

Statement by

Dr. Ron Borzekowski

Nominee for Director of the Office of Financial Research

before the

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

United States Senate

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Chairman Brown, Ranking Member Scott, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. It is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as Director of the Office of Financial Research.

With me today are my wife Dina, my partner for over 40 years, and my children Emma Rose, Benjamin and Ruby. My mother-in-law is here too – beaming on her own and representing the pride that my parents would feel at this nomination. I want publicly to thank my whole family, and my community, for their support and encouragement during my previous public service, and for their future sacrifice if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed in this new role.

Both of my parents were survivors of the Shoah, and came to the United States with nearly nothing, seeking to rebuild their lives and to restart their family lines. My father first worked in a series of factories, and then as a small-business owner. My mother worked first as a social worker and then as a homemaker, meticulously taking care of our home and family. Nightly, our dinner table in a middle-class suburb of New York was the place to discuss the issues of the day. In retrospect, my parents' deep interest in the public affairs of their adopted land may be the origin of my own dedication to well-supported policy.

School took me west to California, where I studied mathematics and political science. After a short career as an actuary, I earned a master's degree in public policy. I followed that with a PhD in economics and a first research job at the Federal Reserve Board, studying the structure of the financial system and later, issues of financial stability. I was thrilled to start my post-graduate career in public service and I still remember my parents' pride when I shared that news.

In the aftermath of the financial crisis and the Great Recession, I worked with my colleagues at the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission helping to analyze and record the causes and history of that crisis. I then joined the Office of Research at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, drawn by the mission and the opportunity to put research and evidence at the center of this new government organization.

As you know, at the same time, Congress established the Office of Financial Research to serve the Financial Stability Oversight Council, its member agencies, and the public. One of the key findings from our work researching the crisis was that hard-working Americans suffered massive costs. The OFR's critical mission should be focused on ensuring that this doesn't happen again. Collecting, standardizing, and making accessible financial data; conducting and sponsoring research related to financial stability; and, developing new tools for risk measurement and monitoring should be in line with that purpose.

This mission implicitly recognizes the inherent economies of scale in collecting and managing data. It also recognizes the benefits of a more coordinated regulatory system. A successful OFR will improve government, lessen the chance of financial crises, and benefit both the public and private sectors.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and with the members of the Council to achieve these worthy goals.

Thank you. I look forward to answering your questions.