

**STATEMENT OF STEVEN NESMITH
ASSISTANT SECRETARY *NOMINEE*
CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**



**BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES SENATE
BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

MAY 13, 2003

Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Sarbanes, and other Members of the Committee, I thank you for your willingness to consider my nomination during such a busy time in the Congress.

It is my pleasure to introduce my wife, Christelle Nesmith, my son Stevie Jr. and daughter, Alexandra. Even though my mother (Ruby Nesmith) is not physically here, I know she is with me in spirit.

I would like to thank Senators Santorum and Specter for their very generous introductions. It has been an honor and privilege to have worked with both Senators in this Administration on economic development issues for Pennsylvania and, therefore, the country during my tenure at the U.S. Department of Commerce. I also want to thank so many people who have supported me leading up to this process and helped me prepare for this hearing - including the Senior Staff of the Senate Banking Committee.

Most importantly, I am deeply grateful to President Bush and Secretary Martinez for according me the honor of this nomination. If confirmed, it is with great humility that I will discharge the duties of the position.

As someone who grew up in public housing and as a so called “at risk child” in the ghetto of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, I am sure many could never imagine that I might sit here

before this prestigious group of U.S. Senators as the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

I hope that my experiences, growing up in public housing and working on economic development issues with Philadelphia's Empowerment Zone, in addition to those as a government relations lawyer and as Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, will assist me in thinking through housing issues from the perspective of both community and economic development; and the larger U.S. economy.

In closing, I recognize there will be challenges ahead of us whether they are specific to a given program at HUD, or issues facing the broader Housing Community. Nevertheless, I believe we must address these issues in a bi-partisan manner in order to find long-term solutions.