



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
FROM THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Remarks as prepared for delivery by  
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Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Intelligence Community  
Opening Statement  
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

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Chairman Schiff, Ranking Member Nunes, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to join you today. It's an honor to be here with my colleagues to discuss the work we have ahead of us to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility – or D-E-I-A – in the IC.

While we have exceptional leaders within the IC who are committed to promoting DEIA, many of whom have worked hard to achieve the progress we have made thus far on these issues over the last many years, we know we have a great deal of work ahead of us. These leaders know that it is not only essential to our mission and our values but to who we are as a nation. Promoting diversity – ensuring that we reflect the country we serve – is a responsibility we carry as public servants.

Moreover, it is fundamental to our national security. Ensuring that we have an IC workforce made up of people who think differently, see problems differently, and overcome challenges differently, is a prerequisite to our success. Their creativity makes us smarter, more innovative, and more successful. And that makes our nation safer and more secure against the array of adversaries and the foreign threats we face.

Currently, however, the Intelligence Community is not where it needs to be.

Minorities, women, and persons with disabilities are far better represented at the lower GS-level ranks than at the senior executive levels, suggesting better success at recruiting than retaining and promoting. And even so, when you look at the recruiting, we consistently see a gap between recruiting and hiring minorities. While we have collected and analyzed far more demographic data than I have time to present in this statement, let me provide a few points that may be helpful.

- In FY2020, the percentage of minorities in the Intelligence Community stood at 27 percent - an increase from 26.5 percent in FY2019, continuing a positive trend since FY2016.
- But as you examine the senior levels of service, the data shows the numbers of minorities in leadership get progressively lower. Across the IC, the percentage of minorities at the senior executive level stands at just 15.4 percent.
- And at ODNI, we lag behind the rest of the IC. Minorities comprise 20.5 percent of our workforce -- 6.5 percent below the IC average although the percentage of minorities at the senior executive level in the ODNI is 1.3 percent higher than the IC average at 16.7 percent.
- In FY2020 the percentage of women in the Intelligence Community stood constant at 39.3 percent - about the same as the year before, after showing a small gain in FY2018.
- Within ODNI, the percentage of women has grown incrementally for the past five years, increasing by 0.4% in FY2020 over the previous year. While still higher than the IC average, that percentage still lags behind women in the Civilian Labor Force at 47%.

While we have seen some positive trends, we need to improve. Here's some of what we are doing to change the situation. I look forward to getting your thoughts and advice on this issue, and I very much appreciate your spending time on it with us.

Early this year we split the IC EEOD into two offices, the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, and the new Office of IC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

(IC DEI), so that we would have an office fully dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We also created a new enterprise-wide role, the IC Accessibility Executive, and stood up the ODNI Diversity and Inclusion Group to address DEIA within ODNI.

### *Recruitment*

Two of our highest organizational priorities are recruitment that includes under-represented communities, and retention of people who are under-represented in our workforce. Both Dr. Dixon, my Principal Deputy, and I have worked to recruit at colleges and high schools where we can reach these communities and expand our overall applicant pool.

- Just recently, I visited our partner school, Florida International University, which is primarily comprised of Hispanic students, and Dr. Dixon visited Harris Stowe State University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in St. Louis.

Of course, we know that our individual efforts will not be enough. We need *institutional growth* to achieve our goals, so we have taken the following measures.

- Across the IC, we have empowered advisory bodies such as the IC Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity (IC EEOD) Council, and the IC Chief Human Capital Council to focus on these issues.
- IC elements are collaborating in joint outreach and recruiting in underrepresented communities to reach more candidates.
- The IC Centers for Academic Excellence program is being strengthened to increase our reach with more formal marketing, university engagement and recruitment strategies in coordination with IC elements.
- We have also formed new partnerships across academia, industry, and government with organizations like the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) -- a national, non-profit focused on increasing STEM involvement for Indigenous peoples of North America and the Pacific

Islands and Advancing Minorities' Interest in Engineering, which provides a direct connection to accredited engineering schools at top-rated HBCUs.

Finally, through initiatives such as ODNI's "Adopt a High School" program, we are not just focusing academic outreach on colleges and universities, we are inspiring under-represented communities at the K-12 levels as well.

There is a lot more we can do, but we need your help with changing policies that hinder program execution. For instance, in a community that prioritizes resources by mission, we found that policies that govern how we can allocate our recruiting dollars can actually hinder recruiting.

For example, if one of our IC mission partners lacks the resources to send a recruiter to an event with an outreach partner, ODNI is prohibited from using its available resources to include them. This is an area where we could use help from Congress, and we appreciate the Committee's inclusion of the Administration's proposal to provide new authorities to ODNI in this area in the FY22 Intelligence Authorization Act.

### *Retention*

Our other organizational priority is to retain our employees after hiring them, and we've learned through pulse surveys, exit interviews, and retention inquiries something about why people stay and leave.

We found that the most common reason people leave the organization is a lack of promotion opportunities. Other causes of low retention include:

- lack of fairness and equity in the workplace;
- Insufficient mentoring and guidance; and
- A lack of identification with the greater organization.

We listened to the voices of those surveyed and we are addressing these issues with employee-led organizations, and taking measures to promote fairness and equity and deliver anti-harassment training.

The Intelligence Community sponsors six IC Affinity Networks (ICANs) that are employee-led, voluntary organizations that foster workplace inclusion and collaborate with IC leaders on improving policies to help connect employees to the community. They include the:

- Latino Intelligence Network (LINK)
- Women's Intelligence Network (WIN)
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Affinity Network (APAN)
- African American Affinity Network (AAAN)
- IC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affinity Network (IC Pride); and
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing IC Affinity Network (DHH)

Networks like these are not a solution to the challenges we face but they can help our retention by leading community-wide professional development opportunities and work-life balance programming.

We are also working to remove the structural and cultural barriers that the IC has built up over generations.

This Community for a long time was known as one that did not value DEIA. It was only a single generation ago, that many of our IC agencies had an open, stated policy of not hiring anyone who was LGBTQ+, forcing many of our colleagues to hide who they were if they wanted to serve their country.

We have corrected our outdated policies since then and made tremendous strides under both Republican and Democratic Administrations. The policy that barred service from members of the LGBTQ community was abolished, glass ceilings were smashed, doors opened, and ladders climbed. The fact that I'm here before you today is yet another example of the work all of you have done to promote diversity in the government, so our progress is real and encouraging, but our journey is far from over.

In the IC we know how to work together to support the nation's objectives. Congress created ODNI to do this, and we are bringing that approach to our efforts to increase diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

This spirit is quintessentially American - to recognize our imperfections and decide we can be better – to see we have the power to make ourselves better – to work toward a brighter vision of what might be, what could be, and what will be. We are resolute in this purpose and I know we will be successful.

Thank you.