

Statement of Kevin K. McAleenan

Before the United States Senate Committee on Finance

On His Nomination to Serve as Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

October 24, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Wyden, and distinguished Senators of the Committee, thank you for considering my nomination to lead U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

I am humbled by and grateful for the President's nomination and would like to take this opportunity to thank President Trump, Chief of Staff Kelly, and Acting Secretary Duke for the faith and confidence they have placed in me.

I was raised in a family of public servants, each member drawn to a cause and driven to make a difference. My father, whose service began in the U.S. Army, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne, continues to serve the public today — at 80 years strong — in the LA County Mental Health System. My mother and brother have worked in the university and public school systems for years, working to help at-risk youth achieve educational opportunities. And my wife, who dedicated several years early in her career working for the Department of Homeland Security in the United States Secret Service.

For me, the call to service came on September 11th. I was extraordinarily fortunate to — almost immediately — have the opportunity to help lead a new focus on counterterrorism within the U.S. Customs Service, and then support the transition to our unified border security agency as U.S. Customs and Border Protection within the Department of Homeland Security.

Over the past 15 years, I have been able to participate in the dynamic evolution of the Agency and I am honored to have had key opportunities to contribute to that transformation, both at headquarters and in the field. In my management and leadership roles, I have found it most valuable and rewarding to engage with, support, and advocate for — the operators — the CBP Officers, Border Patrol Agents, Air and Marine Pilots and Interdiction Agents, Trade and Agriculture Specialists, and mission support personnel – accomplishing our mission on the frontline.

The men and women of CBP, operating in every state and 40 countries globally, are the heart of our organization and are some of the finest professionals in government service anywhere in the world. If confirmed, it would be the greatest privilege of my professional life to represent, and continue serving alongside, them as Commissioner.

In addition to its people, CBP has a strong foundation of legal authorities, operational capabilities, and mission-focused culture, but much more needs to be done to enhance its trade facilitation and enforcement, counterterrorism, and border security missions. As an indispensable national security partner, and the nation's second largest revenue-collecting

source, CBP must continue to innovate to accomplish its complex and critical tasks and to recruit and sustain the world-class workforce it needs.

If confirmed, working closely with this committee and our stakeholders, I am committed to addressing these challenges and to supporting CBP's dedicated and extremely hard-working frontline and support personnel to take our efforts, and our organization, to the next level.