

**U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**Opening Statement of Robert H. Shriver, III**

**Nominated to be Deputy Director, Office of Personnel Management**

**Sept. 29, 2022**

Thank you, Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Portman, and distinguished Members of the Committee for welcoming me here today. It is an honor to be considered by this Committee as President Biden's nominee for Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

I want to start by recognizing the hard-working employees of the federal government, especially those at OPM. I would not be here today without their dedication and commitment. I care deeply about the civil service, about OPM, and all federal employees, and I thank them for their service.

I am also fortunate to have several family members with me here today. My wife JoAnn Martinez is here with two of our three children, Mitch and Justine. Our oldest son Robby is away for his first year of college and couldn't be here today. I want to thank my kids for all the joy they bring me, as well as the support and patience they have shown throughout my career. I especially want to thank JoAnn for her partnership—as both of us have balanced demanding careers with raising our family—and for her kindness and strength throughout our 22 years of marriage.

I am also blessed to have my father, Robert H. Shriver, Jr., my mother, Norma, and my sister, Melinda, here with me today. My parents are retired schoolteachers, and my sister is a public school administrator. They've traveled from Nazareth, Pennsylvania, to support me today, as they have done consistently and steadfastly throughout my entire life.

Like a lot of middle-class kids, I was fortunate to be able to go to college, but I needed to work to contribute to the costs. So, during high school, I worked in the paint department at K-Mart in Bethlehem, PA. I went off to college at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, where I washed dishes and served food in the dining hall. And then, when I went to George Washington University Law School here in Washington, DC, I got a job in the file room of a large law firm. It was about the furthest thing you could be from a summer associate—there was no wining and dining for me. The idea of an unpaid internship didn't even enter my mind. I needed a paycheck and working in the file room got me that.

I have carried those lessons on the importance of hard work into my professional career. I've had the good fortune to work in several positions at OPM, including my current position as the Associate Director for Employee Services at OPM, where I lead OPM's government-wide workforce policy team. I've also worked in state government, for a labor union, and in the private sector. I've held jobs that focused on law, policy, operations, and Information Technology. I've represented both labor and management. I've been a purchaser and a seller of services for the government. I've been a stakeholder and led stakeholder engagement. I've learned what the tools are to advocate for policies outside of government and how to leverage the tools to make policy inside of government. I've had great mentors who taught me how important it is to help the next generation of employees, something that drives me every day.

Through it all, I've been driven by one overarching principle: to help make the government work better for the American people.

OPM is a critical agency for effective and efficient government operations. I like to say that “everybody is in OPM’s business because OPM is in everybody’s business.” What I mean is that strategic workforce management is critical to every agency in government, and OPM exists to provide expert guidance, advice, and support on the full range of workforce matters. OPM also exists to preserve and protect the non-partisan, career civil service. Day in and day out, we balance these two foundational principles—how can we advance innovation in strategic human capital management while honoring the bedrock principles of our merit system that dates to the Pendleton Act of 1883.

If confirmed as Deputy Director, I will strive to build on the successes OPM has had over the past 20 months. I will leverage the experience I have had working in three different offices in OPM—the Office of the General Counsel, Healthcare and Insurance, and Employee Services—to drive policy innovation and customer service improvements across the agency. In partnership with Director Ahuja, I will apply the work ethic ingrained in me by my parents and community from an early age toward advancing my overarching leadership principle: help make the government work better for the American people.

I want to thank you Chairman, Ranking Member, and all Members of the Committee and their staffs for taking the time to meet with me. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I look forward to continuing our conversations and, with Director Ahuja, strengthening the relationship between OPM and this Committee.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.