

**OPENING STATEMENT OF
SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

D.C. NOMINATION HEARING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2008

Thank you, Senator Akaka. I want to extend a welcome to the nominees appearing before us today - we appreciate your time and your willingness to serve the District of Columbia.

It takes a unique individual to be a judge because judges have the significant responsibilities of protecting citizens' rights and liberties as well as upholding and interpreting the law. I trust that if confirmed, both of you will fulfill these responsibilities with honor, courage, and character befitting the court.

This subcommittee spends a great deal of time reviewing the federal government's efforts to find the best and brightest employees in an era when we are losing highly skilled potential employees to a private sector that in many instances offers higher salaries. I think the District of Columbia faces similar challenges in its efforts to find the best and the brightest for its court system.

Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed both of these nominees' biographical questionnaires and believe that the District of Columbia has found two such individuals in these nominees.

I note that both of the nominees have substantial experience in both the private and public sectors in a number of different subject areas.

Ms. Oberly has been nominated to the D.C. Court of Appeals. She is currently the General Counsel for Ernst and Young and was previously in private practice and also spent more than ten years at the Department of Justice.

Judge Irving has been nominated to be an Associate Judge of the D.C. Superior Court. He is currently a Magistrate Judge on that court and was previously in private practice and spent almost fifteen years at the Department of Justice.

Since the Chairman has done so, I won't go through any more of these nominees' qualifications or experiences, but look forward to hearing from them directly about their education, experience, and why they have sought their respective judgeships.

Again, I want to thank both of you for your time today and your willingness to serve the District of Columbia.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Committee will vote on both of these nominations in the very near future.

Thank you.