

AeroVironment CEO Provides Testimony to U.S. Congress on the Capabilities of Unmanned and Robotic Systems in Support of National Security



On June 22, AeroVironment’s Chairman, President and CEO Wahid Nawabi testified before the House Subcommittee on Cyber Security, Information Technology and Government Innovation. The hearing, titled “Using Cutting-Edge Technologies to Keep America Safe,” explored how new and innovative technology – such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and intelligent robotic systems – are helping our military, law enforcement, and border security officials protect our citizens and borders.

Please see below for Mr. Nawabi’s full prepared remarks presented before the subcommittee. A video of the hearing in its entirety is available [here](#).

STATEMENT OF MR. WAHID NAWABI, CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO
AEROVIRONMENT, INC.

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBER SECURITY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND
GOVERNMENT INNOVATION

JUNE 22, 2023

Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Connelly, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am Wahid Nawabi, Chairman, President and CEO of AeroVironment, Inc. We are a 52 year old technology company, publicly traded on the NASDAQ. I was born and raised in Afghanistan. As a 14 year old teenager, I escaped Afghanistan with my three younger sisters traveling for two months from Kabul, Afghanistan, through Pakistan, to New Delhi, India. We were reunited with my parents in New Delhi. I legally immigrated to the U.S. at age 15, became a U.S. citizen and started a new life as an American, learning English, finishing high school and college, becoming

an electrical engineer. I'm an example of a legal immigrant, who pursued the American dream. I feel a personal obligation and consider it my duty to help improve the security of our nation and defend our values not only in U.S., but around the globe. I am grateful for the opportunity today to represent the 1,300 employees of AeroVironment and discuss with you our current and future vision of intelligent robotic systems and how they will enhance our safety and security.

AeroVironment's robotic systems enable the success and assure the safety of government and commercial customers. We are a global leader in unmanned aircraft systems, unmanned ground vehicles, loitering munition systems, and high-altitude pseudo-satellites. We are a large supplier of unmanned systems to the U.S. Department of Defense, providing products to all the Military Services and USSOCOM, as well as the U.S. Departments of State, Justice and Homeland Security. Additionally, our small UAS are employed by more than 50 allies around the globe. We have over a dozen facilities across the country. All our products are manufactured in the United States, except our unmanned ground vehicles, which are made in Germany.

In 2021, AeroVironment celebrated its 50-year anniversary. Over the last half-century, we've been innovation pioneers, pushing the boundaries of what is possible and delivering advanced solutions to support our government and commercial customers. In the 1980s, AeroVironment created the first portable, hand-launched drone for information collection and transmission. Beginning in the 2000s, the U.S. Department of Defense selected AeroVironment's small, unmanned aircraft systems for multiple programs of record. In 2021, AeroVironment developed critical components for the Mars Ingenuity Helicopter, the first powered aircraft flight on another planet and the 2021 Robert J. Collier Award winner for the greatest achievement in aeronautics or astronautics in America. Most recently and over the last year, AeroVironment innovative solutions have helped Ukraine defend itself from Russia, providing critical intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance and precision strike capabilities. AeroVironment's products are not only critical on the battlefield, but also greatly enhance domestic capabilities such as law enforcement, border patrol and natural disaster relief.

Future missions for intelligent robots, integrated with artificial intelligence and autonomy, only require imagination. Systems operating on the ground and up to the stratosphere will enhance global communication, transportation, infrastructure and agriculture inspection, weather monitoring, and provide disaster preparedness and relief. Our solar-powered high-altitude pseudo-satellite can provide a global broadband telecommunications network, weather monitoring for organizations such as NOAA and FEMA as well as Space Domain awareness. Powered entirely by solar arrays, it is designed to stay aloft for up to six months in the stratosphere. Government and commercial customers are only just beginning to harness the potential of this revolutionary and cost-effective capability.

AeroVironment continues to develop unmanned systems with computer vision and machine learning capabilities, which can navigate autonomously on its own, sense, analyze, and identify items of interest, reducing operator workload and increasing situational awareness and safety. We constantly evaluate and integrate new capabilities into our current and future products to assure we stay ahead of our competitors and our nation's adversaries.

I'd like to share a short video showcasing a few of our current and future systems employed by our government and commercial customers.

Thank you again to the Committee for the opportunity to be here today. I invite each of you to visit AeroVironment's facilities across the country and I welcome your questions.