

Written Statement of Dimitri Kusnezov

**Nominee for Under Secretary for Science and Technology
U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

**Before the
U. S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee**

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Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Portman, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored to be here as the President's nominee to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Technology for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Mayorkas for the trust that they have placed in me, and to you for your consideration of my nomination. DHS is responsible for some of the most significant and diverse challenges our nation faces. The opportunity to join in the service of our homeland and to contribute is very humbling.

None of this would be possible without the patience, encouragement, support, and understanding of my family. My wife Jacqueline, a daughter of Ohio, who is here today, has been a partner in everything we have done from the start. My family that could not be here includes: my son Major Nick Kusnezov, an orthopedic surgeon serving at Ft. Campbell, KY and, his wife Tasha and two daughters Emily and Arabella; my daughter Dr. Lara Marquez, an infectious disease epidemiologist, epidemic modeler, and cost effectiveness researcher at U.C. San Diego, her husband Jose and their two sons Cameron and Sutton. I am sure my mother Evelyne is watching online as well. Nothing I do would ever have been possible without them and many others who have helped along the way. I only hope that I can stand up to the expectations that they have for me.

Science and technology have critical roles in safeguarding the homeland. As a scientist and a senior leader, I understand that science and technology can be very distinct, non-overlapping enterprises – one does not necessarily lead the other. Some technologies can even evade scientific understanding and still find great utility.

Good science is its own critic, and it blossoms in fields that you tend. Technology, on the other hand, is evaluated on how effectively it can be used. Both science and technology are critical to DHS – to identify scientific gaps that need attention and to find the means to draw the right technologies into practice. The near term and the long term must be balanced to ensure not only that the ecosystem is there when you need it, but also that the operational components and first responders have what is needed not only for today's problems but for tomorrow's.

I have found that successful technologies require strong alignment with partners, especially the private sector, where risks can be shared in the early stages, but more importantly for providing paths to sustainability and transitions to operational uses. I also believe that there are no silver

bullet technologies, and the most important requirement is vigilance – towards the ever-changing landscape of risks, threats, and opportunities.

We are in a time of remarkable technology change, of remarkable opportunity, of unimaginable innovation, of things we could not have dreamed of just a few years ago. At the same time, this makes the needs for securing the homeland even more pressing. I welcome these challenges and the opportunity to contribute to the best of my abilities.

I have had the pleasure over the years of working with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate and have seen firsthand the tremendous dedication, commitment, and skillset of its workforce and its contributions to the various mission sets of the Department. If confirmed, it would be a distinct honor to work with this team to help safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to answering your questions.