

Opening Statement of Kelly A. Higashi

Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Superior Court, May 23, 2018

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. It is a great honor to be here today and I thank you for considering my nomination to be a Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. I would like to recognize the leadership of the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, and of the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission, chaired by the Honorable Emmet Sullivan, and thank them for recommending me to the White House. I thank the President for nominating me for this position. I would also like to recognize and acknowledge D.C. Superior Court Chief Judge Robert Morin, who is present today, for his leadership and encouragement.

I am immeasurably grateful for the support and inspiration of my colleagues, family, and friends, many of whom are here with me today. The United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, Ms. Jessie Liu, an exemplary leader of the Office, as well as many of my present and former colleagues, are here today, including Mr. Channing Phillips, the beloved former U.S. Attorney who preceded Ms. Liu. I am joined by my law enforcement partners from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department who serve on the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force. Many close friends, including one from my childhood days in California, who traveled from far away, are here today. I would like to introduce my family to you: my life partner, Mr. John Marsh, and our children, Mary Marsh, a freshman at Columbia University, and Riley Marsh, a 9th grader at the School Without Walls in D.C. They, along with my 14-year-old nephew, Taro Zimmerman, of New York City, are my greatest sources of support and inspiration. I would also like to acknowledge the love and support I have received from my two sisters, and to acknowledge my parents, Robert and Kiyo Higashi, who were unable to travel here from California, but who truly wished they could be here. My mother, who was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, and who, during World War II, spent several years in internment camps for Japanese Americans, is especially proud that I have had the privilege as an Assistant United States Attorney to seek truth and justice within our legal system, and that if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, that I will contribute to the D.C. Superior Court's mission to provide equal access to justice for all people.

Although I was born and raised in Los Angeles, California, the District of Columbia is my home. I moved here in 1990 to attend law school at the George Washington University School of Law, and I never left. I then had the good fortune to serve as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Frederick H. Weisberg of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, who has been a role model and mentor to me throughout my career. After my clerkship, I was sworn in as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the District of Columbia, where I have served the citizens of the District as a prosecutor for the past 23 ½ years. It would be a privilege and an honor for me to continue my public service, and my commitment to the citizens of the District of Columbia, as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court.

Thank you again for considering my nomination and I look forward to answering your questions.