

January 21, 2021

Mr. Scott F. Thompson  
Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official  
Office of the General Counsel  
Department of Defense  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Thompson:

The purpose of this letter is to describe the steps that I will take to avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest in the event that I am confirmed for the position of Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Defense. It is my responsibility to understand and comply with commitments outlined in this agreement.

#### SECTION 1 – GENERAL COMMITMENTS

As required by the criminal conflicts of interest law at 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter in which I know that I have a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the matter, or in which I know that a person whose interests are imputed to me has a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the particular matter, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I understand that the interests of the following persons are imputed to me:

- Any spouse or minor child of mine;
- Any general partner of a partnership in which I am a limited or general partner;
- Any organization in which I serve as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee; and
- Any person or organization with which I am negotiating or have an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with an agency ethics official and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict, such as recusal from the particular matter or divestiture of an asset.

If I have a managed account or otherwise use the services of an investment professional during my appointment, I will ensure that the account manager or investment professional obtains my prior approval on a case-by-case basis for the purchase of any assets other than cash, cash equivalents, investment funds that qualify for the regulatory exemption for diversified mutual funds and unit investment trusts at 5 C.F.R. § 2640.201(a), obligations of the United States, or municipal bonds.

I will receive a live ethics briefing from a member of the ethics office after my confirmation but not later than seven days after my appointment pursuant to the ethics program regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2638.305. Within 90 days of my confirmation, I will submit my Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance which documents my compliance with this ethics agreement.

I understand that as an appointee I will be required to sign the Ethics Pledge required under the Executive Order dated January 20, 2021 (Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Personnel) and that I will be bound by it. Among other obligations, I will be required to recuse from particular matters involving specific parties involving my former employer or former clients for a period of two years after I am appointed, with the exception of states and local governments.

I will not modify this ethics agreement without your approval and the approval of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics pursuant to the ethics agreement requirements contained in the financial disclosure regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2634.803(a)(4).

## SECTION 2 – THOMAS AND KATHLEEN HICKS LLC

My spouse and I formed a limited liability company doing business as Thomas and Kathleen Hicks, LLC (the LLC, or its successor) to manage our consulting work. Upon confirmation, I will resign from my position with the LLC, and I will cease to provide services to the LLC, or any client. All amounts owed to me by my clients will be fixed before I assume the duties. In addition, the LLC will remove my name and any and all references to my affiliation with the LLC in any advertising or promotional materials, publications, invoice forms, firm letterhead, photographs and biographies on any public-facing website. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the LLC. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that has a direct and predictable effect on the ability or willingness of any client to pay the agreed upon amount due and owing. In addition, pursuant to the impartiality regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter involving specific parties in which I know a client of mine is a party or represents a party for a period of one year after I last provided service to that client, unless I am first authorized to participate, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d). I also will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter involving specific parties in which I know a client of my spouse is a party or represents a party, unless I am first authorized to participate, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d).

## SECTION 3 – OTHER RESIGNATIONS

Upon confirmation, I will resign from my positions with the following entities:

- Center for Strategic and International Studies
- Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advance International Studies.
- The Aerospace Corporation

- United States Naval Institute
- Biden-Harris Presidential Transition Team (PT Fund, Inc.)

Pursuant to the impartiality regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502, for a period of one year after my resignation from each of these entities, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter involving specific parties in which I know that entity is a party or represents a party, unless I am first authorized to participate, pursuant to at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d).

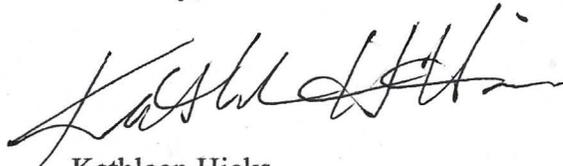
#### SECTION 4 – SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

My spouse is a co-owner of The Mabus Group, LLC (Mabus Group) which provides management consulting services. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Mabus Group, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1). Pursuant to the impartiality regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter involving specific parties in which I know a client of my spouse is a party or represents a party, unless I am first authorized to participate, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d).

#### SECTION 5 – PUBLIC POSTING

I have been advised that this ethics agreement and the Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance will be posted publicly, consistent with the public information law at 5 U.S.C. § 552, on the website of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics with ethics agreements of other Presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen Hicks', written in a cursive style.

Kathleen Hicks