

Chairman Brown Opening Statement – Wednesday, November 30, 2022

The Committee meets today to consider four nominations:

The Honorable Martin Gruenberg to be a Member and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or FDIC.

Mr. Travis Hill to be a Member and Vice Chairperson of the FDIC.

Mr. Jonathan McKernan to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the FDIC.

Finally, Dr. Kimberly McClain to be Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

We thank the nominees for appearing here today and for their willingness to serve our country at this important time, and we welcome their families and friends who are in attendance as well as those watching from home.

The FDIC is responsible for insuring deposits and supervision of over 5,000 banks and savings associations. The agency is governed by a Board of Directors, which Congress has authorized to fulfill its mission to, “maintain stability and public confidence in the nation’s financial system.”

All five members of the Board are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and the Board is tasked with governing the FDIC.

Today, our Committee will consider three of the five FDIC seats on the Board, including the Chair and Vice Chair nominees.

Marty Gruenberg is the President’s nominee to serve as Chair of FDIC. Mr. Gruenberg is exceptionally well-qualified and has dedicated his career to serving the public and ensuring that our banking system is safe and strong.

Since 2005, Mr. Gruenberg has served as a member of the FDIC Board of Directors in various capacities: Chairman, Acting Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Member. The Senate has unanimously confirmed Mr. Gruenberg five times.

During his tenure on the FDIC Board, Mr. Gruenberg has been a fierce defender of consumers, taxpayers, and small businesses—the people that make this country run. He has also seen our banking system at its highest and lowest points—and helped ensure the stability of our financial system through the 2008 Great Recession.

Under his leadership, the agency has put in place important safeguards following the financial crisis, taken steps to strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act, and worked with banks to prepare for the risks that pose threats to our financial system – like cyber threats and climate change.

He has the experience and dedication we need at the FDIC. If confirmed as Chair, Mr. Gruenberg will continue working to protect our financial system so that when Americans place their money in FDIC-insured banks, they know their money will be protected.

At Mr. Gruenberg's nomination hearing to be Chairman of the FDIC more than a decade ago, Senator Sarbanes, who Mr. Gruenberg staffed on this very dais, said that, "Marty is extremely well prepared to serve as its [FDIC] Chairman. He would bring right from the beginning stability and continuity to the work of the FDIC."

Those words still ring true today.

It has been only a few weeks since you last appeared before us, Mr. Gruenberg. Welcome back.

Travis Hill is nominated to serve as Vice Chairman of the FDIC. Most recently, Mr. Hill served as Senior Advisor to the former Chair of the FDIC, Jelena McWilliams, and Deputy to the Chairman for Policy. Before joining the FDIC in 2018, he worked on the staff of this Committee for Chairmen Shelby and Crapo.

Welcome back to the Committee, Mr. Hill.

Jonathan McKernan is nominated to serve as a Member of the Board of Directors at the FDIC. Since 2019, Mr. McKernan has served at the Federal Housing Finance Agency, or FHFA. He is currently on detail from FHFA to Ranking Member Toomey's Banking and Housing Committee staff.

Prior to joining FHFA, Mr. McKernan served at the Treasury Department. Before serving at the Treasury Department, he worked for our former colleague, Senator Bob Corker from Tennessee. Earlier in his career, Mr. McKernan worked in private law practice here in Washington.

Welcome, Mr. McKernan.

Mr. Hill and Mr. McKernan, if confirmed as the two newest board members, you will be joining the agency at a critical time as the country emerges from the coronavirus pandemic and the banking system faces new challenges.

I would like to hear about how you will approach working with Mr. Gruenberg and the other FDIC board members to protect consumers, serve all Americans, and stay ahead of risks to our financial system. I expect financial regulators to demonstrate that they are committed to serving Main Street, not Wall Street.

Finally, our last nominee before the Committee today is Dr. Kimberly McClain — President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HUD's programs help create equal access to opportunity for all through responsible access to housing credit, promotion of fair housing, assistance that helps renters and those experiencing

homelessness to find safe, stable homes, and support for states, tribes, and local governments as they address their housing and community development needs.

If confirmed, Dr. McClain will manage an office responsible for coordinating with congressional offices and Federal, state, and local government agencies.

Dr. McClain is an Air Force veteran who currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs at the Department of Veterans Affairs, or VA. She possesses over 30 years of combined legislative, international affairs, and policy experience.

Before joining the VA, Dr. McClain worked as the Director for Congressional Strategy at the Air Force. Dr. McClain has also previously served at the Department of Defense and other defense agencies in legislative affairs and policy positions.

Welcome, Dr. McClain, and thank you for your many years of devoted service to our country.

Thank you, again, to all the nominees for being here today.