

Former Rep. Heather Wilson aptly dodges ethics questions during nomination hearing, but confirmation looks likely

Air Force Secretary Nominee Heather Wilson's priorities



1- Readiness



2- Modernization



3- Training



4- Research and development

Hearing recap:

- In her financial disclosure, Wilson pledged to step down as president of South Dakota School of Mines and Technology as well as from the boards of eight other businesses, including her position on the board of directors of Raven Industries, a company that makes surveillance aerostat, blimp and balloons. She and her husband will also sell their stock holdings with 16 different US defense contractors
- Wilson fielded many questions regarding her employment by Sandia Corporation, a subsidiary of Lockheed that runs Sandia National Laboratories, a US government-owned facility where nuclear weapon parts are developed
- While Wilson claims she did not engage in lobbying, which would have been illegal within a year after leaving Congress, she was influential in building Lockheed's strategy to enable Sandia to continue its contract with the government in a noncompetitive environment
- Lockheed paid \$4.7 million in 2015 to settle allegations that it used federal funds to lobby on its behalf
- Wilson made about \$50 million working with government nuclear labs from 2009 to 2013
- Wilson faced the toughest questioning from Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT), who pushed her regarding the lack of transparency in her consulting work

Sources: National Journal research, 2017; Valerie Insinna, "US Air Force secretary nominee discloses financial details," Defense News, March 27, 2017.