

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Crapo and members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as you consider my nomination as Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO). I would like to start by introducing my wife Emily and my two sons, Sebastian and Javier, who are with me here today. I am grateful for their love and support, which means everything to me.

I came to this country in my mid-20s, have proudly become a citizen, and have devoted the last fifteen years of my life to public service. My career has been marked by the pursuit of justice and the defense of civil and human rights for people from all walks of

life. I am committed to promoting equal opportunity and combating discrimination, and believe that becoming Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity would be a tremendous opportunity to continue to fulfill that commitment. My qualifications to become Assistant Secretary are based on my record as a leader, bringing people together to resolve complex public challenges; my experience in and knowledge of the field of non-discrimination laws, regulations, and enforcement, including fair housing; and my management abilities, particularly with respect to streamlining the investigation of discrimination claims for careful analysis and expeditious resolution. Most of all, I want to highlight my experience in finding every possible way to inform the public about their rights under the law.

In my previous positions, I have demonstrated expertise in working

with federal civil rights laws, regulations and programs, including Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act), and many other federal and local anti-discrimination laws in employment, education, public accommodation, and publicly funded services and programs.

I served from 2007 through October 2013 as Director of the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights. In this capacity, I have been ultimately responsible for the investigation and disposition of thousands of discrimination cases filed by individuals and organizations. I have also been responsible for helping establish or modify rules and guidelines to investigate and adjudicate employment and housing discrimination complaints under one of the most comprehensive non-discrimination statutes in the country – the DC Human Rights Act of 1977. In doing so, I

have studied and applied federal laws and regulations, from HUD and other agencies, for consistency in the enforcement of civil rights in the District.

Because DC's non-discrimination law is substantially equivalent to the Fair Housing Act, for many years the DC Office of Human Rights has been cross-filing and investigating cases with HUD under federal law. This has required me to understand and apply the rules and guidelines emanating from HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity for the proper investigation and disposition of Title VIII complaints.

With respect to management, in addition to many years as a not-for-profit executive manager, I have provided leadership and

management in government for two state-level agencies: the DC Office of Latino Affairs, and the DC Office of Human Rights.

As Director of the Office of Latino Affairs, I was responsible for designing and advancing policies and programs for the economic and social advancement of the Latino community.

At the Office of Human Rights, I led a successful agency of talented professionals working on combating discrimination in the Nation's capital. I am proud of the many accomplishments that my team of investigators, mediators, attorneys, and administrative law judges achieved under my leadership, whether in enforcement or raising awareness of the wide range of protections that people living and working in DC enjoy.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Crapo, and members of the Committee, I am honored by the President's nomination, the confidence of Secretary Donovan, and the opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I look forward to working tirelessly on promoting fair housing and equal opportunity across the nation and in cooperation with members of this Committee. Thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.