

Keith E. Sonderling Opening Statement

Thank you, Senators Scott and Moody, for your introduction.

Chairman Cassidy, Ranking Member Sanders, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to once again appear before you for the third time, this time, as President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Labor.

Every member of this Committee can agree on one thing: American workers are the best in the world, and they deserve a Department of Labor that is effective, accountable, and responsive to their needs.

Serving America's workers as the leader of the Department of Labor has been the greatest honor of my life. It would not have been possible without President Trump's vision and leadership. I am deeply grateful for the trust he has placed in me and for the opportunity to serve American workers, retirees, unions, and job creators.

Above all, I want to thank my family. I would not be here today without the love and unwavering support of my wife, Fara, our two boys, Spencer and Baron, and my parents, Howard and Barbara.

I spent my legal career as a labor and employment attorney in Florida, where I saw firsthand how the Department's policies affected workers and employers every day.

I joined President Trump's Administration in 2017 as a Senior Policy Advisor at the Department of Labor. There, I learned the Department's mission from the ground up, benefiting every day from the knowledge, experience, and dedication of the staff who devote their lives to serving the American worker.

Over time, I was entrusted with increasing responsibility, culminating in my service as the Acting Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division. President Trump later nominated me as a Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, where I served until 2024.

I then led President Trump's labor transition team before returning to the Department on Inauguration Day.

Few people have had the opportunity to experience the Department of Labor from so many different perspectives, from the outside, as a policy advisor, as the head of one of its largest divisions, as Deputy Secretary, and now as Acting Secretary.

As we celebrate 250 years of American independence, we honor the men and women whose work has built our nation. The story of the American worker is the story of America itself.

And today, thanks to President Trump's leadership, the American worker is once again at the center of our nation's economic agenda.

Since President Trump took office, more than 900,000 private-sector jobs have been created. Wages are rising. 401(k)s have reached record highs. And more Americans are working today than at any time in our nation's history.

President Trump's promise to reindustrialize America is transforming our economy. Trillions of dollars in new investment are revitalizing American manufacturing, rebuilding our infrastructure, expanding domestic energy production, increasing our shipbuilding capacity, and positioning the United States to lead in biotechnology, AI, and quantum computing.

The Working Families Tax Cuts are delivering for American workers. No Tax on Tips and No Tax on Overtime are putting thousands of dollars back into the pockets of the hardworking Americans who keep this country running, while pro-growth incentives are enabling manufacturers to expand, businesses to reinvest, and create even more opportunities for American workers.

President Trump has created unprecedented opportunities for American workers. My responsibility is to ensure America's workforce has the skills to seize those opportunities while protecting the safety, wages, and retirement benefits of every worker.

Under my leadership, the Department has restored compliance assistance and pursued rulemaking that replaces uncertainty with clarity, expands retirement investment opportunities, promotes competition in prescription drug pricing, and helps more Americans start families.

And as a member of the White House Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, I have worked with Vice President JD Vance to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse, ensuring taxpayer dollars serve American workers. I have also strengthened the Department's Office of Inspector General by ensuring it has the resources and support needed to investigate fraud and hold bad actors accountable.

President Trump has always understood that the American people are the foundation of our nation's strength and prosperity. And there is no doubt that the American worker is our greatest competitive advantage.

I am deeply grateful for the trust President Trump has placed in me and for the opportunity to help fulfill his promise to all Americans.

If confirmed, I commit to continuing to work every day to protect America's workers, support job creators, and faithfully carry out the mission that has guided my service since my first day at the Department of Labor nearly a decade ago.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.