

Opening Statement of Robert A. Salerno
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia
December 3, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as a nominee for Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. I would like to thank the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission and its chair, District Judge Emmet Sullivan, for recommending me to the White House, President Barack Obama for nominating me, and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for introducing me to the Committee.

With me today are my wife, Juanita, and my son, Evan. My daughter, Alex, is finishing up her Fall semester at Skidmore College in New York. She and other family members are watching the streaming video on the Committee's website. My parents are no longer with us, but they would have been proud today if they were – especially my father, who always encouraged me to become a lawyer. Finally, I want to recognize friends and colleagues in attendance. I would not be here today without their support and encouragement.

I am excited by the opportunity to serve on the Superior Court. I would bring to the position more than two decades of experience as a litigator in the District of Columbia, recent “quasi-judicial” experience, and a deep commitment to this City.

I have been a resident of the District of Columbia for 25 years and raised two children here. During that time, I have had a varied and rewarding career in private practice. I have litigated civil and criminal matters in federal and state courts across the country, as well as administrative proceedings and arbitrations. I have handled everything from high-stakes commercial litigation, to alleged criminal conduct by individual clients, to pro bono matters on behalf of our most vulnerable residents. I have been fortunate to work on sophisticated matters with extremely talented colleagues. At the same time, I have also always had a strong interest in public service. Prior to becoming a lawyer, I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ecuador, where I met my wife. I also volunteered to serve as a Hearing Committee Chair for the Board on Professional Responsibility. In that capacity, I conducted evidentiary hearings on formal charges of professional misconduct by members of the District of Columbia Bar.

I am at a point in my life where I am ready and able to focus 100% of my energy on public service. It would be a privilege for me to do so as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court. Judges have a unique ability to make a difference in the community on a daily basis, and for many citizens, judges are the personification of the judicial system. I can think of no greater honor for a lawyer than to be entrusted with the responsibility that comes with being a judge. My broad and diverse experience in private practice and my experience as a Hearing Committee Chair make me confident that I would be a good judge and that I would enjoy serving in that role. If I am confirmed, I would work hard every day to achieve fair outcomes, in accordance with the law, for all persons who come to the Superior Court seeking justice and due process, and to do so as efficiently as possible.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.