

Statement of Maurice A. Jones, Nominee to be Deputy Secretary of the U.S.
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

November 17, 2011

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shelby and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Deputy Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Before I begin, I would like to introduce my wife, Lisa, who is here with me today and has been my partner in life for the last decade. Our most precious gift, our 9-year-old daughter, Michela, is in school this morning, but she is with us in spirit.

I am humbled by the nomination and grateful to the President for the trust he is bestowing upon me. I am also thankful to Secretary Donovan for his support. If confirmed, I pledge to work collaboratively with the members of this Committee to ensure that HUD achieves the operational excellence the country needs from this organization during these challenging times.

Public service has been a passion of mine since at least my high school days in rural Lunenburg County, Virginia. In 1979, as a ninth grader, I was fortunate enough to be selected to serve as a page during that year's legislative session of the Virginia General Assembly. The experience changed my life. I observed and assisted legislators working on the public's business, and I was inspired. I resolved, then, to try to enter public service when I grew up.

Following law school and three years of law practice in a firm in Richmond, Virginia, I was blessed with the opportunity to work for the U. S. Treasury Department. Over the course of six years at Treasury (from 1995-2001), I served as Special Assistant to the General Counsel, Legal Counsel to the Community Development Financial Institutions

Fund, Deputy Director for Policy and Programs and Director of the Fund. I loved these jobs, and they taught me valuable lessons and skills.

My experiences at the CDFI Fund, in particular, called upon me to lead people in the building of a high-performing, results-oriented government organization with a compelling mission. And because the Fund was essentially a start-up entity at the time I joined the team, we had to put in place the necessary infrastructure for the programs and operations of the organization. It was on the job training in building a government entity. Over a five-year period, working collaboratively with Congress, we grew from a ten-person organization with an annual budget of \$50 million to a 60-person organization with an annual budget of \$120 million. We invested approximately \$400 million in over 300 mostly non-profit entities that used those monies to make loans and other investments in low-income communities across America.

Following my time at the Fund and approximately nine months with a foundation in the Washington Metropolitan area, I was honored to be asked by then Governor, now Senator, Warner, to join his Administration. I started as his Deputy Chief of Staff and subsequently also became his Commissioner of the State Department of Social Services. At Social Services, I led a team of more than 1,500 state government employees who, in turn, worked through several thousand local government workers in 121 localities to provide social services to the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia. I spent the bulk of my time attempting to transform structures, processes, practices and people at Social Services in an effort to make it a more efficient and effective system throughout the State. During my tenure, Social Services: received a \$922,000 reward for increasing the number of children adopted from state-supervised foster care; earned over \$28 million in federal incentives for record performances in child support and collections; and received around \$24 million in federal awards for successfully placing welfare participants in jobs and improving their job retention and wage advancement capacities.

I departed the Warner Administration after more than three years to join a regional media company in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, Pilot Media. I wanted to run a newspaper because I wanted the challenge of leading a private sector enterprise that

pursued both excellent business results and distinguished public service. Little did I know that I was entering an industry that was and is in the midst of the most far-reaching transformation of its history.

I knew nothing about newspapers when I joined The Virginian-Pilot. Very quickly I had to develop a point of view about our biggest challenges and attempt to set us on a path to achieve our double bottom line mission in these uncertain times. It has been an incredible educational journey, and I continue to learn lessons from the challenge. And we are weathering the times quite well. We have transformed the way we do business in every area of the company, from integrating departments to launching new businesses, to eliminating products no longer valued by our customers. As a result, we remain a debt-free, profitable enterprise well-positioned to assist the community in taking advantage of its opportunities and confronting its threats. The Virginian-Pilot has been voted the best newspaper in Virginia by its peers every year I've been its Publisher.

These are the experiences I bring to the opportunity we are discussing today. HUD aspires to transform itself into an organization that consistently delivers excellent results, as reflected in Goal 5 of its 2010-15 Strategic Plan. To realize this aspiration, transformations across the agency are necessary. I want to help lead this journey. My public and private sector work have helped me to prepare for this role. And particularly in light of the housing and related economic challenges our country continues to face, which have come down so hard on so many Americans, I can think of no more important time to work at HUD.

I am humbled by the President's decision to nominate me for this role, and I am grateful to the Committee for allowing me to appear before you today and for considering my nomination. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you very much.