

STATEMENT OF JOHN GIBBS

**Nominee to Serve As
Director**

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

before the

**UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

September 09, 2020

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Peters, and members of the committee, thank you for the honor and opportunity to appear before you today to discuss my nomination to be the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

I would like to thank my family, particularly my parents, who have supported me through this process, as they have throughout my life. I am who I am today because of their incredible influence on me. I would also like to recognize my grandmother, who passed away in 2016 at the age of 97. She was a Deep South born and raised share cropper and lived through the great depression, civil rights, the era of doing laundry by hand, and getting her chicken from the coop, not the grocery store. She was tough as nails, and without her grit that runs through my veins, I wouldn't have a shot at being where I am today. They challenged me to dream big. I studied hard and got into Stanford University, where I majored in Computer Science. They instilled in me the importance of service which drove me to earn my Masters in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. My education laid the groundwork for the successes in my career. I'm also grateful to Secretary Ben Carson, my boss for the past three years at HUD, for his support, his incredible example, and his candid advice.

Last but certainly not least, thank you to so many of you Senators here today who've taken the time to meet with me prior to today's hearing. I am grateful to your staff as well for the

opportunity to engage in open and straightforward dialogue last week. I look forward to continuing this if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to have been nominated by the President to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management. The past three years serving in this Administration at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development have been deeply impactful on me and I have been able to make a difference in the lives of the American public, and if confirmed, I look forward to more years of service at OPM as Director.

My prior professional experience includes 20 years in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, where I've engaged in work as diverse as developing cutting edge cybersecurity software and working on the very first version of the iPhone. After my time in Silicon Valley, I spent years leveraging my complete fluency in Japanese leading international teams in Japan as a Christian missionary. I wanted to make a difference in combatting the high suicide rate and other social ills in that nation. I then returned to the United States and was able to serve the American public as a Senior Advisor to Secretary Ben Carson at HUD. Currently, I serve as Acting Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, where I oversee more than 700 employees and an annual budget of more than \$8 billion.

During my time in public service, I have worked through numerous personnel management challenges, from creating hiring plans, to making promotion decisions, coaching my teams on performance improvements, and determining and implementing ways to streamline and enhance the Federal the time-to-hire process, which is often far too slow.

If confirmed, I would lead OPM with the core values of: 1) always doing what is legal, moral, and ethical, 2) maintaining open communication with stakeholders, including yourselves and 3) treating others with respect. During the past three years as a political appointee, I've led with these principles, and will continue to do the same if confirmed as OPM Director.

Our Nation's workforce has become increasingly more diverse through the years. As a person who has lived overseas for years and successfully worked closely with those from different religious and cultural backgrounds, I understand and appreciate the value of diverse viewpoints and frank and open discussion. I know what it's like to be the only guy who looks like me in the room. These experiences have deeply informed my leadership and management style. As a result, I always have, and always will, if confirmed as Director, work with all people to promote inclusiveness and further our mission of a more prosperous government and people.

OPM and the federal government face many challenges today, but I believe we can overcome those challenges together. Three of the most persistent challenges facing OPM today are challenges all of the members of this Committee have doubtlessly heard of: time-to-hire, retirement processing, and IT modernization. My experience in personnel management throughout my career, my cyber security expertise, and my success working with people from all backgrounds, will greatly come to bear as I work closely with agency staff and Congress to address these challenges, if confirmed as Director.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my more than 20 years of experience in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, working with folks from all backgrounds, to achieve common goals, give me the experience necessary to lead this agency and address the challenges facing our Federal workforce.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to ensure the Federal workforce and organizations have the tools and support needed to achieve their missions and serve the American people.

I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.