

Statement of Colleen Duffy Kiko
to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority
Before the Committee on
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
April 17, 2024

Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Paul, Members of the Committee, I thank you and your staff for all the kindness that you've shown to me as I've prepared for this hearing.

I would like to introduce my family members who are here today. I appreciate all the love and support provided by my family during this process.

I'd also like to thank Anna Molpus, Murray Duncan, David Eddy, and Rebecca Osborne from the FLRA for their kind assistance throughout this process. And I am especially grateful for Chairman Grundmann – who has been ever so supportive and a pleasure to work with.

As someone who started their federal career as a GS-3 clerk-typist, I'm truly honored to have been re-nominated to serve as a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. I thank President Biden for the opportunity to serve in this capacity, should I be confirmed.

My dedication to federal service was influenced by my parents. My father, Lawrence E. Duffy, proudly spent over 49 years (almost a half century) in the Federal service before retiring. After a stint in the U.S. Army, he was a railway mail carrier for the Postal Service in North Dakota and later became a U.S. Customs Inspector at the North Dakota/Canada border. His work ethic, extreme pride in his job, and impeccable character were examples for me, and to this day, I strive to live up to them. My mother, Angie Duffy, always encouraged her sons and her daughters to strive for careers to broaden our horizons. She pushed all of us to be strong and independent.

I would like to point out a few areas of my career that make me particularly qualified for this position. I was an employee of this agency at its inception – when the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Labor-Management Relations were transferred into the new FLRA in 1979. So, I was there when the agency opened its doors, and I was there celebrating with its first birthday cake.

After joining the newly established FLRA, I worked in almost every component of the agency. In a regional office, I investigated unfair-labor-practice charges, chaired representational hearings, monitored federal union elections, and conducted training for unions and agencies. In the Authority component, I reviewed representational disputes, administrative law judge decisions, and drafted decisions for the Authority Members. My last position before I left to attend law school was a supervisory labor-relations specialist managing procedural motions for the agency. The FLRA has played an important role in shaping me into a professional employee.

I graduated from the Antonin Scalia Law School in Arlington, Virginia in 1986, and, just 19 years later, I would find myself back at the FLRA serving as the Senate-confirmed General

Counsel. Another 12 years later, I was confirmed to serve as a Member of the Authority and designated by the President to serve as Chairman. My career keeps taking me back to my FLRA roots.

My time as Chairman of the Agency from 2017 to 2021 provides me with unique insights into the challenges facing the agency. Steering the agency through the unprecedented COVID-19 public-health emergency was one of the greatest challenges – and most significant accomplishments – of my career in public service. As Chairman, I also: partnered with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to create a successful pilot program for mediating negotiability disputes; oversaw many elements of the agency’s ongoing transition from paper to electronic files, including significant improvements in its e-filing and case management systems; and involved employees from all agency components in innovative teams to implement the FLRA’s strategic plan and address opportunities for improvement from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. As Chairman and Member, I have worked with my colleagues to resolve unfair-labor-practice disputes, determine the appropriateness of units for labor representation, adjudicate exceptions to arbitrators’ awards, and resolve legal issues relating to the duty to bargain. I am continually impressed with the FLRA’s employees, who are some of the most dedicated public servants I have ever met.

I believe my 35 years in the Federal government (20 years in the labor field) will continue to serve me well in this agency, where we are commissioned to provide leadership relating to matters under the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute and to effectively administer the nine specific mandates of the Statute. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and am ready to answer any questions.