

Opening Statement of James A. Crowell IV
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals,
June 23, 2026

Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and members of the Committee, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to appear before you as you consider my nomination to be an Associate Judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. I want to thank the Judicial Nomination Commission for recommending me to the White House and President Donald J. Trump for nominating me.

I am immeasurably grateful for the support and inspiration of my colleagues, family, and friends, many of whom are here with me today. In particular, I want to recognize Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby of the DC Court of Appeals and want to thank my friends and colleagues for their friendship, support, and encouragement.

My wife, Michaelleen, has been my life partner and cherished friend for the last 28 years. Her love and support, and the gift of our children, Jac and Elliotte, are the greatest successes of my life. My family is from Mississippi and Louisiana, but my wife and I have made the District our home for the last 23 years. Our children were born here, and we have proudly raised them as D.C. natives. I cannot discuss my family without acknowledging my mother, who raised me as a single mother, with a high-school education, she worked tirelessly to provide for me and open doors of opportunity that no one in our family had previously walked through. She passed 30 years ago, and I hope that she is able to look down upon her son with pride.

My presence here today is the unlikely result of a supportive family, exceptional colleagues, and my good fortune in joining two organizations that served to shape me personally and professionally – the United States Army and the Department of Justice. In 1994, at age 19, as a young private, I raised my hand for the first time to swear my allegiance to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Over the course of more than 30 years, I have been fortunate to have repeated that oath as I was privileged to serve in a variety of positions whether in a uniform, a suit, or a robe.

I started my legal career as a law clerk to Judge Charles Pannell, Jr. on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Judge Pannell taught me the meaning of judicial temperament – patient, unbiased, committed to the rule of law. In 2001, I joined the Department of Justice and was privileged to represent the United States as trial counsel in countless cases. In 2019, I was deeply honored to receive this Committee’s approval of my nomination to be an Associate Judge on the District of Columbia Superior Court. Since then, I have kept my promise to ensure principled legal analysis. As a trial judge, I have presided over hundreds of civil and criminal bench and jury trials. When requested, I have sat by designation on the D.C. Court of Appeals. In that capacity, I have had the opportunity to author opinions in civil, criminal and administrative appeals involving voluminous complex constitutional and statutory construction issues.

Through my service in uniform, as a prosecutor, and as a trial judge, I have done my best to demonstrate my unwavering commitment to the Constitution while serving my country. I revere the law and would be grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of my hometown in this new role. Thank you again for considering my nomination.