

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL M. GADE
NOMINEE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

September 19, 2017

Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering my nomination as a Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. I want to start my statement by acknowledging my wife of more than 18 years, Wendy, and our three children. My first and most important job is to love them and provide for them, and I hope that I will always be the kind of man that they can emulate and respect. My mother, a patriot and mother of patriots, is also here and is a key reason that I am who I am.

I also want to publicly thank the many men and women who I served with in my more than 20 years in the United States Army. Your many examples of selflessness, courage, and sacrifice awe me and awe the American people. In particular, I want to thank the families of First Lieutenant Tyler Brown and Specialist Dennis Miller, both of whom were killed in action while under my command in Iraq in 2004. You laid your sons' lives on the altar of freedom, and the American people are forever grateful.

If confirmed, I will consider my service on the EEOC to be a natural sequel to my military service, recalling that the key phrase of my oath as a commissioned officer was "to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies..." My oath of office was not to a political party, nor to a particular President, but to a system of "laws, not of men". Being able to point to the Constitution as the ultimate law of the land allows me to be anchored to a set of values that are independent of the political winds that have blown with increasing force for the last quarter-century.

The EEOC performs a critically important role in enforcing laws that prohibit employment discrimination on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability or genetic information. I am committed to enforcing these laws in accordance with the authorizing statute of the EEOC, and look forward to continuing to protect the vulnerable against those who would marginalize them or dismiss them from employment based on characteristics unrelated to their ability to perform the job at hand.

I bring a unique, though not unprecedented, background to this position. I am one of very few non-attorneys to be appointed to the EEOC. Similarly, the EEOC has only had a small number of Veterans as Commissioners in the 53 years since it was created. Fortunately, I am no stranger to either the Federal government or the Veterans and disability community. From 2007 to 2008, I served as an Associate Director of the Domestic Policy Council at the White House, where I was responsible for Veterans' disability policy, ADA oversight, and military health care policy. I have also served on two different advisory committees to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and since 2015 have served on the National Council on Disability, where I have been active in various critical disability policy initiatives. Simultaneous to several of those commissions, I taught political science and leadership courses for more than 5 years at the United States Military Academy after earning both a Master's degree and a PhD in public administration and policy. I believe that my record of accomplishment in academia, government, military, and non-profit roles makes me well-suited to serve on the EEOC. I will bring a fresh, energetic outside perspective, well-developed judgment, proven character, and Constitutional fidelity to my role as a Commissioner.

If confirmed, I intend to act in a spirit of careful consideration and collegiality. I am excited about working with the other commissioners, the professional staff, lawmakers, and interested citizens and groups of citizens to combat illegal discrimination in all of its forms. Where the current anti-discrimination laws are unclear or contested, I intend to work with Congress, advocating that they be updated.

My priorities, if confirmed, will be in the following areas. First, the backlog of charges being investigated by the EEOC needs to be addressed. Each outstanding charge means that both an employer and an employee are waiting, sometimes for months, for a resolution. Second, I intend to take a close look at the Strategic Enforcement Plan, in concert with the other Commissioners and professional staff, to ensure that it is plotting the right course into the future. Third, I would like to spend time on the educational and outreach functions of the EEOC, in the sincere belief that most discrimination is unintentional and could be prevented with better information.

I look forward to your questions.