

Statement by Rae Oliver Davis
Nominee for Inspector General at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Before the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
July 24, 2018

Thank you, Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Brown, and Members of the Committee. It is an honor to appear before you as the nominee to serve as the Inspector General (IG) of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues for their support. In particular, I would like to recognize my parents, Charles and Jerry, and my husband, Chris, for their love and support. I would like to thank my three stepchildren, Graham, Addy, and Liam, for inviting me into their lives and guaranteeing that I would never suffer a dull moment.

I am proud to have made a career in public service and oversight. As a young staff attorney, I cut my teeth working on the then-Senate Governmental Affairs Committee and the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee. I then joined the Tennessee Office of the Attorney General where I led consumer protection investigations that resulted in nationwide settlements with Fortune 500 companies. I aspired to be a federal prosecutor and was fortunate to receive an offer with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Tennessee in Memphis. I prosecuted a wide variety of cases in that office, including everything from false tax claims and investment schemes to firearms and drug violations.

After deciding to return to our nation's capital, I landed in the IG community, where I have spent the last decade of my career. I have worked in three unique and challenging agencies – the Postal Service, the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (SIGTARP), and most recently HUD. I have been boots-on-the-ground conducting and leading investigations. I have also served in two senior level positions where I gained an appreciation for the tough decisions IGs must make every day.

In my most recent position with HUD OIG's Office of Special Inquiry, our efforts have focused on senior official misconduct and enterprise-level risk to the Department. We have created a multidisciplinary team of attorneys, investigators, and auditors to address complex issues in a comprehensive manner.

I would like to share with the committee my personal constitution with respect to IG work and my vision for HUD OIG, if confirmed as Inspector General.

The foundation of IG work is independence. It is the principle that protects our ability to shed light on the truth about government. An independent IG cannot allow the department or agency it oversees to direct its work in any way. And an independent IG cannot accept obstruction or delay in gaining access to agency records.

I also believe the best IGs are strong communicators. IGs must have solid relationships with their authorizing and appropriating committees to ensure they prioritize the right work and keep

Congress informed. In my rounds with Senators and your staffs, I committed to ensuring that we conduct comprehensive investigations and deliver thorough reporting. I am aware that our work is also of significant interest to American taxpayers. Shedding light on government mismanagement and misconduct through our reports can be as effective as prosecutions and financial recoveries.

To remain current in our efforts, we must communicate well with HUD. We can be independent in the direction of our work and reporting while maintaining strong lines of communication about HUD's priorities, initiatives, and planning. I believe strongly that we must also be active in the IG community, through cross-cutting initiatives, training programs, and development of best practices.

My vision and goal-setting for HUD OIG will focus on effectiveness. We can spark positive change by making hard-hitting recommendations relating to HUD's top management challenges. HUD's mission is far-reaching and there are many pressing issues in HUD programs that require attention. I am honored to be considered as the nominee for this important oversight position.

I appreciate the opportunity to come before this Committee and to answer your questions. Thank you for your time today.