

Opening Statement by David Woll

Thank you, Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Warren, and distinguished members of this committee. I am deeply thankful, honored, and humbled to be nominated by President Trump to serve as the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. I would also like to thank the Committee and your staff for the courtesies you have extended to me and my family during the confirmation process.

Thank you as well to my friends and family for being with me today, some physically here, and some with me in spirit. I deeply appreciate your love and support.

My middle child is an Air Force officer currently deployed to the Middle East. He may be watching this hearing on his computer. We are thinking of you and look forward to your safe return home.

This year is a reflection point for me because it marks the 35th anniversary of my graduation from the University of Virginia School of Law. In those early days, like many of my law school classmates, I was recruited by and accepted a job with a large law firm where I was mentored by many fine lawyers who I still deeply admire and respect today.

But I yearned to do something different. I wanted to make a real difference in the world. I got my first chance to do that in 1998 when I was hired as an enforcement attorney with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

My first investigation at the SEC involved a securities boiler room that targeted elderly investors. After thousands of hours of document review and countless depositions, multiple indictments were issued to take down that den of thieves. I felt like I had made a positive difference in the lives of my fellow citizens, and I was hooked.

I then had an opportunity to serve as an Assistant U.S. Attorney here in the District of Columbia. Like most prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's office, I began in D.C. Superior Court prosecuting violent crimes. In my first three years in the office, I prosecuted domestic violence and sexual assault cases, which was deeply fulfilling work. My colleagues and I prosecuted defendants who victimized some of the most vulnerable people in the community, including children and indigent women who had been battered and trafficked. The work was emotionally draining and grueling, but once again, I felt like I was making a difference and helping people.

I later went on to serve as a federal prosecutor in Brooklyn, where I prosecuted business and securities fraud cases involving victims who were financially devastated by others who took advantage of them. This included prosecuting a \$100 million Ponzi scheme and a Hurricane Katrina fraud case.

After my time as a trial attorney with DOJ, I joined HUD as the Deputy General Counsel where I continued to manage complex investigations. I believe this extensive trial experience will help me manage both affirmative and defensive litigation efforts at HUD.

I also have experience with a wide range of matters that are typically handled by HUD's Office of General Counsel. For example, while recently serving as first the Deputy General Counsel and then the General Counsel for the Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery, also known as "SIGPR", I addressed legal questions concerning ethics, personnel matters, the Freedom of Information Act, and inter agency agreements and cooperation. At SIGPR, I was also responsible for creating office policies on a wide range of issues including agency information sharing, and use of force.

I also have legal management experience. As Deputy General Counsel at HUD, I managed three offices within the Office of General Counsel and more than 100 lawyers throughout the country, and at SIGPR I managed a highly seasoned team of attorneys and bankers.

I believe my career in government has prepared me to now head the legal office at HUD. I feel particularly privileged to be considered to lead this incredibly talented and professional team of lawyers, many of whom I have worked with before. From experience, I know that these attorneys genuinely care about helping those in need and providing a gold standard of legal services to the agency. If confirmed, I very much look forward to my next chapter at HUD.

Again, thank you to the Committee for your consideration of my nomination.