

Prepared Statement of Stephen M. Hahn, M.D., Nominated to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services

Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, Members of the Senate HELP Committee, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I am humbled to be here and am very grateful for your consideration of my nomination by President Trump to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs. I sincerely appreciate the time many of you and your professional staff have taken to meet with me over the past several weeks as part of this very important confirmation process.

Before I begin my statement, I would like to introduce my family who are here today. I am joined here by my wife Lota; our four children, Chris, Emma, Robert and Caroline; and our son-in-law, Mike. As you can probably see from your seats, Emma and Mike are expecting our first grandchild any day. This is a true blessing for our family and a constant reminder of what is important in life.

I am a scientist and a medical doctor. Science and fighting for the best interests of my patients has guided my entire professional life. I have been a front-line cancer physician, researcher, and leader of complex medical organizations. In my work I have seen the joys of informing a patient of a successful treatment and the sadness in letting a loved one know that there are no further options. Throughout my entire career – I have depended on and relied on the fact that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had my back. Because of the FDA, I had confidence for my patients in the treatments I administered. As I reflect on the trust I placed in the FDA, I am now humbled that, with your consent, I may be in a position to lead that very agency I have relied on and trusted for my entire career.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed by the Senate, I promise to be guided by the core values of integrity and transparency, and I promise to put the interests of the American people first. As a front-line cancer physician, researcher, and executive at an academic medical center, I am profoundly aware of the importance of the FDA's role in the health and welfare of the American people. The FDA represents the gold standard for protecting the public health, is trusted by Americans and admired around the world for its mission ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of medical products and the safety of the nation's food supply. The professionals at the FDA have remarkable expertise and a deep commitment to the agency's mission. I believe strongly in the importance of science, data, and the law that have guided and should continue to guide the decision-making at the FDA.

I also want to emphasize that I have deep respect for Congress, and its role in writing the laws that the FDA must enforce. If confirmed, I pledge to faithfully execute the laws written by Congress, and be responsive to your questions regarding the agency. I look forward to collaborating with the legislative branch to protect the public health.

The role of the FDA is as vital today as it was when the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act became law in 1938. We are at a crucial and exciting time in American medicine and science, one in which the discoveries are dramatic and the translation of science into better medical products for patients is occurring at an ever more rapid pace. We are also approaching a time when new and improved ways of evaluating data will allow us to expedite innovation, better evaluate new products and

ensure food safety, all with even greater accuracy and certainty. All of this, however, requires that the FDA have the appropriate talent, expertise, and infrastructure to keep up with progress in science and technology. It is crucial that the FDA encourage innovation and competition so that Americans have access to a continuously improving universe of treatments. The American people depend on a strong FDA and, if confirmed, I will work with Congress, the Administration, and stakeholders to ensure fulfillment of that vision as its leader.

There are many issues that will likely come before the Commissioner that are perplexing and engender honest disagreement. When that occurs, I pledge to listen, study and assess all viewpoints.

It is true that the challenges are many and complicated, but it is also true that there are remarkable solutions on the horizon and these solutions are within our grasp. As I have spent time meeting with each of you, I am increasingly optimistic and energized about the prospects of working towards data-driven and balanced solutions that are congruent with the law. It is my belief that regardless of our differences of opinion on any one issue or another, we all want what is best for the public health. The mission of the FDA is too important for the American people and the stakes are too high not to make the absolute best decisions, guided by science, data, and the law.

Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, Members of the Senate HELP Committee, sitting behind me are my wife and our children. I want them, their children, and all of the American people to live in a world where they can trust in the safety and security of their food supply and where they have access to the most innovative, effective and safe medical products in the world. If I have the honor of being confirmed by the Senate, I will uphold myself to the highest standards of integrity, transparency, communication, and teamwork at the FDA. I will collaborate closely with you in a bipartisan way, communicate about the FDA's programs, and will rely on your counsel to faithfully serve the American people.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination, I look forward to answering your questions.