

## Questions for the Record

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

*“Nominations of Gigi Sohn, to be a Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission; Alan Davidson, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, DOC; Viquar Ahmad, to be Assistant Secretary for Administration and Chief Financial Officer, DOC; and Jed Kolko, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs, DOC”*

10:00 AM, December 1, 2021

### Questions for the Record from Senator Klobuchar to Viquar Ahmad

**Broadband Infrastructure.** The bipartisan infrastructure law includes the largest investment our country has ever made in broadband, \$65 billion for broadband infrastructure. The NTIA at the Department of Commerce will oversee the rollout of the majority of the \$65 billion.

*Question:* If confirmed, how will you help NTIA deploy those funds quickly and effectively?

*Answer:* The Department of Commerce is grateful for the significant investment included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to help close the digital divide and ensure that all Americans have access to reliable, high speed, and affordable broadband. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) work to implement the IIJA is already underway and is engaging with stakeholders in every state, territory, tribe, and community to ensure these programs succeed.

The Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) supports Commerce’s Operating Units by providing expert guidance so that funds are deployed efficiently and in accordance with the law and regulations. The close partnership of the OAM and NTIA teams is essential to operational success. If confirmed, I will ensure that we have the robust capability necessary and streamlined processes in place to support the Department’s efforts in effectively delivering these funds to communities nationwide.

**Small business growth.** Small business drives the American economy, and new businesses are responsible for creating nearly all net new jobs. The Department of Commerce plays an important role in supporting entrepreneurs and businesses.

*Question:* If confirmed, how will you support minority and women entrepreneurs and minority-owned businesses?

*Answer:* I fully share President Biden and the Department of Commerce leadership’s commitment to not just rebuilding to how things were before the COVID-19 pandemic, but to building back better and more equitably. The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is a key component of that effort. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure MBDA’s success and that the Department’s finance and administrative staff are available to help MBDA effectively carry out its mission.