

STATEMENT OF DR. JEFF T. H. PON

**Nominee to Serve As
Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management**

before the

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

October 18, 2017

Thank you Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member McCaskill, and Members of the Committee for the honor to appear before you today to discuss my nomination to be the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

I would like to thank my family, Gillian, my wife, and my two daughters, Cordelia and Charlotte for supporting me through this process and transition to serve if confirmed as the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

I would like to thank President Trump for the trust he has put in me to lead and manage the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which as you know is a vital agency to ensuring the proper functioning of the Federal government. I would also like to thank the Senators whom I've had a chance to visit with prior to today's hearing and their staff. I felt we had very honest and straightforward discussions about the obstacles we face and I was inspired by their commitment to working together to solve the big problems with big ideas. I would also like to thank the staff of the Committee that have taken the time to speak with me during this process. If confirmed, I am looking forward to leading the hard-working Federal employees of OPM who serve the American people. And I would like to thank my friend, Acting Director Kathy McGettigan who is here today, for her friendship from our time together when I previously served at OPM and her support through this process.

My prior professional experience includes working in both the public and private sectors, including time at OPM, where I led multiple eGovernment initiatives, and at the Department of Energy, where I served as the Chief Human Capital Officer. In the private sector, I have gained experience working with companies and organizations of all sizes, and have seen the technological advancements they have been able to make to better serve their employees. Through this public and private sector experience, I developed a keen understanding of the role human resources plays in the success of an organization. Furthermore, I gained first-hand knowledge of the challenges Federal managers encounter while accomplishing the mission of their organization. I have continually focused on mission driven efforts, and along with the knowledge of developing and implementing large scale change, I stand ready to both confront the challenges and appreciate the successes of leading a Federal agency. This understanding of how to develop and implement successful large scale change will be important in my role, if I am confirmed as Director.

OPM, and our Federal government, face many challenges, but I believe we can overcome those obstacles. In my lifetime, which I mean as during my service as OPM Director if I am confirmed, I want to work with this Committee to tackle the big problems. We have not taken a hard look at our civil service laws in decades, we are still relying on paper processes, and in too many areas the Federal Government is not a workplace that is keeping up with the demands of the next generation of public servants or serving our current Federal employees. We can do better, and working together I believe we can implement many of the ideas I have already had the opportunity to speak with some of you about in our meetings prior to today.

If confirmed, I plan to also concentrate on the most important resource at OPM and in the Federal government, its people. My imperatives, or non-negotiables, for both myself and for my teams are the following: 1) always tell the truth; 2) work together as a team; 3) make the tough choices; 4) treat everyone with dignity and respect (and demand it back); 5) enhance the reputation and accomplishments of those around you (success is defined through the success and

accomplishments of others); 6) value differences and 7) create an environment that energizes you and the team around you. If we integrate these principles into our daily work, I believe we can be successful in overcoming the obstacles before us today.

I would like to include in my testimony today a favorite quote of mine from Thomas Jefferson, “As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times.” In my lifetime, I have been fortunate enough to see technological advances in the public and private sector, and if confirmed, I look forward to leading OPM as it continues to advance to better serve the Federal workforce and as a result, better serve the American people.

Thank you for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.