

**Opening Statement of Chairman Tom Carper  
Nominations of Stevan E. Bunnell to General Counsel, U.S. Department of Homeland  
Security, and Suzanne E. Spaulding to Under Secretary for National Protection Programs,  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
September 18, 2013**

*As prepared for delivery:*

Before we get started, I would just like to extend my deepest sympathies to the friends and families of those we lost during the shooting at the the Navy Yard on Monday. I would also like to commend the brave law enforcement officials and other first responders who rushed to the scene of this terrible tragedy.

It is my hope that we can learn as much as possible from this incident so we can prevent these types of tragedies in the future. I know the Department of Homeland Security will be doing its part to learn from this incident and keep Americans safe.

Today we meet to consider the nominations of Stevan Bunnell, President Obama's choice to serve as General Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security and Suzanne Spaulding, the President's nominee to be Under Secretary for the National Protection and Programs Directorate. These positions are extremely important to the Department and to the security of our nation.

The National Protection and Programs Directorate, for example, is responsible for securing our nation's critical infrastructure from cyber attacks. The General Counsel serves as the Secretary's chief legal advisor and ensures that the Department's activities are consistent with the Constitution and the laws we make here in Congress.

I know my colleagues and I on the Committee are very pleased to see the President put forth nominees to fill the leadership vacancies in these critical components. The Administration has made some recent progress towards filling the number of vacancies at the Department. From what I understand, nominations are pending for four of the eight senate-confirmed vacancies at DHS. Of course, that still leaves four positions without even a name put forward – including the Secretary and Inspector General. It is imperative that we get all of these vacancies filled as quickly as possible.

As I have said before, the confirmation process is a shared responsibility. The Administration has a responsibility to provide us names of excellent people – honorable, hardworking and capable people – who can provide strong leadership not just at the Department of Homeland Security, but across government.

And my colleagues and I here in the Senate have an obligation to exercise our “advice and consent” responsibilities in a judicious but timely manner. If the nominee is qualified, we need to move him or her quickly. This morning, we have before us two people who I believe are very well-qualified.

Stevan Bunnell has over 25 years of experience practicing law. For seventeen of those years, he served in positions of increasing responsibility as a prosecutor and supervisor at the Department of Justice, including as Chief of the Fraud and Public Corruption Section and Chief of the Criminal Division in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Washington D.C.

In addition to working with a variety of law enforcement agencies on complex criminal cases, it's my understanding that Mr. Bunnell also worked closely on national security issues with someone we are all very familiar with – Michael Chertoff – then an Assistant Attorney General at the Department of Justice. Later, Mr. Bunnell left the government for private practice. He is currently serving as the managing partner of the law firm O'Melveny and Myers in Washington D.C.

Our second nominee is Suzanne Spaulding. She comes to us with a rich background in both government service and work in the private sector. She is currently serving as the Acting Under Secretary for the National Protection and Programs Directorate. Before that, she served as a Deputy Under Secretary in the directorate.

Ms. Spaulding's distinguished career has also included positions as the General Counsel for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Staff Director for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and as an attorney for the CIA. She also has several years of experience in private practice. In her current post at the Department of Homeland Security, she has brought a direct and engaged management approach to some of the Department's most important missions.

Over the course of their respective careers both of our nominees have shown themselves to be natural leaders. In addition, both have become widely respected by their peers for their intellect, professionalism, and integrity. I believe these are the types of qualities we want to see in our government leaders. I'd like to ask for unanimous consent to enter into the record all of the letters of support we received that speak to the great attributes of our nominees.

To conclude, I would just like to thank both of our nominees for their willingness to serve our nation. I would also like to thank their families for sharing them with us. We know that public service it is not always easy and that a lot of sacrifices must be made, so we thank both you and your families for your commitment to our nation and for being here today.

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