

**Statement of Anjali Chaturvedi
Nominee for General Counsel
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
Hearing to Consider Pending Nominations
July 27, 2022**

Chairman Tester, Ranking Member Moran, distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next General Counsel for the Department of Veterans Affairs. I am grateful to the President for his confidence in nominating me to this position.

I want to thank Senator Feinstein for that very kind introduction. It was almost 20 years ago that I served on Senator Feinstein's Judiciary Committee staff as counsel. I learned so much about the workings of the US Senate, including the extraordinary work of the staff. I also learned by watching Senator Feinstein what it means to be a servant leader.

I also want to extend my congratulations to Jaime Areizaga-Soto for his nomination as Chair of the Board of Veterans Appeals.

I would like to introduce my family: my husband Terrence Clark, who served in law enforcement for 27 years; my sister Anupama Chaturvedi Connor; my uncle Vinay Chaturvedi; and my mother-in-law Virginia Storjohann, and her husband Neil Scarlett. But the most important person here for me today is my 12-year-old son Kiran Chaturvedi Clark, a rising 7th grader, who we brought back from sleep away camp in West Virginia to attend today's hearing.

When I married Terry, I became part of a military family. Our nephew enlisted in the Army and served in the infantry in Afghanistan, and his wife, a West Point graduate, was a Blackhawk test pilot and also deployed to Afghanistan. My late father-in-law, Terry's stepfather, served in the Korean War. Neil Scarlett served in the Air National Guard and Air Force. Terry's father, William Clark, served in the Army National Guard. And my mother-in-law worked for VA hospitals in Iowa City and Denver. I am so grateful for what our Veterans, including my family, have done for all of us in serving our country and believe that it is our sacred duty to serve them, their families, their caregivers, and their survivors.

I am a child of immigrants and first-generation American. My parents, Ram and Saroj Chaturvedi, came to the United States in 1964, thinking they would stay for a year as my father finished his education. But they saw the promise this country offered, what they could contribute, and they built a life here. They became part of the fabric of their small rural community in Upstate New York where my father was a physics professor in a public college for 41 years, my mother completed her second master's degree, and they raised my brother Rakesh, sister, and me. I am so sorry that they have passed away and are not here today, but I know that I would not be in front of you without them as my guiding light. It was my parents who instilled in me the values of hard work and service — service to family, to community, and to country. They were thrilled that when I became a lawyer, I represented the United States as an Assistant United States Attorney which I did for twelve years, first in the District of Columbia and later in the Northern District of California.

I left the Department of Justice (DOJ) to gain diversity of experience in other areas of the law, including private practice and in global corporate settings where I worked for sixteen years in highly regulated, complex and large organizations. Over the years, I have led many high-performing and empathetic teams.

I returned to DOJ earlier this year to serve as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division because in the same way my parents instilled in me the importance of service, I wanted to show my son through my example what it means to be a public servant.

Now, I have been called to serve at VA. I believe in the mission of VA. The core responsibility of VA is providing our Veterans with the health care and benefits they have earned and to make sure that at their passing, they are afforded the honor they deserve. And in meeting these responsibilities, VA must ensure that our Veterans, their families, their caregivers, and their survivors are treated with integrity, compassion, and respect. Veterans make up less than 10% of our population, yet their service to our country overwhelmingly benefits us all. I had the good fortune of working with Veterans when I was a prosecutor — JAG lawyers and law enforcement officers who previously served in the military. I also worked alongside Veterans in private practice, most recently at Northrop Grumman, where approximately 14% of the work force are Veterans. I did pro bono work on behalf of Veterans, including volunteering time to mentor a returning Veteran.

The opportunity to serve the people who have served us — who have defended our freedoms — is an honor that I do not take lightly. The work of VA, including the Office of General Counsel, must be excellent. It must be Veteran focused. It must drive efficient and ethical results, all in service to the safety and wellbeing of our Veterans. I promise you, if confirmed, I will remain faithful to these commitments every day as the General Counsel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I thank you for allowing me the chance to appear today and I look forward to answering your questions.