

Statement of Katherine Archuleta
Nominee for the Position of Director of the Office of Personnel Management

July 16, 2013

Thank you, Chairman Tester, Ranking Member Portman, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is a privilege for me to be considered as the President's nominee to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and I thank the Committee for its consideration of my nomination.

In addition, I want to thank my home state Senators, Mark Udall and Michael Bennett, for their gracious comments. They are incredible leaders for the State of Colorado, and I am honored to be introduced by them today.

I especially want to recognize and thank my husband of 33 years, Edmundo Gonzales, who joins me here today. I also want to thank my daughter, Graciela, who unfortunately is not able to be here today.

In my life, I have given back to my community and my country. From my time in local government to my various roles in senior leadership in the Federal government, I am passionate about public service. In my career, I have been a leader and a manager, a small business owner and an employee, a communicator and a listener. I have made tough choices about budgets, as well as decisions about recruiting outstanding individuals and removing those who have failed to perform. I believe in the value and honor of men and women who chose to serve their country both in and out of uniform. If confirmed, I will approach my work as Director of OPM with that same sense of service and inspiration.

Having worked at three cabinet-level agencies, I know that one common thread at every agency is that you need top talent working at top performance to achieve your mission. That starts with recruitment, inspiring people from all communities and all backgrounds to join in the noble task of self-government in our democracy, and hiring the very best from all who step forward

Talent must be sustained, and employees require training throughout their careers. A sense of personal growth and contribution helps keep our best employees working in government. Employees' development over time, and their reports of their experiences with the Federal HR system are a constant feedback loop. Such feedback, read poorly, can frustrate and demoralize our workforce; read right, it can support and improve our workforce.

As Director, I will lay out three important goals based on my desire to strengthen OPM's fulfillment of its mission: utilizing top talent, encouraging innovative approaches, and renewing the commitment to strong leadership.

One of my first priorities will be to build on OPM's health care experience; standing up the Multi-State Plan Program and implementing its provisions of the Affordable Care Act. I realize the importance of the timely establishment of easily understandable healthcare plans.

I will also prioritize the improvement of the agency's Information Technology systems. In past attempts to transition retirement services into a digital system, OPM fell short.

Identifying new IT leadership, using existing agency expertise, and seeking advice from experts from inside Government and the private sector, I believe that OPM can successfully update its IT systems. If confirmed by the Senate, I will work with my senior management team to create a plan within 100-days of assuming office on modernizing IT at OPM. I will add a Chief Technology Officer position specifically focused on assessing and improving the technology products that OPM uses.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work throughout my tenure to inspire the next generation of Americans to experience the nobility and excitement that public service offers. I will work to strengthen and improve the services offered by OPM for the federal community as part of its core mission, from resume to retirement.

At this time, I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have.