

**Chairman Peters Opening Statement As Prepared for Delivery
Full Committee Hearing: Nominations of Loren L. AliKhan and John P. Howard III to be
Associate Judges, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and Adrienne Jennings Noti to be
an Associate Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia**

December 2, 2021

Today, we are considering three nominations:

Loren L. AliKhan and John P. Howard III, to be Associate Judges on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and Adrienne Jennings Noti to be an Associate Judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Welcome to each of you and to your friends and family members for joining us today. Congratulations on your nominations, and thank you all for your previous service and for your willingness to take on these important new roles.

I am pleased that we have three highly-qualified nominees before us today. Throughout the nomination process, this Committee has heard nothing but praise for your legal abilities and professionalism.

The D.C. Superior Court and the D.C. Court of Appeals function as the state-level trial and appellate courts within the unique justice system here in the nation's capital. Both courts decide matters that impact the freedom, livelihoods, and safety of individuals and families across the District. Both courts are also suffering from extensive judicial vacancies.

The Superior Court is extremely understaffed with 14 vacancies among the court's 62 judgeships, and two additional Superior Court judges are retiring in December 2021 and January 2022.

According to the National Center for State Courts, the D.C. Superior Court has one of the highest per capita numbers of cases filed, 83,000 new cases every year are filed across its five divisions. The vacancies have burdened every division, especially during the pandemic.

For the D.C. Court of Appeals, which has nine judicial seats, there are three vacancies and there will be a fourth vacancy upon an upcoming retirement.

These vacancies result in delays in more than 200 cases every year, and a 50% increase in wait times within the last five years, leading to greater workloads for current judges and delayed resolutions for litigants.

I am pleased we have three nominees to these Courts here today, and I hope we will soon see several of these seats filled.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve and for being with us today. I look forward to hearing from each of the nominees.