

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ERNIE DUBESTER OF VIRGINIA TO BE A MEMBER
OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
NOVEMBER 7, 2017

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to come before this Committee again for its consideration of my nomination to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA). I also would like to thank the Committee's staff for their work and assistance in reviewing my nomination and scheduling this hearing.

Before making a brief opening statement, I would like to introduce my wife, Karen Kremer. In a few months, we will celebrate our 30th Anniversary. When I first met Karen, she was working for Senator Howell Heflin on the Senate Judiciary Committee. So this Body will always hold a special, personal meaning in my life.

I also want to recognize the presence here this morning of my colleagues from the FLRA, including those of my personal staff. These dedicated public servants, as well as many FLRA staff who are not present, are the key to the FLRA's many successes in recent years.

I am also pleased to appear with Colleen and James who, hopefully, should the Senate confirm us, will soon be my new colleagues.

Mr. Chairman, this is the fifth time I have had the privilege to come before the Senate after being nominated by a President for a position of public trust. During the nineties, I was nominated twice to serve as Chairman, and Member, of another independent agency, the National Mediation Board. And, this is the third time that I have had the honor to come before this Committee after being re-nominated by President Trump to continue serving as a Member of the FLRA.

I have served as a Member for over eight years. And I served as Chairman for most of 2013.

The last eight years reflect many accomplishments at the FLRA. Exercising our statutory responsibility to provide leadership in labor-management relations, we have engaged in numerous outreach, facilitation and training activities which include the delivery of a variety of training sessions to tens of thousands of labor and management representatives in the Federal Sector community. During this period, we have also made timely issuance of decisions a major priority.

In addition, with an agency focus on human capital initiatives, such as training and development, performance management, and work-life balance, employee morale has improved dramatically. For the last two years, we have ranked in the top 5 overall in the Partnership for Public Service rankings for “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government.” And in 2015 and 2016, we received #1 rankings in the specific categories of teamwork and effective leadership.

Mr. Chairman, with over 40 years of experience in labor-management relations, working as a public servant, advocate, mediator, arbitrator, and academic, over 25 of those years are in the Federal sector. I remain strongly committed to the FLRA’s mission and to the importance of stable, constructive labor-management relations in the Federal sector. And, if confirmed, I will continue to work tirelessly so that the FLRA is recognized by the Federal sector’s labor-management community as one of the most effective and efficient agencies in the Federal government.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and I would be pleased to answer any questions that you have.