO training, 6 weeks of consular training and then 4 weeks of top-up Russian.

I was actually at the Foreign Service Institute for almost a full year. It was 10 months before I went out to my first assignment, and that is actually quite typical.

The 6 months of general training that a U.S. Army officer gets is actually pretty comparable to what a U.S. Foreign Service officer will get before she or he deploys to the field.

Something that I think is a challenge in our system is that we train to the specific assignment that is coming. We do not have, for instance, an expectation that a U.S. diplomat must study negotiations.

I love to share this example. I had been in the business for 26 years when I first joined the FSI team and I only learned then that we teach negotiations, which is pretty shocking.

That is why I feel that this mid-level course is so important because there are things that we teach at FSI and we teach it well, but because of the way that our personnel system is set up, our assignment system, so that you take training really only that is needed for a specific assignment, we miss out on some of those.

We hope to rectify this with the creation of the mid-level training course and the development of the training float so we actually have the time and the space to allow people to train effectively, not just for the particular job, but for a career.

Senator HAGERTY. I will share this with you after the meeting, but I have got some statistics here titled "The Five-Year Workforce Plan" for FYs 2019 through 2023 for the State Department, and it shows the overwhelming weight of training going toward language and a much smaller portion going toward tradecraft or area studies or learning how to supervise.

Again, back to the balance of training, I would just argue, again, as a business person that those other components are terribly critical. I had the benefit of serving in a post that had a tough language, but I also felt that we suffered when the language requirements were erected so high that language proficiency became far more important to get to post than, for example, management proficiency.

I think striking a balance there will be critically important. Thank you.

Ms. POLASCHIK. Senator, may I address that point?

Senator HAGERTY. Sure.

Ms. POLASCHIK. I would like to unpack it a little bit. Yes, when you look at the Foreign Service Institute's budget, the language school is the behemoth, but that is because the State Department has prioritized language training for a number of positions, and we look at that very carefully.

Every 3 years there is a triennial language review, and leadership from embassies overseas, the regional bureaus, make the decision about what level of language proficiency is needed.

Having served most of my career in places where people do not speak English, I personally can attest that it has been incredibly valuable to be able to communicate with host government officials, civil society leaders, the general public, in their own language, but, actually, our language students are the minority. I mean, the budget is quite a lot because it costs a lot to do that language training. For instance, in FY20, FSI had 69,356 students. Only 5,000 of them were language students.

They are there for the longer-term training, but 64,356 other people pass through our halls—our virtual halls, in some cases—for a wide array of tradecraft courses.

We do quite a lot, but just—the budget does not necessarily reflect that.

Senator HAGERTY. I just—I will encourage—and we will spend some time after this—to look at that balance again. I served at a post where the post itself made the recommendations, I think, in a way that tends to be self-reinforcing.

The post I served at they called the Chrysanthemum Club, and the lack of fluency in Japanese, for example, at that post became a barrier to getting what I thought were the type of qualifications, the type of individuals I needed.

For example, Japan is the third largest economy in the world after the U.S. and China. Yet, I had zero business degrees in that embassy. There has got to be a balance struck here, and I look forward to talking with you more about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Hagerty raises a couple issues as to how you make decisions on mid-level as to who can get the training. As you indicate, you do not get the training until you need it in your assignment.

If it is not identified or the person cannot find a place, then we are going to be without capacity in the mission because of that, or if we do not have someone to fill in and we cannot afford to allow a person to leave for training, it also means that you are going to see a situation, perhaps in the Japanese mission, where we do not have the individual trained as highly as we needed to in the economic or trade mission.

I think it does raise questions as how you make those decisions.

Ms. POLASCHIK. I would like to address the issue that you just raised, Mr. Chairman, which is so important in terms of gaps and how we actually get people to training.

One of our great lessons learned from COVID is that we do not need to fly people back to Washington to do training effectively.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we have converted 94 percent of our course offerings to the virtual world. That means if someone is sitting in Mission Japan and they have not had a chance to take Commercial Advocacy training before they got to post, they can do it while they are working in Tokyo or one of the consulates with much less investment of time because they do not have to have the travel time and at much less cost to the U.S. Government.

We are working now on trying to figure out the right balance in the future, what do we need to really offer in-person at the FSI campus and what should we keep virtual, and I think in many

cases, we are leaning to keeping a mix of some in-person and some virtual, for example, with Commercial Advocacy training, because if people are going to be here in between assignments, they would benefit from in-person training. If they cannot fit that into their schedule, we can get it to them where they are in the field when they need it.

Senator HAGERTY. Mr. Chairman, I might just add one point to the issue you raised, and I applaud your point, Ambassador. Technology and the realization that we have come to over the past year and a half, 2 years, may present a real opportunity here as we look at prioritizing the needs and the deficiencies that I saw in the old way of how we did this.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Hagerty's observation as an ambassador has been reinforced by a lot of what I have heard as I have traveled to different missions around the world about getting trained individuals in the areas of great need in that mission.

I recognize you are doing everything you can to fill the void, which brings us, of course, to if you are going to have a physical presence then you need to have the pool of positions in order to fill those.

You mentioned the budget includes 500. Where did that number come from?

Ms. POLASCHIK. Mr. Chairman, I would have to take that question back because our—

Senator CARDIN. I thought you might, because I have heard numbers as high as 2,000 that are needed.

Ms. POLASCHIK. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. I recognize the pragmatic issue of how budgets and there are also transition issues, but I was just wondering if there is a rationale for 500.

Ms. POLASCHIK. I can share the FSI side of it and I would, again, have to defer to colleagues on the GTM side of the house.

As we were building our FY23 budget request, we looked long and hard at what we needed just to make our current training float whole because, in fact, we do have positions that are built to be sort of a training float—that is our long-term language training that Senator Hagerty just mentioned—and actually the way that we have been staffed, unfortunately, in recent years, we have not even been at that full minimal training float.

The initial figures are to make us whole and also to build out more opportunities for long-term professional development and training.

Every year, the Foreign Service—actually the State Department, writ large, sends 100 people out for long-term training. So adding 100 Civil Service professional development and training float positions would allow us to do even more, and those long-term trainings are at the National Defense University, at nongovernmental universities. We have positions at Princeton and Stanford and it is a wonderful opportunity for our colleagues.

Senator CARDIN. I am going to turn the gavel over to Senator Kaine. There is a second vote that is on the floor that Senator Hagerty and I are both going to have to at some point go to cast our votes.

Senator Kaine, when you finish your questioning, if you want to go to the next panel you may. There is no other person in line, and we have the information on that I will leave with you.

Thank you.

Senator Kaine [presiding]. Both of you have done your questions already? Okay, great. Thank you. Let me find my place in my notes, having just walked in.

One of the things that I like doing as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee is when I travel to other countries, I usually ask to meet with first- and second-term FSOs without the Ambassador present. That makes some of the ambassadors nervous.

I tell them this is not to ask them what they think about you, and I usually then congratulate these FSOs. I say you have achieved a job that is really hard to get, and then I ask this question, "What will make you decide to either stay with the State Department for your entire career or what might make you decide to do something different?"

I hardly have to say anything more than that to guarantee an hour-and-a-half or a 2-hour-long discussion as people talk about the joys and the challenges of life working in the Foreign Service of the United States.

My observations over the years, and we have had committee testimony to this effect, is that other nations are now investing more in their sort of Foreign Service professionals than we are.

This might have already been addressed in the questions that have been asked, but how can we do a better job in attracting the best, but then maybe also the retention issue has been a significant one and maybe particularly the retention of a diverse workforce. The State Department needs to be more diverse, and I think sometimes the retention of diverse Foreign Service professionals is particularly challenging.

I would love it if you might address that.

Ms. POLASCHIK. Thank you, Senator, for that question and for your support of our entry-level colleagues and colleagues at every level. We really appreciate it.

We talked earlier with the chairman and Senator Hagerty about a mid-level training program, a pilot that we have underway at FSI, because, like you, we have been very concerned about the gaps that exist in our training program between the entry level and then the more senior positions.

So back in 2020, I asked our team to start talking with our clients, basically, the regional bureaus, folks out in the field, what do they see is the gaps and they identified four areas that deal primarily with analysis, communications—working with the Hill is one of them—and mentoring others.

So we are developing a new 5-day pilot course that should address those gaps, but it is not just those skills. It is also looking at these new areas that 21st century diplomats need to understand and be able to work effectively: climate change, emerging technology, multilateral institutions, et cetera.

We see this course plus interlocking modules as a way to build capacity. In fact, many of those courses we already offer. It is just that people do not really necessarily have the time to take them because it is constantly this rotation.

The training float that Secretary Blinken hopes to create should address some of those needs to give people the time and space to build their skills and train.

I just wanted to add, with respect to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, we have done a lot in recent years. We launched a new course in 2019, Mitigating Unconscious Bias, which is a foundational course so people can become aware of their own inherent biases and begin addressing them.

We are doing a needs assessment now to look at State Department wide DEIA training needs and we have also hired a new senior advisor for DEIA to accelerate our efforts. We are also building out our organizational development coaching program. That was a very strong ask from our State Department employee affinity groups so that they would feel more supported.

We also have a new mid-level leadership program, the Secretary's Leadership Seminar, that we launched with Harvard Business School, which is pretty cool, and we relied on a private philanthropist for support for that.

When we had the graduation of the first cohort in September, I heard so many mid-level officers, both Civil Service and Foreign Service, say to me, "I feel valued as a result of that course." So I think looking at ways that we can support people with programs like that where they feel valued will be really important to stopping the attrition.

Senator KAINE. Ambassador Polaschik, let me ask you another question, and, again, it may have been covered in the previous questions as I was voting.

The Belfer Center talks about the study—and I know we will hear more about this in panel two—about the need to expand the size of our Foreign Service corps by at least 2,000 positions, maybe as many as 380.

My understanding is the FY22 budget does begin down that path with a proposal of nearly 500 in some of the areas you just mentioned—more expertise in China, Indo-Pacific, climate, global health, responding to some current concerns.

Do you have an understanding about is the 485 part of a 5-year plan to get to 2,000 or get to 1,500? What is your understanding about that kind of path that State and the Administration may be intending to go in future years?

Ms. POLASCHIK. Sorry. I turned myself off.

I will take that question back for our colleagues in the Global Talent Management Bureau, but I was involved in the discussions as we were building out the '22 and '23 budget, and our idea is, as you said, to do this incrementally, because we, first, need to make ourselves whole in terms of filling our existing training float because we are not even there now, and then building in more and having Civil Service colleagues as part of that is really important because the way our Civil Service corps is structured right now they do not have the same flexibility and ability to go in and out for, let us say, a year-long detail on the Hill as a professional development opportunity.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. I have no further questions, Ambassador Polaschik. I am very happy to have you here and I would be very happy now to welcome our next two witnesses. If you might

come up, and we will just take a brief break as Joshua Marcuse and David Miller come.

Ambassador, thank you very, very much for serving in such an important role.

Just as the panel is shifting and we are bringing up panel two, sometimes we just omit to explain to the public. I have two panels. Three people can sit at the table and this is designed as a hearing on this very important topic, the State Department workforce for the 21st century.

The first panel is a little bit the—not necessarily the party line, but what is the State Department's thought and the Ambassador is a current member of the State Department professional Foreign Service—that is panel one.

Panel two are experts who care very deeply about this. They are not part of the current State Department. They have had experience in State Department issues, but they offer not an administration or State Department position, but their own position, given their expertise. It is helpful to the committee to hear both from inside the Administration, but outside experts as well and that is why we have set the panel up in this way.

Let us see. I have my panel members. Go ahead and have a seat, if you will, and as you do I will introduce you and it may be by the time I finish the introductions and then you finish your testimony both Senators Cardin and Hagerty will return.

Joshua Marcuse—Joshua is the head of Strategy and Innovation for Global Public Sector at Google Cloud. He previously served as the executive director for the Defense Innovation Board, which is a group focused on bringing technological and organizational innovation and business practices of Silicon Valley to the Department of Defense.

He was the information adviser to the CTO, Chief Technology Officer, at the Department of Defense and also held roles in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, Personnel Readiness, and Chief Management Officer. He has also worked at Center for Strategic and International Studies, Booz Allen Hamilton, and connected to the Council on Foreign Relations.

Joshua, thank you for being here today.

Our second witness on panel two is Ambassador David Miller, partner and founding investor of Torch Hill Capital, LLC, a private equity firm. In private sector, he has worked for a decade in international positions at Westinghouse.

Ambassador Miller was the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs on the National Security Council staff in the White House from January 1989 until December 1990. He was the U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania from 1981 to 1984, and to Zimbabwe from 1984 to 1986.

Following a year in Vietnam working on projects primarily for ARPA, he was selected as a White House Fellow in 1968 and 1969, and he has had extensive experience working both in and out of government. He is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations and also the District of Columbia Bar.

If I could ask each of you to testify, try to keep your testimony to 5 minutes. Mr. Marcuse, I will begin with you and then Ambassador Miller.

Is your mic on? No, it is not. I wonder if we have——
 Mr. MARCUSE. Is that better?
 Senator KAINE. That is much better.

STATEMENT OF JOSHUA MARCUSE, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INNOVATION BOARD, CO-FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN OF NGO-GLOBALLY, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. MARCUSE. Senator Kaine, Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the invitation to testify today.

I am here solely in my capacity as a private citizen, not representing any organization, especially not the Department of Defense, where I had the privilege to serve as a civilian for more than a decade until March 2020.

Unlike the distinguished ambassadors here today, I have never had the honor of serving in the Department of State. I can only offer the impressions of a well-intentioned outsider humbly submitted with the utmost respect for my colleagues.

At their finest, there is no tool of foreign relations more powerful than the ingenuity, versatility, and resolve of America's diplomats. Yet, the State personnel with whom I spoke described an organization that, to them, feels rigid, hierarchical, risk averse, a culture that is nostalgic and stagnating, and employees who are discouraged.

Surely, the truth is more nuanced. Nevertheless, now is the moment for a cultural renewal in our State Department workforce. To usher in this renewal I suggest three observations.

First, modernizing training alone is inadequate. A holistic approach is needed to foster an organizational culture fit for the 21st century. FSI should be commended for its substantial efforts to modernize training, but we must ask ourselves how might all State Department leaders intentionally construct a learning culture, one where people are encouraged to experiment, to innovate, and to adapt?

Second, we need a new paradigm of diplomacy necessitating a relook at curriculum for an increasingly digital world and new generations of the workforce.

Third, the delivery mechanisms for training will require overhaul rather than incremental improvements. The dominant modes of professional development have changed radically in the commercial world and academia.

There are more ways than ever to deliver rich multimedia interactive content to a globally-distributed user base. Based on these observations, I suggest seven recommendations.

First, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources should establish a State Department Chief Learning Officer, a senior leader with a small team dedicated to promoting a learning culture.

Next, the State Department should create a network of designated individuals at every bureau and embassy to be responsible for learning and training.

USAID's Bureau of Policy Planning and Learning offers an example to follow. Their continuous learning and adaptation initiatives should probably be expanded statewide.

Second, the State Department should aggressively pursue diverse outside perspectives. DoD benefited from the establishment of a robust Defense Innovation Board in 2016, which enjoyed bipartisan support from Obama and Trump administrations. Perhaps the State Department should explore creating its own version, a Diplomacy Innovation Board.

Third, the State Department should embrace digital competencies. The Defense Innovation Board recommended DoD to prioritize five focus areas: design thinking, lean startup, agile software development, data science, and innovation management. Subsequent reports emphasized machine learning and artificial intelligence.

State should increase its collaboration and training with providers outside of the Government where much of that needed resources and expertise are concentrated.

Fourth, the State Department should support homegrown innovation efforts. When I served in government, I was aware of three impactful grassroots initiatives at State: the Collaboratory, the Strategy Lab, and Tech at State. The Strategy Lab and Tech at State did not survive and the work of the Collaboratory has migrated to other units possibly due to budget constraints or changing priorities.

These are the types of efforts that should be receiving more support and attention, not less.

Fifth, the State Department should establish executive exchange programs to attract outside expertise and offer State personnel broadening experiences outside. For example, DoD effectively harnessed its tech talent by establishing a Defense Digital Service. It is time for a State Digital Service.

Sixth, the State Department should increase the use of exercises, simulations, and experiments. FSI has made steady progress towards integrating scenario-based training into curricula but there are further opportunities to explore. As an interim measure, more State Department staff should be invited to participate in DoD exercises.

Seventh, the State Department must embrace a learning paradigm that makes emerging technology a priority, not an afterthought, in reimagining training and education. This will require significant resources so sustained bipartisan congressional leadership is needed.

This view is, broadly, consistent with the recommendations put forth by Representative Young Kim in her amendment.

In the near future, FSI world must exist equally in the virtual world and the physical world. There are profound implications of these technologies. Learning does not occur at a set place and a set time, but is possible everywhere and at all times.

FSI can better serve State's entire global workforce with on-demand learning for the lifespan of employment to, perhaps, even after.

In conclusion, we need to preserve what the State Department has done right over the last century—to train generations of inspirational leaders, to represent our values and our interests abroad, but at the same time, we must boldly experiment with new concepts and practices that will innovate the diplomatic mission.

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, Member Kaine, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide my perspective today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Marcuse follows:]

Prepared Statement of Joshua J. Marcuse

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am honored to be able to share my perspective on “*Training the Department of State’s Workforce for 21st-Century Diplomacy*.” I offer my views solely in my capacity as a private citizen, representing no other organization, particularly not the Department of Defense, where I had the privilege to serve as a civilian for more than a decade. However, the observations and proposals I will share today are informed by my experience leading the Defense Innovation Board, and several DoD and federal-wide projects related to human capital, professional development, and organizational change—both in the Government and in collaboration with the Partnership for Public Service. In addition, I have established or served as an advisor to multiple nonprofit organizations devoted to developing emerging global leaders. These non-governmental organizations have afforded me the opportunity to receive the unfiltered views of hundreds of public servants, quite a few of them from the Department of State. While I do not purport to speak for anyone else, I will endeavor to do justice to them and their experiences.

I also must begin by acknowledging that unlike the distinguished ambassadors who have served as witnesses, I have never had the honor of serving in the State Department. While my views are informed by and in harmony with studies on foreign service modernization such as the insightful report by my fellow witness, *Revitalizing State—Closing the Educational Gap* (<https://afsa.org/revitalizing-state-closing-education-gap>),¹ and that of my colleagues at the Truman National Security Project, *Transforming the State Department into a More Just, Equitable, and Innovative Institution* (https://assets-global.website-files.com/60b7dbd50474252e6c8c4fc5/60f5acf9dcd30575c7386ab1_Truman-Center-Task-Force-Transforming-State-Final.pdf),² I can only offer the impressions of a well-intentioned outsider. I offer these comments humbly in the spirit of collaboration.

The State Department has developed many inspiring leaders who have tackled the world’s most complex geopolitical and humanitarian problems—often prevailing against the odds, leading in ambiguity, toiling in obscurity, rarely with adequate resources, and often in harm’s way. Many of our diplomats and civil servants are quick learners, resourceful, and resilient. *At their finest, there is no tool of foreign relations more powerful than the skill, integrity, versatility, and resolve of America’s diplomats.*

Yet, fewer and fewer of the State personnel with whom I spoke believe these qualities are the norm. Fewer of them seem to believe State’s best days are ahead of them. Many describe an organization that, to them, feels rigid, hierarchical, parochial, and risk-averse; a culture that is nostalgic and stagnating; leaders who are anxious; employees who are disengaged.

The truth is surely more nuanced; for example, State’s Federal Employee Viewpoint Scores (FEVS) showed a slight improvement in satisfaction this year.³ Nevertheless, *now is the moment for a cultural renewal in our State Department workforce.* Like so many of our government institutions, the overall pace of adaptation has slowed, while all around us the pace of change appears to be accelerating. General C.Q. Brown, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force recently said to his workforce, “*accelerate change or lose.*” That is an example of what urgency feels like.

In the last 2 years, the State workforce has faced a global pandemic, cyber attack, climate crises, global supply chain shocks, humanitarian emergencies in every region, on top of escalating great power competition and unhelpful politicization of its non-partisan role. To meet these challenges, we need to accept three premises, each of which I will discuss briefly:

- First, modernizing training alone is inadequate; a holistic approach is needed to foster a State Department culture fit for the 21st Century. Improving training and education are a crucial lever to pull, along with others.
- Second, the aforementioned global challenges require new paradigms of foreign service, necessitating a relook at curriculum content, not just delivery mechanisms. State has begun this, but there is probably more to be done.

- Third, the delivery mechanisms for training will require a significant overhaul rather than incremental improvements. The dominant modes of education, training, and professional development have changed radically in the commercial world and even in academia, and so too must they evolve in the Federal Government generally and State specifically.

I believe that all three of these foundational observations are true of the Department of Defense as well. In some cases, DoD has recognized this and made progress, though much remains to be done. Where possible, I hope to suggest some lessons by analogy.

PART 1: CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE AT STATE

Peter Drucker, the late legendary management consultant, is known for the adage, “*culture eats strategy for breakfast*.” Had Drucker been invited to testify today he would have gone on to say that *culture also eats training for a mid-morning snack*. By this I mean that when we take State employees out of their work environment, their leadership chain, their promotion incentives, and other explicit norms and unconscious biases, and put them in a training classroom, very little that happens in that classroom will survive once they return. To prepare State’s workforce for 21st Century Diplomacy absolutely depends on modernizing training—which is important—but we must look beyond that problem framing to explore the State Department’s culture, and ask ourselves *how might State Department leaders intentionally construct a learning culture?* Or put another way, how could State become a Learning Organization?

“Learning Organization” is a term defined by management theorist Peter Senge in his bestseller *The Fifth Discipline* as *a group of people working together collectively to enhance their capacities to create results they really care about*.⁴ Learning Organizations can be large bureaucracies, but they take on some of the qualities of startups: they are constantly sensing their environment, conducting small experiments, and adapting how they operate. They place a premium on *learning* and *curiosity* as core organizational and individual values. Whereas some organizations optimize for execution and efficiency, Learning Organizations also emphasize discovery, agility, and evolution. Gen. Stan McChrystal writes about this beautifully in his book *Team of Teams*,⁵ chronicling how Joint Special Operations Command had to rapidly evolve in response to Al Qaeda.

Learning Organizations are known for innovation. They tend to grant managers greater autonomy, and—as Harvard psychologist Amy Edmonson has researched for decades—their managers give their employees a sense of psychological safety.⁶ Edmonson defined team psychological safety as a “*a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking*.” That is to say that teammates feel comfortable disagreeing and debating, respectfully challenging assumptions, asking for help, and believe that failures are opportunities for learning and growth. Wharton professor Adam Grant, who incidentally co-led the Workforce Subcommittee of the Defense Innovation Board, has pointed out that psychological safety is essentially a *necessary precursor for innovation*.

Employees are freed up from worry about saving face or getting credit to focus on the mission. Learning organizations encourage employees to have what Carol Dweck described as a growth mindset.⁷ They are rewarded not only for excellence, effort, or time-in-grade, but for curiosity, intrapreneurship, and adaptation. When the subcommittee asks how we can prepare the State Department workforce for the 21st century, the answer is not by improving training alone, but by challenging the leadership of the State Department to undertake a coordinated campaign to turn the State Department into a Learning Organization.

Cultures take time to change; it takes time and sustained involvement from leadership, which is why bipartisan congressional support is essential. I recommend that State’s leadership should consider three specific actions as part of that campaign:

- *First, ask the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources to establish a State Department Chief Learning Officer (CLO) with a small team under her or him to work continuously to promote this agenda.* (This individual should not be the Director of the Foreign Service Institute.) The Navy was the first service to establish a CLO, and hired John Kroger, the former President of Reed College for the post. Kroger’s experience was not without challenges,⁸ and the whole premise of establishing CXOs to solve organizational problems justifiably has its critics, but in government, naming an individual tends to concentrate attention, resources, and accountability. So this is a good start, and would certainly signal a recognition of the problem.

- *Next, the State Department should designate an individual to be responsible for learning and training at every bureau and embassy.* These individuals should be organized into a network on platforms (such as Slack) that can exchange observations, share resources, and provide mutual support in real time. DoD has a DoD Chief Learning Officers Council (DCLOC) led by an OSD CLO—admittedly not at the right level of seniority—but it’s a start. Naming individuals in many operating units is crucially important because learning is not something that happens only in a classroom at the Foreign Service Institute. Learning—and training—must happen on the job, on the frontlines, in the core of the work, and therefore become embedded in culture and in practice.
- *Second, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources should look hard at the USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning.* Having an organization dedicated to Learning has—by all accounts I have heard—served USAID quite well. This team has a dynamic initiative called Continuous Learning and Adaptation (CLA), and they invest strategically in data collection and analysis, operate an excellent website called USAID Learning Lab⁹ for sharing best practices, and work assiduously to promote evidence-based practices and decision making. Expanding this effort State-wide would make a lot of sense; I suspect the function could be embedded under the Under Secretary for Management.
- *Third, the State Department should aggressively pursue diverse outside perspectives.* Welcoming outside views and external benchmarking are essential to challenging status quo thinking and stoking creativity. One thing that has had a dramatically positive effect on the DoD was the establishment of a robust Defense Innovation Board in 2016, which enjoyed bipartisan support from both the Obama and Trump administrations. Perhaps the State Department should explore creating its own version—a Diplomacy Innovation Board—that would provide independent, pathbreaking recommendations to encourage innovative best practices throughout the Department, especially from industry. The State Department has 19 advisory committees, but really none that serve this purpose.

PART 2: EMBRACING NEW PARADIGMS OF FOREIGN SERVICE

A common critique leveled against the military is that it trains to fight the last war; or a corollary critique: it prepares for the wars it wants to fight. In a similar vein, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is optimized for foreign service officers, and often led by previous generations of FSOs, so it is likely to be shaped by both the benefits *and constraints* of past experience. There are roles and functions for which FSI likely remains ideal, but there are new roles and functions for which it must adapt. In the same way, the U.S. Army is still the best in the world at training infantry and artillery, but it is today struggling to train product managers and data analysts. Further, a growing body of curriculum needs to be overhauled. I experienced this working with the Eisenhower School at the National Defense University and the Defense Acquisition University, which is responsible for defense industry studies and acquisition training respectively. Given the radical disruption of the defense industry in the last decade, it’s immensely challenging for faculty and curriculum to keep pace, even with leadership clamoring for it.

To embrace new paradigms, I offer five recommendations:

First, as my fellow panelist Ambassador David Miller has written, *the State Department should prioritize conducting an analysis of what competencies to prioritize at the early, middle, and senior career levels and a gap analysis* to assess State’s current approach.¹⁰ Following such an assessment should be the revision of courses administered at the early, mid-, and senior career levels. Assessments should also provide a justification for providing the authorities and funding needed to make a meaningful human capital investment.

It’s equally important *not to rely solely on a single assessment at a moment in time*, but to build in a robust capacity to respond to emergent needs and for curriculum rapidly. This is often best accommodated by combining in-house instruction with a robust network of outside commercial and university training and education providers.

Second, the State Department should embrace competencies that are optimized for digital transformation and increasing uncertainty. When the Defense Innovation Board’s Workforce & Culture subcommittee was conducting assessment of 21st skills for DoD to prioritize, they recommended five focus areas for DoD: *Design Thinking, Lean Startup, Agile Software Development, Data Science, and Innovation Management*. Subsequent reports emphasized *machine learning and artificial intelligence*. These are the 21st century skills modern organizations need to embrace digital technologies and develop the adaptive capacities of Learning Organizations.

Several DoD organizations have had notable successes importing these types of methodologies from academia and industry, such as NavalX, CyberWorks, AFWERX, National Security Innovation Network, and Air Force Kessel Run. Often these efforts are undertaken in a familiar pattern: a defense organization pilots a new-to-DoD curriculum from a proven commercial vendor or university, eventually undertakes a train-the-trainer approach to build instructional capacity in-house, scales the offering of the curriculum to a wider network. The missing final stage is embedding the new curriculum into existing educational institutions inside the Department.

A notable success story is the NSF I-Corps curriculum developed by the National Science Foundation, inspired by the Lean Startup methodology pioneered by Professor Steve Blank at Stanford University.¹¹ The I-Corps curriculum is now taught widely to the federal labs to commercialize federally funded scientific discoveries. It has since been effectively adapted by the Intelligence Community to teach Lean Startup principles for solving national security problems. Based on the I-Corps curriculum taught to entrepreneurs and scientists, a foundation called the Common Mission Project supports the *Hacking 4 Defense (H4D)* program now offered at more than 50 universities in four countries. The National Security Innovation Network—a program of the Defense Innovation Unit—supports H4D financially and programmatically and worked closely with the I-Corps founders to make this national program a true public-private partnership with DoD. There was a single iteration of *Hacking 4 Diplomacy* course offered at Stanford University in 2016, but without an empowered partner at the State Department, *Hacking 4 Diplomacy* didn't catch on. The State Department needs a lot more I-Corps, H4D, and similar non-traditional curriculum.

Third, the State Department should increase its collaboration with training providers outside of government to increase the diversity and agility of educational offerings. Much of the resources and experience to draw upon exist outside of government today, and it's faster, cheaper, and better not to immediately jump to building internally what can be a blended approach.

When I was setting up a program in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy that we called Policy University—admittedly named with a touch of irony—we did annual surveys of leaders, managers, and employees to set learning objectives and then outsourced modular curricula based on needs. Our data showed that this drove costs down, increased flexibility, increased employees' use of the professional development resources, and also employees reported greater satisfaction with the learning offerings. While the evidence was anecdotal, we believe this drove improved performance and satisfaction.

A particularly effective example of this is the work of a company called Dcode that specializes in helping commercial technology companies sell products and services to government agencies. Reverse engineering that business model, Dcode established they could also effectively instruct DoD leaders to promote innovation in their organizational cultures and to be more savvy consumers of digital products and services. After several years of iteration with defense and IC customers, AFWERX just awarded a 5-year contract to Dcode for their educational services, which I regard as a victory for the Air Force.

Fourth, the State Department should support homegrown innovation efforts. When I served in government, I was aware of two impactful grassroots initiatives at State to promote this kind of work: *The Collaboratory* in the Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, and *The Strategy Lab* in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. The Collaboratory applied innovative approaches to support and enhance State's educational, cultural and professional exchange programs. The Strategy Lab focused on applying techniques from the private sector to facilitate creative problem solving and original thinking about foreign policy and security challenges. The founder of the Strategy Lab, Zvika Krieger, and I worked together in DoD to pioneer this model during his time working under former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter. The Strategy Lab did not survive, and the work of The Collaboratory has migrated to other parts of State, possibly due to budgetary constraints or changing bureau priorities. I believe these are both examples of the type of efforts that should be receiving more support and attention, not less.

Fifth, the State Department should work to bring more perspectives in from outside, even if temporarily. They do more to train the workforce through on-the-job collaboration and exposure to new ideas than any executive education course ever could. This should include a variety of bi-directional exchanges with more State Department employees spending time in rotational assignments outside of State such as DoD's exceptional DoD ventures program where mid-career officers spend 6 weeks at venture capital firms and startups, or its Education with Industry programs such as SecDef Executive Fellows.

In the other direction, *State needs to open up many ways for Americans at the pinnacles of their careers fields to join our diplomacy efforts.* A lack of robust lateral pathways into the State Department hinders its ability to bring in fresh perspectives to tackle a set of problems that increasingly require diverse skills and perspectives to solve, especially industry and academic personnel. This is especially true at the mid-career level.

For example, *it is time for the State Department to establish its own State Digital Service.* To thrive in an increasingly digital strategic environment, the State Department should follow the path of the U.S. Digital Service and GSA's Technology Transformation Services. DoD faced a similar challenge, and in 2016, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter stood up the Defense Digital Service (DDS). We now know that having a dedicated team of public servants—software developers, engineers, data scientists, designers, and product managers—who serve as a self-described “SWAT team of nerds” significantly increases the technical capacity of the Department to respond to urgent priorities with sophisticated digital solutions. These teams are radically different from and complementary to enterprise IT functions.

By strategically leveraging fellowships, the State Department could bring in subject matter expertise in areas where the State Department needs it the most, using expanded Schedule A and B direct hiring authorities. These could take the form of existing fellowships such as the Presidential Innovation Fellowships, AAAS fellowships, Intergovernmental Personnel Act detailees, and the newly-created Digital Corps. The State Department should create Executive-in-Residence and Entrepreneurship-in-Residence programs in key topical areas such as data science, cybersecurity, and sustainability. Offering these programs would directly expand the scope of expertise within the State Department.

PART 3: ADOPTING NEW DELIVERY MECHANISMS FOR TRAINING

Today, the universe of digital learning opportunities and tools have exploded. There are more ways than ever to deliver rich, multimedia, interactive content to a globally distributed user base such as the State workforce. They are all mobile, social, and on-demand. More than that, in response to COVID-19 we have proven that platforms like Google Classroom and Zoom can be used to expand in-person, human-to-human educational experiences to virtual. These technologies come in essentially four flavors:

- Vast, publicly accessible platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and edX that offer Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that empower individuals to drive the learning experience.
- Enterprise upskilling platforms like NovoEd, Canvas, and Guild that empower employers to drive the learning experience.
- Nimble, interactive self-paced educational technology apps and micro-learning platforms that can also deliver measurable gains in technical disciplines such as PluralSight and Code Academy.
- The emerging frontier of these technologies are Live Virtual Constructive (LVC) environments in which individuals can use avatars in multiplayer simulated gaming environments that are very realistic. Companies like Praxis Labs are using inexpensive Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) goggles to allow adult learners to experience these simulations incredibly vividly at home. With new computer-based simulations, games could be conducted both synchronously and asynchronously.¹² Using both in-person experiences and distance learning, the State Department could create a cadre of Foreign Service Officers that practiced using the tools available to them *before* needing them.

To take advantage of new training techniques, I have two recommendations:

First, the State Department should increase the use of exercises, simulations, and experiments. DoD makes extensive use of tactical, operational, and strategic exercises for training and education; concept development and analyses; requirements definition and technology testing; and operational rehearsal to improve performance in stressful conditions. Joint exercises with allies can themselves serve as a potent diplomatic signal. I believe there is an analogous set of techniques for diplomatic education, and presumably could serve similar purposes. I acknowledge that the Foreign Service Institute has made steady progress towards integrating scenario-based training into its curricula. I suspect they need significantly more resources and leadership imprimatur to expand this approach. As Deputy Secretary of Defense, Bob Work created—and Congress authorized—the Warfighting Lab Incentive Fund. Congress should establish a flexible fund to encourage the State Dept to explore this.

As an interim measure, the *State Department could work with DoD to insert more State Department staff to participate in DoD exercises*, which would impose a lesser burden on the State Department and have the added and much needed benefit of exposing both DoD and State personnel to one another in a moment when civil-military relations could benefit from such exposure and familiarization.

Second, the State Department must embrace an entirely new learning paradigm that makes emerging technology a priority not an afterthought in re-imagining training and education for the State Department workforce. Some specific examples of what this could look like would be to start with three pilot projects: first, negotiate a partnership with a learning platform company to make a vast library of online learning available to all State employees; second, work with a virtual reality company to pilot online training for consular affairs and visa processing in a virtual environment; and third, pilot an A-100 class at several American universities as a prototype of a Diplomatic ROTC effort while experimenting with new virtual training approaches.

Moreover, the State Department must contemplate the profound implication of this shift that training does not occur in a set place for a set time, but is possible everywhere and at all times, consistent with the spirit of a Learning Organization. This means that in the near future, the Foreign Service Institute must exist equally in the physical world as it does in the virtual world. Its course offerings include live only, virtual only, and are fully blended curriculum. Its service population is not restricted to its resident students but open to the entire State workforce—foreign service officers, civil servants, locally engaged staff, contractors, and interns. The duration of learning is not a week-long class or year-long language study, but the life-span of employment. I think this view is broadly consistent with the spirit and letter of the amendment to HR-1157 introduced by Rep Young Kim (CA-39).

CONCLUSION

We need to preserve what the State Department has done right over the last century to train generations of inspirational leaders to represent our values and interests abroad. At the same time, we must boldly experiment with new concepts and practices that will innovate the diplomatic mission. Our diplomacy succeeds when we invest in our workforce, especially in how we train and educate them to succeed in a rapidly evolving and complex world.

The case for change in the workforce looks more urgent when you contemplate the demographic forces at play. According to State Department data: nearly half the Senior Executive Service and almost a quarter of GS-15 employees are currently eligible to retire; within the next decade “nearly all” of the current senior Foreign Service members will be eligible to retire; attrition rates are up.¹³ *Recruitment—but also training—will determine the character and capability of the State Department for the next two generations.*

For the last two decades, professional development and training at the State Department has suffered from budgetary constraints, but also, perhaps, from a constraint of imagination driven by a lack of resources and often staffing. *This scarcity mindset chases creativity away.* As Ambassador Nicholas Burns proposed, *I recommend a 15 percent increase in State Department personnel levels to create a training float, similar to that maintained by the military.*¹⁴ Investing in the workforce is also a crucial tool of retention, especially because it attracts and retains the best people.

These workforce concerns necessitate prioritization from State leadership and congressional leadership. I believe that the points that I have highlighted in this testimony are crucial for cultivating a 21st Century diplomatic workforce. I had the great privilege to serve under Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis. He famously observed, if budgetary support for the State Department dwindles, then DoD needs to buy more ammunition. Taken in reverse: investing in the modernization of our diplomatic workforce is an investment in our national security, peace, and prosperity.

Chairman Cardin and Ranking Member Hagerty and members of the subcommittee, thank you for focusing on training and education, as well as giving me the opportunity to provide my perspective today.

Notes

¹David C. Miller, Thomas Pickering, and Rand Beers. (2021). Revitalizing State—Closing the Educational Gap.

²Truman Center for National Policy (2021). Transforming the State Department into a More Just, Equitable, and Innovative Institution (https://assets-global.website-files.com/60b7dbd50474252e6c8c4fc5/60f5acf9dcd30575c7386ab1_Truman-Center-Task-Force-Transforming-State-Final.pdf).

³https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/21-STATE-44024.eml_-1.pdf

⁴Peter M. Senge (2006). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. Random House Books.

⁵Stanley A. McChrystal, Tatum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell (2015). *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*. Portfolio.

⁶Amy Edmondson (2018). *The Fearless Organization*. John Wiley & Sons.

⁷Carol Dweck (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Ballantine Books.

⁸<https://www.wired.com/story/opinion-office-life-at-the-pentagon-is-disconcertingly-retrograde/>

⁹<https://usaidlearninglab.org/>

¹⁰David C. Miller, Thomas Pickering, and Rand Beers. (2021). *Revitalizing State—Closing the Educational Gap* (<https://afsa.org/revitalizing-state-closing-education-gap>).

¹¹https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/resources.jsp

¹²See U.S. Representative Young Kim's amendments to H.R. 1157 (<https://youngkim.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-young-kim-pushes-modernize-streamline-state-department>).

¹³<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/workforce/2019/02/nearly-all-state-dept-ses-senior-foreign-service-members-eligible-to-retire-in-next-10-years/>

¹⁴Ambassadors Nicholas Burns, Marc Grossman, and Marcies Ries offered this recommendation in their 2020 report, *A U.S. Diplomatic Service for the 21st Century* (<https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/DiplomaticService.pdf>).

Senator CARDIN [presiding]. Thank you very much for your testimony.

We will now go to Ambassador Miller.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DAVID MILLER, JR., PRESIDENT, U.S. DIPLOMATIC STUDIES FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Is your mic on?

Mr. MILLER. Now?

Senator CARDIN. You are on.

Mr. MILLER. Yes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, Senator Kaine. I join Josh and, I think, many, many of us in saying thank you so much for having this hearing on State Department education and training.

It is a desperately important subject that almost always ends up at the back of the line, and you guys taking the time today when there is actually a lot going on in the Congress at this very moment, I think, is just outstanding. Thank you very much.

I have testified a number of times on this subject and I will use my favorite sentence again. I have never seen an institution work so hard to select people and do so little to train them once they are on board. It is a stunning observation. I benefited from the support of State Department officers during two tours as an ambassador, 2 years at the National Security Council.

I offer recommendations and some criticism from a deep appreciation for the Foreign Service and the State Department. They are fine people.

They, sadly though, I fear, represent a textbook example of the great philosopher, Jim Mattis' observation that "bad process beats good people 9 times out of 10." General Mattis has a lot of quotes, but I have always liked that one a lot.

At the heart of the issue is changing the current State Department culture, period. That is a tough assignment. The State Department does not incentivize or reward officers for spending time in training. In the past several decades, it never has, whether in a Republican or Democratic administration.

Other institutions, both within the Government and the private sector, recognize that without a clear and sustained message from leadership you cannot change an institution's culture.

Historical evidence shows that large institutions simply develop bureaucratic inertia that is hard to overcome. Think back to Goldwater-Nichols reform in the 1980s. The Defense Department needed a congressional push then and the State Department needs a congressional push now.

The committee asked for specific recommendations and we have a number. The Congress should increase funding for the Foreign Service. It is under-resourced and it does need float for training, and it was encouraging to hear Deputy Secretary McKeon mention the current request for 500.

I want to make a fundamental point here. Without fundamental structural reform, I think that the money will not be spent as wisely or usefully as it could.

Two very specific recommendations. I think the Foreign Service Institute needs an outside Board of Visitors. That is a model that has proved valuable for the National Defense University, obviously, for almost all private institutions of higher education.

That Board of Visitors, if you talk to the people at West Point, hold that board in high regard for two reasons. One, it helps West Point think about how to teach better, and secondly, it helps West Point sell their innovation to a larger audience.

The Foreign Service Institute also needs a provost and we need somebody that is an educational expert that is at the Institute for longer than the normal turnover of Foreign Service Institute leaders. The A-100 course needs to be residential, as is everybody else's course, and it needs to be significantly lengthened in time.

It would also help, frankly, if FSI leadership did not turn over and over. We have been working with them for some years and, essentially, we have had four or five different leaders.

The State Department has continued to rely on on-the-job training or experiential learning, and while on-the-job training is a nice idea, experience needs framing, which is otherwise referred to as education. If you simply rely on on-the-job training, you are simply not doing your job.

Finally, on the issue of diversity, mid-career training, we believe, is absolutely critical for the retention of minority officers. If the culture of the Department remains mentorship and on-the-job training and informality, you almost inherently are offering unequal opportunity to our employees.

If we want to address the exit of mid-level officers of minorities, I think the mid-level career course becomes absolutely critical.

With that, I will end my comments. I want to say, again, thank you so much for doing this.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follow:]

Prepared Statement of Ambassador David Miller

Good afternoon Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and Committee members.

My colleagues and I at the Diplomatic Studies Foundation are very encouraged that you are focusing on a subject that gets little attention, but one which is of great importance to our country: the education and training of State Department personnel.

Why is this issue particularly important?

Today, we see the emergence of a serious global competitor. Countering the rise of China's competing political and economic model will require diplomatic excellence. Frankly, our studies and research over nearly 4 years have made clear that our diplomats today don't receive anywhere near the kind and level of education and training required to meet this challenge. State Department personnel will also have to assume new responsibilities as our military forces, particularly Special Forces, are redeployed to address new strategic priorities. Our diplomats and their civilian colleagues will be the new Tip of the Spear in many countries where the Department has benefited from a close working relationship with our military. These men and women deserve more training to help prepare for their new leadership role.

So how bad is the problem? I have never seen an institution work so hard to select people and do so little to train them once on board. I benefited from the support of State Department officers in leading as Ambassador two diplomatic overseas missions and during my 2 years at the National Security Council. They are smart and dedicated people who do critical work for our country. But, to quote General Mattis, bad process beats good people 9 times out of 10. State Department officers need and deserve an institution that prioritizes investing in their professional education and training.

At the heart of the issue is changing the current State Department culture that does not incentivize or reward officers for spending time in training. In the past several decades it never has, whether in Republican or Democratic administrations. Other institutions, from the CIA to the FBI, to private sector companies like Goldman Sachs and GE, all recognize that without a clear and sustained message from leadership you cannot change an institution's culture. We saw this lack of prioritization last week, when Secretary Blinken gave a speech presenting five pillars on modernizing the Department yet made scant mention of training. State Department leadership—even if so inclined—will not be able to make this cultural shift alone. Congress must join in demanding that the Department prioritize training and professional development. Historical evidence shows that large institutions, both public and private, develop bureaucratic inertia that is hard to overcome. Think back to the challenge of the very successful Goldwater Nichols reform of our military in the 1980's. The Defense Department needed a congressional push then; the State Department needs one today.

So, let me offer some recommendations that come from years of research on education and training in both the private sector and sister U.S. Government departments and agencies, as well as working with the Foreign Service Institute and the State Department.

- Yes, Congress should increase the Foreign Service Institute's funding. FSI is severely under-resourced. It was encouraging to hear Deputy Secretary McKeon mention the current request for 500 new positions for a training float when he spoke before you last week. However, with any more resources *must* come fundamental, structural reform. I recommend establishing an empowered Board of Visitors, a Provost, and an office responsible for collecting and doing research and development on training innovation at FSI. Also, residential training for the A-100 course, fellowship opportunities at other departments and at private sector organizations in other regions of the country, and more frequent and extended leadership and management training for officers after they reach the middle level and then the senior executive thresholds. It also would help if there was not constant turnover in the director position at FSI.
- More rigorous training should be required as a necessary step for promotion at all levels. The CIA simply mandates this, while the FBI and DEA send clear signals to personnel that without attending leadership and management training you were unlikely to be promoted to senior positions. Private sector institutions of excellence focus resources on critical leadership as well. Yet the State Department by its conduct *discourages* professional development, as promotion panels often treat a period, including a year at a higher educational institution, as a lost year. The State Department needs to fundamentally reform its training and education incentive structure. We hope this will be part of the promotion precepts revision process Deputy Secretary McKeon mentioned the Department is currently undertaking.
- The State Department has long relied on "on the job training" (OJT), or experiential learning. While important, OJT is insufficient. Experience needs framing, otherwise known as education, to give focus and context to the experience. The Department needs to train its officers to discern how to best use their experiences in practice. This is not intuitive.

- Finally, the Department faces a diversity problem that increased training could help remedy. Although the Department recruits a diverse cadre of officers, a recent GAO report showed an exodus of minority officers beginning at the mid-ranks. If mid-level officers' professional development is left in the hands of informal mentorship, which is intrinsically unequal, then many minorities will continue to be underinvested in, underemployed, and underpromoted. If all officers at the mid-rank received more opportunities for training and professional development, if everyone was lifted together, advancement would no longer be random and unequal. This will by no means solve the Department's diversity problem, but it is an important step towards leveling the playing field for minority officers.

Thank you again for this opportunity. Our Foundation has been working to promote education and training for several years, and we hope this is the start of a serious reform effort—an effort that frankly this Committee must drive.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for your testimony. I want to make a comment that is meant to be taken lightheartedly, so do not take it personally.

It would have been much more effective if you would have used the Naval Academy as the example rather than West Point, with the chairman coming from representing the state of Maryland and being on the Board of Visitors of the Naval Academy.

But with that in mind—

[Laughter.]

Mr. MILLER. Sir, I am engaged in a game right now at the University of Maryland in College Park, which we call our Diplomatic Power for Peace game. I am steeped in the ARLIS Lab to the START program to the icons modeling. I wanted my son to be in the Navy, but he is an airborne artillery officer at the moment. He likes staying on the ground.

Senator CARDIN. God bless your son. We appreciate all that serve our nation and we are all together. Except when Army plays Navy in football we are all together.

Mr. MILLER. Yes, that seems to be a continuing gap.

[Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. So noted.

Senator Kaine, would you like to start?

Senator KAINE. I would be glad to, and thanks. This is a very important hearing and there are some aspects of your testimonies that I find very interesting.

Mr. Marcuse, Josh, I am going to start with you. Just to repeat, in your interviews with State personnel from page 2, "Fewer of them seem to believe State's best days are ahead of them. Many describe an organization that, to them, feels rigid, hierarchical, parochial, and risk averse, a culture that is nostalgic and stagnating, leaders who are anxious, employees who are disengaged."

Then when you get to your observations or premises, the first one is modernizing training alone is inadequate. You cannot just fix training without going in and fixing culture, and that seems to be a common observation between both of you.

It is interesting, when I have the meetings—I think you might have been here when I was asking questions of Ambassador Polaschik—if I meet with first- and second-term FSOs without the ambassador present and I ask what will determine whether you will stay or whether you go, and I do not know what I was expecting to hear, but a theme that I hear is sort of a rigidity theme, and it is less about training.

It is a little more, I have to go through the most intense security vetting possible to get this job and then if I want to order five pencils to be at my desk at the embassy wherever I am situated I have to fill out things in triplicate because they are worried that I may steal them or something. So you vet me in an intense way, but then you still micromanage me in ways that suggest that you do not trust the results of your own vetting.

Those comments are just indicative of a broader rigidity. Do we have a culture that rewards innovation and risk taking, and you have an assigned role, but you also can and should creatively free-lance a little bit to grow the role and bring good ideas to the table.

So I guess I would like to ask you, Mr. Marcuse, separate and apart from the recruiting and training, what are things that we can do that would encourage more of the risk taking, creativity, skills that our professionals have in pretty high degree?

Mr. MARCUSE. Thank you so much, Senator, and thank you for that observation because I think it demonstrates great insight into the experience of our diplomats today, and I get the sense that the people you were talking to you were very candid with you in those conversations and that you understand what we are up against with this.

I thought it was really, really important that Senator Hagerty talked about training people to become supervisors and the importance of that, and the common thread that I would love to draw here is that all the studies from business schools show that people do not leave companies. They leave bosses.

When there is someone at work who believes in you, who trusts you, who supports you, who you believe is invested in your growth, then you feel great loyalty not only to that individual but to that entire institution, and when you do not have that kind of leadership it builds into that frustration.

What it really comes down to is do employees feel like they are trusted? Do they feel like their boss has their back? The term for this is psychological safety, and psychological safety is the precursor of innovation and creativity and critical thinking and, crucially, of dissent, and that is really what we need in order to have a culture of innovation and a culture of learning at the State Department and, really, anywhere in our government.

So I think that one of the things I would love to see the Foreign Service Institute and the State Department do a lot more of is take the art and science and tradecraft of people leadership and elevate it to the highest purpose of our training and education because if you take language and you take the subject matter of area studies and you take all the other things aside, what will determine whether our diplomacy is effective or not is how we lead our people.

Leadership is not just hierarchical and top down. We are leading our peers and managing up to our bosses, and we are leading as individual contributors as well as managers at all time, and there is no more fitting tribute to Secretary Powell than to say that leadership should be our highest goal and our highest purpose. I think that there are many observations you have heard today about teaching leadership at the Department of Defense. It is by no means perfect by any stretch of the imagination.

It is something that the department takes very seriously and I think that that is an important observation about learning culture, sir.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. Mr. Chair, I have one more question but I am glad to wait until you each ask questions, or would you like me to ask it now?

Senator CARDIN. Why don't we go to Senator Hagerty and then come back?

Senator KAINE. Great.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you. I want to just note that your question was, indeed, very insightful, Senator Kaine. I think it shows a great deal of appreciation and understanding for the challenge here. Thank you for calling that to our attention.

I am going to come back to Mr. Marcuse and continue this discussion. I am very interested to hear about your experience and your insights during your time serving the Defense Innovation Board.

We recognize that there are many institutional challenges that are related to the United States military. However, it appears that the military approaches the issue of training and education very seriously and dedicates significant resources and attention to that issue, and it is not a coincidence that some of our senior military leaders, such as General David Petraeus, General H. R. McMaster, have earned their Ph.D.'s while they were serving in the military.

Mr. Marcuse, in your view, what are the major factors that led the U.S. military to prioritize training and professional education and how are our soldiers incentivized and rewarded for pursuing further training and professional education?

Then take us to what we can learn from that as you are thinking about the opportunity for the State Department.

Mr. MARCUSE. Thank you so much for that question and for those observations, and one of the things that we have observed about General McMaster is that in all the conversations that we were in in DoD about innovation and dissent and creativity, everyone would always point to the one general that wrote the book "Dereliction of Duty," and he said, well, we have creativity in the Department of Defense. We have mavericks. Look, we have the one general, General McMaster.

He would be the first to tell you if he were here and I believe, Senator—excuse me, I believe General Petraeus would as well, that they had to buck the trend to pursue their Ph.D.'s. I have a colleague who now is a brilliant professor at the Air Force Academy who was told that she should absolutely not pursue a Ph.D. because she would never fly again.

We actually have research from the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis at West Point, which shows that your promotion potential, I believe, is diminished by 40 percent if you pursue a Ph.D.

The truth is, is that the people that have gone on to do exactly the laudable behavior that you described had to buck the process that one of my personal heroes, Secretary Mattis, referred to here, which is that the process does not reward or support this behavior.

What I do think we have seen is that it is an expectation of everyone in the military to spend a substantial proportion of their time in training, a much larger proportion of their time than at the State Department, but the cultural barriers at State and at DoD are nearly identical.

If you look at the training that we do offer in DoD, it is not training in innovation. It is not training, for the most part, in these digital areas that I highlighted. DoD is also facing many of the same challenges that the State Department is facing. I applaud that they gave themselves a bit of a head start in the last 5 years.

What is really interesting about the kinds of training and education that I think we are discussing in this dialogue right now is that much of it that occurred in DoD was grassroots. I will give you an example.

A bunch of Marines created their own Center for Adaptive Warfighting. They just made it themselves. They got the training online. They are autodidacts. Maybe they were able to get a little bit of training dollars here and there.

We had to fight very hard to get even small amounts of training, for money for these kinds of things. One of the things you got to encourage, to unpack, to excavate and to push the State Department and DoD are all leaders on—as you know, they say that we are training people in data science, but we really need to understand what that means exactly and precisely because offering this kind of training does not necessarily mean that they are learning the right curriculum or that it is being done in the right way.

Senator HAGERTY. My optimism may have been misplaced, but the two gentlemen I mentioned are ones I know personally and I had noticed that they had been able to achieve that, it turns out to be, miraculous accomplishment. I would say it would be even more so were it to have happened in the Department of State.

If I were to find optimism, though, it is that the State Department is smaller. Perhaps we could be more agile, and we have a dedicated chairman and ranking member here that would like to see change happen. We want to support that and move in a positive direction. I appreciate your help there.

Mr. Chairman, I have another question for Ambassador Miller, but I will come back to that after you have had an opportunity to go. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Everybody is being so polite up here, I am telling you.

I am going to ask one question and then I will turn it back to Senator Kaine, and that is you have indicated—I think everyone recognizes that resources are needed, but resources are not the sole problem that we have here.

There is a cultural problem within the State Department and this committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has the responsibility of oversight, of establishing the correct policy. The appropriators will provide the dollars. A lot of times in doing that they will put certain legislative language in with the consent of the Foreign Relations Committee. They try to direct the funds in a more constructive environment.

The better way would be for us to pass in reauthorization language dealing with what structural changes we would like to see at the State Department as it relates to this subject.

You have mentioned a couple specific issues on a Board of Visitors or a Provost, but I am just interested as to whether you could see some other statutory directions that you think would be helpful in order for us to address the historic challenges that we have had within the State Department on promotions, on the availability of training, the scope of training, et cetera, if there is ways in which we could be more constructive in our authorization.

Ambassador Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Yes. I think that the fundamental cultural change is the link of education and training to promotion. That is the key to success as you look at the CIA's rebuilding of its training facility and, basically, the agency saying you will not get promoted unless you take these courses.

The FBI and DEA offered incentives, i.e., if you want to become an ASAC someplace or ASAT you have to take these courses. If you look at that simple achievement, at State there has to be a linkage between leadership and management and training and promotion, which is, I think, the key thing.

I am also very, very concerned about the lack of training for ambassadors. It is, in my mind, somewhat absurd that we send out individuals with remarkable authority from the President and we give them 3 weeks of training.

If you are in the private equity business that would be one of these things you would say, "Really?" Either change the letter or train the player, and I think that that is something that you have to look at as a fundamental cultural change.

If, in particular, our Special Forces are rotating back into main theater operations and our State Department is going to become the tip of the spear around the world, in many cases where we are in a soft power confrontation with the Chinese, and yet, we have not faced into the fact that we seriously need to consider the training that we give the people that lead our missions.

Senator CARDIN. Let me ask one additional question and that deals with the training float. You have heard the comments that we need have additional personnel so that we can fill with competent help while training is going on.

The Administration's budget includes 500. If either one of you have a view, first, as to the gap we have on a training float and the need for us to have additional personnel in order to make this easier for training, and secondly, is 500 a reasonable number or do you have a view on that?

Who wants to volunteer to go first?

Mr. MILLER. I think I want to volunteer one of Josh's heroes, I am willing to bet, and that is General Odierno, in the middle of an awful ops tempo mess, said, "We are not going to stop education and training." That sent a huge signal through the military that education and training was absolutely critical.

I would like to comment a bit on the float thing. Everybody needs float. Everybody wants more float. Everybody wants more employees.

In my opinion, I think that the State Department needs to function, look at the available float today. Five hundred entry-level people are not going to solve the issue of Deputy Assistant Secretary competence. If we want to start to increase training and you have 150 DASes or whatever, there is part of my private sector soul that says surely some of those people could be available for training now and meet the Senate and the House halfway. Of course, we need more people for training. We have more jobs to do overseas, but the float has to be found also in existing senior officers right now who need more management and leadership training.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. Marcuse, do you want to add to that?

Mr. MARCUSE. Absolutely. I completely support the expansion of resources and staffing at the State Department. I do worry that this training float is being used as an excuse. The truth is, is that all of the new paradigms of training do not necessarily fall into the same constraints and strictures that the training float assumes.

The performance of FSI during COVID that we heard from the Ambassador is really impressive. If it is true that they have moved 94 percent of their training to virtual and that some of the performance, at least in the core training and other areas, have improved and they can do it from anywhere, then they should continue adapting. They are on the right track. They are iterating. They should keep iterating past the constraint of the training float.

When I had the privilege of building a professional development program inside OSD policy, there was not a training float. Everything was done by going to the managers and saying, "I am going to improve the performance of your people. I am going to increase their employee engagement. If you believe that what we are doing is a valuable use of their time, let me have some of their time."

They said yes. I think the training float is really important for solving certain kinds of crunches, when you do need it to be residential and you are dealing with a very complex assignment system, and I appreciate that.

There is so much opportunity to do meaningful educational experiences that could be done in spite of the float, and I would encourage them to just keep up the momentum that we heard earlier today and do even more of it and do more experimentation.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you both.

Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

When I have these conversations that I mentioned with my first- and second-term FSOs, another issue that comes up that is very connected to retention—it is not training, per se, but it is very connected to retention—are issues about family.

I will never forget being in Egypt once and doing an FSO meeting, and one of the second tours said, "I have got to duck out. I have a Friday night Skype date with my husband," who was also a State Department person in Turkey. They would put on nice clothes and with a glass of wine in front of them have a Skype date.

The model of who was an ambassador, who was an FSO, from days gone by might have been a white male and maybe the family would accompany unless it was in a place of danger. Otherwise, the

family might not accompany, but now it is so often the case that our FSOs have partners who are professionals, maybe professionals within the State Department family or professionals in other ways.

How good is the State Department at recognizing that the paradigm of who an FSO is and their family obligations is a little bit different than it would have been 30 years ago?

I am on the Armed Services Committee and it is pretty common if we have discussions about personnel that I will hear some version of—I have a boy who is in the Marine Corps—you know, we recruit the Marine, but we retain the family. You get somebody in and they are 18 or 22 that is one thing, but if you are going to try to retain them, by then they might have a family. You have to think about it holistically.

Do we have personnel models that are sensitive enough to the realities of modern family life, including life partners that have their own professions and want to be professionally challenged?

Mr. MILLER. Wading into this is like volunteering for the Housing Board, which is something I was told never, ever, ever to do, and so I did not.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MILLER. I will wade into this anyway. I think the CIA does a much better job of tandem couples, if you will, for the obvious reason that the demands of an operator's job there have to be part of a family structure. It is awfully hard to have a COS and have a wife that does not know what her husband is doing, or vice versa.

That said, generally speaking, I am not up to speed in the last 4 or 5 years, but State, I do not think, listens quite carefully enough to these challenges. One of the bits of evidence of that, I think, is the mid-level exit, which is about when families look at each other and say, if we are going to live like this forever then this is not going to work.

We lose an awful lot of good people there, one, because the problem is, in fact, difficult. I mean, let us not kick the can down the road. I mean, this is a serious issue.

I do think the Department could do a better job of that and I do not know of anything better to say than you have to learn how to listen very, very carefully. One of the things an ambassador can do at post is to listen, because you solve the family issues one family at a time.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Marcuse, how about your conversations with State Department personnel and insights into this question?

Mr. MARCUSE. Again, a question that demonstrates a great empathy for the challenges that they face, one, I confess, is a little bit outside the scope of my expertise, but as a parent of two young children, I can certainly relate to it and its motivation.

One of the things that we would need to recognize is that there are moments in the life of everyone in their career, particularly a career as demanding as being a diplomat, when the best thing for their family is to leave.

What is heartbreaking is that they do not have a good way to come back, and I think that we would do very well to have a more permeable model of service that would facilitate transitions in and out at these key milestone moments in people's lives and careers.

There are incredible Foreign Service officers whose greatest moments in their career were serving this country who have chosen to leave because they are putting their family first, but there will be a time in the near future that they would love to return, and we should make it as easy for them as possible.

At the moment, we do absolutely nothing for them. They have to go through many difficult processes. They have to be read back into their clearances. There is things we could do for them financially and professionally that would recognize their time.

Whether they took time away to work in industry or to pursue further degrees or to take care of their families or just to slow down from the pace of being abroad, we could do a lot with human capital if we were more creative about thinking about sabbaticals, intermissions, temporary detours, and resuming, and that would also address the issue that you raised of making sure that our Foreign Service officers can also take care of their families.

Senator KAINE. That is a very insightful response. I appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. I would like to just come back to the notion of float that you raised for a moment, Mr. Chairman, and touch on something that, to use a business term that is similar or related, is capacity utilization.

There is something that happens in the career progress of Foreign Service officers that yields a great deal of distraction and often misalignment, and that is why I am so disappointed that the Global Talent Management team is not represented here today.

Because I have had strong Foreign Service officers that worked for me that have been, literally, out of sorts for months trying to get their next onward placement, and what comes home to me is an email that I received early this morning from a Foreign Service officer, a very capable Foreign Service officer that worked for me.

He has been 2 years trying to get to the right job, and he wrote me to tell me finally, finally, he has found a position that matches his skill set. Here is a very talented person that spent 2 years in limbo. Again, they put him in some job but not the best utilization of his skill set.

As a business person, that is a capacity utilization problem. We are misallocating the supply that we do have. Again, it is sort of related to the float issue, but it is also an opportunity if we can come in and tighten up the time lines, making clear the requirements and the metrics for onward progress. There is a lot of opportunity in the HR side.

It looks like, Ambassador Miller, you have a comment there.

Mr. MILLER. Yes. Fundamentally, if you looked at the Department objectively, if you caught Josh and said, "Why do you not take a look at the Department for 30 days," there is a huge amount that could be improved at State. It gets down to how many signatories you need to move a memo forward. How quick can we make decisions?

From the top to bottom, you revert to the culture structure, and the culture is in many ways sort of a morass on many issues and I do not know exactly how to attack it, but it is pervasive, I fear.

Senator HAGERTY. I simply note this, that there is a tremendous amount of capacity that is being underutilized in the Department today. It is disheartening to those that are caught in this sort of process and it is something, I think, that if we applied business practices and principles to we could go a long way toward addressing it.

Any further comment on that point?

Mr. MILLER. Part of your float issue, if you will—and, again, it is a business practice—let us suppose you have four DASes in the bureau and you say, I would like to take one of them out for a week's worth of training, and they look at you and say, "But there is nobody that can take their place."

Now, if that is the case, you have an investment problem and that is somebody ought to be in training to take the place of that DAS at some point. So you are just—it is an opportunity both to train the DAS and look at the potential replacement, rather than an impediment to, oh, we do not have anybody for training. Just from a private equity background, it is just another little bit of, you know—

Senator HAGERTY. Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Let me thank both of our witnesses. To me, this is exactly what the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should be doing on oversight. We invest a great deal in our diplomacy in the State Department and we know we have a challenge in regards to the training issue and personnel issues, and they are difficult to get a handle on, but it is incredibly important that we have full capacity to carry out our extremely important missions around the world.

I think this hearing has been extremely helpful. We had some discussions yesterday about a reauthorization of the State Department bill. You go back about 15 years ago, we used to pass reauthorizations of the State Department bill and this would be a prime subject matter of a reauthorization bill.

We have not done that in the last 15 years, mainly because of the challenges in individual countries and it becomes a target for amendments that can be difficult to handle, but on issues like this, this would be a very healthy process to have a reauthorization. We are looking for a way in which we can do that. One of the reasons I was excited to take on this subcommittee particularly was because of the support by both Senator Menendez and Senator Risch of having this type of oversight and making recommendations in regards to some of the fundamental issues at the State Department.

Senator Hagerty and I identified training as an early issue that we wanted to get our hands around and see whether we could do something constructive. This hearing has been extremely helpful to us in helping us understand what we need to do.

We will continue to reach out to you for help as we try to struggle with what we can do both legislatively as well as through oversight and appropriations to make sure that we do everything we possibly can to have the strongest possible presence on the global stage.

I, lastly, want to underscore what all of us have said. Our Foreign Service officers and the personnel at State Department are dedicated individuals serving our country with great distinction.

We are very proud of the men and women who step forward to serve in these critically important roles. They deserve a system that recognizes their talent, that encourages their development and promotion, and is compatible with family life, and I think that is an area where we can improve and we intend to be active in trying to make that happen.

With that, the subcommittee will stand adjourned with our thanks to our witnesses.

[Whereupon, at 4:07 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

