

Opening Statement of Deborah J. Israel
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Superior Court
October 22, 2019

Good morning. I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Committee. Thank you, Chairman Lankford and Ranking Member Sinema, for holding this hearing and thank you to all of the Members of the Committee for your consideration. Finally, thank you to the Committee staff for their hard work preparing for this hearing and the courtesy they have shown me throughout this process. I am honored by the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee to be an Associate Judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

I would like to thank the Judicial Nomination Commission and its chair, the Honorable Emmett G. Sullivan, for recommending me to the White House, and I thank the President for the honor of this nomination. Thank you to Congresswoman Norton for her introduction and support. I would like to recognize and thank the Chief Judges of our District of Columbia Courts who have joined us today including, Chief Judge Anna Blackburne Rigsby, of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and Chief Judge Robert E. Morin of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

It is my privilege and joy to introduce my family members, some of whom join me here today. Here with me today are my mother, Alice Israel, who travelled from her home in Delaware, my partner, Laurie McMahon, of the District of Columbia, and my sister, Tiffany Israel, who joins us from Connecticut. My father, Gary Israel, was not able to travel here today, but is watching with great excitement by video, and back in Connecticut watching by video, are my brother-in-law, the Reverend Luk DeVolder and my 5-year old niece Audrey, as well as my brother Dean. In particular, I want to thank my parents and my family. My family has made sacrifices over the years so that I can be where I am today. Whatever is best in me that I have to offer in service, I owe to them.

I am also honored that a number of friends and colleagues have joined me here today. I wish to recognize and thank the Honorable Carol Dalton and Joanne Young for their support and guidance. I want to thank the attorneys and staff at Womble Bond Dickinson for sharing their brilliance and wisdom over the years, and, in particular, I want to thank the partners of my team who are here with me today, Louis Rouleau, Cathy Hinger and Mark Schamel. It has been my privilege and joy to work with such a disciplined, generous and exceptional team of professionals.

I have been a member of our legal community here in the District of Columbia for my entire professional career and I know firsthand the strong reputation our courts have earned as fair and hardworking, with well qualified and smart judges. I come before you today with deep experience in the private sector and if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, it would be an honor and a privilege to bring my skillset and experience to the mix of talents on our bench and serve alongside the District's exceptional judges. I am deeply humbled by this opportunity and I look forward to answering the Committee's questions.