

Mr. John M. Molino Nominee to be Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning US Department of Veterans Affairs

Statement for the Record

John M. Molino
Nominee to be

Assistant Secretary
for Policy and Planning
US Department of Veterans Affairs

Before the

Committee on Veterans Affairs
United States Senate

September 29, 2005

Chairman Craig, Senator Akaka, members of the committee, thank you for your consideration of my nomination to serve as an assistant secretary in the Department of Veterans Affairs. I am grateful to President Bush for the confidence he has placed in me by nominating me for this position. I am humbled by the nomination, honored by your consideration, and I would be privileged, if confirmed, to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning.

My earliest memories include value and respect for selfless service. My father served as a soldier during World War II. He later joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars and rose through the progression of positions, serving at post and county levels. He was especially proud of his volunteer service at the VA hospital (not far from my boyhood home in Brooklyn, New York), where he amassed literally thousands of volunteer hours. He would have been very proud had he lived to see his youngest son serve as a deputy under secretary of defense and to receive the President's nomination to be an assistant secretary of veterans affairs.

My parents had three sons. Each of us was a career Army officer, serving a combined total of nearly 75 years on active duty.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my wife, Eileen, for her steadfast support and the positive influence she has been on each of our three sons. Eileen joins me today, along with our eldest son, Bill, and our youngest son, Matt. Bill is a graduate of the College of William and Mary and is employed by Northrup-Grumman. He has focused his service in our church community. Several years ago, he founded a summer theatre program for high school-aged youth that has become a mainstay in our community. It has grown in popularity annually, providing a wholesome, summer activity for many young people. Matt is a senior at George Mason University. He will graduate in January and will begin his active service as a lieutenant in the

US Army at that time. Chris, our second son, could not be with us today; he is a captain in the Army and is currently serving with his Ranger unit in Iraq.

Upon confirmation, I will become thoroughly familiar with the issues facing the Department and will do my best to ensure we are a Department competent & capable today and fully prepared for the challenges of tomorrow. The Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that decisions made by the Secretary and his Deputy are made with full consideration of their impact throughout the department. The cross-cutting nature of this position makes it vital to the current and future well-being of the Department and the lives of this nation's veterans. I promise you that my tenure will have as its benchmark a total commitment to America's veterans and their families.

I am acutely aware how fortunate we are to live in this country, how blessed we are by God, and how grateful we should be to those who have served and to those who serve today to protect our way of life. We are wise to remember that this would not be the land of the free, were it not also the home of the brave.

I am committed to be of service to those brave Americans who have served our nation in uniform.