

**Ranking Member Khanna Opening Remarks**  
**CITI Hearing: “Science, Technology, and Innovation Posture of the**  
**Department of Defense”**

***May 14, 2026***

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I too want to welcome each of you here for your first public hearings before this Committee. You each have critically important roles, and I thank each of you for making the decision to serve our country.

I echo the Chairman’s comments about the rapid advance of innovation. Even having these conversations once a year, as we usually do, seems inadequate to keeping up with the pace and breadth of technological change.

And that’s why your jobs are so important. Technology moves faster than legislation. We need to trust, and the American people need to trust, that you and those who work for you are stewarding the immense resources of the Department of Defense in a trustworthy, transparent, methodical way that best serves the needs of the United States.

That’s so fundamental because those resources stretch into all corners of our economy, and the Department historically has played a crucial role in priming the country’s innovation pump. Radars become microwaves, ARPANET becomes the internet, TRANSIT becomes GPS, other programs become lifesaving mRNA vaccines or Apple’s Siri. DoD’s investments today in quantum, AI, health care,

materials science, or other fields could well be foundational to the American economy of the future.

DoD research funding supports our scientists and engineers at our leading-edge universities and our most innovative start-ups. DoD dollars shore up our industrial base, allowing cutting-edge technologies to come to market in ways that perhaps the private sector alone would not enable. And DoD leadership can and should push breakthrough technologies in ways that change our current ways of thinking and doing.

To that end, like the Chairman, I'm interested to hear how the newly reconfigured Research and Engineering ecosystem is performing. Mr. Michael, you've also used the wide-ranging authorities granted as the Department's Chief Technology Officer at a greater scale than they have been leveraged before, and I hope we can explore how that is going.

Mr. Stanley, under Mr. Michael's leadership as the CTO, CDAO is responsible both for maturing existing enterprise programs and the numerous tasks given by the DoD's AI Strategy. I look forward to hearing your approach to prioritizing and balancing these efforts.

And Mr. West, I know one of your focus areas is lowering barriers for commercial entry. That's a subject of great interest to many of us, and I hope we can dive in there as well.

In the interest of time I'll stop there – I look forward to our discussion this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.