

Statement of Karen Dunn Kelley
Nominee for Under Secretary for Economic Affairs
Before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee
July 26, 2017

Good morning Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson and esteemed members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

Thank you for the chance to meet with you today and I appreciate meeting so many of you over the past few weeks to discuss this opportunity to serve at the Department of Commerce as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. I am deeply honored and humbled to have been asked by Secretary Ross, and nominated by President Trump, to serve the American people in this capacity.

I have known and worked with Secretary Ross for many years and have the greatest respect and admiration for him personally and for his many accomplishments. That is why I was particularly honored to have been asked by Wilbur Ross to serve. I could not be more thrilled by this prospect. I also want to thank my family and friends for their support. Today, I am joined by Dr. Joseph Kelley, my husband of 31 years and our three children - Sean, Caitlin, Broderick, and his wife Katie. Also, joining me are my parents Elenmarie Dunn and William Dunn, a former Marine who proudly served this country, and my three sisters - Denise, Janine, and Siobhan.

As you know, I am from the private sector and have given careful consideration to what it means to serve in the federal government. Allow me to explain:

I want to serve for a simple reason: I want to give back to this country that has given me so much and to serve my fellow Americans. I believe I offer unique qualifications for the role for which I have been selected and nominated, and my willingness to serve is compelled by my desire to help make a difference. The chance to work for Secretary Ross is also very appealing. He is a man who can synthesize complex information and distill it into 4 or 5 salient points. He is trustworthy and has a track record of proven success and I am particularly proud of the work we did together at Invesco during the 2008 financial crisis.

As a business woman for the last 35 years in the financial markets and the last 28 at a major global finance firm, I know how to manage personnel, strategy, budgets, operations, public relations and thought leadership across the globe. In particular, a big part of my career as a finance professional has been devoted to using and relying on the exact data that the Department produces. I respect that data and the institutions that create it.

The mission of the Economics and Statistics Administration, the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the U.S. Census is to serve as the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy. I know how to serve that mandate by putting the people, process and procedures in place to create an accurate product.

If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Ross to turn strategic initiatives into tactical action in support of the President's priorities. One of his priorities is effective and meaningful management and oversight of the 2020 Census and the economic statistical programs at the Department of Commerce.

A high quality 2020 Census that counts everyone once, in the place where they live is our highest priority. If confirmed, I will work to translate that priority into tactical action to produce an efficient, effective and accurate Census while minimizing operational, technical and financial risk. Working with Secretary Ross, I will help create partnerships to support the process by bringing together people from across the federal government to support the Department of Commerce's mission.

Finally, the Census as well as all the other data produced by the Department of Commerce needs to be communicated in a transparent and understandable way to help Congress and other elected officials fulfill their responsibility to all Americans. In me you will find a partner who will communicate, collaborate and cooperate with you.

Thank you for the chance to be with you today to discuss this important opportunity and to give you a lens into my approach and qualifications. I also want to again thank my family for supporting my decision to enter public service. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, the other members of Congress, and the many dedicated employees of the Department of Commerce.

Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.