

Opening Statement of Catharine F. Easterly
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals
September 23, 2011

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. I want to thank President Obama and the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission, in particular, its Chair, the Honorable Emmet G. Sullivan, for this great honor. I also want to thank the Committee and your staff for considering my nomination so expeditiously, at a time when there are many pressing matters demanding your attention.

A number of my family members are here with me today: my husband Aaron Zebley, my daughters Clara and Daphne, my parents, and my sister and my two brothers. A number of friends, colleagues and mentors are also here. Suffice it to say, I would not be here today without their support and guidance.

Throughout my career, my abiding interest has been to work to promote fairness of process in our justice system, particularly for those least able to advocate for themselves. After graduating from law school, I worked for almost five years as an appellate public defender in New York City. I then moved to a law firm where I focused on civil litigation. In 2003, I joined the Special Litigation Division of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS). At PDS, I have had the unparalleled opportunity to apply my skills as an appellate defender and a civil litigator, and to identify and address complex, recurring issues that affect the fairness and efficiency of the District's criminal justice system.

Putting the sum of my experiences to use as a judge on the Court of Appeals, in service of the District of Columbia community, would be an honor and a privilege. Thank you for considering my nomination, and I look forward to answering your questions.