

## **U.S. SENATOR HEIDI HEITKAMP**

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**Event:** Hearing for the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) Nominations: Hon. Ernest W. DuBester, Hon. Colleen D. Kiko, and James T. Abbott to be Members

### **Opening Statement**

Thank you, Chairman Lankford.

Over the past few months the President has nominated three new members to serve on the Federal Labor Relations Authority. As you know, the Authority is comprised of three presidentially nominated and Senate confirmed Members responsible for adjudicating unfair labor practice complaints, determining whether to grant exceptions to arbitrators' grievance-arbitration awards, resolving disputes over the negotiability of proposals and provisions made during collective bargaining, and reviewing representation decisions of Regional Directors in representation disputes over union elections and unit determinations.

Our First nominee is Colleen Kiko. This nominee has the distinguished honor of being a native of North Dakota, having been born in the town of Pembina, North Dakota, near the Canadian border. Her father, Lawrence Duffy, was a career federal employee, serving the Postal Service as a railway mail carrier and the Customs Service as a customs inspector. Ms. Kiko also earned a Bachelor of Science at North Dakota State University in 1972. With her stellar North Dakotan roots and education, it is no wonder that she has been so successful. Currently, Ms. Kiko is an Administrative Judge for the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board where she has been since 2008. Previously she served with the FLRA in 2005 when President George W. Bush appointed Judge Kiko to be the FLRA's General Counsel. If confirmed, Judge Kiko will serve as the Chair of the Authority.

Next, we have Ernest DuBester. Member Dubester is currently serving out his second term as a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. He began his career at the National Labor Relations Board, serving as counsel to former Chairman and Member John Fanning. If confirmed, Mr. Dubester will continue to serve as a Member.

Lastly, we have James Abbott. James Abbott has served as Chief Counsel to the Federal Labor Relations Authority since 2007. He is currently serving with Acting Chairman Patrick Pizzella and previously served with Chairman Dale Cabaniss and Member Thomas Beck.

Prior to his appointment to the Authority, Mr. Abbott served as Deputy General Counsel for the Congressional Office of Compliance from 2004 to 2007.

I thank all the nominees for their willingness to serve the citizens of the United States and I look forward to your testimony.

I look forward to learning more about your qualifications and desire to serve

Thank you.