

“The Nomination of Ronald D. Vitiello to be Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Richard S. Tischner, Jr. to be Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia”

**Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson
November 15, 2018**

As prepared for delivery:

Today, the Committee will consider President Trump’s nominee to serve as the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or “ICE”. The Director is responsible for leading an organization of approximately 19,000 employees with a budget of more than \$7.5 billion. ICE is the lead federal agency responsible for enforcing federal laws related to immigration, border control, customs, and trade. In addition to enforcing our immigration laws, ICE’s vast law enforcement responsibilities include investigating financial and cybercrimes as well as intellectual property and commercial fraud; human rights violations; weapons, narcotics, and human smuggling; transnational gang activity; and enforcing our export laws. These missions are critical for our nation’s economic and national security.

President Trump has nominated a qualified and capable candidate to lead the agency. Ronald Vitiello currently serves as Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Deputy Director and Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director. Prior to this role, Mr. Vitiello served as Chief of the U.S. Border Patrol and the Acting Deputy Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. He has over 30 years of experience in the federal government, including serving at locations on both the southern and northern borders. I want to thank Mr. Vitiello for his previous service to this country and for his willingness to lead ICE. It is extremely unfortunate that in this political climate, the dedicated employees at ICE face constant criticism, threats of violence, and the calls from some members of Congress to abolish such an important agency.

Today we will also consider a nominee to be the Director of D.C. Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, or “CSOSA”. The Director is in charge of 490 staff-members, and a budget of \$246 million. CSOSA is responsible for overseeing probationers and parolees, as well as providing pretrial services in D.C. CSOSA’s mission is to enhance public safety, reduce recidivism, and promote accountability, inclusion, and success through the implementation of evidence-based practices in close collaboration with its criminal justice partners and community. In FY 2017, CSOSA’s Community Supervision Program was responsible for working with 16,407 pretrial offenders, probationers, and parolees.

President Trump’s nominee is a dedicated public servant with a passion for public safety. Richard Tischner currently serves as Chief of the Superior Court Division in the United States Attorney’s Office, a position he has held since 2011. Mr. Tischner has over 30 years of experience with the United States Attorney’s Office, also serving as a Supervisory Assistant United States Attorney for approximately 20 years.

Thank you to both the nominees for being here today. I look forward to hearing your testimony.