

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

October 20, 2021

Madame Chair 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 tell the committee again that this Body will always hold a special, personal meaning in my life. When I first met my wife of 33 years, Karen Kremer, she was working for the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I also want to recognize the dedicated public servants from the FLRA who are the key to the FLRA's many accomplishments over the years. If confirmed, I will continue to make their morale and engagement a high priority by focusing on human capital initiatives, such as training and development, performance management, and work-life balance.

Madame Chair, this is the sixth time I have had the privilege to come before the Senate, after being nominated now by four Presidents, 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 fourth time that I have had the honor to come before this Committee after being re-nominated by President Biden to continue serving as a Member of the FLRA. Each of my prior nominations was unanimously confirmed by the Senate.

I have served as a Member since August 2009. I previously served as Chairman for most of 2013, and have served as Chairman again, since January 21, 2021.

As I often say, the FLRA is a small agency with a large mission. It has the statutory responsibility to provide leadership and guidance for the labor-management relations programs throughout the Executive Branch. So, the FLRA's work can have meaningful rippling effects. If the FLRA is performing well, this enables other agencies to more effectively and efficiently resolve their disputes and, consequently, to focus their time and energy on mission accomplishment.

Madame Chair, with over 45 years of experience in labor-management relations, working as a public servant, advocate, mediator, arbitrator, and academic, over 30 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.