

**Nomination of Assistant Secretary Roy A. Bernardi to be  
Deputy Secretary of the  
Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Hearing Before the United States Senate Committee on Banking,  
Housing and Urban Affairs**



**April 21, 2004**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Roy Bernardi, and I am presently the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. I am here thanking you for inviting me to appear as President Bush's nominee for Deputy Secretary of HUD.

Please allow me to express my gratitude to President Bush for his confidence in me. For three years I have had the pleasure of working with Deputy Secretary Alphonso Jackson. I'm happy that the Senate confirmed him as Secretary. It is my hope that the Committee and the Senate will see fit to confirm my nomination, and I look forward to continuing my working relationship with Secretary Jackson.

It is a pleasure also to be here today with Cathy MacFarlane, the President's nominee to be our Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, and with Dennis Shea, nominee for Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research.

And may I introduce my wife, Alice, whose love, support, and patience provide not just the basis but the greatest reason for my being here today. I am also particularly excited to have my children, Dante and Bianca, be here today.

Mr. Chairman, I take humble pride, if I might put it that way, in finding myself in this place. I am a first generation Italian-American. My parents immigrated to America when they were teenagers. They acquired language and working skills attending night schools. They married and had four children who have worked to achieve enough success at least to give our parents a measure of satisfaction. I grew up in the Northside Italian neighborhood of Syracuse and spoke Italian even before I learned English!

I had the opportunity to be Syracuse's City Auditor for twenty years and then the honor of being its Mayor for nearly eight years when President Bush and Secretary Martinez invited me to join this administration as an Assistant Secretary.

In nominating me to be HUD's Deputy Secretary, President Bush has not only honored me but I well understand he bestowed important responsibilities on me. The Deputy Secretary is the department's chief operating officer, managing an agency with some nine thousand employees and a budget in excess of \$31 billion. The department is larger, but the challenge of managing it is not unlike that of being mayor of Syracuse. I feel confident I have the experience to meet it.

HUD's purposes are especially aimed at helping low- to moderate-income persons. We see to it that the nation is being supplied with safe, decent, and affordable housing, throughout not only the largest cities but also communities large and small including rural areas. We also administer programs for the economic development of these communities, to revitalize older areas in decay and improve the residents' quality of life. It will be an important priority to make sure that every dollar Congress appropriates is used to maximize efficiency and energy, often by partnering with private and nonprofit institutions to leverage our limited resources. I will work closely with Secretary Jackson and President Bush to achieve the goals and objectives of our programs.

As HUD's chief operating officer, I will be committed to fostering better co-operation with the people who serve at every grade and with the unions representing many of them. I will work to understand and improve the bargaining process. In my more than three years in the Office of Community Planning and Development, I have grown to appreciate and respect the expertise of our career employees. More important, we developed an environment of trust and co-operation, of personal fondness and friendship that fostered high morale in CPD and which I hope to extend across HUD's divisions and offices.

Mr. Chairman, let me assure you that I also intend to work closely with this committee and its staff and with other committees with jurisdiction over HUD's programs. The administrative branch of our government is charged with making proposals for rules and offering ideas for policy and program changes. We understand the importance of working with the members of Congress. We are allies in achieving the goals of progress that together we all want to realize.

So, I pledge to keep the lines of communication open. I further pledge to share with the Congress the information and data we have.

I look forward to answering any questions you may have and to working closely with all of you in the future.