

Ranking Member Pat Toomey (R-Pa.)  
Opening Statement  
Full Committee Hearing: Nomination Hearing  
August 5, 2021 at 10:00 AM

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Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Under both Presidents Obama and Biden, I've repeatedly supported nominees who had the necessary experience, temperament, and policy views to serve. Unfortunately, the nominees before us today—who have been nominated for seniors positions at HUD—do not meet all of these important criteria.

My objection to these nominees is not because they issued offensive tweets, it's because of what those tweets, and their own writings in other mediums, tell us about what they believe.

Let's consider Solomon Greene. He's repeatedly made troubling statements denigrating the police and advocating for the defunding of the police. Some of these statements he made on Twitter. But others he made in an article he himself wrote just last June.

In that article, he alleged that "overpolicing" endangers communities of color, and he advocated for "recapturing funding for the police"—a euphemism for defunding the police—and reallocating that funding to other uses, such as "community arts and cultural institutions" at a time when crime rates in America's major cities are on the rise.

These views are so outside the political mainstream that they disqualify him from holding a senior leadership position at HUD.

Equally concerning are Julia Gordon's past statements. Ms. Gordon, among other things, retweeted a post that described police officers as "the people killing us." She also suggested in a letter that she wrote—not a tweet or a retweet—that police violence stems from "flawed and biased systems that require structural change."

Additionally, Ms. Gordon disparaged elected Republican officials. For example, she attacked Senator Lindsey Graham as "desperate" and "#LyingLindsey."

In my view, these and other troubling statements are clearly outside the political mainstream and disqualify her from serving in a senior position at HUD.

Unfortunately, we don't know the full extent of Mr. Greene and Ms. Gordon's public statements because they deleted some of their previously public tweets before being nominated. I asked them to try to recover their deleted tweets from Twitter. But they've refused to comply with this reasonable request. It makes you wonder: What do they have to hide?

As the Senate evaluates nominees' fitness for senior leadership positions, it's important the public has a full picture of their policy views, judgment, and character. A nominee's past public statements matter, and a nominee should not be able to avoid scrutiny by merely clicking a button marked delete.

All of the Republicans on this Committee have written to President Biden asking him to withdraw Mr. Greene and Ms. Gordon's nominations because of their past anti-police statements. And we are not alone in our concern. The National Sheriffs' Association, which represents thousands of sheriffs across the country, has written letters opposing both of these nominees.

Mr. Uejio also has a record that makes him unqualified to serve in a senior position at HUD. As CFPB Acting Director, he's publicly promoted the view that our criminal justice system, which includes police officers, is infected with "latent, structural racism."

Beyond that, what's most troubling about his record is his lack of housing experience, especially on fair housing issues. He's been nominated to run HUD's fair housing office, which is responsible for protecting households from housing discrimination. Yet nothing in his background suggests that he has the experience or qualifications to enforce and administer the nation's fair housing laws.

He's served as CFPB Acting Director for only a few months. But in that short time he's reportedly taken concerning personnel actions, refused to provide information to Congress, ignored stakeholders on important housing matters, and returned the CFPB to the path of regulation by enforcement.

There have been serious allegations that, under Mr. Uejio's leadership, the CFPB is taking unusual and possibly unlawful actions to forcibly replace career civil servants with loyalists. Yet he's refused to provide Congress with documents relating to these allegations.

Ignoring stakeholder input, Mr. Uejio also decided to delay the transition to CFPB's new Qualified Mortgage rule—despite industry, consumer, and civil rights groups, and bipartisan Senators from this very Committee urging him to reconsider. In fact, despite stakeholder concerns, the CFPB stated it will consider re-writing the rule.

In addition, Mr. Uejio rescinded CFPB policies that provided regulatory clarity, clearing the path for the CFPB to return to regulation-by-enforcement. Finally, he's shown little regard for the CFPB's jurisdictional limits.

I'm troubled that the Biden administration has chosen nominees who have made it clear, through their writings, tweets, and retweets, that they are hostile to the police, subscribe to the theory that the police are racists, and support defunding the police. These statements speak directly to their policy views and temperament and therefore they are extremely relevant to our consideration of their nominations.