Opening Statement from Michael Chamberlain
Nominee, Director of the Office of Government Ethics
Before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
November 19, 2026

Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and distinguished Members of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored and humbled to have been nominated by President Donald J. Trump to serve as Director of the Office of Government Ethics. I am grateful to President Trump for affording me the possibility to join the administration and once again serve the American public. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of my nomination.

The public's trust in its government has declined significantly, with that decline accelerating rapidly during the pandemic. Government officials made decisions with profound effects on the lives and futures of Americans with little data or science to back them up – in some cases, even acting in defiance of evidence in their possession. More recently, the discovery of large-scale fraud in government programs has further eroded trust. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I will ensure OGE does all it can to help restore that lost trust.

Though it is a relatively small agency, the work of OGE is important to the effective functioning of the executive branch. The principle that guides its work – that public service is a public trust – is one of the most important concepts steering those who serve the American people. Preserving that trust requires public officials to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above self-interest.

A foundation of the executive branch ethics policy is that decisions made by federal officials be made in the best interests of the American people, free from conflicts of interest. Every President deserves to have dedicated, hard-working individuals in leadership roles who will help carry out the agenda the President was elected to enact. OGE serves a vital role in assisting the President in the Constitutional duty to nominate and appoint senior officials, working with agency ethics officials to identify potential areas of conflict and provide mechanisms for officials to avoid them. The office provides guidance, support, and training to agency ethics officials and administers the financial disclosure system used by executive branch agencies. The office is also essential in holding agencies accountable for complying with ethics program requirements. If confirmed, I would consider it a privilege to help advance OGE's mission every day.

If confirmed, my priority will be to support OGE's dedicated career professionals as they carry out the agency's many important responsibilities. I look forward to working collaboratively with ethics officials across the executive branch to provide practical guidance, effective training, and

responsive customer service. I will also endeavor to improve processes and systems to maximize the office's efficiency and effectiveness.

Throughout my career I have held executive, management, and supervisory positions. Those experiences taught me that leadership is fundamentally about building strong teams, establishing clear expectations, and creating a culture of accountability and service. The teams and organizations I led have been characterized by high levels of quality, efficiency, compliance, and customer service.

During President Trump's first administration, I had the honor of serving at the Department of Education. That experience deepened my appreciation for the responsibilities entrusted to public servants and the importance of maintaining the public's confidence in our institutions. It also demonstrated to me how ethics could be weaponized as I witnessed good and honest people being victimized by baseless attacks.

My more recent experience has prepared me even more directly for the director's role. Following my service at the Department of Education, I joined Protect the Public's Trust, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting integrity and accountability in government. The organization shares the philosophy of the Office of Government Ethics – that public service is a public trust. Our work exposed misconduct and double standards in government when other watchdogs had averted their gaze.

Most importantly, all these experiences have helped me recognize that ethics is a shared responsibility. OGE succeeds by working closely with the White House, agency leaders, agency ethics officials, inspectors general, the Department of Justice, and countless public servants throughout the executive branch. I am committed to strengthening those partnerships while ensuring that OGE hews to constitutional and statutory requirements and remains a trusted source of guidance, professionalism, and leadership.

Thank you again for considering my nomination. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.