



Testimony of John Bobbitt

Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Office of Administration

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

November 20, 2019

Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Brown, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you this morning. I am deeply honored that President Trump has nominated me to serve under Secretary Carson as the Assistant Secretary for Administration at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Before I begin, I want to express my deepest appreciation to my beautiful wife, Jian, who is here today. Jian has been, and continues to be, a bedrock of support, the love of my life for me and our family while I serve at HUD. She is here today from our hometown of Houston, where she has maintained our residence to provide care for my mother and father, George and Bette Bobbitt.

I want to thank my father, a Navy Veteran of World War II and my mother who worked for the British Army Staff here in Washington DC. They met at a USO dance during the war and have been married for 72 years. At 97 and 96 years old, they are the source of my passion to succeed personally and professionally. I also want to acknowledge my grandfather Dr. Clarence Charles Hastings, a prominent veterinarian and World War I Veteran who instilled in me strong values and a work ethic required to succeed. And finally, I want to thank my stepdaughter Xiaoting, Mike Fei, sister Robin and our extended family, friends, and colleagues for their love and support.

During my 37 years of business experience, I have served in diverse executive roles in the private and public sectors responsible for operations, finance, sales and marketing for large multi-billion-dollar corporations to start-up ventures.

My government and public service journey began in 1984 as a volunteer White House Lead Advance Representative. I served in that capacity under the George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush administrations and I have served in that role in the Trump administration. I also served as the Director of Strategic Communications at HUD from 2006 to 2009 and had the privilege to return to HUD in February 2019 as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations, managing human resources, procurement and facilities within the Office of Housing, HUD's largest office. During my time in this position, I have established core values, an open-door policy, met with many employees, restructured the management team, and increased our FEVS score card of leadership by 23 percent and overall employee satisfaction by 17 percent. We also created and launched a comprehensive Employee Development Training Program.

My knowledge of HUD and government operations has given me a sound perspective on what is required to achieve success in the work ahead – both from the organization and from myself. Additionally, my relevant skills and extensive experience obtained from the private sector will aid in implementing improved and more efficient processes.

I believe that a leader's management philosophy is the cornerstone for the organization's direction, vision, goals and success. As a leader, I am committed to the development and advancement of three things: People, Processes, and Performance.

I believe you manage work, but you lead people. I believe in an employee-centered organization that strives to achieve high morale through a positive, accountable culture that develops individuals for career growth and opportunities.

Next is the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes that are adopted. A focus must be placed on clearly identifying and streamlining processes and policies.

Finally, my emphasis is on performance. I believe that an organization that properly sets standards of measurement, creates attainable goals, and empowers staff to achieve them is bound for high performance.

So, with these as my guiding philosophy, here are the priorities I will focus on if confirmed as HUD's Assistant Secretary for Administration:

1. I will implement a culture and set of core values as well as a "career long" employee training program that will foster employee development and succession planning.
2. I will focus on improving the hiring process by working to decrease the time it takes to hire, and reduce the risks associated with critical vacancies.
3. I will introduce measures to decrease the prolonged process of procurement and ensure qualified oversight of existing contracts.

4. And finally, the modernization of HUD's hiring, training and procurement IT systems to enhance accuracy, accountability and the ability to effectively measure performance.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of this committee, thank you again for your consideration of my nomination. I welcome your questions.