

Statement of Charles Arrington
to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority
Before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
October 23, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and distinguished members of the Committee. I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the President for this nomination and to each of you for the opportunity to serve.

I want to acknowledge my daughter, Avery, whose existence fills me with pride, and my supportive girlfriend, Courtney, as well as my family, friends, and colleagues who have shaped my journey and made me who I am.

I come from humble roots. I was raised as an Army brat and primarily shaped by my grandfather and grandmother, Louis & Mary Jacober. Louis, a dedicated carpenter and small business owner stepped in to help raise me during my parents' absences.

My early years were marked by hard work, wrestling in high school, and laboring on a dairy farm. Wanting to sleep in, I enlisted in the Navy after high school where I strived for excellence as a dual-platform aircraft mechanic. I served on the flightline at Whidbey Island during the tragic events of September 11th and later with HM-15 Blackhawks during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Those experiences instilled in me a profound sense of duty and resilience, and an even stronger bond with America and its principles and ideals.

Transitioning to the private sector, I faced challenges pursuing higher education under the old GI Bill, which led me to community college. Financial struggles forced me to prioritize work over studies, returning to my blue-collar roots. Eventually, I found my calling in public service with the Department of Veterans Affairs, starting as a WG-3 forklift operator. That role introduced me to federal sector unions and the value of collective bargaining. Later, at the National Cemetery Administration as a WG-5 cemetery caretaker, I took pride in the grueling yet honorable work of interring America's heroes at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, a mission we never failed, rain or shine. As a returning Iraq veteran, this work was both physically demanding and emotionally profound particularly at a time when I became a father and welcomed my daughter, Avery, into my life.

My decade with the VA included leadership as President of the National Association of Government Employees Local, participation in master contract negotiations, and service as a National Safety Representative. Rising to WG-10, I later transitioned to a GS-11 Employee and Labor Relations Specialist, where my blue-collar perspective and commitment to fairness allowed me to call "balls and strikes" from both sides of the table. My respect for the integrity

of labor relations processes and the statutes governing them, particularly 5 USC Chapter 71, has guided my career.

My background informs my approach in two ways. First, my blue-collar mentality, rooted in Southern Illinois, where I witnessed the labor dynamics of industries like Anheuser-Busch and Granite City Steel, has equipped me with dedication and an understanding of the delicate balance in labor relations. Second, while I value academia, I believe my experience is my most important credential. I have negotiated two of the largest federal union contracts (VA/AFGE/NAGE), written and defended grievances, bargaining unit certifications, and unfair labor practice charges, participated in arbitration proceedings, and engaged with the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) in nearly every capacity as a practitioner. This hands-on experience, spanning over two decades of public service, has prepared me to contribute meaningfully to the FLRA.

If confirmed, I am committed to bringing my experience, integrity, and dedication to the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute, serving the American people and upholding the principles of fair labor relations. Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to responding to your questions.