

**Opening Statement of Vijay Shanker**  
**Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals**

Good morning, Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Portman, and members of the Committee. I am honored and humbled to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. I thank you and your tireless staff for holding this hearing. Thank you to the Judicial Nomination Commission and its Chair, Judge Emmett Sullivan, for recommending me to the White House. I thank President Joseph Biden for nominating me. I was extremely grateful when I was first nominated in 2020 and am honored to have been nominated again this year. And, of course, I am also grateful to Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby and the associate judges of the D.C. Court of Appeals. I would be honored to join them in their service to the people of the District.

I can go no further without recognizing my true partner in life, Dee Martin. Dee has been such a support to me throughout this process, and also happens to be a phenomenal attorney in her own right. For over 20 years, Dee and I have supported each other in all our endeavors, perhaps none of which is more important than the raising of our amazing daughter, who has made us proud every day of her 14 years. Thank you to my wonderful parents, who unfortunately could not travel to be here today. They came to this country with little money and no support, settled in Ohio, and worked tirelessly with the single goal of providing my sisters and me with every opportunity they could. Thank you also to my sisters, brother-in-law, and niece, and to my wife's family, who welcomed me into their lives the very first day I met them.

There is not enough time today to thank all the people who have supported me in my professional life, but I must name two: the Honorable Chester J. Straub, for whom I had the privilege to serve as a law clerk, and Patty Merkamp Stemler, my boss for most of the past 17 years. They both truly epitomize what it means to be a public servant.

For almost two decades it has been my privilege to serve the nation as a career attorney in the Department of Justice. In that time I have gained a deep understanding of appellate law and practice, having argued almost 60 cases and having appeared in every federal court of appeals with criminal jurisdiction. I have been trusted with some of the Department's most challenging cases, across subject matter areas, and have been honored with the Department's John Marshall Award for the Handling of Appeals. Before joining the Department, I had a broad-based litigation practice at two law firms, where I gained valuable experience in civil, administrative, antitrust, and criminal law. As I mentioned, I also had the great fortune to begin my legal career as a law clerk to Judge Chester Straub on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, where I learned about the value of preparation, meticulousness, civility, and collegiality.

Public service is a passion to me and if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I commit to ensuring that every party appearing before me is heard, respected, and given the opportunity to meaningfully participate in the judicial process; to applying the law impartially; and to striving every day to earn the respect of my colleagues and my community.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.