

STATEMENT OF DOUG PARKER
NOMINEE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR
FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS OF
THE UNITED STATES SENATE
MAY 27, 2021

Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Burr, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. It is my privilege and honor to be before you today as the Committee considers my nomination to be the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health. I want to thank President Biden for the opportunity to serve our nation in this important role. I also want to thank my family. I am incredibly appreciative for the love and support of my wife, Leigh Phillips, who has joined me here today in the committee room with our 2 month old daughter Rose. Our other daughter, Evelyn, has been enjoying Washington, DC this week while I prepare for this hearing, and is staying with friends.

I'd also like to thank my parents, who both grew up in Western North Carolina during the Depression and instilled in me the values of community, family, justice and faith that have guided me throughout my life. My mother is watching these proceedings from the home where I grew up in Lynchburg, Virginia. My older brother Michael, who has always supported me in my career and in life, is following the hearing from his home in Germany.

My father, who passed away in 2017, began his career working for an electric utility in Southern West Virginia, where my brother and I were born. He cared deeply about the health and safety of his fellow employees. His very first act as a supervisor, back in the 1950s, was to hold an employee safety breakfast. He was proud of a career spanning more than 30 years in which no employee suffered a major injury at work. I think he would be very proud today to see the opportunities I will have, if confirmed, to thoughtfully address the health and safety of America's workers.

Both of my parents instilled in me the value and dignity of work. While I was in high school, I spent my summers making tomato stakes in our garage that I would sell to save money for college. It was a small family business that started as my brother's Future Farmers of America project.

After college, and a couple of years working in Washington, DC, I returned home to help my father start another small business manufacturing and selling specialized tools for

the electric utility industry. I worked mostly in sales, but filled in as needed as a security guard, a typist, a general laborer, or whatever needed to get done. I appreciate the challenges faced by small business owners, whose financial risk-taking and innovation is what drives growth and opportunity in this country.

I then decided to apply for and attend law school, where my interest in labor law and worker's rights took shape. As a labor lawyer and legal aid advocate, I've had the privilege of working on behalf of coal miners, warehouse workers, hotel housekeepers, and health care workers.

As a public servant, at both the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) I have demonstrated my ongoing commitment to the health and safety of workers. During my time at MSHA, I helped to improve the agency's use of its available enforcement tools to bring mines with poor safety records into compliance, efforts that helped to usher in the safest period for miners in our Nation's history.

At Cal/OSHA I have led the agency through the past fourteen plus months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early in the pandemic, we proactively developed guidance, model programs and training tools to help employers put COVID-19 prevention plans in place. We have provided compliance assistance to thousands of employers. When employers have failed to adequately protect workers from exposure to COVID-19, we have taken action. And in November, the Cal/OSHA Standards Board adopted an emergency temporary standard to train workers, implement controls to limit transmission, and contain workplace outbreaks when they do occur.

In both of these government roles, maintaining a dialogue with stakeholders has been a top priority for me. One of my first actions at Cal/OSHA was to reinstate our stakeholder advisory committee, and I understand how important it is to hear input on the issues facing our workplaces. If confirmed, I will maintain that commitment to stakeholder dialogue. We do not have to choose between a strong economy and good, safe jobs; listening to and learning from stakeholders is how we can ensure both. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.