

OPENING STATEMENT OF KATHERINE E. OLER
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia
September 21, 2023

Good morning and thank you. Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Paul and members of this committee.

I am deeply honored by the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee to be an associate judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. I would like to thank you and your committee staff for considering my nomination.

I am particularly grateful to President Biden for nominating me for this position. I would also like to thank the DC Judicial Nomination Commission, chaired by the Honorable Marie Johns, for recommending me to the White House.

I would not be here today without the tremendous love and support of my family. Here with me today is my husband of nearly 24 years, Col. (ret.) Adam Oler, our two incredible teenage children, who are undoubtedly my greatest accomplishment; my sister-in-law, Dr. Allison Oler Szapary; my mother, Margaret Ellsworth, who worked tirelessly for 30 years as a schoolteacher and has been my lifelong cheerleader and supporter; my father Paul Ellsworth could not be here today due to health reasons, but I want to thank him for his unwavering love and support over the years.

In addition to my family, I am grateful to the countless fellow servicemembers whom I had the privilege of serving alongside for over twenty years. I hope in some way, my presence here today can be seen as a reflection of their service and commitment, which is part and parcel of my own.

I am the fourth generation of my family to be born in Washington DC. Though I grew up elsewhere, I returned to this city during and after my military service. My decision to join the Air Force was motivated by a lifelong desire to serve my country and my community. Earning my commission also added to my family's long history of military service. My father enlisted in the Army during the Vietnam era. My grandfather joined the submarine service as a teenager early in World War II, and fought across the Pacific. My great grandfather served in the artillery in France at the end of World War I, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

During my twenty-one years on active duty, I had the opportunity to serve across our great country and all over the world performing legal work that was both inspiring and challenging. My service as a prosecutor gave me the opportunity to work on scores of complex felony cases. It taught me the importance of hard work, preparation, and how critical it is to demonstrate the highest degree of professionalism, both as an attorney and an officer.

More fundamentally, the cases I tried imparted upon me that every case is distinct, and that the fair and timely administration of justice is at the very heart of our judicial system. Those were lessons that I took with me to the trial bench, where I served for three years as my service's deputy chief trial judge, and that I keep with me today in my current role as a special master on

the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. Over my 26-year legal career, I have spent nearly nine years on the bench. I believe this work has prepared me to serve as a DC Superior Court judge.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would serve this city with the same level of dedication, hard work, and uncompromising commitment to the fair administration of justice that has guided me throughout my career.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination and I look forward to answering your questions.