

Opening Statement of Craig Edward Leen
Nominee to be Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Superior Court
June 23, 2026

Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, Members of the Committee, it is a true honor to appear before you today as a nominee to be Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Superior Court. I thank President Donald J. Trump for nominating me, the Judicial Nomination Commission for recommending me, U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro for supporting me, and this Committee for considering me. I commit to you without reservation that if confirmed to this position that I will serve with integrity, independence, and a commitment to the rule of law.

I would like to say a few words about myself and my family. I am pleased to be joined here today by my college sweetheart, Dr. Ana Maria Muniz-Leen. My wife is truly remarkable— a double board-certified psychiatrist who provides mental health services to students at our alma mater. Together, we are raising two children we are very proud of. Our daughter has profound autism and a substantial intellectual disability. She loves the outdoors, music, Disney movies, and we love participating annually as a Duo Team in the Marine Corps Marathon. My wife's and my advocacy for our daughter throughout her life, seeking to ensure she receives all the support she needs to thrive, and seeing how important it is to have an accessible society committed to equal protection under law, has shaped me profoundly and has informed my public service. Our son is here today. He is a walking miracle. He was not supposed to live past 19 weeks in utero, but he is here today— vibrant, strong, and thriving, and a great student and cross country and track runner as well. He also is our daughter's best friend and often her voice. My family and I love living in Washington, DC and I am deeply grateful for their support.

I am currently a partner at K&L Gates where I practice as a litigator in the labor and employment and administrative law fields. My practice involves representing federal contractors, fund recipients, and other organizations before federal agencies, combining litigation with advice and counsel. I am also a professorial lecturer in law at George Washington Law School, where I teach Government Lawyering, Disability Rights Law, and Local Government Law, and previously taught Legal Drafting and Labor Law. Prior to my time in private practice, I had extensive experience in the public sector as a federal agency head at the U.S. Department of Labor, as the City Attorney of Coral Gables, Florida, and as the chief of the federal litigation section and previously chief of the appeals section at the Miami-Dade County Attorney's Office. I also was a law clerk to Judge Robert E. Keeton, District of Massachusetts, one of the most meaningful experiences in my life.

My experiences in both the public and private sector have opened doors for me that I could only dream of as a young attorney, including serving as the 139th President of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia and Co-Chair of the District of Columbia Family Support Council.

If confirmed, you have my commitment that I will be dedicated to the rule of law, to transparently explaining my decisions, to moving my docket effectively and efficiently, to adhering to the highest ethical standards, and to treating those who come before me with respect. Thank you again for considering my nomination.