



News Release

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Statement of the South Dakota Board of Regents on President Heather Wilson's Nomination to be Next Air Force Secretary

PIERRE, S.D. – The President of the United States announced today his intention to nominate Heather Wilson, president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, as the next Secretary of the U.S. Air Force.

“South Dakota’s loss will be the nation’s gain,” said Randy Schaefer, president of the South Dakota Board of Regents. “During her four years at Mines, Heather Wilson has found money for new buildings, established new programs, increased research, grown enrollment, deepened the connection between the university and the community, and improved financial management. She’s been a great university leader.”

“Her nomination is a real credit to South Dakota and higher education,” Schaefer said. “We know she will continue to be a strong advocate for university-based research and the development of young leaders in the Air Force.”

President Wilson will continue to be the president of the School of Mines until confirmed by the U.S. Senate, when she will immediately relinquish her position, according to Mike Rush, executive director and CEO of the Board of Regents. An interim will then be appointed and the Board of Regents will conduct a national search for her successor.

Established in 1885, the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (www.sdsmt.edu) is an exceptional engineering and science university with a 98 percent placement rate for graduates at an average starting salary of over \$63,000 a year. Ranked one of “America’s Best College Buys” for 18 years straight, South Dakota Mines was also ranked first in the nation for return on investment for a college education by the *Wall Street Journal* and in the top-10 “Best Colleges for Vets” by the *Military Times*. The university has grown enrollment by more than 20 percent over the past five years.

The South Dakota School of Mines is one of six universities in South Dakota governed by a single Board of Regents. The South Dakota system is known for high-quality programs provided at a price that families can afford.

Half of the students at South Dakota Mines are from South Dakota and half are from 40 other states and more than 30 foreign countries.