

Statement of Caroline Diane Krass
Nominee to be General Counsel of the Department of Defense
June 16, 2021

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and distinguished Members of the Committee. And thank you to Senator Bennet for your kind introduction. It is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the General Counsel of the Department of Defense. I am deeply grateful to both President Biden and to Secretary Austin for their trust and confidence in me, and to the Committee for considering my nomination.

I would not be here today without the love and support of my husband, William, who has been at my side for more than thirty years, and my daughter Emma and son James. I am proud to be able to introduce you this morning to William and James.

I want to thank each of you on the Committee and your staff members for the time you have devoted to the confirmation process. I am inspired by the bipartisan nature of this Committee, which is consistent with my own experience of serving for over twenty-three years as an Executive Branch lawyer in administrations of both parties. I am eager to return to government service and to continue to foster the critically important and cooperative relationship between this Committee and the Department of Defense. I strongly believe that it is the General Counsel's duty to ensure that the Armed Services Committees are kept properly informed to further their oversight responsibilities.

If confirmed, I believe that my prior experience will serve me well in providing sound and clear legal advice to Secretary Austin and the Department's leadership team. As General Counsel of the CIA, my responsibilities included ensuring compliance with all applicable law. I also spent over a decade at the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice, where I had the opportunity to provide legal advice on a wide range of difficult legal issues to many government agencies, including the Department of Defense. Over the course of my career, including two tours at the National Security Council, I have developed productive and collegial relationships with lawyers throughout the national security community, including among the career civil service. Those relationships will heighten my effectiveness at assisting the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces, together with the civilian DoD personnel, in protecting our Nation's security. Finally, I have been fortunate to work with many of the lawyers in the Department's Office of General Counsel and Chairman's Legal, and I have been impressed by their dedication to the rule of law. It would be a privilege to lead the Office, building not only on the leadership experience I gained as CIA General Counsel and at OLC, but also my recent experience leading a global team as an in-house General Counsel in the private sector.

Thank you again for your consideration, and I look forward to answering your questions.