

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

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UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

“Hearing to Consider Pending Nominations”

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Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Wyden, members of the Committee, thank you for having me here today. It is a privilege to appear before you as President Trump’s nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary for Legislation at HHS. I would also like to thank Secretary Azar and the many others at HHS who have helped with my nomination.

Here with me today is my family--my husband, Justin, and our two children, Reid and June, as well as my parents, Craig and Janie Cudworth. They are my rock and without their support, I would not be where I am today. Finally, I wish to recognize the amazing HHS legislative affairs team who work tirelessly every day to fulfill the HHS mission to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans in part by serving this great institution. They are the best team in Washington and I’m proud to call each and every one of them colleagues.

I have to tell you that it’s surreal sitting on this side of the dais. After nearly a decade as a Senate staffer, I fondly remember sitting where your staff sit now, giving advice on hearing strategy, Member interests and ways to advance your policy goals. It’s those formative years that have helped to prepare me for the role I am seeking your support for today.

My experiences in both the majority and minority under Chairman Alexander, Leader McConnell and Senator Jim Talent taught me about listening to constituents, the power of bipartisanship and the importance of precedence. I owe each of them a debt of gratitude for the unique lessons of leadership I learned and the opportunity to serve alongside them as they worked tirelessly for the great states of Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Legislation plays a critical role in ensuring the communication between the executive and legislative branches that our Founding Fathers envisioned. If confirmed, it would be my job to ensure you receive the technical assistance you need to draft legislation and answers to your questions about the Department’s programs. Additionally, it is the responsibility of this position to ensure you are informed in a timely manner of the Administration’s initiatives and policies so that, together, we can serve the American people better.

Over the last three years, I have been the principal deputy in HHS legislative affairs. In this role, I am the policy lead for our team. When I think back to all of the issues that the Department has

collaborated with this Committee on in that time, I realize how much we have accomplished together.

The list is long.

If you'll indulge me a moment, I'll name just a few—we are turning the tide in the opioid epidemic, lowering the cost of prescription drugs, providing relief to Americans who suffered after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, protecting American medical research from foreign threats, ensuring quality nursing home care, helping more foster children find their forever homes, and strengthening Medicare.

If confirmed, I pledge to continue my commitment to the close collaboration between HHS, this Committee and Congress that will help more Americans live longer, healthier, happier lives.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to your questions.