

Statement of Rear Admiral Earl L. Gay, USN (Ret.)
Nominee for the Position of Deputy Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management
November 18, 2014

Thank you, Chairman Tester, Ranking Member Portman, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor for me to be considered as the nominee to be Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management and I want to thank President Obama for nominating me to this important position, and Director Archuleta for her support.

In addition, I want to thank Representative John Lewis for introducing me today. He is an American icon and one of my personal heroes. His kind words of support mean the world to me. Thank you!

I especially want to thank and recognize my wife of 32 years, Ardella, who joins me here today and is a retired, 26-year civilian federal employee, and our two daughters, Faythe, who was also a Navy officer, and Carmen—collectively known as “Earl’s Girls.” The fact that I am here today is because of their unwavering love and support.

Growing up in Atlanta, Georgia, my parents instilled in me the importance of education and a sense of civic duty. I chose to embrace a life of service to my country by applying to the U.S. Naval Academy. It was there that I learned the essence of leadership-- defining your vision, articulating expectations, and overseeing progress through transparency and accountability. These guiding principles have served me well throughout my career and made me the leader I am today. If confirmed, I will continue to follow these principles as I work to ensure that OPM is successful in its efforts to recruit, retain and honor a world-class workforce for the American people.

Throughout my 33 years in the Navy, I have had the honor to serve my country in various roles. I’ve been deployed overseas, commanded a naval strike group, served as the Commander of the Naval District Washington, planned and executed a historic presidential inauguration, and managed congressional affairs. These opportunities have afforded me the privilege of working with countless dedicated, patriotic public servants – both military and civilian alike. I am excited about the opportunity to continue to lead and learn from the most committed and capable individuals our government has to offer.

If confirmed, I will use my skills in strategic planning and teambuilding to assist Director Archuleta in leading and management of the agency. Under Director Archuleta’s leadership, OPM has improved our processing of new retirement claims and we are now completing over 82% of cases in 60 days or less. The agency has also made great progress to strengthen quality oversight controls within our background investigations program and we continue to provide high-quality investigations for 95% of government. I am excited about the opportunity to play a significant role in advancing Director Archuleta’s vision and the agency’s strategic plan.

Given my military and national security background, Director Archuleta has asked that I focus a significant amount of my time on Federal Investigative Services, working with the program

office leadership and our administration partners to implement the reforms directed in the President's 120 Day Suitability and Security Review, recent legislation and elsewhere. I have also been asked to take the lead in working with our agency partners on efforts to recruit veterans into our federal government. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Director Archuleta on her initiatives related to strengthening our recruitment efforts of women veterans. We must ensure that we continue to honor the service of our military men and women, especially those returning from conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Public service is a noble profession and we must do all we can to recruit, retain, and honor a world-class workforce and strengthen and improve the services offered by OPM, from resume to retirement and beyond.

Serving as Commander of U.S. Navy Recruiting Command prior to my own retirement, I was able to share my love of country and dedication to public service with young men and women and encourage them to join our ranks. I witnessed over 97,000 patriotic Americans stand like I did so long ago, to take an oath and serve their country. I could not have picked a more fitting end to my Navy career and I believe serving as the Deputy Director of OPM is a natural progression for me to continue to inspire Americans to join the federal government and serve their country.

Thank you again for allowing me to appear before you today. At this time, I would be pleased to answer any questions the Committee may have.