

Statement of Christopher Krebs

**Nominee for Under Secretary for the National Protection and Programs Directorate,
Department of Homeland Security**

Before the

U. S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs

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Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member McCaskill, and Members of the Committee – Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Under Secretary of Homeland Security for the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD). I am honored to have been nominated for this position by President Trump, and I am grateful to have Secretary Nielsen's support.

More than anything else, I am especially grateful for the strong support of my family. I would like to take a moment to recognize them and introduce those who have joined us today. First, I would like to thank my parents Van and Fran for providing me the opportunity in life to succeed. I would also like to thank my brothers, William and Davis, for keeping me honest and helping me develop my partnership-building skills. I would also like to thank my Father-in-law Dave and Mother-in-Law Patrice for being there for me, my wife, and our children. Those kids have also joined us here today – Henry, Anna, Charlie, and Jack. They are what keeps me grounded. I come to work every day to make the world a better, safer place for their future. And last, but certainly not least, I would like to recognize my wife, Emily. Without her – her support, her patience, her strength, and her love – I would not be here today.

I also want to thank my friends, coworkers old and new, and everyone else who has supported me on this journey. I am humbled to have their support.

I am fortunate to have served at the Department of Homeland Security in several capacities. I was appointed to my current position as the Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection by the President in August 2017, and I serve concurrently as the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary for NPPD. I have dedicated my career to risk management and critical infrastructure protection in both government and the private sector. I am passionate about this mission, and if confirmed, it will be my great honor to lead the Department's cyber and infrastructure security mission as the Under Secretary for NPPD.

This context is important. In our discussions prior to this hearing, many of you asked what drew me to this position. The answer is simple – I view this position as the pinnacle of national risk management in cyber and physical security. NPPD can do more to advance a national risk management agenda than any other single place in the U.S. government. No single stakeholder has the complete picture necessary to detect emerging systemic risk conditions or comprehensively manage systemic risk, making NPPD's coordination mechanisms, information sharing role, and ability to engage and inform policy- and decision-makers essential to success in our shared homeland security mission.

Success in this mission cannot be possible without the tireless work of NPPD's incredibly talented workforce. They are, without a doubt, our single greatest asset. NPPD employs a workforce of nearly 3,600 federal employees and approximately 18,000 contractors throughout the country. While serving as the senior official for NPPD, I have sought to place the employees first by creating a team-oriented

culture; ensuring a diverse and inclusive environment; and helping good ideas rise to the top. If confirmed, I will continue to look for ways to enhance the morale of the NPPD workforce by tirelessly representing the men and women of NPPD; increasing the visibility of our mission and organization; and assertively engaging leadership, industry, Congress, our stakeholders, and other external audiences.

NPPD's responsibilities have grown substantially since its inception over 10 years ago. This growth is driven by a dramatic shift in the threat environment that few could have anticipated at the Department's creation. Today, we face the challenge of managing risk in both the physical and digital worlds. This risk comes from Mother Nature; a diverse group of threat actors including nation states like Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea; as well as cybercriminals, terrorist groups, and other nefarious actors seeking to take advantage our open society and the proliferation of technology to do us harm. They attack us anywhere they perceive vulnerability: in the cyber world, through the deployment of tools like BlackEnergy, WannaCry, NotPetya, and SamSam; and in the physical world, by utilizing small arms, improvised explosive devices, vehicles and other readily-available means to target innocent people as we gather to worship, attend a sporting event or concert, travel, or simply transit open public spaces. We must do everything we can to mitigate threats and enhance resiliency of our infrastructure.

The growth in this mission is also driven by our increasing reliance on linked systems and networks. Where it was once possible to define and defend perimeters around single systems or high risk assets, we now face the growing challenge of managing shared risk. To put it most simply, perimeters today often overlap or simply do not exist. As Secretary Nielsen often says, "Your risk is my risk, and my risk is your risk." Industry is shifting towards an integrated risk management approach, and as the leader in the federal government for managing risk to federal networks and national critical infrastructure, NPPD must also integrate this approach into its business model.

In all, I see three primary strategic goals for NPPD. First, NPPD must defend non-national security systems across civilian agencies and secure federal facilities. Second, NPPD must accelerate efforts to manage systemic physical and cyber risk to critical national functions. And third, NPPD must raise the security baseline across the country by providing stakeholders with the scalable tools and resources they need to secure their systems and infrastructure. NPPD must work to accomplish these goals by fostering voluntary, incentive-driven partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. If confirmed, I will draw on my private sector experience and understanding of the unique value government offers to ensure NPPD emphasizes an approach that is customer-centric and requirements-driven.

Operationally, my top priority as the senior official for NPPD has been enhancing the resilience of our nation's election systems. In the face of unprecedented interference in our 2016 election by Russia, NPPD has worked closely with state and local election officials in thousands of jurisdictions across the country to ensure that each American's vote counts and is counted correctly. If confirmed, I will continue to make this my top priority as the Under Secretary.

If confirmed, I also pledge to work closely with this committee and the Congress to facilitate oversight of NPPD's activities and advance our shared legislative priorities, including restructuring NPPD, enhancing the security of our election systems, reauthorizing the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) program, hardening critical infrastructure against vulnerabilities like electromagnetic pulse, and others. I want to thank this committee for including in its recent DHS authorization bill legislation that would transform NPPD into the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. Congress plays an active role in NPPD's success, and I look forward to working with this committee to pass this critical legislation.

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