

Opening Statement of Kathleen Kraninger
Nominee for Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection
Before the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
Thursday, July 19, 2018

Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is a privilege to be here as the President's nominee for Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. I want to thank President Trump for this honor and for the confidence he has placed in me with this nomination.

I'd also like to express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends who have joined me today. In particular – my parents, Dave and Pat, are here from Cleveland, Ohio. My older brothers, Dave and Dan, and their families traveled from Wisconsin and Connecticut. My younger brother, Matt, and his family are watching online.

I am incredibly lucky to have an amazing family who encouraged me in every endeavor and taught me that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible in this great country of ours. I am especially grateful for their steadfast support as I have followed my call to public service and pursued a career serving the American people.

My love for our country, its ideals and promise, drives my commitment to public service. It sparked my interest in my university's summer internship program where I worked for my hometown Congressman, now Senator Brown. It inspired my decision to join the Peace Corps and volunteer for two years teaching in the former Soviet Union. There I saw firsthand the devastating impact of communism, the economic consequences of central planning, and the absence of free markets and the rule of law.

Following the attacks on September 11th, 2001, I felt the call even more deeply, to help our country in a time of need. I'm very proud to have served on the leadership team at both the Departments of Transportation and Homeland Security during that extraordinarily challenging time. I have also been honored to serve three separate Congressional committees, including the Senate Appropriations Committee under Senator Shelby's leadership. In my current position as Associate Director at the Office of Management and Budget, I have had the opportunity to take a broader leadership role – overseeing \$250 billion in budgetary resources and related policies for 7 Cabinet departments and 30 other Federal agencies, including the Bureau as well as the other financial regulators.

Throughout my career, I have focused on implementing common-sense solutions to complex problems and delivering real value for the American people. While I will not prejudge and cannot predict every decision that will come before me as Director, if confirmed, I can assure you that I will focus solely on serving the American people.

Congress established the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection “to ensure all consumers have access to markets for consumer financial products and services...that are fair, transparent, and competitive.” I am firmly committed to satisfying this Congressional mandate. To do so, I would establish four initial priorities.

First, the Bureau should be fair and transparent, ensuring its actions empower consumers to make good choices and provide certainty for market participants. In particular, the Bureau should make robust use of cost benefit analysis, as required by Congress, to facilitate competition and provide clear rules of the road. In my experience, effective use of notice and comment rulemaking is essential for ensuring the proper balancing of all interests. It also enables consideration of tailoring to reduce the burden of compliance, particularly on consumers and smaller marketplace participants.

Second, the Bureau should work closely with the other financial regulators and the States on supervision and enforcement. Nothing is more destructive to competitive markets and consumer choice than fraudulent behavior. Under my stewardship, the Bureau will take aggressive action against bad actors who break the rules by engaging in fraud and other illegal activity.

Third, the Bureau must recognize its profound duty to the American people to protect sensitive information in its possession. Under my leadership, the Bureau would limit data collection to what is needed and required under law and ensure that data is protected. This issue clearly needs more attention, particularly because many consumers are unaware of the vulnerabilities or unsure of what actions to take to protect themselves.

And, fourth, the Bureau must be accountable to the American people for its actions, including its expenditure of resources.

As a former Congressional staffer, I appreciate the important role Congress plays in overseeing this agency. I value the advice and perspectives you shared during our meetings over the past month – conversations that I welcome going forward, should I be confirmed in this important position.

Thank you for your consideration.