

**Written Testimony of Daniel Jorjani
Nominated to be Solicitor for the Department of Interior
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Thursday, May 2, 2019**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Manchin, and Members of the Committee, it is my honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior. I ask for your consent to the President's nomination.

If confirmed, I will bring over 20 years' experience to this role, including approximately 10 years at the Department of the Interior, where I have spent 2 years as the Principal Deputy Solicitor, 4 years as the Counselor to the Deputy Secretary, and almost 4 years as the Counselor and Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget.

It is my understanding that no other nominee for Solicitor has ever brought this much DOI experience to the role.

If confirmed, I will serve as the chief legal officer for the Department and as the principal legal advisor to Secretary Bernhardt. I first met Secretary Bernhardt in 2001 and consider myself fortunate to have the opportunity to work for him directly. He is a lawyer's lawyer and a person of the highest integrity.

I am joined today by my extraordinarily awesome wife, Aimee, and my three children, Nickolas, Lucy, and Flora. Nickolas is named for my oldest cousin, Nick, a recently retired Federal civil servant who has worked tirelessly at home and abroad to protect our country since 9/11.

As a child of physicians who immigrated to this great country in the 1950s, I learned from both of them to appreciate the wonders of America and the importance of public service. I grew up hearing my mother's stories of living in Scotland during the Second World War and the aftermath she endured in London while doing her residency there. I learned early on the challenges that women face in the workplace and the importance of creating a safe and secure work environment.

On the farm in Kentucky is where my father first taught me to shoot at the age of 5 with a Browning SA 22, a rifle I still own today and will pass on to my children.

There, I also learned coal's importance to the hardworking families of southeastern Kentucky. And I learned the equally important lesson that government has an important role to play in ensuring the safety of those same hardworking men and women.

From 2001 to 2009, I was fortunate to have been mentored by senior career members of the Senior Executive Service on DOI operations and on the executive branch inter-agency process more broadly.

I re-joined the Department in January 2017 after serving on the Trump-Pence Transition Team. Starting in May 2017, I began my service as Principal Deputy Solicitor and have served in that capacity for the past 2 years. During this time, I have been fortunate to work with highly talented lawyers and administrators, both at Main Interior and in the regions.

The Solicitor's Office is currently composed of 407 employees, including 352 attorneys. Our portfolio covers all 10 bureaus and is organized by issue area including ethics; energy and minerals; parks and wildlife; Indian affairs; Indian Trust Litigation; land; water; general law; and administration.

Almost half of our lawyers are located in 16 regional and field offices that span from Anchorage to Albuquerque to Knoxville, Pittsburgh, and beyond. The Solicitor's Office also houses Interior's Freedom of Information Act Office, which is managed by the newly created SES role of Deputy Chief FOIA Officer. The career civil servant who holds that role is a senior lawyer with over 20 years executive branch experience, much of it in FOIA policy and litigation.

In addition to my responsibilities over the past 2 years as Principal Deputy Solicitor, I have also served as the Regulatory Policy Officer on Interior's Regulatory Reform Task Force and as a member of Interior's Executive Resources Board, which plays an important role in managing the Department's SES corps.

If confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to use my legal, policy, regulatory, and management skills to further the Department's mission to protect and manage the Nation's lands, natural resources, and cultural heritage and to ensure that the Department fulfills its responsibilities to the Insular areas and its trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes and their members.

Thank you very much for your consideration.