

**Opening Statement of Chairman Sherrod Brown
Hearing on FDIC, SEC, and Treasury Nominations**

July 11, 2024

The Committee meets today to consider four nominations:

The Honorable Christy Goldsmith Romero to be a Member and Chairperson of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

The Honorable Caroline Crenshaw renominated to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission;

The Honorable Kristin Johnson to be Assistant Secretary for Financial Institutions at the Department of the Treasury; and

Mr. Gordon Ito to be a Member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to serve as the “independent member with insurance expertise” on the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

We thank the nominees for appearing here today.

Three of today’s nominees – Ms. Goldsmith Romero, Ms. Crenshaw, and Ms. Johnson – have all previously been confirmed unanimously by the Senate. Ms. Goldsmith Romero has been confirmed by every member of the Senate multiple times.

In a Washington that is far too divided, far too often, Democrats and Republicans on this Committee and in the Senate have agreed that these nominees possess the experience and character to serve the public.

The nominees today have received strong statements of support and support letters from a broad swath of the financial services sector, including from consumer groups, former regulators, state insurance commissioners, and so much more.

These nominees bring with them years of experience and a strong dedication to public service.

If confirmed, they will each play an important role in the success and stability of our financial system.

The President has nominated Christy Goldsmith Romero to be a Member and Chairperson of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. As Chair, she will lead an agency responsible for protecting the bank accounts of millions of Americans across the country.

Ms. Goldsmith Romero is a highly-qualified nominee with more than two decades of financial services experience.

Ms. Goldsmith Romero has served as a Commissioner on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission since 2022, after she was unanimously confirmed by the Senate. At the CFTC, she has worked to ensure market integrity and protect commodity end users and consumers.

Prior to joining the CFTC, Ms. Goldsmith Romero spent six years at the SEC where she served as counsel to SEC Chairs Mary Shapiro and Christopher Cox – in both Democratic and Republican administrations.

And she served as the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program— better known as TARP. She took on that post in 2009 amid the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, where she did vital work protecting taxpayers. She served in several roles in the Inspector General’s office at TARP before being unanimously confirmed by the Senate to serve as the Special Inspector General.

She managed a large staff of examiners, accountants, auditors, and other investigative professionals. As the Special Inspector General, she followed the facts where they led and wore her independence on her sleeve – helping the office meet its mission, and in the process recover billions of dollars for American taxpayers.

During her decade as IG, she looked under the hood of many financially-distressed banks and institutions.

She knows how to spot signs of trouble – she knows what to look for when it comes to financial instability or potential contagion.

She understands bank regulation and the important role regulators play in ensuring the safety and soundness of our financial institutions.

And she has proved she will hold accountable those who engage in fraud and misconduct.

Ms. Goldsmith Romero’s nomination comes at a pivotal time. Everyone here today agrees that the FDIC needs drastic culture change. Longstanding issues of harassment and misconduct have plagued the agency for over a decade under multiple chairs. The women and men of the FDIC deserve a workplace free of harassment and misconduct. That is why I called on the President to nominate a new chair.

Ms. Goldsmith Romero is a tough, fair, and accomplished regulator and manager who has a track record of making sure bad behavior does not go unchecked.

Listen to the people that have worked with her – the people that have seen her character up close.

Christopher Cox, the former Republican SEC Chair, wrote the Committee and said this about Ms. Goldsmith Romero:

“She is a consummate professional. Her skill and objectivity are the reasons she has worked successfully across multiple administrations of different parties. That high level of

professionalism is reflected in the fact that she has twice been unanimously confirmed to her important financial regulatory positions.”

The Committee also received a letter of support from a group of bipartisan women who have spent decades working in financial services as congressional staff, federal agency staff, and industry representatives.

Leadership starts at the top. Ms. Goldsmith Romero is the right choice to lead the agency as it charts a much-needed transformation of its culture.

Congratulations, Ms. Goldsmith Romero, on your nomination.

The President has renominated Caroline Crenshaw to a full term on the Securities and Exchange Commission. Ms. Crenshaw joined the SEC Board in 2020 after being nominated by President Trump and unanimously confirmed by the Senate. In her four years as a Commissioner, Ms. Crenshaw has been a fierce advocate for protecting Americans’ money, and has routinely fought to make our markets more fair and more transparent.

Prior to her confirmation to the SEC Board, Ms. Crenshaw served as a career staff attorney at the SEC, as well as counsel to two SEC Commissioners.

Prior to joining the SEC, Ms. Crenshaw worked in private law practice in Washington, D.C.

In addition to her exemplary service to our country at the SEC, Ms. Crenshaw is also an Army Reserve Captain in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps.

Welcome back, Ms. Crenshaw, and thank you for your service.

The President has nominated Kristin Johnson to serve as Assistant Secretary for Financial Institutions at the Department of the Treasury. The office Ms. Johnson would lead, if confirmed, handles a broad portfolio including financial institution policy, insurance, cybersecurity, and community and economic development.

Ms. Johnson brings with her a wealth of experience in the public and private sectors, as well as experience in academia – giving her a well-rounded understanding of financial institutions, policy, and regulation.

Ms. Johnson currently serves as a Commissioner on the CFTC – after being *unanimously* confirmed by the Senate in 2022. At the CFTC, Ms. Johnson has served as a reliable voice for market participants and has fought for sound, competitive, and efficient markets.

Prior to joining the CFTC, Ms. Johnson served as a professor of law for more than a decade – teaching at Emory, Tulane, and Seton Hall University. She taught courses in banking law, the law and regulation of securities and derivatives markets, financial institutions, and systemic risk law and policy.

Earlier in her career, Ms. Johnson worked for large financial institutions and in private law practice in New York City.

Good to see you, Ms. Johnson.

The final nominee on today's panel is Gordon Ito. The President has nominated Mr. Ito to serve as the independent insurance expert on FSOC.

If confirmed, Mr. Ito would be one of ten voting members on FSOC responsible for monitoring and identifying financial stability risks.

Mr. Ito's decades of insurance experience have prepared him to serve as a member of FSOC.

Like the other nominees before us today, Mr. Ito is well-qualified. He currently serves as the Insurance Commissioner for the State of Hawaii. He first joined the Hawaii division of insurance over 30 years ago – in 1993 – and has served in multiple roles within the office.

As Hawaii's insurance commissioner, Mr. Ito has been a strong proponent for a fair and competitive insurance marketplace and for consumer protection. He has played an important role in helping Hawaii recover from the devastating wildfires in Lahaina, which resulted in the deaths of more than one hundred residents and billions of dollars in damages.

In addition to serving in Hawaii's insurance division, Mr. Ito has held several leadership roles with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, including Secretary-Treasurer.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Ito worked in private law practice in Hawaii.

Welcome, Mr. Ito.

Thanks again to the nominees for appearing here today, and for your willingness to serve.