

Opening Statement [as prepared]

Ranking Member Rob Portman

Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee

Nominations of:

Margaret A. Burnham, Gabrielle M. Dudley, Henry S. Klibanoff, and Brenda E. Stevenson to be Members of the Civil Rights Cold Case Records Review Board

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Thank you, Chairman Peters.

Unsolved civil rights cold cases reflect a difficult period in our nation's history. They are stories of real people with real families who are still looking for answers. Joining in that search are journalists, scholars, and others. The Civil Rights Cold Case Records Review Board will play an important role in making records open to them and to the public. Board members will need to balance public disclosure and privacy interests as they review voluminous records, no easy task. And they can subpoena parties and work with the Attorney General to petition for the release for sealed records, powers that need to be exercised carefully. I thank the nominees for their willingness to serve on the Board and look forward to discussing these issues and how they would bring their backgrounds and qualifications to bear on the Board should they be confirmed.

Thank you.