

Statement of General John F. Kelly, USMC (Ret.)
Before the
U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
On His Nomination to Serve as
Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security
January 10, 2016

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McCaskill, and distinguished Senators of the Committee, please accept my thanks and appreciation for considering my nomination to lead the men and women of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Senator McCain, Senator Carper, and Secretary Gates – I am grateful that each of you took the time to be here on my behalf, and for your kind words.

Please allow me to introduce my family. My wife, Karen, is here, as are my daughter and son-in-law. Anyone who has answered the call to serve our country knows that the personal sacrifices of public service are often felt most acutely by their families. As the wife and mother to three strong-willed Marines and one determined FBI agent, Karen has been my anchor and I'm grateful for her love and partnership.

Over the past 45 years, I have been privileged to serve my nation as both an enlisted Marine and an officer. I have led platoons and divisions. I have held senior command positions in Iraq, served as the Combatant Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, and as the Senior Military Assistant to two Secretaries of Defense—Secretaries Gates and Panetta. I have worked with our allies, across agencies, the private sector, and with independent experts to identify innovative, comprehensive solutions to current and emerging threats.

These assignments—while varied—shared the common characteristics of working within and leading large, complex, and diverse mission-focused organizations, while under great pressure to produce results.

I am humbled to once again be called to serve, this time with the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security.

As I solemnly swore before God when I entered the Marine Corps, if confirmed, I will faithfully support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic—every second of every day.

I believe in America and the principles upon which our country and way of life are guaranteed. I believe in respect, tolerance, and diversity of opinion. I have a profound respect for the rule of law and will always strive to uphold it. I have never had a problem speaking truth to power, and I firmly believe that those in power deserve full candor and my honest assessment and recommendations.

I love my country, and I will do everything within my power to preserve our liberty, enforce our laws, and protect our citizens. I recognize the many challenges facing the Department of

Homeland Security—and should I be confirmed—I look forward to partnering with you all to protect the homeland.

I look forward to discussing the future of this Department and answering the Committee's questions. Thank you for this opportunity.