

Opening Statement of Erin Johnston
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Superior Court

Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Paul, and members of this esteemed Committee, thank you for considering me for the role of Associate Justice of the D.C. Superior Court. I would like to thank your staff for their courtesy and professionalism. Thank you to the Judicial Nomination Commission, and especially its chair, the Honorable Marie C. Johns, for recommending me to the White House. I would also like to thank President Joseph Biden for nominating me. I am deeply grateful to the judges of the D.C. Superior Court, and Chief Judge Anita Josey-Herring, for all of the generous encouragement I have received throughout this process.

I am most grateful to my family. I am fortunate to have extended family across this country. Here with me today from California is my sister, Stacey Gomez. She has been by my side in every important moment of my life. She was the first to envision my nomination to the judiciary, and I thank her for her steadfast belief in me and my potential. I reserve special thanks for my three children, who are also here with me today. My children are my inspiration. They make me better. And they are my most fun cheerleaders every day.

My mother worked hard to provide me with the educational opportunities available in this country that had not been available to her. It was those efforts that enabled me to find my way to the New York University School of Law. Since graduating from law school, I have lived here in the District. It has been a privilege to belong to such a vibrant community and to raise my children here.

I have spent my professional career at the Washington, D.C. office of Kirkland & Ellis. I have worked on large-scale litigation involving complex and novel legal issues that reflect the vast array of subject matters that touch our courtrooms, from contract claims and torts, to statutory interpretation and criminal matters. I have now taken several cases from inception through appeal, gaining extensive first-hand experience with every stage of the litigation process.

The matters that have meant the most to me have been my pro bono work. I have spent nearly 2000 hours on pro bono work over the course of my career, including handling several family law cases before the D.C. Superior Court. In choosing this work, I sought to represent families that otherwise would not have had access to counsel during what often was the most pivotal and challenging moments of their lives. I saw first-hand the impact of the justice system on the residents of the District. It would be a privilege to continue to contribute to D.C. Superior Court cases from the bench.

The breadth and depth of my experience has prepared me well for the wide range of matters that the D.C. Superior Court faces each day. I have learned the value of hard work and preparation, how to communicate effectively with people from all walks of life, and the importance of the dignity of each person involved in the judicial process. In my practice in state and federal courts across the country, I have seen judges who embody a reverence for the rule of law, listen with an open mind, move matters forward thoughtfully and effectively, and lead with steady compassion. If confirmed, this is the kind of judge I would endeavor to be. I would be grateful to serve the

District by dedicating myself in every case to the rule of law and providing equal access to justice. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to answering your questions.