Written Statement of Mark Priebe
Nominee, Inspector General, Department of Education

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Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Mark Priebe, and I am honored to be the President's nominee to serve as Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education.

For the past twenty-two years, I have devoted my career to public service, working each day to help ensure that government honors its responsibilities to the people who fund it. I consider myself fortunate to perform this work; it is both my passion and my calling. None of it, however, would be possible without the love and support of my family, who are here with me today.

My wife, Erin, and I have been married for twenty-three years. Our twenty-year-old son, Joey, is studying political science at Virginia Tech and plans to attend law school. Watching him consider how he hopes to contribute to the world has sharpened my own sense of purpose and prompted me to reflect more deeply on the legacy I want to leave for his generation.

I come from a family of public servants, and public service has therefore always felt like a natural calling. My commitment to combating fraud took shape early in my career at the Michigan Department of Treasury, where I assisted with a case involving abuse of the state's bottle-deposit program. One morning, I joined several state teams as they deployed across Michigan to visit grocery and liquor stores where suspected fraud was occurring. Each transaction involved only a few dimes, but those losses came from a system funded by Michigan consumers, and their cumulative cost grew quickly. That experience clarified my professional purpose: to identify those who exploit public systems, protect the people those systems serve, and hold wrongdoers

accountable.

I seek to serve as Inspector General because I believe that every taxpayer dollar carries a public trust. Someone worked to earn that money, and the government has an obligation to steward it responsibly. When public funds are misspent, mismanaged, or stolen, the consequences are not abstract entries on a balance sheet; they are tangible costs borne by real people, often by those least able to absorb them. That conviction has sustained me throughout more than two decades of public service.

I also believe strongly in investing in the next generation. Outside of work, I officiate high school football and volleyball because student-athletes need qualified officials who will show up, apply the rules fairly, and help ensure that every participant receives the experience they deserve. Although this service may seem modest, it reflects the same principle that guides my professional life: fulfill the responsibility entrusted to you, perform the work with integrity, and ensure that the system serves those who depend on it.

I have built my career in the Inspector General community and the broader field of public oversight. My experience includes service at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Real Estate Assessment Center and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Division of Audits and Accounting, as well as earlier work in tax compliance at the Michigan Department of Treasury.

In January 2017, I joined the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General (ED OIG), where I've now served for nearly a decade. Some of the work I'm proudest of came as Director of the Non-Federal Audit Team. When I took over, regional audit staff did quality control reviews only when they had time. I brought those reviews into the team and made them part of our regular work. The reviews became more consistent, and auditors and their firms got their results back sooner.

I also advanced a broader vision of outreach as an essential tool for strengthening oversight. We worked with audit firms to clarify what our

requirements mean in practice. The OIG Non-Federal Team is responsible for maintaining the audit guide for proprietary schools, the for-profit colleges that receive federal student aid. We also helped shape changes to the Uniform Guidance, the government-wide rules for how federal grant money is managed and audited. Enforcement matters, but it's better to catch problems before the money goes out the door than after.

Along the way, I earned the Certified Fraud Examiner credential and, in 2026, became a Certified Inspector General. I pursued these qualifications because effective oversight requires not only commitment, but also technical expertise, disciplined analysis, and adherence to rigorous professional standards.

Most recently, I had the privilege of serving as Acting Inspector General at ED OIG. During my tenure, I helped lead a fraud summit through which our office partnered with the Department to increase awareness of fraud in higher education, including the growing problem of ghost students receiving financial aid. That initiative reflects a principle I hold firmly: agencies cannot combat complex fraud effectively in isolation. Success requires sustained coordination across offices and, when appropriate, across government. Leading that effort reinforced my conviction that this is the work to which I am called.

Serving as Inspector General of the Department of Education would be the highest honor of my career. If confirmed, I will carry out the office's mission with independence, integrity, and rigor. I will remain steadfast in identifying and preventing waste, fraud, and abuse; promoting economy and efficiency; and ensuring that the Department fulfills its obligations to the students, families, educators, institutions, and taxpayers it serves.

Thank you for your time and consideration.