

STATEMENT OF DONALD M. REMY,
NOMINEE TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT VETERANS AFFAIRS

Thank you Chairman Tester, Ranking Member Moran, and distinguished members of this Committee. It truly is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary McDonough for their confidence in me. And, if you all believe me worthy, for giving me the opportunity to serve our great Nation once again – this time alongside the men and women who are dedicated to delivering on America's sacred promises to our Veterans and their families. I also want to express my gratitude to Senator Cassidy for his kind introduction. Senator, if confirmed, I promise to make Louisiana proud.

Over the last week, I have had the opportunity to gather wisdom, advice and guidance from several members of the Committee and your staffs about how we can make good on our collective commitment to assist the caregivers, families and survivors who have played a critical role in support of our Veterans. I am a Veteran: yet I know I have a lot to learn about the Department of Veterans Affairs. I also know I share a passion for the mission of the agency with Veterans and non-Veterans alike who work at the VA and in these revered halls of Congress. Your expectation of transparent and timely communications, demand for strong leadership and accountability, and bipartisan engagement validate my unyielding desire to undertake this important task.

If I may, I would like to follow up on the brief introduction of my family.

With me today is my incredible wife, Alicia, who has been rock solid in supporting my desire to serve again.

Seated next to her is one of my closest friends, Major General (Promotable) Ronald P. Clark. Ron and I grew up together and as is true with many military families, his family is my family.

Also, with us today also are my two terrific sons, Alex and Jason. I could not be prouder of the young men they have become.

Chief among the reasons I sit before you today are my father Retired Army Master Sergeant Donald Remy, who was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam and has relied heavily on his Veteran's benefits and my mother, Ann Remy. She

raised not just me, but my brother, an Air Force Veteran, and sister, as well as many other sons and daughters of our proud military community, like General Clark.

I have been given a clear mission by Secretary McDonough: To use all my experience, skills, and leadership capabilities as the Department's chief operating and management officer to help nurture a culture of excellence and motivate those around me to deliver on our shared values. Further, the Secretary has expressed that we must continue to provide COVID care and vaccines while immediately developing and executing on plans to appropriately re-introduce our workforce to a post-pandemic working environment. We also must assure that our human and financial resource management strategies are well-positioned for employee and organizational success. If confirmed, I will embrace these and other assignments with courage, fortitude and humility.

Throughout my career, I have been faced with difficult issues in complex organizations. I believe that those experiences make me well prepared to handle the variety of issues within VA and its community. They will be hard and multifaceted, but that is no excuse to not lean in and find suitable solutions. If confirmed, I will do my very best to help our team get it right.

Indeed, if confirmed, my initial goals will include:

Assure everyone in our workforce understands and embraces our collective commitments;

Working with this Committee and the professional team at the VA, guide modernization and innovation to Veterans programs, facilities and services, including the delivery of electronic health records modernization;

Listen to the needs and expectations of our Veteran's and their families and take timely meaningful action to assure we are meeting our mission.

To achieve these goals will require solid leadership, teamwork, transparency, and accountability. President Biden and Secretary McDonough have said that every American should embrace our responsibility to our Veterans and their families. If confirmed, I will work with this Committee, our civil servants, and among the VA's many internal and external stakeholders who have embraced this responsibility.

I am greatly humbled by the opportunity to support a system that has helped me and my family so much. We have benefitted from disability compensation, higher education benefits, home financing, medical care, life insurance, and burial

arrangements. Our experience, like most Veteran families across the land has been extraordinarily positive and in some measure life changing.

I'd like to close on what I believe is a call to action. During my professional journey, I have answered the call whenever the Nation has requested my service: whether on active duty; as a civil servant; or political appointee: the pentagon, judiciary or justice department. And, this time is no different. I am a Veteran and have a long family heritage of Veterans. My mentor, late Judge Nathaniel Jones was a World War II Army Veteran and attended college on the GI Bill. He often admonished us that to answer the call is not a choice, it is an obligation. His words echo in my heart.

I highly respect the constitutional role of the Senate to evaluate my qualifications and if confirmed, I will join Secretary McDonough and a strong team of leaders and professionals dedicated to delivering on our promises to those who served and their families.

May God bless all those who have fought and sacrificed for this Nation and may we be forever grateful. Mr. Chairman I am prepared to respond to any question from you and the Committee.