

First, I would like to say a word about our Committee and our tolerance for character assassinations.

Until yesterday, I thought we all recognized that McCarthyism has no place in our democratic society.

Any American citizen who fled communist repression – whether FDIC Chair Jelena McWilliams or OCC nominee Saule Omarova – should be lauded for her courage and her conviction.

Anyone who hears Professor Omarova’s story of life in the Soviet Union will understand how offensive the attacks on her character are.

I have faith that my colleagues, on BOTH sides of the aisle, will reject these modern-day “red scare” tactics.

The Committee meets today to consider the nominations of:

Matthew Axelrod to be Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement at the Department of Commerce;

Alanna McCargo to be President for the Government National Mortgage Association;

James Arthur Jemison II to be Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing at HUD; and

Mark Colón to be Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development at HUD.

We congratulate the nominees and thank them for appearing here today. We welcome their families and friends in attendance, and watching from home.

If confirmed, the nominees before us today would play a significant role in protecting U.S. national security interests, expanding housing opportunities for millions of Americans, and supporting families searching for a safe and affordable place to live.

As Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement, Mr. Axelrod would be responsible for leading a division within the Commerce Department’s Bureau of Industry and Security that detects, investigates, and deters illegal behavior.

As President of the Government National Mortgage Association, or Ginnie Mae, Ms. McCargo would play a significant role in expanding funding for mortgages and making home ownership a reality for millions of Americans across the country, including in Ohio.

As the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, Mr. Jemison would be responsible for leading an office dedicated to ensuring vulnerable families across the country have a decent place to call home.

And, finally, as Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Mr. Colón would be responsible for leading an office working to support communities in all our states.

All four nominees appearing here today are highly qualified.

Mr. Axelrod has a distinguished record of service as a government prosecutor. He is currently detailed to the Office of the White House Counsel from the Department of Justice.

Before that, Mr. Axelrod served in several roles at DOJ, working to protect our national security and working on criminal prosecutions.

Welcome to the Committee, Mr. Axelrod.

Alanna McCargo currently serves as Senior Advisor for housing finance at HUD. Prior to joining the Biden Administration, Ms. McCargo served as Vice President for the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where she focused on reducing the racial homeownership gap and making housing more affordable.

Ms. McCargo also has 10 years of experience at Fannie Mae, including during the last financial crisis.

We are glad to have you here today, Ms. McCargo.

Mr. Jemison currently serves as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Community Planning and Development at HUD. Prior to joining the Biden Administration, Mr. Jemison held numerous positions for the City of Detroit—most recently leading the city's development agenda.

He has also served the public in Massachusetts and the District of Columbia, all working on issues related to creating vibrant, growing, affordable communities.

Welcome, Mr. Jemison. We are glad to have you here today.

Our final nominee today is Mark Colón.

Mr. Colón currently serves as the President of the Office of Housing Preservation at New York State Homes and Community Renewal.

In various roles at that agency, Mr. Colón has served the people of New York, working to build and protect affordable housing, and helping families recover from Superstorm Sandy.

Welcome, Mr. Colón.

We are grateful to the nominees for appearing here today, and for their willingness to serve the American people in these important roles.

I look forward to your testimonies.