

Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson
Nominations Hearing to Consider Chad Wolf to be Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans, Department of Homeland Security; Jeff Byard to be Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Troy Edgar to be Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Department of Homeland Security; John Barger to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service; and Chad Bungard to be a Member and Vice Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.
June 12, 2019

As prepared for delivery:

Today, the Committee will consider five well-qualified nominees who have been selected to serve in critical leadership positions across the federal government.

Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans, DHS

The Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans assists in development, coordination, and implementation of Department-wide policy and programs related to border security, counter-terrorism, and cybersecurity, among others. The Policy Office is also in charge of issuing the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, a congressionally-mandated outlook of the Department's long-term strategy and priorities in securing the homeland. The Under Secretary is also responsible for leading the Department's efforts in international affairs and engagements.

Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security

The FEMA Administrator is the President's and Secretary of Homeland Security's principal advisor on emergency management. The Administrator's duties include the operation of the National Response Coordination Center; the effective support of all Emergency Support Functions; and, more generally, preparation for, protection against, response to, and recovery from all-hazards incidents. The Administrator is also responsible for management of the core DHS grant programs supporting homeland security, and for providing an annual estimate of the resources needed for developing the capabilities of federal, state, and local governments necessary to respond to a catastrophic incident.

Chief Financial Officer, DHS

The Chief Financial Officer is the lead financial manager of DHS. The position is tasked with providing guidance and oversight of the DHS budget request, resource management, grant awards, and financial operations at the component level. DHS has been without a Senate-confirmed Chief Financial Officer since January 2017.

Governor, United States Postal Service Board of Governors

The Postal Service's Board of Governors is similar to the board of directors of a private company's board of directors. It oversees the operational and financial decisions of the Postal Service, but also represents the public interest—ensuring that the Postal Service continues to meet its obligations to its customers and the American people.

The Board should consist of nine Senate-confirmed Governors. But due to the dysfunction in Washington, D.C., the Board has gone without a quorum—a minimum of four Senate-confirmed Governors—since 2014. The Board did not have any Senate-confirmed Governors between December 2016 and August 2018, when this Committee worked to confirm Mr. Robert Duncan and Mr. David Williams. They were the first new Governors confirmed since 2010. While progress has been made, the Board still lacks a quorum.

Member, Merit Systems Protection Board

The Board hears and adjudicates federal employee appeals and also conducts research and issues reports on various issues related to the federal workforce. Since January 2017, the Board has been without a quorum to adjudicate appeals, and the Board has been without any Senate-confirmed members since March of this year.

This Committee has already voted on two nominees to the Board, Mr. Dennis Kirk to be Chairman and Ms. Julia Clark to be a Member, back in February. I am pleased the White House worked to expeditiously submit a third nomination.

Chad Wolf

Mr. Chad Wolf was nominated by the President to be Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans. He has been serving as the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary since February 2019. Mr. Wolf has extensive homeland security policy experience gained through serving in various senior leadership positions throughout the Department. For instance, Mr. Wolf helped stand up the Transportation Security Administration and later became Chief of Staff to the Administrator. After working in the private sector on aviation and homeland security policy, he became Chief of Staff for Secretary Nielsen in 2018.

Jeff Byard

The Committee will consider Jeffrey Byard to be the next FEMA Administrator. Mr. Byard's extensive experience working in emergency management at both the state and federal level will be vital as we shift to a locally executed, state managed, and federally supported model of disaster recovery and response. If confirmed, this Committee looks forward to working with Mr. Byard and FEMA as the agency continues to implement the Disaster Recovery Reform Act that Congress passed last October.

Troy Edgar

Mr. Troy Edgar has been nominated to be the Chief Financial Officer of DHS. Mr. Edgar has spent his career in the private sector, most notably as President and CEO of Global Conductor, Inc. He also has experience working in financial management and federal contracting throughout the private sector. Mr. Edgar served in the U.S. Navy as a sonar technician. We thank you for your service to this country.

John Barger

Mr. John Barger has been nominated to be a Governor of the Postal Service's Board of Governors. Mr. Barger's career spans over 30 years of leadership in finance, entrepreneurship, and public governance. Since 2005, Mr. Barger has served as the Managing Director of NorthernCross Partners, LLC, an investment and advisory firm to small and middle market companies and private equity funds based in Los Angeles California. In addition, he currently serves on the board of NanoLumens, a visual display and technology company, and WineDirect, a supply chain and logistics company. Mr. Barger previously served as Director and Former Chairman of the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association (LACERA) responsible for the pensions and health care benefits of approximately 160,000 active and retired employees of Los Angeles County and approximately \$60 billion in funds.

Chad Bungard

Mr. Chad Bungard has been nominated to be Vice Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board. Mr. Bungard has extensive relevant experience having served as the chief legal officer in three federal entities. From 2006 to 2010, Mr. Bungard oversaw the MSPB Office of General Counsel and gained a thorough understanding of the Board's practices and procedures. He has devoted more than 20 years of his career to helping develop an efficient and effective federal workforce.

I'd like to thank the nominees who have volunteered to serve in these important positions, and I look forward to hearing their testimony.