

S. HRG. 117-439

NOMINATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JULY 14, 2022

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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NOMINATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Amy Klobuchar, presiding.

Present: Senators Klobuchar [presiding], Blumenthal, Schatz, Baldwin, Tester, Hickenlooper, Wicker, and Blunt.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator KLOBUCHAR. All right. I am calling the hearing to order. We are very excited today to consider two important nominations for the Department of Commerce. We welcome our nominees and their families, and we thank both of you for your willingness to serve.

First, I would like to welcome Susie Feliz to be Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Commerce. She is joined by her husband, Jose. He is very well behaved. Back there, he is not doing anything. You know, it will distract us. Ms. Feliz comes from a proud military family with a long history of veterans who faithfully served our Nation.

Her career in public service spans more than 20 years and includes positions in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. She has dedicated much of her life to working with all levels of local, State, and Federal Governments, as well as constituents and businesses to improve underrepresented and minority communities. She currently serves as the Vice President for Policy and Legislative Affairs at the National Urban League.

Ms. Feliz brings a wealth of expertise and knowledge in shaping public policy and has a strong track record of working with people on both sides of the aisle. And I look forward to working with you to ensure that this committee's priorities are communicated to the Department and that together we can achieve our shared goals.

I also wanted to mention Chairwoman Cantwell's strong support of both of the nominees. She just lost her mom. Senator Wicker and I were just talking about this on Monday. And so she is still in town working really hard on the USICA semiconductor bill but has

a lot going on. And she is very excited about both nominees. I saw her last night and wanted to convey that.

Second, Mr. Don Cravins has been nominated to be Undersecretary of Commerce for minority business development at the Department of Commerce as well. We welcome you in this incredible new position, and we are excited about the work you can do. We talked about this yesterday. And you are joined by your wife, Yvette, and two of your children, Dominique and Chloe. So we thank you for being here as well.

This position was established when we passed the Minority Business Development Act as part of the bipartisan infrastructure law, which was signed into law in November. A number of people on this committee worked really hard on that bill and we thank them for their leadership. If confirmed, Mr. Cravins would be the first Senate confirmed person to occupy this important position leading the Minority Business Development Agency.

The MBDA is the only Federal agency solely dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of our nation's 9.2 million minority owned businesses. The agency's nationwide network of local MBDA centers assist minority owned businesses in gaining access to capital, finding the right markets, and landing contracts and technical assistance that help companies grow and compete.

I am proud to say that 1 of the 39 MBDA centers is located in my state in Minneapolis. I can't think of anyone better suited to lead the agency than Mr. Cravins. He has long been committed to public service, business development, and equity. He previously served as an elected official in his home state of Louisiana, first in the State's House of Representatives, then in the Louisiana State Senate.

And in January 2009, he left the Louisiana Legislature to serve as Staff Director and Chief Counsel for the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship under then chair and our friend Mary Landrieu, former Senator from Louisiana. So that is a pretty good recommendation for all of us in the Senate. In January 2013, he became Mary's Chief of Staff.

Senator Landrieu, I know strongly supports your nomination and is a huge fan of your work. Currently, Mr. Cravins serves as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer at the National Urban League, which operates 13 entrepreneurship centers across America, focused on the development of minority owned businesses.

I am so excited, Don, to see you at the helm of this incredible agency as it embarks on a new chapter, embraces new responsibilities. And I know Senator Wicker has also been incredibly helpful on this front when it comes to the important work with entrepreneurs, minority entrepreneurs across the country.

So it is also fitting that we are chairing this hearing together. Again, I would like to thank both of you for your willingness to serve. I now turn to Ranking Member Wicker, also from the South, Mr. Cravins, for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER WICKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSISSIPPI**

Senator WICKER. Right across the river. Thank you, Senator Klobuchar. And thanks to Senator Cantwell for calling this hearing because of the nominations of Mr. Donald Cravins to be Undersecretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development, and Ms. Susie Feliz to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. These are important positions within the Department, and they warrant the Committee's focus this morning.

This is the first time a nominee has come before the Senate to fill the role of the recently created position of Undersecretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development. Last year, I actually sponsored legislation that codified the Minority Business Development Agency and elevated its top leader to the position of undersecretary. So this is a matter of importance to me.

This agency does critical work to support minority businesses, business owners across the Nation, including in my home State of Mississippi. I attended a banquet of the United Negro College Fund some years back in Tupelo, Mississippi. My fellow Mississippian, the late Charles Evers spoke at that banquet, which was held at the Ramada Inn in Tupelo.

He said to the group of young people there, "I don't want you just to get a job at the Ramada Inn. I want you to own the Ramada Inn." And that belief is now going to be carried on by this MBDA. And I think it is good to have a Senate confirmed official leading this agency to make sure there is sufficient Congressional oversight.

I am encouraged by Mr. Cravins' qualifications, including his service as Staff Director of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship committee. And I look forward to hearing from him today about his strategic plans for the MBDA. I appreciate that has listed as one of his priorities to expand the geographic reach of the agency.

I have in my hand, Madam Chair, a letter dated July 14, 2022, recommending highly Mr. Donald Cravins for confirmation. It is signed by Rick C. Wade, Senior Vice President, Strategic Alliances and Outreach, U.S. Chamber of Commerce. And I ask unanimous consent that it be admitted at this point.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. It will be.

[The information referred to follows:]

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Washington, DC, July 14, 2022

Hon. MARIA CANTWELL,
Chair,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROGER WICKER,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports the nomination of Mr. Donald Cravins, Jr. to be the first Under Secretary for the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the only Federal agency of its kind focused on promoting the growth and competitiveness of minority-owned businesses.

Mr. Cravins has a solid and diverse background in public and private sector leadership, which will serve him well in this role. He also has a strong track record of dedicated service and engagement with the business community. He previously served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the National Urban League and as Staff Director and Chief Counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

We believe Mr. Cravins would be a great ally in our collective efforts to strengthen business in America and build an inclusive economy. We urge the Committee to expeditiously advance his nomination to the full Senate, and appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

RICK C. WADE,
Senior Vice President,
Strategic Alliances and Outreach,
 U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Senator WICKER. And I know Mr. Cravins will see this area as an area of untapped potential, particularly our rural areas. Now, moving along, the Department of Commerce has vast range of policy areas and programs in its jurisdiction.

And the Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs provides a key link between the Department and Congress regarding this entire portfolio. I look forward to hearing from Ms. Feliz about the experience she would bring to this Assistant Secretary position and her goals for this vital role, if confirmed.

So thank you very much, Senator Klobuchar, and look forward to the hearing.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much, Senator Wicker. I think we will start with you, Ms. Feliz. And thank you both of you. Look forward to hearing from you, and then we will have questions from the Committee. Go ahead. We have some members on remote as well. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF SUSIE FELIZ,
 NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR
 LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

Ms. FELIZ. Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. I am honored to be President Biden's nominee, and I am grateful to Secretary Raimondo and Deputy Secretary Graves for their trust in me to fulfill the duties of this position.

I want to thank my husband, retired Navy Captain Jose Feliz, who is in the audience today, for his unconditional love and support, for being a wonderful father to our two young sons, Giovanni and Lucas, and for the privilege of being a stepmother to his two older children, Genesis and Daniel.

I am here because of the love and sacrifice of my parents who left their homes in Ecuador in search of a better life for themselves and their families here in the United States. Together, they raised three children, including my sister Anna Louisa, who works in the private sector, and my brother Josh, who is a captain in the U.S. Army.

My parents chose careers in public service to give back to a country that gave them so much and to provide for their families. My

father retired after 27 years of service in the Army as a combat engineer. He fought in both wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in defense of our Nation and was a recipient of the Purple Heart for his service in Iraq.

My mother retired as a special education teacher's assistant at Albritton Middle School in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. They both instilled in me the core values of duty, integrity, and selfless service, which I will bring to the Department of Commerce, if confirmed. As a military child, I lived and attended schools in six different States, which exposed me to the cultural differences we have across our country.

I learned to love and appreciate the diversity of our Nation, but also saw firsthand the economic hardships faced by so many, particularly in historically underserved communities. This experience fueled my passion for advancing inclusive economic growth and opportunity throughout my career on Capitol Hill.

If confirmed, I am excited to continue my purpose in service to the Nation at the Department of Commerce. I believe my experience on Capitol Hill has prepared me to carry out the role of Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. During the last two decades, I have served as an aide to former Senator Clinton, a Legislative Director to Representatives Joe Baca, Al Green, and Karen Bass, and as the Vice President of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the National Urban League.

I am grateful to my former bosses for the opportunities they gave me and the legislative training I received, which will serve the needs of Congress at the Department of Commerce, as well as the needs of State, local, and tribal governments.

If confirmed, I will bring an in-depth understanding of the legislative process, a track record of working in a bipartisan fashion with Congress and the Administration to ensure policies are implemented faithfully, and experience leading legislative teams.

Finally, I have worked on several legislative priorities that are essential to the economic mission at the Department of Commerce, including minority business development, digital equity, economic development, and the decennial census. The Department has several mandates that I look forward to working with you to implement if I am confirmed.

Not the least of these mandates is employing historic new public investments to ensure all Americans have access to affordable broadband, workers have access to job training and wraparound services that create pathways to quality jobs, and women and minority owned small businesses have the tools they need to grow and thrive.

In addition, the Department's strategic goal of driving U.S. innovation and global competitiveness is central to revitalizing domestic production and increasing the resiliency and diversity of supply chains.

And its authority to facilitate trade abroad and issue trade restrictions and economic sanctions on countries that threaten U.S. national security and foreign policy interests has never been more vital.

As a former Congressional staffer, I recognize the constitutional responsibility of Congress to create laws and execute oversight au-

thority. My experience has helped me understand how important it is for Congress and the Executive Branch to work closely together to ensure the faithful implementation of these laws.

If confirmed, I commit to work with my team and all leaders within the Department of Commerce to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to requests from Congress, Governors, Mayors, and tribal governments, and to ensure the Department is working toward meeting statutory deadlines.

It is humbling to have been nominated to a role so critical to implementing policies and programs which are aiding in our Nation's economic recovery, as well as to protecting our economic standing in the world.

If confirmed, I look forward to serving as your direct line of communication to the U.S. Department of Commerce. Thank you again for inviting me to testify today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement and biographical information of Ms. Feliz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUSIE FELIZ, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF COMMERCE FOR LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. I am honored to be President Biden's nominee and am grateful to Secretary Raimondo and Deputy Secretary Graves for their trust in me to fulfill the duties of this position.

I want to thank my husband, retired Navy Captain Jose Feliz, who is in the audience today, for his unconditional love and support, for being a wonderful father to our two young sons, Giovanni and Lucas, and for the privilege of being a stepmother to his two older children, Genesis and Daniel.

I am here because of the love and sacrifice of my parents who left their homes in Ecuador in search of a better life for themselves and their families here in the United States. Together they raised three children, including my sister Analuisa who works in the private sector, and my brother Josh who is a Captain in the U.S. Army. My parents chose careers in public service to give back to a country that gave them so much and to provide for their families. My father retired after 27 years of service in the Army as a combat engineer. He fought in both wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in defense of our Nation and was a recipient of the Purple Heart for his service in Iraq. My mother retired as a special-education teacher's assistant at Albritton Middle School in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. They both instilled in me the core values of duty, integrity, and selfless service which I will bring to the Department of Commerce, if confirmed.

As a military child, I lived and attended schools in six different states, which exposed me to the cultural differences we have across our country. I learned to love and appreciate the diversity of our Nation but also saw firsthand the economic hardships faced by so many, particularly in historically underserved communities. This experience fueled my passion for advancing inclusive economic growth and opportunity throughout my career on Capitol Hill, which, if confirmed, I am excited to continue at the Department of Commerce.

I believe my experience on Capitol Hill has prepared me to carry out the role of Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. During the last two decades, I have served as an aide to former Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton; a legislative director to Representatives Joe Baca (CA-43), Al Green (TX-09), and Karen Bass (CA-37); and as the Vice President of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the National Urban League. I am grateful to my former bosses for the opportunities they gave me and the legislative training I received which will serve the needs of Congress at the Department of Commerce, as well as the needs of state, local and tribal governments. If confirmed, I will bring an in-depth understanding of the legislative process, a track record of working in a bipartisan way with Congress and the Administration to ensure policies are implemented faithfully, and experience leading legislative teams. Finally, I have worked on several legislative priorities that are

central to the economic mission of the Department of Commerce—including minority business development, digital equity, economic development, and the decennial census.

The Department has several mandates that I look forward to working with you to implement, if I am confirmed. Not the least of these mandates is employing historic new public investments to ensure all Americans have access to affordable broadband, workers have access to job training and wrap-around services that create pathways to quality jobs, and women-and minority-owned small businesses have the tools they need to grow and thrive. In addition, the Department's strategic goal of driving U.S. innovation and global competitiveness is central to revitalizing domestic production and increasing the resiliency and diversity of supply chains. And its authority to facilitate trade abroad and issue trade restrictions and economic sanctions on countries that threaten U.S. national security and foreign policy interests has never been more vital.

As a former congressional staffer, I recognize the constitutional responsibility of Congress to create laws and execute oversight authority. My experience has helped me understand how important it is for Congress and the Executive Branch to work closely together to ensure the faithful implementation of these laws. If confirmed, I commit to work with my team, and all leaders within the Department of Commerce, to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to requests from Congress, governors, mayors, and tribal governments; and to ensure the Department is working towards meeting statutory deadlines.

It is humbling to have been nominated to a role so critical to implementing policies and programs which are aiding in our Nation's economic recovery as well as protecting our economic standing in the world. If confirmed, I look forward to serving as your direct line of communication to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Thank you, again, for inviting me to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used):

Susie Feliz, formerly Susie Saavedra. Birth name is Susie Jerez.

2. Position to which nominated: Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. Department of Commerce.

3. Date of Nomination: March 15, 2022.

4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

Residence: Information not released to the public.

Office: 1805 7th St, NW, Washington, DC 20001.

5. Date and Place of Birth: September 1, 1978; Elmhurst, Queens, New York.

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) and the names and ages of your children (including stepchildren and children by a previous marriage).

- Spouse: Jose Feliz, Specialist Leader, Deloitte
- Stepdaughter: Genesis Feliz Jones, Associate Veterinarian, THRIVE Affordable Vet-Care, 28 years old
- Stepson: Daniel Feliz, unemployed, 21 years old

7. List all college and graduate degrees. Provide year and school attended.

- Cornell University Diversity and Inclusion Certificate, 2022
- George Washington University, Master of Public Administration, 2002
- The University of Denver, Bachelor of Arts, 2000

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, and highlight all management level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

National Urban League, 8/2013 to present

- Vice President, Policy and Legislative Affairs, 4/2018-present
- Senior Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs, 4/2016–3/2018
- Senior Director, Education and Health Policy, 8/2013–3/2016

U.S. House of Representatives, 9/2005–6/2013

- Representative Karen Bass (CA–37), Senior Advisor/Legislative Director, 1/2013–6/2013
- Representative Al Green (TX–09), Legislative Director, 2/2009–12/2011
- Representative Joe Baca (CA–43), Legislative Director, 1/2006–2/2009, Senior Legislative Assistant, 9/2005–1/2006

U.S. Senate, 8/2002–9/2005

- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D–NY), Legislative Aide, 1/2004–9/2005, Legislative Correspondent, 8/2002–12/2003

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Intern, 6/2001–5/2002

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

National Association for Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Congressional Fellow, 6/2000–8/2000

- House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt

9. Attach a copy of your resume.

See attached

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above, within the last ten years. None.

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution within the last ten years.

- Keystone Policy Center, Board of Trustees (2018 to present)
- Hispanic Lobbyists Association, At-Large Board Member (Present), Vice President (2017)
- GW Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, Advisory Board Member (2018–2021)

12. Please list each membership you have had during the past ten years or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization. (For this question, you do not have to list your religious affiliation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution.). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

Army Navy Country Club, 2018 to present

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt. No.

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities.

Obama for America, Virginia Latino Vote Fellow, 2012

Managed paid canvass team to register, educate and turnout Latino voters in support of President Obama's successful 2012 reelection. Managed a get-out-the-vote field program involving 110 Spanish-speaking volunteers in 23 high-density Latino precincts in Northern Virginia.

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Field Director for Pete Aguilar CA–31 Campaign, 2012

Recruited, trained, and managed volunteers & staff in the Pete Aguilar for Congress campaign in California's new 31st congressional district.

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

Not applicable.

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

- Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society
- The Hill Top (Grassroots) Lobbyist List: 2021, 2020, 2019

17. Please list each book, article, column, Internet blog posting, or other publication you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. Also list any speeches that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Do not attach copies of these publications unless otherwise instructed.

Not applicable.

18. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the name of an "alias" or "handle" you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

- Active: Twitter: @SusieSDC
- Active: Instagram: @susiedsaavedra
- Active: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Susie.saavedra.10>
- Active: LinkedIn: [Linkedin.com/in/susiefeliz](https://www.linkedin.com/in/susiefeliz)

19. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date and subject matter of each testimony.

Not applicable.

20. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

I have two decades of experience working on Capitol Hill as an aide to Senator Clinton, a legislative director to Representatives Joe Baca (CA-43), Al Green (TX-09), and Karen Bass (CA-37), and subsequently as the Vice President of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the National Urban League. As a result, I bring an in-depth understanding of how public policy is formulated, an extensive network across all levels of government, the private sector, trade associations, and civil society, and a track record of creating and then shepherding policy through its congressional life cycle. I have also led diverse, legislative teams for over 15 years. Finally, I bring a strong understanding of many programs being implemented at the Commerce Department including those related to broadband access, small business development, and skills training given my experience managing these issues as a congressional staffer and with the National Urban League. I am prepared to carry out the role of Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Commerce and am excited for the chance to advance job creation, economic growth, and opportunity for all in our Nation.

21. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

If confirmed, my main responsibility will be to work with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Commerce as well as all leaders within the Department of Commerce to respond to Congressional inquiries in a timely manner. I would also be responsible for managing a team of legislative and intergovernmental professionals who work with Congressional and intergovernmental stakeholders every day.

I have two decades of experience working on Capitol Hill as an aide to Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, a legislative director to Representatives Joe Baca (CA-43), Al Green (TX-09), and Karen Bass (CA-37), and in nonprofit advocacy as the Vice President of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the National Urban League. This experience has provided me with a strong understanding of the legislative process and the roles of Congress and the Executive Branch in public policymaking.

22. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department/agency, and why?

The first challenge facing the Department of Commerce is related to its strategic goal of driving U.S. innovation and global competitiveness. The Department will continue to be on the front lines of defense against foreign competitors and adver-

saries that engage in harmful and illegal trade practices, steal intellectual property, and permit cyber-attacks.

And the Department will continue to exert its authority to facilitate trade abroad and issue trade restrictions and economic sanctions on countries that threaten U.S. national security and foreign policy interests. Finally, the Department will continue to play a significant role in revitalizing domestic production and increasing the resiliency and diversity of supply chains through investments in American manufacturing, technological innovation, research, and development.

The second challenge facing the Department of Commerce is related to its strategic goal of fostering capitalism and growth to ensure all Americans participate in the 21st century economy. This will include employing historic public investments to ensure all Americans have access to affordable broadband, workers have access to job training and wrap around services that create pathway to quality jobs and women and minority owned small businesses have the tools they need to grow and thrive. The Department will also continue to employ place-based investments to help underserved communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic get on the road to recovery and build long-term economic competitiveness.

The third challenge facing the Department of Commerce is related to its strategic goal of providing 21st century service with 21st century capabilities. This will include effectively implementing new Department of Commerce authorities and investments, optimizing the workforce, and delivering exceptional customer service.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts.

- *National Urban League defined contribution plan.* The plan sponsor will not continue to make further contributions after my separation.
- *National Urban League defined benefit plan.* I will continue to participate in this defined benefit plan.
- *National Urban League bonus.* Pursuant to my employment agreement, I recently received a performance-based bonus at the end of Q1 2022 for services rendered in 2021. This bonus is \$11,200, worth 7 percent of my salary, and was paid on 4/13/22. I have reported this in the appropriate section below.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain. No.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflict of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee. In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflict of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee. In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest, and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflict of interest. Any conflict of interest

will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee. In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy. None.

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? No.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, or municipal entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain. No.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain. No.

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination. None.

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your department/agency endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority? Yes.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistle blowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures? Yes.

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee? Yes.

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so? Yes.

SUPPLEMENT TO QUESTIONNAIRE

May 18, 2022

Hon. MARIA CANTWELL,
Chair,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROGER WICKER,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

I write to supplement the committee questionnaire that I submitted to the Committee on April 25, 2022 in connection with my nomination. Below are corrected or supplemental responses to certain questions in that questionnaire.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

After discussing with the Committee the type of activity that this question was intended to capture, I am able to provide information on the following activities,

most of which are covered in my resume which I previously submitted to the Committee.

During my tenure with the National Urban League, I led the Urban League's policy team in drafting policy priorities and developing advocacy strategies to advance the Urban League's mission in education, housing, health care, broadband access, small business development, and job training.

I also helped to secure over six opportunities for the National Urban League leadership to testify before Congress to promote the organization's priorities around digital equity and inclusion, workforce training, small business development, and education equity.

I helped to influence the modification of the following proposals which are related to the Commerce Department's mission and have since been signed into law:

- *Minority Business Development Agency Authorization Act* under the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*;
- *Digital Equity Act* under the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*;
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) *Affordable Connectivity Program* under the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*;
- Small Business Administration *Small Business Community Advantage Pilot Program* under the *American Rescue Plan*;
- FCC's *Emergency Connectivity Fund* under the *American Rescue Plan*.

In addition, I helped influence the modification of the following proposals which are pending before Congress:

- National Apprenticeship Act of 2021
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022

I also helped draft comment letters on behalf of the National Urban League for inclusion in the Federal Register related to the following:

- Implementation of the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Docket No. 21-450)
- NTIA implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Request for Comment, Docket No. 220105-0002, RIN 0660-ZA33)

As I noted during my committee staff interview, I was not a registered lobbyist during the period covered, did not perform legal work for NUL, and did not represent them as a "client". Further, these activities did not constitute a significant part of my daily responsibilities and in fact took up less than twenty percent of my time. The majority of my responsibilities include managing a team, drafting policies, executing a schedule of quarterly policy briefings and an annual legislative policy conference, project management, research, and keeping Urban League affiliate leaders current on Federal policy changes.

Sincerely,

SUSIE FELIZ.

SUSIE FELIZ

LEADERSHIP ACUMEN Legislation Government Affairs Public Policy Advocacy Capital Beltway network Partnership development Alliance building Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Senior government affairs executive with nearly two decades of Capitol Hill experience working as a senior congressional aide and advocate for a national civil rights organization. Leader who has managed and coached diverse teams for over ten years. Bridge builder with a track record of success leveraging a wide network to advance economic growth and opportunity, including through policies that promote digital equity, workforce development, affordable housing, education equity, and small business development.								
EDUCATION Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Cornell University Master of Public Administration The George Washington University Bachelor of Arts The University of Denver	EXECUTIVE HISTORY <table border="0"> <tr> <td>NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE</td><td><i>August 2013—Present</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Vice President, Policy and Legislative Affairs</td><td>4/2018- Present</td></tr> <tr> <td>Senior Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs</td><td>4/2016- 3/2018</td></tr> <tr> <td>Senior Director, Education and Health Policy</td><td>8/2013- 3/2016</td></tr> </table> • Successfully leveraged an extensive Capital Beltway network across the US House and US Senate, the executive branch, in trade associations, the private sector, and civil society as a lead civil rights advocate and former senior congressional aide. • Represented the Urban League externally through strategic advocacy before Congress and the Administration as well as through targeted education and outreach to business leaders, advocacy organizations and other key third-party stakeholders and partners. • Led the Urban League's policy team in drafting policy priorities, developing advocacy strategies, and negotiating the favorable inclusion of legislative text in over 20 bills relating to education, housing, broadband, small business, and workforce development.	NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE	<i>August 2013—Present</i>	Vice President, Policy and Legislative Affairs	4/2018- Present	Senior Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs	4/2016- 3/2018	Senior Director, Education and Health Policy	8/2013- 3/2016
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE	<i>August 2013—Present</i>								
Vice President, Policy and Legislative Affairs	4/2018- Present								
Senior Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs	4/2016- 3/2018								
Senior Director, Education and Health Policy	8/2013- 3/2016								
BOARD MEMBERSHIPS Hispanic Lobbyists Association Keystone Policy Center	• Developed COVID-19 relief recommendations for congressional action and conducted advocacy efforts to appropriate committees, leadership, and caucuses resulting in seven new Urban League funding opportunities under the American Rescue Plan of 2021. • Secured over six opportunities for the National Urban League leadership to testify before Congress to promote the organization's priorities around digital equity and inclusion, workforce training, small business development, and education equity. • Formed a coalition and led advocacy efforts to advance a key Urban League education policy priority, resulting in favorable Administration guidance in support of the priority. • Collaborated on coalition advocacy efforts to increase equitable access to broadband and devices for virtual learning resulting in the inclusion of \$7.1B for the Emergency Connectivity Fund for schools and libraries in the American Rescue Plan. • Selected to speak as a panelist at over 20 national conferences, congressional briefings, and events on topics including education, housing, health care, and economic equality. • Managed Urban League engagement with business, trade associations, and civil society groups to advance the organization's broadband access and digital equity priorities.								
HONORS The Hill's Top Lobbyist: 2021, 2020, 2019									

SUSIE FELIZ

CORE COMPETENCIES

► Successfully led policy and advocacy efforts with both the legislative and executive branches as a lead advocate for a national civil rights organization, utilizing extensive experience as a congressional aide in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

► In-depth understanding of how public policy is formulated. This is augmented by a track record of working with multiple stakeholders to create and then shepherd policy through its congressional life cycle.

► Have been successful in helping to establish and transform loose coalitions of non-profit, for profit and civic groups into alliances focused on achieving common public policy goals.

► Through over 15 years of experience working on Capitol Hill both as a senior legislative aide (including as a leader of the Hispanic Congressional Staff Association) and subsequently as an advocate; have developed an extensive network across all levels of government.

► Intimate knowledge of nonprofit operations from work as a **senior leader for the nation's** oldest and largest civil rights and community-based organization with a network of 91 local chapters in 36 states and DC.

► Comfortable and effective in crafting and delivering focused communication efforts to local and national political figures and leaders.

US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Karen Bass (CA-37)
Representative Al Green (TX-09)
Representative Joe Baca (CA-43)

September 2005- June 2013

Legislative Director/ Senior Advisor
Legislative Director
Legislative Director

- Led diverse teams of legislative staff in drafting, introducing, and successfully negotiating House passage of 11 bills and resolutions, 10 amendments, and over \$60 million dollars in appropriations for three members of Congress.
- Managed committee work for members of the House Judiciary Committee and House Financial Services Committee, including preparing and staffing Representatives for over 300 congressional hearings and markups.
- Advised members of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, including as the president of the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association, resulting in a broad-based and diverse US House and US Senate network.
- Facilitated over 400 small group presentations with various constituents including trade associations, college presidents, state and local education officials, company CEOs, and local elected officials.

US SENATE

US Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton

August 2002 – September 2005

Legislative Aide

- Drafted, introduced, and secured bipartisan cosponsors and public endorsements for national workforce housing legislation.
- Represented Senator Clinton through public speaking at two national policy conferences and at business, social and public gatherings.
- Facilitated over 100 small group presentations with elected officials, community leaders, industry associations, and corporate executives on behalf of Senator Clinton **to advance the Senator's policy priorities**.
- Managed Hispanic outreach for a Senator representing a state with a high Hispanic population leading to relationships lasting over 15 years with national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organizations.
- Drafted memos and talking points to prepare Senator Clinton for over 50 official meetings, speaking engagements, committee events, and video productions.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much. Mr. Cravins.

**STATEMENT OF DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR., NOMINEE
TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR MINORITY
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you, Senator. Good morning, Acting Chair Klobuchar, Ranking Member Wicker, and my condolences to Senator Cantwell and her family. Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the first ever nominee for Undersecretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development.

I am grateful to President Biden for the nomination, and I thank him and Secretary Raimondo for their confidence in me. I am joined this morning by my wife of 24 years, almost 25, Yvette Puckett Cravins. She has been a tremendous partner and an invaluable supporter in both my personal and my professional life.

We have raised three wonderful children. Our oldest, Dominique Claire, just completed her first year, the Washington and Lee School of Law. My middle child, my son, Donald Cravins the III, Trey, will be a third year cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point. I am sure he is sleeping right now. He had duty last night, Senators.

And last but certainly not least is Chloe Denise Cravins. She is a fifth grader and loves playing her clarinet. In many ways, this is a full circle life moment for me. In 2009, I began working just two floors above this room as the Staff Director of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship committee. But my desire to work on small business issues began well before 2009. Early in my life, I developed a passion for the success of minority owned businesses.

My parents, Donald Senior and Patricia, have owned and operated a small business in Louisiana for over 30 years. And during that time, members, I witnessed the unique struggles of small, minority owned businesses, but I also realized the potential of the American entrepreneurial ecosystem. Despite obstacles, my parents, like millions of minority, American minority business owners, they persevered and afforded my siblings and me the benefits of our great country.

After graduating from Louisiana State University and earning my law degree from the Southern University Law Center, I successfully ran for the Louisiana State Legislature in 2004. As a State representative and later a State Senator, I represented hundreds of businesses. Many were minority owned, and many were located in rural communities.

In the period following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I assisted my constituents with navigating the challenges related to recovery and rebuilding. I became a voice for small business. I became a champion for business owners.

And as a result, former U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu chose me to become Staff Director of the United States committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship upon her becoming chair. While there, I played an integral role in the drafting and the passage of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, negotiating with stakeholders on both sides of the aisle, including the Administration.

I organized multiple bipartisan hearings and roundtables focused on and featuring minority businesses from both urban and rural

areas. I should note that during—that my commitment to public service also motivated me to join the Army National Guard during my time with the Committee.

In my current position as the Executive Vice President of the National Urban League, I have continued my work and my passion for entrepreneurship. The National Urban League operates 13 entrepreneurship centers across America, focused on the development of minority owned businesses, and I play a key role in the success of those centers.

With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Minority Business Development Agency is expected to increase its programing to support the Nation's 9.2 million minority owned businesses. If I am confirmed, the MBDA will operate as a data driven, policy focused agency aimed at increasing minority business enterprises' access to capital, contracts, Government services, and business opportunities.

MBDA will implement a significant research agenda to identify economic conditions, market trends, and opportunities that foster the growth and global competitiveness of the next generation of minority business enterprises. If confirmed, I will focus on three priorities.

First, I will assess the agency to determine its strengths and its challenges and begin responsibly building the agency to meet the full potential of the Act. Second, I will work to ensure the MBDA is providing the support and the resources minority business enterprises need to succeed.

Last, I look forward to expanding the geographic reach of the MBDA to rural communities. In addition to my family and my professional accomplishments, I am also proud of my military career. I currently serve as a major in the Army National Guard. If confirmed, I promise to serve the MBDA with the same integrity I have exhibited as an officer in our Nation's military.

Senators, I believe my unique life experiences, both in the private and the public sector, make me the right American to become the first Undersecretary for Minority Business in the Department of Commerce. And I respectfully ask for your consideration. Thank you.

[The prepared statement and biographical information of Mr. Cravins follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR., NOMINEE FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, and members of the Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today as the first ever nominee for Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development. I am grateful to President Biden for the nomination, and I thank him and Secretary Raimondo for their confidence in me.

I am joined this morning by my wife of 24 years, Yvette Puckett Cravins—she has been a tremendous partner and an invaluable supporter in both my personal and professional life. We've raised three wonderful children. Our oldest, Dominique Claire just completed her first year at the Washington & Lee School of Law. My middle child, Donald Cravins, III (Trey), will be a third-year cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point. And last but certainly not least, is Chloe Denise Cravins. She is a 5th grader and loves playing her clarinet.

In many ways, this is a full-circle life moment for me. In 2009, I began working just two floors above this room as the staff director of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee. But, my desire to work on small business issues began well before 2009. Early in my life, I developed a passion for the success of minority-owned businesses. My parents, Donald Sr. and Patricia have owned and operated a small business in Louisiana for over 30 years. During that time, I witnessed the unique struggles of small, minority-owned businesses but also realized the potential of the American entrepreneurial ecosystem. Despite obstacles, my parents, like millions of American minority business owners, persevered—affording my siblings and me the benefits of our great country.

After graduating from Louisiana State University and earning my law degree from the Southern University Law Center, I successfully ran for Louisiana State Legislature in 2004. As a state representative and later a state senator, I represented hundreds of businesses—many were minority-owned, and many located in rural communities. In the period following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I assisted my constituents with navigating the challenges related to recovery and rebuilding. I became a voice and a champion for business owners. As a result, former U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu chose me to become Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship upon her becoming Chair.

While there, I played an integral role in the drafting and passage of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, negotiating with stakeholders on both sides of the aisle and the Administration. I organized multiple bipartisan hearings and roundtables focused on and featuring minority-owned businesses from both urban and rural areas. I should note that my commitment to public service also motivated me to join the Army National Guard during my time with the Committee. In my current position as the Executive Vice President of the National Urban League, I have continued my work and passion for entrepreneurship. The National Urban League operates thirteen entrepreneurship centers across America focused on the development of minority-owned businesses and I play a key role in success of those centers.

With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Minority Business Development Agency is expected to increase its programming and support to the Nation's 9.2 million minority-owned businesses. If I am confirmed, the MBDA will operate as a data-driven, policy-focused agency aimed at increasing minority business enterprises' access to contracts, capital, government services, and business opportunities. MBDA will implement a significant research agenda to identify economic conditions, market trends, and opportunities that foster the growth and global competitiveness of the next generation of minority business enterprises. If confirmed, I will focus on three priorities. First, I will assess the agency to determine its strengths and challenges and begin responsibly building the agency to meet the full potential of its new mandate. Second, I will work to ensure the MBDA is providing the support and the resources minority business enterprises need to succeed. Lastly, I look forward to expanding the geographic reach of the MBDA to rural communities.

In addition to my family and my professional accomplishments, I'm also proud of my military career. I currently serve as a Major in the Army National Guard. If confirmed, I promise to serve the MBDA with the same integrity I've exhibited as an officer in our Nation's military. Senators, I believe my unique life experiences, both in the private and the public sector, make me the right American to become the first Under Secretary for Minority Business Development and I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration. Thank you.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used): Donald Ray Cravins, Jr.
2. Position to which nominated: Under Secretary for Minority Business Development, Department of Commerce.
3. Date of Nomination: May 9, 2022.
4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

Residence: Information not released to the public.

Office: 80 Pine Street, New York, New York 10005.

5. Date and Place of Birth: 07/31/1972; Houston, Texas.
6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) and the names and ages of your children (including stepchildren and children by a previous marriage).

Spouse—Yvette Puckett Cravins, Senior Counsel at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman

Daughter—Dominique Claire Cravins—Age 22

Son—Donald Ray Cravins, III—Age 20

7. List all college and graduate degrees. Provide year and school attended.

Louisiana State University—BA, Political Science (1994)

Southern University Law Center—Juris Doctor (1998)

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, and highlight all management level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

Don Cravins Insurance Agency—sales agent (1994–1996)

John Breaux for U.S. Senate Reelection Campaign—Deputy Campaign manager (1998)

McGlinchey Stafford PLLC—Associate Attorney (1998–2001)

Domengeaux, Wright, Roy, & Edwards, LLC—Associate Attorney (2001–2009)

Louisiana State Legislature—State Representative (2004–2006)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

Louisiana State Legislature—State Senator (2006–2009)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

United States Senate—Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee (2009–2013)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

United States Senate—Chief of Staff, U.S. Senator Mary L. Landrieu (2013–2015)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

Louisiana Army National Guard—(2011–2015)

District of Columbia Army National Guard (2015 to present)

The George Washington University—Adjunct Professor (2010 to present)

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee—Deputy Political Director (2015)

National Urban League—Senior Vice President of Policy (2015–2018)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

Charter Communications—Vice President (2018–2021)

National Urban League—Executive Vice President (2021 to present)—*This was a management-level job that relates to the position for which I am nominated.*

9. Attach a copy of your résumé. Attached.

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above, within the last ten years. None.

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution within the last ten years.

Please see responsive positions already reported in question 8 above, and the following:

Board Member—Energy Foundation

Board Member—Keystone Policy Institute

Advisory Board Member—Poder Latinx

Advisory Board Member—Louisiana Youth Seminar

President—Pinchback Group, LLC

Board of Directors—100 Black Men of Prince George's County

Chair—Alpha Political Action Committee

Board Member—Louisiana State University National Foundation Board

Chair—NUL Federal Credit Union

Advisory Board Member—ALLvanza

Board Member—aParent Miracles Foundation

Trustee—Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Trust

12. Please list each membership you have had during the past ten years or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization. (For this question, you do not have to list your religious affili-

ation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution.). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

West Point Parents Club of Maryland, DC, and Virginia—(2019 to present)

The Rocks, Inc.—Life Member (2019 to present)

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.—Life Member (1991 to present). This organization restricts membership to men.

100 Black Men of Prince George's County—Board of Directors (2020 to present). This organization restricts membership to men.

Louisiana State Bar Association—Member (1998 to present)

Louisiana Youth Seminar—Advisory Board (1998 to present)

Energy Foundation—Board Member (2020 to present)

Keystone Policy Center—Board Member (2018–2020)

Louisiana State University National Foundation Board—Honorary Board Member (2018 to present)

Greater Washington Urban League Guild—Volunteer Member (2018 to present)

Alpha Political Action Committee—Chair (2020 to present)

NUL Federal Credit Union—Chair (2021 to present)

ALLvanza—Advisory Board Member (2021 to present)

Poder Latinx—Advisory Board (2019 to present)

aParent Miracles Foundation—Board Member (2021 to present)

National Bar Association—Member (2020)

Washington Bar Association—Member (2020)

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt.

Elected to the Louisiana Democratic State Central Committee—2002

Elected to the St. Landry Parish, Louisiana Democratic Executive Committee—2002

Elected to the Louisiana State House of Representatives—2004

Elected to the Louisiana State Senate—2006, reelected in 2007

Candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, Louisiana's 7th Congressional District—2008

No campaigns have outstanding debt, and my campaign account is closed.

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities.

I serve as the Chair of the Alpha Political Action Committee. This is an unpaid position.

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

Troy Carter for Congress (10/18/21)

Troy Carter for Congress (02/17/21)

Klobuchar for Minnesota (07/22/21)

Warnock for Georgia (10/10/20)

Dr. Camron Webb for Congress (10/01/20)

Michael Blake for Congress (06/19/2020)

Michael Blake for Congress (09/30/2019)

Scott for Congress (09/23/19)

Alpha Political Action Committee (09/18/20)

Wes Moore for Governor of Maryland (10/28/21)

Friends of Anthony Brown (5/7/2022)

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

Army Meritorious Service Medal—2 awards
 Army Commendation Medal—3 awards
 Air Force Commendation Medal
 Army Achievement Medal
 Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal—2 awards
 National Defense Service Medal
 Armed Forces Service Medal
 Humanitarian Service Medal Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal
 Washington DC National Guard Homeland Defense Ribbon
 Washington DC National Guard Emergency Service Ribbon
 Louisiana National Guard Commendation Medal
 Louisiana National Guard Emergency Ribbon
 Southern University Law Center Hall of Fame Inductee (2018)
 Southern University Law Center Distinguished Alumni Inductee (2015)
 Advocate of the Year—National Bar Association (2020)
 Distinguished Alumni of Louisiana State University Inductee (2015)
 Professionalism Award—Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyer Section (2003)

17. Please list each book, article, column, Internet blog posting, or other publication you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. Also list any speeches that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Do not attach copies of these publications unless otherwise instructed.

Publications

“Entrepreneurial Inequity in America” (2022) <https://www.axios.com/2022/05/10/driver-of-the-racial-wealth-gap-business-ownership>
“How HBCUs help shape the entrepreneurial ecosystem” (2022) <https://www.thirdway.org/report/how-hbcus-help-shape-the-entrepreneurial-ecosystem#:~:text=search%20for%20funding,Specifically%3A,help%20entrepreneurs%20find%20external%20funding>
 Diversity Equity and Inclusion column: <https://techcrunch.com/2021/12/03/dont-let-new-hybrid-workplaces-keep-the-old-systemic-racism/> (2021).
“Smart Cities, Inclusive Growth: Harnessing the Enormous Economic Promise of Next Generation Networks” published in the National Urban League’s State of Black America Report (2018).
“21st Century Innovations in Energy: An Equiv Framework,” published in the National Urban League’s State of Black America Report, (2016).

Speeches and Presentations

March 23, 2011—Small Business Growth-Louisiana Economic Development, spoke on the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010.
 April 19, 2010—“The Small Business Committee’s Big Impact for Small Business” delivered to the International Economic Development Council.
 April 2, 2011—spoke to the California Black Chamber of Commerce about the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010.
 July 20, 2011—spoke at the U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce’s Advocacy Day on the Hill.
 April 13, 2012—spoke to the Greater Southwest Louisiana Black Chamber of Commerce on the State of Small Business.
 May 16, 2012—spoke to the Jefferson Parish, Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Small Business Awards Luncheon.
 May 31, 2012—spoke to the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce about the state of small business.
 July 27, 2012—spoke at the National Urban League’s Annual Conference on the Small Business Ecosystem.

Developed and moderated Small Business Day at the National Urban League's Legislative Policy Conference (2016).

November 3–4, 2016—created and moderated “Advocacy Essentials for Chamber of Commerce Leaders.” The event was sponsored by the Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame.

Testified before the Democratic Platform Drafting Committee of the Democratic National Convention—(June 9, 2016)

Submitted written testimony to the Republican Platform Drafting Committee of the Republican National Convention (2016).

Developed and moderated the Small Business Day at the National Urban League Legislative Policy Conference (2017).

May 23, 2017—spoke at the Edison Electric Institute's Business Diversity Conference about the state of minority business enterprises.

18. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the name of an “alias” or “handle” you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

Facebook—www.facebook.com/donald.cravins

Twitter—[@don_cravins](https://twitter.com/don_cravins)

LinkedIn—www.linkedin.com/in/donaldcravins

Instagram—www.instagram.com/donaldcravins

19. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date and subject matter of each testimony.

Testified before the U.S. House Financial Services Committee's Subcommittee on Diversity and Inclusion at a hybrid hearing entitled “The Legacy of George Floyd: An Examination of Financial Services Industry Commitments to Economic and Racial Justice” on June 29, 2021. My testimony focused on the importance of America's financial institutions in addressing the racial wealth gap and other inequities that persist in our country.

20. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

My parents have owned and operated a small business for over 30 years. During that time, I witnessed the struggles of small business ownership and the unique obstacles business owners of color encounter. Despite these obstacles, the fruits of that business were a large factor in my development and success and have shaped my passion for supporting minority-owned businesses. Given the newly expanded mission for the Minority Business Development Agency, I believe my background and life experiences in the areas of minority business policy, my management and budgeting skills, and as importantly, my leadership and integrity affirmatively qualify me for appointment to the position of Under Secretary.

Minority Business Policy. As a former state legislator, I represented thousands of businesses, many of which were minority-owned and many located in rural communities. In the period following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I became deeply aware of the challenges businesses face related to recovery, insurance, and resiliency. During my service as Chair of the Louisiana State Senate Insurance Committee, I developed a solid reputation for being a voice and champion for business owners. As a result of my work in Louisiana, I was chosen by former U.S. Senator Mary L. Landrieu to become the Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship in 2009. While there, I gained critical knowledge of the committee process and the importance of oversight and responsiveness to the United States Senate. I also played an integral role in the drafting and passage of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, negotiating with stakeholders on both sides of the aisle and the Administration. In my current position as the Executive Vice President of the National Urban League, I have continued my work and passion for entrepreneurship. The National Urban League operates thirteen entrepreneurship centers across America focused on the specific development of minority businesses. I play a key role in the oversight and success of those centers and the programs they operate.

Management & Budgeting. As a legislator, I collaborated with my colleagues to manage the state budget during challenging times in Louisiana's history. When I transitioned to Federal service and became Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I managed the majority staff and budget. I also served as an effective manager as Chief of Staff for former U.S. Senator Mary L. Landrieu. In my current role as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of one of the Nation's largest civil rights and community services organizations, I manage over one hundred employees and a multi million dollar budget. In each of these roles, I served as an effective leader, manager, and fiscal agent.

Integrity. Throughout both my professional and military careers, I have served with integrity. I have never been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or professional misconduct. I have also served honorably as an officer in the Army National Guard.

21. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

If confirmed, I will be responsible for standing up a new statutorily authorized agency. This will require management and accounting controls, the oversight of an expansion, and growth to meet the statutory requirements of the agency. As a former state legislator, I have experience managing a public budget and being a fiduciary of government spending. Also, as a former Staff Director, Chief Counsel, and Chief of Staff in the U.S. Senate, I have personally managed large teams and large budgets. In my current position, I serve as the chief operating officer of one of the Nation's largest civil rights and community services organizations. Lastly, in my current capacity, I provide oversight and guidance to thirteen entrepreneurship centers operated by the National Urban League.

22. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department agency, and why?

With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Minority Business Development Agency will be expected to increase its programming and outreach to the Nation's more than 9 million minority-owned businesses.

I believe the top three challenges also offer three areas of opportunity and center around: (1) building capacity; (2) ensuring minority business enterprises have the tools and resources needed to level the entrepreneurial playing field; and (3) expanding the geographic reach of the Minority Business Development Agency to rural areas.

Building Capacity. It will be important to retain competent personnel and recruit talented individuals who have a shared passion for the success of minority-owned businesses. If confirmed, I commit to assessing the agency to determine its strengths and challenges and begin responsibly building a new agency according to the spirit and intent of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Tools and Resources for Minority-Owned Businesses. Another challenge/opportunity will be ensuring that minority-owned businesses have the tools and resources to participate in the opportunities afforded by Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The Minority Business Development Agency must lead the Federal Government's efforts to promote the growth and global competitiveness of minority business enterprises, which face unique challenges. Access to capital is the number one impediment to the success of minority business enterprises. If confirmed, I will work to ensure MBDA's nationwide network of Business Centers, programs, and initiatives address the problem through introductions to a national network of lending partners. The Minority Business Development Agency, through its national network of Business Centers, must continue to provide management and technical assistance, capacity building, education, and training to ensure inclusive entrepreneurship.

Expanding Reach to Rural America. One of the challenges and greatest opportunities for the Minority Business Development Agency is the mandate to extend its geographic reach to rural communities. Although the Minority Business Development Agency has always provided a diverse array of services such as its Specialty Centers for advanced manufacturing, exporting, and procurement, I will work, if confirmed, to ensure it has a laser focus on rural businesses as well.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts.

I have a Thrift Savings Account related to my service in the Army National Guard.

I have a 401(k) plan with VOYA related to my employment with the National Urban League.

I have a 401 (k) with Fidelity related to my employment at Charter Communications.

I have a 403 (b) with Fidelity related to my employment with George Washington University.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee.

In the event an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee.

In the event an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee.

In the event an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest, and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official at the Department of Commerce to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered with the Commerce Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that will be provided to this Committee.

In the event an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with the Commerce Department's ethics counsel and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

In 2015, while serving as Deputy National Political Director at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, I educated members of the American Pro-Israel community and members of Congress on the importance of a strong U.S.-Israel relationship through foreign aid, government partnerships, joint anti-terrorism efforts, and the promotion of peace through a negotiated two-state solution.

In 2017, while serving as the National Urban League's Senior Vice President for Policy, I contributed to the drafting of the National Urban League Main Street Mar-

shall Plan. The Plan focused on critical infrastructure, education, and economic issues facing America and was introduced as a component of the Jobs and Justice Act (H.R. 5785-115th Congress (2017–2018)). Also in 2017, I was part of a bi-partisan effort imploring Congress to fund the Minority Business Development Act in the FY2018 appropriations and recommending that MBDA provide an annual policy report to Congress to address gaps in equity between minority and non-minority owned firms.

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:

a. Provide the name of agency, association, committee, or group;

Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board

b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;

April 22, 2008

c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;

On July 26, 2007, I filed a formal complaint with Louisiana State Police and my local police department notifying them a political adversary threatened me and my family with physical harm. Louisiana State Police visited with the political adversary, and he ceased his threatening behavior. On April 6, 2008, the political adversary reengaged in threatening behavior, and I again filed a formal complaint with the Louisiana State Police. On this occasion, he threatened to ruin my professional reputation as an attorney by alleging he was owed a fee for the referral of a legal client. A Louisiana State Police investigation revealed that his allegation was unfounded. To further perpetuate his threat, he presented this false allegation of professional misconduct to my law firm. The law firm was ethically obligated to report the matter to the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board (LADB). The LADB investigated the matter, found it unsubstantiated, and dismissed it. As a result of his threats and actions, he was arrested on April 11, 2008, by Louisiana State Police and charged with attempted extortion.

d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.

The complaint was found unsubstantiated, and the matter was dismissed by the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, or municipal entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

On May 28, 1992, when I was a 19-year-old college student, I was arrested for misdemeanor driving while intoxicated in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. On August 5, 1992, I pleaded guilty to the charges in the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The docket number of the proceeding was 92-1151. At the time of sentencing, I requested imposition of the sentence be deferred under the provisions of Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure Article 894. Article 894 allows the court to suspend sentences for misdemeanors, permitting the offense to be expunged from one's record if all the conditions are met. On November 6, 1992, the State agreed to accept my plea of guilty under Article 894 and not to oppose the sentencing under Article 894(b). The Court held that since I abided by the conditions of my probation, the offense should be dismissed under Article 894. The State also agreed to expunge my record if I did not receive another DWI within 5 years. Accordingly, on May 15, 1998, the DWI was expunged from my record.

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain. No.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

On May 28, 1992, when I was a 19-year-old college student, I was arrested for misdemeanor driving while intoxicated in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. On August 5, 1992, I pleaded guilty to the charges in the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The docket number of the proceeding was 92-1151. At the time of sentencing, I requested imposition of the sentence be deferred under the provisions of Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure Article 894. Article 894 allows the court to suspend sentences for misdemeanors, permitting the offense to be expunged from one's record if all the conditions are met. On November 6, 1992, the State agreed to accept my plea of guilty under Article 894 and not to oppose the sen-

tencing under Article 894(b). The Court held that since I abided by the conditions of my probation, the offense should be dismissed under Article 894. The State also agreed to expunge my record if I did not receive another DWI within 5 years. Accordingly, on May 15, 1998, the DWI was expunged from my record.

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain. No.

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination. None.

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your department/agency endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority? Yes.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistle blowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures? Yes.

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee? Yes.

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so? Yes.

UPDATE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Hon. MARIA CANTWELL,
Chair,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROGER WICKER,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

I am writing to update and correct my response to question E.4. on the Senate Commerce Committee Nominee Questionnaire I submitted to the Committee on May 21, 2022.

Specifically, question E.4. asks whether I or my spouse, or any business over which we exercised control, ever failed to pay any loan or similar obligation when due at final maturity, or whether I was ever more than 180 days delinquent on any such loan obligation. I originally answered "Yes" to this question. However, as I explained during my interviews with your respective committee staffs, after having reviewed my prior mortgage payment statements, I realized the correct answer is "No."

Thank you for considering my nomination.
Sincerely,

/s/ DONALD CRAVINS
7/26/22

DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR.

Purpose driven small and minority business policy expert. Former Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship with a proven ability to draft and advocate for legislation. Created and implemented hearings focused on the Small Business Administration and led panel discussions on issues impacting small and minority businesses. Former U.S. Senate Chief of Staff with a demonstrated ability to lead and inspire large teams while achieving measurable results. Former state legislator with a deep understanding of the "nuts and bolts" of local and state governments.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Business Policy • Federal and State Policy Analysis • Crisis Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional Briefings and Hearings • Staff, Project & Coalition Leadership • Legislative Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Business Policy • Public Speaking & Advocacy • Diversity, Equity & Inclusion |
|---|--|---|

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Serving as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the National Urban League (NUL). NUL is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights and community services organization. Lead architect of NUL's corporate DE/ESG Initiative and leader of the entrepreneurship/small business portfolio.
- Served as Senior Vice President of Policy of the National Urban League. Drafted NUL's Main Street Marshall Plan. The Plan focused on critical infrastructure, education and economic issues facing America and was introduced as a key component of the [Jobs and Justice Act \(H.R. 5785 — 115th Congress \(2017-2018\)\)](#).
- Provided [testimony before Democratic National Committee Platform Drafting Committee \(June 20, 2016\)](#) on the issues facing America's urban areas including, jobs, justice, education, and small business initiatives.
- Served as Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Key strategist in the passage of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. Negotiated with stakeholders on both sides of the aisle and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Act was signed by President Barack Obama on September 27, 2010.
- Authored and passed significant legislation while serving as a Louisiana State Representative and Senator. Sponsored Act 565 (2008) authorizing the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission to **reform Louisiana's juvenile detention centers**. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, served as the Chair of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Insurance and as the Vice Chair of the Louisiana Commission on Juvenile Justice.

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

National Urban League, New York, New York (Present)

Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer

- **Assists the President/CEO** in setting and maintaining goals, monitoring work, and evaluating results to ensure departmental and organizational objectives and operating requirements are met and are aligned with the needs and mission.
- **Leads NUL's** Corporate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives.
- **Assists** with the functioning of and relationships with 92 Urban League affiliates and the NUL Board of Directors.
- Conducts oversight and provides guidance for the thirteen Urban League Entrepreneurship Centers.

Charter Communications, Inc., Washington DC

(2019 - 2021)

Vice President of Policy and External Affairs

- Developed and implemented **Charter's** policy strategy on a wide range of communications issues affecting the company.
- Built partnerships with external stakeholders to further shared policy objectives.
- **Involved in the creation and development of Charter's** Spectrum Community Investment Loan fund. The fund is a \$10 million fund designed to make loans of up to \$1 million to minority owned small businesses within the Charter footprint.

DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR.

National Urban League, Washington DC (2015 - 2019)

Senior Vice President of Policy/Executive Director of the Washington Bureau

- Primary developer of **NUL's** public policy, research, and advocacy agenda.
- Expanded **NUL's** impact and influence inside the Capital Beltway by engaging with Congress and the Administration.
- Conducted policy and advocacy presentations to Urban League affiliates throughout the U.S.
- Created and conducted the Small Business Legislative Policy Conference and the Black Business Confidence Index.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (2015)

Deputy National Political Director

- **Conducted** educational briefings with candidates for federal political office.
- Organized political briefings and tracked advocacy activities.
- Educated new and current members of the American pro-Israel community on national issues.

U.S. Senate – Office of Senator Mary L. Landrieu, Washington, DC (2013 - 2015)

Chief of Staff

- Managed and supervised **all administrative responsibilities of the Senator's** DC office and 3 state offices.
- Reviewed policy and legislation dealing with issues of importance to the Senator and Louisiana such as disaster recovery and energy production.
- Managed a staff of over 70 employees and a budget of over \$3 million.

U.S. Senate – Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Washington, DC (2009 - 2013)

Staff Director and Chief Counsel

- Managed and supervised all activities of the Committee.
- Vetted presidential nominees for U.S. Small Business Administration.
- Developed small and minority business policy and legislative initiatives.
- Managed a staff of 30 employees and a budget of over \$2 million.
- Staffed hearings relative to the U.S. Small Business Administration and small business policy.
- Drafted opening statements, memoranda and floor statements for the Chair and members of the Committee.
- Developed and managed state events highlighting the services of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Monitoring Trust (2021 – Present)

Trustee

- Establish, supervise, and administer the federally created Trust.
- Receive and hold the Trust assets.
- Invest monies held by the Trust and pay liabilities of the Trust.
- **Engage professionals and other advisors.**
- **Monitor and** enforce grant requirements.

The George Washington University, Washington DC (2010 - Present)

Adjunct Professor

- Instructor in the College of Professional Studies.
- **Instructor** in the Graduate School of Political Management.

Army National Guard, Washington DC (2011 - Present)

Major, Judge Advocate General

- Command Judge Advocate for the 74th Troop Command, District of Columbia Army National Guard. Recipient of two Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal.

DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR.

Louisiana Legislature, Baton Rouge, La

(2004 - 2009)

Senator and Representative

- Served as Chair of the Insurance Committee, Vice Chair of the Retirement Committee and as Vice Chair of the Juvenile Justice Commission of Louisiana.
- Passed significant legislation in the areas of insurance and juvenile justice reform.

Domengeaux, Wright, Roy & Edwards LLC, Lafayette, LA

(2000 - 2008)

Associate Attorney

- Provided representation for injured plaintiffs involved in various types of accidents. Represented thousands of plaintiffs in complex litigation and class actions.
- Conducted research and drafted memoranda on various legal issues. Motion practice.

EDUCATION

D&I Certificate	Cornell University, Ithaca, New York Multicultural and Diversity Studies	(2021)
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Juris Doctor	Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, La. President, Student Bar Association Associate Editor, Southern University Law Review Moot Court Board	(1998)
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Bachelor of Arts	Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La. Vice President, Student Government Association Chair, African American Cultural Center Governing Board	(1994)
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HONORS

National Bar Association Advocacy Award	(2020)
Southern University Law Center Alumni Hall of Fame	(2018)
Distinguished Alumni of Louisiana State University	(2015)
Top Forty Under Forty, The Network Journal	(2015)

BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Director, Energy Foundation
 Advisory Board Member, Poder Latinx
 Advisory Board, ALLvanza
 Member, Louisiana State University National Foundation Board
 Director, Louisiana Youth Seminar



DONALD R. CRAVINS, JR.

AFFILIATIONS

Member, Louisiana State Bar Association
 Life Member, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
 Life Member, The Rocks, Inc.
 Board Member, 100 Black Men of Prince George's County

PODCAST, PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

"Entrepreneurial Inequity in America" <https://www.axios.com/2022/05/10/driver-of-the-racial-wealth-gap-business-ownership>, 2022.

"How HBCUs help shape the entrepreneurial ecosystem" <https://www.thirdway.org/report/how-hbcus-help-shape-the-entrepreneurial-ecosystem#:~:text=search%20for%20funding,.Specifically%3A,help%20entrepreneurs%20find%20external%20funding>, 2022.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion column: <https://techcrunch.com/2021/12/03/dont-let-new-hybrid-workplaces-keep-the-old-systemic-racism/>, 2021.

Hosted the National Urban League's Weekly Podcast, "For the Movement"; iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/for-the-movement/id1345148843?mt=2#episodeGuid=28294be978459a983492e76a257f58c7>

Authored "*Smart Cities, Inclusive Growth: Harnessing the Enormous Economic Promise of Next Generation Networks*" published in the National Urban League's State of Black America Report, 2018.

Presented at African American Economics – The Debt that is Owed: Solutions to Close the Racial Wealth Gap, Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference, September 12, 2019.

Panelist on "From Job Guarantees to Wage Subsidies: Exploring Policy Options to Promote Employment," The Hamilton Project at Brookings Institute, December 6, 2018.

Panelists on American Association of Blacks in Energy's Policy Summit Workforce of the Future Panel, 2017.

Diversity and Inclusion presentation to Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

Testimony at Democratic National Committee Platform Drafting Committee, June 20, 2016.

Authored a White Paper entitled, "*21ST Century Innovations in Energy: An Equity Framework*," published in the National Urban League's State of Black America Report, 2016.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much to both of you. Excellent job. And really impressive resumes and work and passion for what you are doing. I think I will start out with you, Ms. Feliz. We enjoy having Secretary Raimondo before this committee. She is always prepared, so it is probably going to make your job easier.

But one of your jobs, of course, is to update the Committee on legislation and our staff impacting the broad mandate of the Department. But in particular now with the passage of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, one of my big priorities in that bill was the broadband piece. Representative Clyburn and I jointly led the broadband bill that was the model for the bill that was incorporated.

And of course, Chairman Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker also led a lot of the efforts with regard to broadband. And the law, as you know, entrusts the NTIA to distribute \$42 billion in National Telecommunications and Information Administration, in grants for states to build out broadband to reach unserved and underserved areas.

Could you talk about how you are going to coordinate the work of the Commerce Department bureaus, State, local, tribal governments to work with us in the Committee and raise awareness of the investments that are available across the board.

Ms. FELIZ. Thank you for your question, Senator, and thank you for your leadership in passing this historic investment in high speed Internet for all Americans. I can understand why this issue is so important to you.

And I know that this Administration shares your commitment to ensuring all families and communities have access to high speed Internet and also to ensuring coordination among the various programs, broadband programs being implemented across several agencies.

If confirmed, I commit to working with you and your staff, consulting with the career staff in NTIA and respective bureaus, and to keeping the lines of communication open as well as ensuring there is transparency with respect to how the Department is implementing these programs.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Very good. Thank you very much. Mr. Cravins, Senator Wicker mentioned rural, and I have long been a champion for rural exports, actually, because a lot of our smaller companies in my State, and I am sure in his State, you know, can't have experts on every country in the world or speak the language, and then yet they have products that could do very well abroad.

And Senator Hoeven and I actually introduced the Promoting Rural Exports Act to establish a rural export center at the U.S. Commercial Service, very important agency, UCS, to provide support to rural businesses to help them export.

I think that MBDA currently operates four export centers across the country to help minority owned businesses. Could you talk a little bit about helping minority owned rural exporters access global markets, which is so much of our global future for our economy?

Mr. CRAVINS. Well, Senator, thank you so much for the question and thanks for your leadership in this area. As I said in my opening testimony, the rural piece, Senator Klobuchar and Senator Wicker, is very important to me, as someone who grew up in rural

south Louisiana. If I am confirmed members, this is a piece that I want to roll up my sleeves and get started working on as soon as possible.

A couple of things I will say about that, Senators. One, I know my reading of the Act is that in order for the MBDA to do this work, this expanded work, \$110 million is the floor for what that will entail. And so I will ask the members that if I am confirmed, you will see me again asking you for those resources, Senator Klobuchar, so that we can build on what the Act mandates the new agency will look like.

As far as exporting, as you have mentioned, there are four centers that currently exist at the MBDA for exporting. When I get there, I would like to assess what those centers do. I would like to address whether or not there are any gaps in the work that those centers do. Even though those centers are located obviously in four cities, I don't think they are limited geographically for the help that they can provide nationwide.

And so I would like to see what is the technology like so that if minority businesses in Minneapolis want to access and need help, can they reach out to San Antonio or to Miami or Houston or Arizona to do that? And if not, Senator, how can we work with your team to change that?

And so, again, if I am confirmed, I will work very hard to make sure that our rural piece talks about exporting, manufacturing, and really just bringing the resources to minority businesses in rural America, in some cases, for the first time.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. We are seeing a manufacturing skills gap estimated to leave over 2 million jobs unfilled by 2030, could cost the U.S. economy big time. Minority owned manufacturing firms represent over 10 percent of all U.S. manufacturing firms and report similar challenges. Quickly, in your opinion, what can Congress do to help minority owned manufacturers get the resources they need to grow?

Mr. CRAVINS. I think we can—thank you, Senator. I think what we can do is build upon the work, I think, that MBDA has been doing with the creation of these four and the existence of these four centers that are currently there.

I think we can use the power of the new Act, which allows the Undersecretary to take testimony, to do research, to work across agency, Commerce Department, as well as all administrative agencies to see how we can leverage the resources of the Federal Government.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you. And I am going to just follow up in writing on two topics local to me. Neighborhood development center based in Saint Paul, has really helped thousands of entrepreneurs in our State.

We are very proud of it and would like to get your views in writing on working with these community based initiatives. And then second, Mayo Clinic, also seeking out employees, has combined with the Rochester, Minnesota branch of the NAACP to work with our HBCUs across the country to recruit the next generation of doctors, nurses, and others in the medical profession.

So I will ask you about that in writing. I am going to, after Senator Wicker finishes, turning over the gavel to Senator Schatz who is here. And I want to thank both of you. Thank you.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Senator Klobuchar. I appreciate that very much. Ms. Feliz, as Legislative Intergovernmental Affairs Assistant Secretary, you are going to realize more and more how diverse the Department of Commerce is. And so you can be conversant about a number of issues.

I want to talk with you today about NOAA, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, and particularly their rules on a rather precise issue of the catch limit for red snapper fishermen. And it may be that you haven't really delved into this very much, but this is something that we are going to have to deal with the Department of Commerce and with NOAA.

There are annual catch limits in the Gulf of Mexico on red snapper. As a matter of fact, there are limits established by NOAA and by the Government that are deeply flawed to the detriment of our sports fishermen in Mississippi. If allowed to be implemented, it would reduce Mississippi's red snapper quota by 60 percent. Dr. Spinrad, the NOAA Administrator, has said, and I quote, "there is no way the proposed calibration would pass peer review."

So we have the NOAA Director actually saying publicly that this is flawed data. Now, on the other hand Ms. Feliz, the State of Mississippi has implemented a very detailed assessment called Tails and Scales, that actually involves catching a number of red snappers, weighing them on the scales, and providing that data.

Now, we had thought that NOAA would incorporate the data that—the good data that we have provided in terms of the annual catch limits in place of this flawed data, which Dr. Spinrad said would never pass peer review. That sadly has not been done. And it seems as though the agency, unless we make some changes, is going to be going to push forward with this flawed data.

And we just cannot tolerate that down in the state of Mississippi. So will you commit to getting up to speed on this issue, to making sure that the Secretary understands the importance of this issue, as I know she does, and that you all work with our friends at NOAA to make sure that this data is as accurate as possible?

Ms. FELIZ. Thank you for your thoughtful question, Senator. I understand how important this issue is for you and your constituents. Fishing in the Gulf Coast is a prosperous industry that has a huge impact on the American people that you represented in your home state of Mississippi.

Yes, Senator, I do commit to, if confirmed, getting up to speed on this issue. I know this is an issue you care very deeply about. And if confirmed, I will make a commitment to work with you and your staff to ensure that we are listening to your views and ensure that there are open lines of communication as well as transparency with respect to how the Department and Bureau is implementing this rule.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, ma'am. And I might add that one reason I am going to be leaving this hearing early this morning is to go and meet in my office with Dr. Spinrad. So, I think it is a multi-thousand, thousand job issue and millions and millions of dollars for our economy.

So thank you very much. Now, Mr. Cravins, I think it is probably becoming clear to both of you that you are going to be confirmed with flying colors. And so thank you, Mr. Cravins, for saying and agreeing to follow through on rural minority business development too. And I appreciate what you said about being a military veteran. And I note Captain Feliz, retired Navy Captain Feliz is here.

In my view, the United States military is the most successful civil rights program in the history of the world. And I witnessed it as an Air Force cadet answerable to minority superiors when I was in college as an Air Force active duty member, as an Air Force reservist.

So I appreciate the fact that you see that as a way to perhaps draw some of the retirees that have had this great leadership experience in this great civil rights experiment into small business.

We have got 9.2 million minority businesses now. Is it realistic to establish a numerical goal, do you think? And I realize this is coming out of the blue, but do you think there is some merit in saying by the end of x date we will have x number of million?

Mr. CRAVINS. Senator, thank you for the question and thanks for your leadership on this issue. Thank you for your leadership and the support of the MBDA throughout the years. So great question, Senator. And I think about it often. As a military man, I do understand that goals are important.

Without them, we can't measure successes and we can't measure failures. What I would say, and again, I can't speak for the Administration until I am confirmed, I do believe, though, some goals are important. What makes goals real or not is that they are based upon input. And so if we were to create goals, Senator Wicker, I would want to work with you and the members of this committee.

I would want to work with stakeholders. I would want to work with the men and women who have been doing this work for over 50 years and set realistic, rational goals. And then we could measure ourselves, Senator, so that when you call me before this committee again for an oversight hearing, or to answer some questions, I will have something I can measure it by.

Without it, we just really kind of just shooting in the dark, shooting blind. I think our minority businesses, you have got 82,000 in Mississippi. I think they would want us to have some reasonable, realistic goals for us to live by so that you and I could go down and talk about these goals in Jackson.

I could go to the acorn State, and I will go as long as it is not a Saturday, and it is football season. I will go to all your schools—

[Laughter.]

Senator WICKER. That might be the very time to go.

[Laughter.]

Senator WICKER. Well, we are intruding on the time of other members. Let me just say this, Senator Klobuchar, and to my fellow members of the Committee, if we can have a breakthrough in this area, I cannot express how important it would be to the economy of this country. If we could have a quantum leap in minority business entrepreneurship, that would be a game changer. We are looking to you.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. So well said. Well, Senator Schatz, we turn this over to you, knowing now that the Ranking Member said these two nominees are going to go through with flying colors. That is a lot on your shoulders, but I leave it in your hands. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII**

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Senator Klobuchar and Ranking Member Wicker. Senator Blunt is ready to ask questions and I would be happy to defer to him.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROY BLUNT,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI**

Senator BLUNT. Well, thank you, Senator. I am going to go to the ceremony in the rotunda in a moment for the last Medal of Honor winner from World War II. And that is why I am leaving, not because I have any lack of interest in these two jobs. I would say, Don Cravins understands a lot about the Senate, a lot about the Congress, and fortunately because of that, a lot about Missouri.

So I like that, and I understand your family commitment to the Government and to these issues. You know, this new job, and I may be missing some of your opening statements. Give me a little bit of a summary of what you hope to have happen here.

This is a job we created in this Congress in a bipartisan way to reach out in a way that we haven't before. How do you see yourself building on that job and how do you see yourself advocating for the businesses that we were hoping to include in a more dramatic way?

Mr. CRAVINS. Senator, thank you so much for the question and thanks for your commitment to minority businesses. As you know, you have got almost 70,000 in your great State. Senator, the reason why I was interested in this job was because, as you know, the MBDA was created in 1969 by President Nixon.

And every President, Republican or Democrat since then, has said we need a minority business development agency because minority businesses are facing unique challenges in our country.

Because of your leadership, this Congress's leadership, and President Biden's leadership, for the first time, you all said as well—and not only should the agency exist, but we need to grow it, we need to make it intentional, and we need an Undersecretary, real leadership, and an added level of leadership to make the agency work and be intentional.

And so for me, Senator, this is a dream come true, a prayer answered, to be able to do this work and to be able to do it at such a level in this Administration and with this Congress. My goals, Senator, are very quickly to, one, assess the agency to see all of the great work it has been doing, but to address gaps and challenges that maybe the current MBDA may be facing.

The second goal of my Senator is to grow it according to the mandates of the Act. I joke, I have never had a job with a better job description than this one. You all passed an 80 page Act not even a year ago, saying expressly, this is what we want our MBDA to look like.

This is who we want it to serve, and this is how we want you to serve it. And so the second goal, Senator, is to make sure that

the team and I understand the Act. And then last, Senator, we are going to execute.

And if we are fully funded, if we are funded according to what you all said we need, I want to expand to rural areas. I want to bring MBDA to a new generation. Our entrepreneurs of today don't necessarily look like the entrepreneurs of yesterday. Supporting those entrepreneurs of yesterday, but how do we build the next generation?

The Act calls for the Parren Mitchell Grant program to be created. Former Congressman Parren Mitchell, who, you know, was a big, big promoter of minority businesses. I look at that program as one, Senator Blunt, where we can go to HBCUs and other minority serving institutions and we can invest in the future entrepreneurs of this country.

So I hope you can hear the passion in my voice, Senator. I am excited about this opportunity. I am asking for your support to be confirmed, and I am ready to roll up my sleeves and get started.

Senator BLUNT. Well, you are going to have my support to be confirmed. And Ms. Feliz, I would say, you too have, you know, the background in the House and the Senate. I think that to have people in these jobs that understand the importance of communicating with the legislative branch of Government and helping reach out to be sure we are giving you the tools you need, and at the same time you understand the intention of the job you are asked to do.

And as the court recently put some new responsibilities or reminded the Congress, rather, of its old responsibilities, which was your job is to pass the laws, your job is not to leave a lot of things that people who are appointed to jobs have to try to figure out what you meant. And help us help you do that as well.

So, Senator Schatz, thanks for letting me move forward here. And best of luck to both of you and good to see you both here today.

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Tester.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JON TESTER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA**

Senator TESTER. Chairman Schatz, thank you very much. Mr. Cravins, thank you for being here and your willingness to serve. I was part of the five Republicans and five Democrats who worked together to get the bipartisan infrastructure package done.

And why that is important, from your perspective, is that it made permanent the Minority Business Development Agency. And as a result, the agency's capacity and reach have been expanded in what I think is a much needed way. I want to talk about natives.

Can you talk about how this expansion of capacity will help tribal communities, and what types of commitments you would prioritize in that regard?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you so much, Senator Tester. And thank you as well for your leadership and for your willingness to support the MBDA. Senator, the native community, the indigenous community is very important to me. It is important to me because, one, I grew up in a community that was extremely diverse.

And two, because of the work that I have done just throughout my lifetime. I have represented members of the community, and at the National Urban League, I am very, very attuned to inequities

that exist in underserved communities. First of all, Senator, what I would do if confirmed is I would look at the current programing that already focuses on the native community.

And as you know, MBDA has several programs that focus on the American Indian, Alaska Native, and the Native Hawaiian communities. And so I would work on those, Senator, to make sure that those are working, see if there are any gaps, and to fill those gaps.

The other place, Senator Tester, that I think we can work on to address the needs of the tribal, the native, the indigenous communities—as you know, Senator, many of those communities are located in rural communities, in remote rural communities.

And so, again, if we fund the MBDA at the levels that you all said we needed to be funded, the \$110 million, and we can really build out the rural entrepreneurship centers, I believe many of those centers could focus on the indigenous, the native populations.

Senator TESTER. Boy, I have got a lot of questions. I will just go with the first one that was top of my head, and I thank you for your answer to that question. Now, how do you make sure that that money has been actually getting to the ground and doing what you intended to do?

Mr. CRAVINS. Senator, I think it is leadership. The type of style that I have is you trust, you hire smart people, you hire good men and women to do the job, but you verify. So I trust but verify.

And so I believe that when you supported changing the role of MBDA, expanding the role of MBDA, creating an Undersecretary role for the MBDA, was that you wanted someone that you could call to the mat if necessary, to ask those questions.

And so, Senator, I am going to make sure that if I am confirmed that I lead that type of agency, I have those types of individuals who are working for me, and that I can come and talk to you to make sure it is getting done and being done correctly.

Senator TESTER. Appreciate that, Mr. Cravins. So I want to talk about the reservations that don't have the necessary physical infrastructure for business development. How do you envision helping them?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I envision helping them through technology. The fact that we are having a hearing today and you are paying remotely, I know my days at the Senate, even in 2009, that would have been unheard of.

And the fact that we are all now able to zoom and meet virtually, I believe we can amplify the existing resources. And as we build out, we can amplify resources and we can meet people where they are without having to necessarily build a physical structure in every rural community or have a physical presence in every single community.

I think through technology, Senator, smart technology, we can service communities all across this great Nation.

Senator TESTER. So let me ask you this. A lot of the tribes may not know you even exist. How do you reach out to those folks? What do you use? You are invited to come to Montana, and we will do a tour of all seven reservations, but the fact is, that is kind of impractical as it applies to all the reservations in the country. How do you reach out to them? How do you let them know what you have to offer?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you for the question, Senator. And that is something that I look forward to. I think one of the most pressing issues I look forward to. The MBDA has to amplify and change its appearance. It has to amplify its knowledge.

And I think that is why you all made a—codified it so that people do know that it exists. The honor of being the first, Senator Tester, is a blessing but also in a burden of making sure that that actually happens, that we make sure we get to people, meet them where they are, and that they understand that there is help for them.

And so, Senator, I am going to work very hard with the existing centers. I am going to work very hard with the Members of Congress. I am going to work very hard with—if we are fully funded to create rural business centers.

And also, Senator, I will mention the Act also said, if fully funded, we could create regional centers, which currently the MBDA does not have regional centers. I believe regional centers could also assist with the issue you raise about awareness.

As you know, most of our Federal Governments have regional offices and so people are able to access those offices nearer to home. MBDA currently does not have that.

Senator TESTER. Hopefully you are confirmed, and we will stay in touch. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Senator Tester. Senator Blumenthal, it is good to see you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Senator Schatz, Mr. Chairman. Good to see everyone there, and thanks for letting me participate remotely in this way. Mr. Cravins, I share your passion for support for minority owned businesses, and thank you to Ms. Feliz as well, to your commitment to this cause.

In Connecticut, what we have seen during the pandemic, as in many, many other parts of the country, I am sure my colleagues have said it, is the impact has fallen disproportionately on minority owned businesses, the hardship and heartbreak has particularly impacted them.

And I wonder whether there is any light you can shed on not only the need for capital, but also for technical assistance at this critical time. Because as you have observed just now, technology permits us to participate remotely in this hearing.

There are lots of ways that technology can aid or in other ways impede development of minority businesses. So technical assistance becomes very, very important. Wonder if you could comment.

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal, and thank you so much for the question. I am speaking from my lens at the National Urban League, where I have had an opportunity to see firsthand how the pandemic has disproportionately affected businesses of color.

What we know is that minority owned businesses were more likely to see decreased revenue during the pandemic and to experience a greater drop in employment than white owned businesses.

Black owned businesses closed at twice the rate that white owned businesses closed or their non-minority counterparts. And to your point, those businesses, and that is why I think the MBDA was codified, need help and they need assistance. And to your question about technical assistance, I would say that I think the MBDA through its current business centers, have been providing that technical assistance.

If I am confirmed, first day on the job, we are going to review those agencies, those business centers, and we are going to see if there are any gaps, any challenges, and I am going to have an opportunity to see firsthand how that work is being done. If we are fully funded, we are going to expand on that work according to the Infrastructure Act, the bill that you all passed.

We are going to build rural centers, we are going to build regional centers, and that is going to help with the technical assistance. And so, Senator, I am—again, if we have the opportunity to, if I have the opportunity to be confirmed, and we can fully fund the agency, I think we can address those issues.

We want to—I want to make sure, Senator, that when the next recession or storm or whatever hiccup or challenge that a minority business owner faces, that he or she are in a better position to weather the storm. And what we found during COVID is that many of our minority business owners were just not in great conditions to weather the storm.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Did you find during your experience at the Urban League that the Restaurant Revitalization Program had a beneficial effect for many small business restaurants? I found throughout Connecticut that restaurants survived and many of them are now thriving because of the Restaurant Revitalization Program, which unfortunately now has run out of money, and I am hoping will be replenished. Maybe you can give us your personal experience.

Mr. CRAVINS. Senator, thank you for the question. Yes, I did find that based upon my personal experience, that programs like the help that we provided, the Federal Government provided to small businesses did in many instances help those businesses make it. As I said, those businesses started out with less to begin with. Many minority business owners don't have a nest egg.

Many minority business owners, when the supply chains were hit, it really impacted minority businesses. Because when they raise their rates, it can lead to shuttering the doors. And so the programs that the Federal Government put in place to help those minority business owners, at least from my vantage point, I did see that it prevented many—it helped and assisted many of those business owners with staying alive, staying afloat.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks, Mr. Cravins. Ms. Feliz, I have a quick question for you. Are there changes that you anticipate making in your office, assuming you are confirmed?

Ms. FELIZ. Thank you for the question, Senator. I, you know, if confirmed, I look forward to learning about the processes in place at the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to ensure that there are timely and accurate responses to Congressional inquiries and oversight requests, and assessing those processes that exist, and then later making a determination if there are any that

need improvement. But I am very excited to work with the extremely talented and dedicated public servants that are already at the Department.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you very much. Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman, to you and the staff for accommodating me in this way remotely. Thanks a lot.

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal. Next is Senator Hickenlooper.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN HICKENLOOPER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Cravins, thank you for your service. Thank you both, Ms. Feliz as well, for your service and for being here today. Mr. Cravins, I applaud the minority business development agency's Enterprising Women of Color Initiative in support of the fastest growing population of entrepreneurs. If confirmed, how do you look at coordinating with the Small Business Administration's Women's Business Centers to help expand and support that initiative?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you so much for the question, Senator, and thank you for your leadership in this space as well, continued leadership. So as a former Staff Director of the Senate Small Business Committee, I am very, very familiar with the Small Business Administration and the wonderful work that they do there, and that Administrator Guzman has been doing since taking the role.

One of the programs that I have seen grow and really mature and blossom is the Women's Business Center program. And so what I most—one of the things that excites me the most about this new role, if confirmed, is leveraging the skills and the products of the SBA into the MBDA.

And the agencies are very different, but they complement each other very, very well. And so one of the mandates you put in this wonderful Act that you all created, this wonderful job description, as I called it, is you tell me, you mandate that I work across the Government to make sure that the minority business issues are being intentional and intentionally addressed. And so although the Women's Business Center program work for all women.

The way I see myself working, is to make sure that women of color, that their interests are being sought after and seen after as well in that program. And so I want to do that with the SBA. I want to do that with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Defense. I want to be the voice for the minority businesses of this country.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Terrific. Good answer.

Mr. CRAVINS. Thanks, Senator.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Ms. Feliz, and I am eager to make sure everyone is aware that you have your degree from the University of Denver, one of Colorado's proud assets. The Office of Space Commerce recently announced new director Richard DalBello.

The Office is undertaking a truly critical process of developing an open architecture data repository, which basically is a fancy language for a data base, to catalog orbital debris and to enhance our awareness of what they call space situational awareness, but the

geometry of where that debris is, where are the satellites, how do we make sure things don't run into each other.

This data repository is going to help maintain the sustainable and safe operations of civil space missions. And Ms. Feliz, I guess what I would love to hear you talk about a little bit is, are you willing to or are you committed to making sure that we keep this committee informed of further Congressional action necessary to support the growth and mission of the Office of Space Commerce?

It is relatively new, and I think in these early years we are going to need to have a close connection for conduit for information.

Ms. FELIZ. Thank you for your question, Senator. I understand how important the Office of Space Commerce is to you and other members of this committee. And if confirmed, I certainly look forward to learning more about the programs under the Office's jurisdiction and to keeping this committee and working with your office and members of your staff to keep you and this committee informed of any action needed to support this critical mission.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. Thank you. I appreciate it. It is going to be important. And then, Mr. Cravins, how does the MBDA interface with the SBA to ensure that minority business owners have the support and the assistance to overcome the obstacles that we know they face in terms of securing credit that all underserved communities have to deal with?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you, Senator. I think the best way we can interface with the SBA is to communicate well with the SBA. As you know, the SBA has lending programs. The MBDA does not.

And so one role that the Undersecretary and the team have confirmed could work on is to making sure that the SBA programs are hitting their marks, that their lending programs are hitting their marks, and that minority business entrepreneurs are having an opportunity to participate in those programs.

As you know, the SBA has contracting goals as well. And so I see a big role for an Undersecretary of Minority Business to make sure those goals, that minority businesses are participating in those goals, and that we are meeting those goals as a Nation.

The other thing I would suggest, Senator, is in the Act, that you have said that the Undersecretary can convene hearings on capital access, can do research on capital access, and those issues. And so I am hoping the agency will be funded so that we can do that work and we can build the agency to the agency I think you wanted it to be when you passed the Minority Business Development Act last year.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Absolutely. Thank you and thank you both. I think Administrator Guzman is going to be very well served by both of your tenure. Thank you. I yield back.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY BALDWIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you. I am now going to recognize myself for some questions. Mr. Cravins, Wisconsin is currently served by minority business development agencies located in Detroit and Chicago.

We are working on changing that and hope to have good news from the MDBA soon in response to the announcement of antici-

pated new locations in six states. As Undersecretary, would you make opening and supporting new offices in states that do not have them like Wisconsin, a priority?

Mr. CRAVINS. Absolutely, Senator. Thank you for your question and thank you for your support. Senator, I hope I am confirmed and in the job so I can come with you when we open that center in the great state of Wisconsin. But yes, ma'am, the Act is very clear.

Congress has said they want MBDA to touch people and meet people where they are in all states. And so, as I have said before, I think through technology we can do that. But I am excited to see, that the men and women who are there now are working to bring a center, hopefully, to your home state.

It is needed. And I look forward to working with you and your team to make sure it is successful.

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you. In an effort to promote economic resiliency among minority businesses, one of the requirements of the Minority Business Development Act is a study on alternative financing solutions.

One financing solution that has been proven to increase the resiliency of small businesses is the use of employee ownership. Employee owned companies are twice as likely to survive an economic downturn, and during the pandemic, they were three times more likely to retain staff.

As Undersecretary, will you ensure that employee ownership is considered among the alternative financing solutions studied by the MBDA?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you, Senator, for the question. And you know, last night I had an opportunity to read the Act again. This job description, as I call that, and I read it with my family, and I saw the section of the Act that you are talking about.

It says Agency Study on Alternative Finance Solutions, and it says we must conduct a study on opportunities for providing alternative financing solutions to MBEs and submit to Congress and publish on the website of the agency.

And so, Senator, if confirmed, looking very forward to conducting the study, following the mandates of the Act. And yes, ma'am, absolutely, we are going to look at alternative ways to get equity and financing to minority businesses and enterprises. As you know, it is the number one issue facing minority business enterprises.

Senator BALDWIN. Absolutely. One of the priority of the MBDA is to provide Federal assistance to minority businesses in the area of workforce development. As a strong supporter of Federal apprenticeship programs, I have been concerned that the number of black apprentices in Milwaukee has declined significantly during the pandemic.

A further concern is the discrimination that black apprentices report encountering upon entering the job market after completion of their apprenticeship. I raised this issue with Labor Secretary Marty Walsh, and I am confident that he is prioritizing the issue at his agency.

But given the mission of the MBDA, it seems like there might be an opportunity for a productive partnership there. Would you

commit to working with Secretary Walsh to connect apprentices to minority businesses served by the MBDA?

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you for the question, Senator. And as an Urban League—an Urban Leaguer, as you know, apprenticeships is a big part of what we do. And you are right, I am concerned with the numbers that I am seeing across our great country.

Yes, ma'am, I absolutely commit to working with Secretary Walsh. And I will go further, Senator, with other members of the Administration as well, and their Departments, DOD, the Department of Transportation, to work on apprenticeships across the Government.

Senator BALDWIN. Great. Thank you.

Mr. CRAVINS. Thank you.

Senator BALDWIN. I have no further questions. I don't believe there are any other members that have further questions. So this concludes our hearing this morning. Thank you, Ms. Feliz and Mr. Cravins, for appearing before the Committee today and for your continued commitment to public service.

Senators will have until Monday, July 19, at the close of business to submit questions for the record to the Committee. And the witnesses will have until the close of business on July 26 to respond to those questions.

Thank you, again, and that concludes today's hearing. And I am supposed to gavel out, but I am going to use a bottle instead.

[Laughter.]

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you, again.

[Whereupon, at 11:01 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

June 8, 2022

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker
Ranking Member
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker,

On behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), I write to emphasize the vital role that you and your committee play in the confirmation process and how it is a critical step in President Biden diversifying federal agencies. As our country faces unprecedented challenges, we have the rare opportunity to rebuild our country in a way that meets the needs of minority populations and reflects the image of our diverse American constituency.

As the CHC works to ensure there is robust Latino representation in the administration and the federal workforce, I write in support of President Biden's nomination of Mrs. Susie Feliz to the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Commerce.

Latinos represent the largest and second-fastest-growing ethnic group in the nation, making up nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population. Yet, there have only been a few Latinos to have held leadership positions at federal agencies. It is vital that there is representation and diversity in our U.S. federal agencies for it would bolster perspectives that are too often overlooked.

Mrs. Feliz is a dedicated public servant with nearly two decades of Capitol Hill experience working as a senior congressional aide, dating back to when she served as legislative director for then-CHC Chair Joe Baca. She also served as legislative director for Representatives Al Green and Karen Bass, and legislative aide to Senator Hillary Clinton. As a senior congressional aide in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, Mrs. Feliz has led diverse teams and advised several Members on a range of policy priorities. Additionally, she fostered staff mentorship, retention, and advancement as President of the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association (CHSA) in 2011. Currently, Mrs. Feliz serves as the Vice President of Policy and Legislative Affairs at the National Urban League. Mrs. Feliz's long history and experience working on Capitol Hill and subsequently as an advocate has helped advance the Urban League's priorities around broadband access in underserved areas, digital equity and inclusion, small business development, workforce training, and education equity.

Mrs. Feliz holds a Master of Public Administration from The George Washington University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Denver. For several years, she has advised Congressional leaders and heads of organizations on legislative strategy and is highly qualified to serve as Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs. We also believe that Ms. Feliz's tenure as Assistant Secretary will contribute to strengthening the Department of Commerce's mission to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity for all communities, including those in Latino communities and other underserved areas.

I respectfully request the committee to swiftly schedule a hearing and committee vote for Susie Feliz to be Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raul". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "R" and a cursive "aul".

Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



June 14, 2022

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker,

On behalf of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) and our national Hispanic-owned business community, **we write to express our support for Susie Feliz to serve in the Biden-Harris Administration as Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Commerce. We believe that this candidate's expertise and experience merits serious consideration and urge the committee to swiftly schedule her confirmation hearing and expeditiously report her nomination to the full U.S. Senate.**

Susie is exceptionally qualified to fulfill the duties of this role. She is a senior government affairs executive with two decades of Capitol Hill experience working as a congressional aide to four members of Congress and in non-profit advocacy. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the George Washington University, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Denver. Susie is also an outstanding civil rights advocate with an impeccable track record on many of the issues critical to the mission of the Department of Commerce, including digital equity, workforce development, and small business development. We especially commend Susie for her natural ability to lead and inspire through her work and dedication, as well as her proven skills in team management and coalition building. Susie comes from a family of public servants and will bring a level of integrity and sense of duty that is much needed in our system of government. Congress, this Administration, and the American people all have much to benefit from her willingness to answer the call to serve.

The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses that aggregately contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. We also serve as a platform for our nationwide network of over 250 local Hispanic chambers of commerce.

The USHCC has confidence that success in the appointments process will evolve if our new government reflects who we are as a growing nation. Voices of diversity, especially Hispanics who account for 63.5 million of the U.S. population, will only help to effectuate the change needed to improve quality of life and ensure economic vitality for all Americans.

The USHCC firmly believes that having a strong Hispanic presence at every level of government will allow us to fully reflect our diversity in Hispanic communities, including gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and ethnicity. Our country will benefit from the wealth of talent and commitment that lies in the professional identities of many Hispanic public service professionals.

Our demographic accounts for approximately 20% of all Americans. However, in our modern history we have never been equitably represented in the Presidential Cabinet, our Court System, or other key political appointments. This Administration has the unique opportunity to change this and create a systemic paradigm shift of inclusion and equality in the highest ranks of our federal government.



We look forward to collaborating with you and the Office of Presidential Personnel to achieve this important goal. Furthermore, we are proud to provide necessary recommendations of qualified Hispanic professionals who are willing and ready to serve our country. If you have any questions about this candidate or the USHCC's efforts related to political appointments please do not hesitate to reach out to us at any time, we welcome the opportunity to have dialogue on this important process in American history.

Respectfully,

Ramiro A. Cavazos
President & CEO
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



June 21, 2022

Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
United States Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science & Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science & Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Nomination of Susie Feliz for Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs,
Department of Commerce**

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

As one of the members who spearheaded the *Proyecto 20%* initiative to ensure that at least 20% of the Biden administration's appointments are held by Latino/as, I am also taking this opportunity as the President and CEO of UnidosUS to offer support for Susie Feliz to serve as the next Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Commerce.

In her current role at the National Urban League, Mrs. Feliz is responsible for directing and overseeing the Washington Bureau's policy team in the development of public policy priorities and advocacy strategies that advance the National Urban League's economic empowerment and civil rights agenda. She promotes the Urban League's policy objectives externally through strategic advocacy before Congress and the Administration as well as through targeted education and outreach to business leaders, advocacy organizations, and other key stakeholders and partners. Prior to joining the National Urban League, Feliz served as an aide to former U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York and as legislative director to Representatives Joe Baca of California, Al Green of Texas, and Karen Bass of California, and she also led the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association. A graduate of the University of Denver, Feliz earned a Master of Public Administration degree from George Washington University.

We know that Latinos represent the largest and second-fastest-growing ethnic group in the nation, making up nearly 20% of the U.S. population. Despite this, Latinos are the most underrepresented minority group in the federal workforce, making up just 8% of total personnel. To truly reflect the diversity of America, it is imperative that Latinos account for at least 20% of representation across all levels of the federal government. *Proyecto 20%* urges the confirmation of Susie Feliz as soon as possible and appreciates the committee's commitment to make her confirmation a priority.

Sincerely,

Janet Murguía, President and CEO, UnidosUS
 Domingo Garcia, President, LULAC
 Arturo Vargas, Chief Executive Officer, NALEO Educational Fund
 Hector Sanchez Barba, Executive Director and CEO, MI Familia Vota
 Thomas A. Saenz, President and General Counsel, MALDEF
 Ramiro A. Cavazos, President and CEO, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
 Nathalie Rayes, President and CEO, Latino Victory Fund
 Mark Magana, President and CEO, GreenLatinos
 Frankie Miranda, President and CEO, Hispanic Federation

P20% Coalition Partners



The Proyecto 20% coalition is working to ensure that 20 percent, or 800, of the 4,000 political appointments are filled with qualified Latinos and Latinas, given the importance of equitable Hispanic representation in all departments and agencies and at all levels. Her confirmation is critical to Hispanic-Americans, the largest (and the second-fastest growing) ethnic minority group in the nation, with more than eighteen percent of the overall population.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA TO
SUSIE FELIZ

Relationships with State and Local Governments. The Commerce Department's Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs has the responsibility to maintain relationships with Congress, as well as state and local governments. This is especially important as the Department continues to implement the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program created in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which will provide states and territories \$42.45 billion over five years to expand their broadband connectivity.

Question. If confirmed, how will you work with state and local governments in Arizona to ensure that underserved areas receive broadband access? Will you commit to working with state and local governments to provide appropriate and clear guidance related to broadband deployment?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working in partnership with NTIA to ensure that state and local governments receive proper guidance and a fair and equitable allocation of broadband deployment funding.

Relationships with Tribal Governments. The Assistant Secretary position also serves as the Department of Commerce's point of contact for tribal communities. Arizona is home to twenty-two federally recognized Native American tribes. The Department is implementing the Tribal Connectivity Program to enable more tribal communities, especially those in rural areas, to receive broadband access.

Question. Will you also commit to working with Arizona's tribal communities to ensure that tribal governments receive proper guidance and a fair and equitable allocation of Tribal Connectivity Program funding?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working in partnership with NTIA and Arizona's tribal communities to ensure that tribal governments receive proper guidance and a fair and equitable allocation of Tribal Connectivity Program funding.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JACKY ROSEN TO
SUSIE FELIZ

Tourism. Ms. Feliz, my Omnibus Travel and Tourism Act with Ranking Member Wicker—which we like to call the “TourBus”—is a top priority for a broad coalition of bipartisan Senators and national organizations working to support the travel and tourism industry in the U.S. and the critically important workforce it employs. Nearly a dozen bipartisan Senators are co-sponsors of the TourBus, which passed out of this committee with unanimous support last year.

The TourBus would, among other things, coordinate Federal travel and tourism policy across government by creating an assistant secretary position at the Department of Commerce, someone focused every single day on bolstering America's travel and tourism industry and coordinating a strategy across multiple Federal agencies—like the strategy I was glad to see the Department released last month and which my subcommittee held a hearing on earlier this week.

Question. Ms. Feliz, I am thrilled that Secretary Raimondo strongly supports our bill, including its provision to create an Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism. She has committed, before this committee and in private conversations, to working with me to help make this happen. So, if confirmed, can you also commit to working with my office and relevant committees in the Senate AND the House to pass this bipartisan legislation to support the future of the travel and tourism industry and our global competitiveness in the international travel market?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with your staff and the relevant Congressional committees on this legislation.

NTIA Coordination and Oversight. I was proud to be part of the group of Senators that helped draft key portions of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that Congress passed last year, including the infrastructure title—which included my Middle-Mile Broadband Deployment Act; NTIA's new Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment, or BEAD program; and key cybersecurity provisions. This \$65 billion-dollar investment is crucial for communities in Nevada, including those living in our rural communities. The pandemic highlighted the challenges families faced without access to broadband. Left out the ability to access remote work, telehealth, or government services, millions of families suffered. That is why it's important that we make sure these dollars actually go out to our unserved and underserved communities.

Question 1. Ms. Feliz, will you commit to working with my office to ensure NTIA is following the Congressional intent of the Middle-Mile Broadband grant program,

the BEAD, and the cybersecurity provisions laid out in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with your office to ensure NTIA is following Congressional intent behind the Middle-Mile Broadband grant program, the BEAD, and the cybersecurity provisions laid out in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Question 2. Ms. Feliz, Nevada has a significant amount of Federal lands, including military bases that will require extensive coordination with DOD and the Bureau of Land Management. How will you ensure NTIA works closely with their Federal counterparts to minimize delays and unnecessary red-tape in deploying broadband in Nevada?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that NTIA works closely across the Administration, including with DOD and with land-management agencies, to minimize delays and unnecessary red-tape in deploying broadband in Nevada.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. ROGER WICKER TO
SUSIE FELIZ

Question 1. Many of NOAA's Notices of Funding Opportunity for funds appropriated by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) include considerations of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Not only were none of those considerations included in the BIL funding, the layering on of additional requirements often discourages historically disadvantaged groups from applying for grants.

- Has NOAA examined how to make the grants application more accessible, rather than layering on requirements that were not included in the BIL? Did NOAA work with disadvantaged communities in developing the NOFOs and grant applications? If so, how was such feedback incorporated?

Answer. I understand the importance of making sure diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are considered in implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). If confirmed, I will work with NOAA to ensure this focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility continues in implementing BIL funding.

Question 2. In March, President Biden and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced an agreement "in principle" to replace the invalidated EU-US Privacy Shield framework. Before the framework was struck down by the European Court of Justice in 2020, the Privacy Shield provided the legal basis for the transfer of data between the United States and the European Union. American companies, in particular small and medium-sized businesses, relied on the legal certainty provided by the Privacy Shield to conduct digital commerce across the Atlantic. In the years since, companies and consumers have lacked this certainty and have eagerly awaited a replacement framework.

- Ms. Feliz, last Congress, this committee held a hearing on the invalidation of the EU-US Privacy Shield and its impact on the continuity of transatlantic data flows between the EU and the United States. In March, President Biden announced an agreement in principle to replace the invalidated EU-US Privacy Shield framework.
- The establishment of a durable and lasting data transfer framework between the United States and the EU that provides meaningful data protections to consumers, sustains the free flow of information across the Atlantic, and encourages a continued economic and strategic partnership with our European allies is very important to this Committee. Would you commit to keeping this Committee informed on any progress that is made to finalize the agreement between the United States and Europe to replace the Privacy Shield framework that was invalidated in 2020?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to keeping this Committee informed on any progress that is made to finalize the agreement between the United States and Europe to replace the Privacy Shield framework.

Question 3. It has been brought to my attention that after almost three months, Department of Commerce officials have not yet submitted Secretary Gina Raimondo's QFR responses for the Commerce Committee's hearing held on April 27, 2022, titled, "Department of Commerce Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Priorities."

- In light of this situation, how will you plan to insure timely QFR responses, and other required responses, to Congress if confirmed to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with the bureaus and Department-level offices to appropriately prioritize responses to Congress, while at the same time ensuring that such responses are thoughtful and responsive. I will also examine the response-drafting process to determine whether there are areas for improvement or increased efficiency.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

NOFO. In April, the MBDA published the NOFO for the Minority Colleges and Universities grant program which will provide funds to eligible institutions to develop entrepreneurship curriculum and training activities. The grant program, along with the MBDA, was authorized as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which specifically defined eligible institutions as “an institution of higher education described in any of paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a))”, includes Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) along with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (NHSIs) and Alaska Native Serving Institutions (ANSIs). However, in the NOFO, MBPA decided to exclude PBIs and AANAPISIs in their definition of eligible minority serving institutions.

Question 1. Please describe the unique role and impact of PBIs and ANNAPISIs have in higher education.

Answer. Minority Serving Institutions are an integral part of our U.S. higher education system. Predominantly Black Institutions were first recognized by Congress through the Predominantly Black Institution Act of 2007. As that law states, PBIs are essential and often mission-driven in providing postsecondary access and training to low- and middle-income black and other minority students. In addition, the institutional category of PBIs officially emerged in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, the bill that reauthorized the Higher Education Act of 1965. Unlike Historically Black Colleges and Universities, a group of institutions that initially came into being in 1837, which are primarily four-year institutions, and 1890 land-grant institutions established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890; the vast majority of PBIs are public two-year colleges.

PBIs are concentrated in the South, Midwest, and East, predominantly in urban areas. While most PBIs enroll a student body that is more than 50 percent black, some have a student body that is as much as 75 percent black. White and Latino students are usually the second largest racial group enrolled. Like other MSIs, PBIs serve a population of students who are mainly low-income and are often the first in their families to attend college.

Additionally, PBIs account for 3 percent of all postsecondary institutions, yet enroll 9 percent of all Black college students. Given the changing demographics of the United States and the role of higher education in promoting upward mobility, PBIs play a critical role in their communities by providing access and credentials to an increasingly diverse student body.

The role of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) and their contributions to the success of AAPI college students is also a vital one. AANAPISIs received their designation as an MSI in 2007 through the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, which expanded in 2008 under the Higher Education Opportunity Act. The AAPI population is composed of over 48 ethnicities that are diverse in socioeconomic class, language, religion, educational attainment, and migration history, among other attributes. AAPIs are among the fastest-growing minority groups in the United States, with a predicted population increase of 125 percent (to over 40.1 million) by 2060. Given these increasing numbers and the complex, heterogeneous composition of the AAPI population, higher education institutions must have a deeper understanding of AAPI students and their needs.

Question 2. Please describe how MBE benefit from MSIs, including PBIs and ANNAPISIs.

Answer. MBEs benefit from MSIs, such as PBIs, AANAPISIs, and NHSIs, because MSIs serve and enrich their communities, not just their students. MBEs can access talent, skills, and technology support from MSIs. Specifically, MBEs can find employees or partners who look like them and understand their culture, heritage, and, potentially, linguistic abilities.

Similarly, PBIs and AANAPISIs are helping to train and develop the next generation of Black, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA & NHPI),

and other indigenous entrepreneurs, which would mean more established MBEs in our communities and decreasing the MBE to non-MBE gap in our economy.

Question 3. If confirmed, will you continue to exclude PBIs and AANAPISIs from MBDA programs and funding opportunities?

Answer. If confirmed, I can commit to you that PBIs and AANAPISIs will be included in MBDA programs and funding opportunities.

It is my understanding that the law requires AANAPISIs to be included within the groups eligible to receive MBDA's services. The language of Executive Order 11625 and 15 CFR part 1400 include Asian Pacific Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Asian Indians, and notes that MBDA serves these groups in its MBDA Business Center program and other programs. However, I know that AANAPISIs were not included in MBDA's recent Minority Colleges and Universities Notice of Funding Opportunity because the Notice is based on the congressional language and committee report identifying the specific colleges and universities that should be eligible to compete for the funding, which included Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (NHSIs), and Alaska Native Serving Institutions (ANSIs).

If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to work with your team to ensure that MBDA programs and funding opportunities are inclusive of more MSIs that serve students of color.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JACKY ROSEN TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

Entrepreneurial Development Assistance For Underrepresented Students. In Nevada, minority-owned businesses are an integral part of our communities, but unfortunately the pandemic posed a significant challenge to their continued success. It is vital that minority-owned businesses have access to adequate resources to foster growth, and Congress must begin these investments earlier, providing aid to startups and entrepreneurs. That's why I introduced the Minority Entrepreneurship Grant Program Act with Senator Tillis. This bipartisan legislation would establish a Minority Entrepreneurship Grant Program to award grants to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to promote and increase opportunities for minority student business ownership and entrepreneurship.

Question 1. Mr. Cravins, how important is it to extend outreach and mentorship to communities of color to jumpstart more entrepreneurship?

Answer. It is of the utmost importance to extend outreach and mentorship to communities of color to promote and grow the idea of entrepreneurship. As you are likely aware, while growth rates in entrepreneurship are increasing compared to rates of participation in the labor market, there are systemic challenges for minority entrepreneurs. HBCUs and MSIs have historically played an integral role in supporting communities of color, giving graduates the tools and experience to enrich civic and economic life/engagement. HBCUs and MSIs are important engines of economic growth and public service and are proven pillars for intergenerational advancement. However, often, these institutions lag sufficient resourcing. I understand that MBDA currently plays a role in supporting HBCUs and MSIs through their investments and if confirmed, I will continue to connect with and engage HBCUs and MSIs across the country to see how we can further cultivate the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Outside of engagement with MSIs, MBDA also has several pilot programs that focus on the unique needs of minority entrepreneurs—such as the Enterprising Women of Color Initiative and the Formerly Incarcerated Entrepreneurship Program. In fact, the MBDA Act even calls for the development of Rural Business Centers to be created around the country in connection with MSIs; investments like this help jumpstart entrepreneurship for communities that are too often left behind. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to partner with you and the Committee to discuss outreach and mentorship opportunities to help jumpstart minority entrepreneurship.

Question 2. Mr. Cravins, under your leadership, how will the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) address the needs of aspiring young student entrepreneurs at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)? And how will you support greater diversity in entrepreneurship?

Answer. I think implementing the MBDA Act as you and your collegiate envisioned will be a crucial first step. I understand that MBDA's current grants to MSIs

invest in the next generation of students and young entrepreneurs who will help lead the way. The current program provides funding for entrepreneurship programs, including curricula, courses, seminars, and replicable products and tools, that teach students how to develop businesses and commercialize products and services in the domestic and global marketplace. The MBDA Act calls for an expansion of this work through national coverage of MBDA's traditional Business Centers and implementation of the Rural Business Center program—which requires partnership with MSIs. I confirmed, commit to working with the team at MBDA and of course, you and the Committee, to understand other ways MBDA can support MSIs across the country.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

Minority Business Development Agency Codification. The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) was codified under the provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The legislation also expands MBDA's national footprint by authorizing regional offices and creates the Undersecretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development.

Question 1. If confirmed, how will you strengthen and expand the Minority Business Development Agency consistent with the IIJA?

Answer. Through the MBDA Act—Congress provided valuable tools for strengthening and expanding the MBDA in a number of ways. First, the Act calls for MBDA to meet our communities where they are. If appropriated the full funding amount, MBDA will be able to implement the (1) Rural Business Center Program, (2) establish regional offices, and (3) invest in community-based organizations already fighting for MBEs and minority entrepreneurs. Second, the Act provides MBDA with the authority to coordinate across the Federal government on matters involving minority businesses. Lastly, the Act codifies and expands MBDA's current programs, including the flagship Business Centers and investments in Minority Serving Institutions through the Parren J. Mitchell Program.

Question 2. How will MBDA determine where to locate regional offices? If confirmed, are there any specific criteria you intend to use?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the career and political staff at MBDA to understand the work that is being done in this space. I will also consult with you and other members of the Committee on how best to establish a presence to meet the needs of your constituents.

As you may be aware, MBDA previously ran and operated various regional offices throughout the Nation before being eliminated by a previous administration.

Now, with the passage of the MBDA Act of 2021, it is my understanding the law requires the Agency to establish a regional office for each of the regions of the United States.

Furthermore, according to the Act, the purpose of these regional offices will be to expand the reach of the Agency and enable the Federal Government to better serve the needs of minority business enterprises in the region. This would be accomplished by (1) working with MBDA Centers that are in that region; (2) working with resource and lending partners of other appropriate Federal agencies that are in that region; (3) seeking out opportunities to collaborate with regional public and private programs that focus on minority business enterprises; and (4) promoting business continuity and preparedness, among other priorities provided by the Act.

If confirmed, I intend to fully carry out the law as envisioned by Congress.

Small Business Opportunities on Tribal Lands. Tribal communities face unique challenges in starting new businesses. In northern Arizona, the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe continue to face repercussions from the closure of Navajo Generating Station (NGS) near Page, and the resulting closure of the Kayenta Mine that supplied NGS. The power plant and mine provided stable, good-paying jobs to many tribal members.

Question. How can the MBDA provide assistance to tribal members looking to open their own small business in economically distressed communities?

Answer. Thank you so much for this question. If confirmed, I will continue the work MBDA is doing through American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian (AIANNH) and MSI programs to further support Tribal and native business growth by addressing strategic initiatives such as (1) innovation and entrepreneurship, (2) strategic planning, and (3) transformative projects.

I also believe that, if fully funded, the MBDA will implement a Rural Business Center Program that can and will assist Tribal and indigenous communities and entrepreneurs. These programs are operated by community-based organizations and/

or MSIs that are engrained in the community and understand the unique challenges they face.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. RAY BEN LUJÁN TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

FY 2023 Budget. The Minority Business Development Agency serves a vital role uplifting minority owned and operated businesses, like the many that power New Mexico's economy. Last year, I was proud to work the Ranking Member and other members of this Committee to fully authorize the Minority Business Development Agency, making it permanent in statute for the first time in its 50-year history. I'm glad that Mr. Cravins has been nominated as the first undersecretary in the Agency's history, and am confident that the experience and expertise he brings to the Agency will allow them to expand and grow pursuant to the mandate in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The bipartisan infrastructure bill authorized \$110 million to enable the Agency to fully meet its mission and reach every corner of our Nation to uplift and support minority owned and operated businesses. This includes establishing regional centers, and standing up a new program to establish Rural Business Centers at minority-serving institutions. During the FY22 funding cycle, Congress appropriated only \$55 million—half of what was authorized. As a result, the Agency did not have sufficient funding to stand up several vital programs established in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, including the Rural Business Center program.

Question. Mr. Cravins, can you speak to the importance of MBDA receiving the full \$110 million for Fiscal Year 2023, as requested by President Biden, to carry out its mission?

Answer. As you know, the \$110 million requested by President Biden for Fiscal Year 2023 is identical to the authorization level set by this Committee in the MBDA Act. The very same Act that created the Under Secretary position I am being considered for. This funding is profoundly important to implementing the MBDA Act and carrying out the mission of MBDA as envisioned by Congress. This mission includes (1) strengthening the administration of existing and new programs, (2) providing technical assistance and research opportunities to our business centers and enterprises, (3) hiring additional staff or otherwise increasing capacity to reestablish regional offices, and (4) establishing Rural Business Centers which you have helped champion. The Rural Business Centers would partner with Minority Serving Institutions around the country to support MBEs which is particularly close to my heart as a person born in rural Louisiana. These are just a few of the tenants of the MBDA Act that are critical to MBDA's ability to support communities around this country and are contingent on funding.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. RAPHAEL WARNOCK TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

MBDI. Minority and community development financial institutions are time-honored institutional forms. Only 2.6 percent of insured institutions are currently designated as Minority Deposit Institutions (MDIs). Since 2014, the number of MDIs has decreased across the United States from 175 to 142. MDI community banks have generally decreased since 2001 with only 20 currently in the United States, which is less than half of the number that existed in 2001.

Question. What role do you see the Minority Business Development Agency in supporting MDIs? How will you partner with other Federal agencies to support MDIs going forward?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staff on this very important issue and commit to engaging with the career and political staff at MBDA to discuss the importance of MDIs as they play a vital role in assisting minority and underserved communities and are resources to foster the economic viability of these communities.

Today, access to capital continues to be the number one barrier for minority businesses. The MBDA Act gives MBDA the ability to coordinate across Federal agencies like the Department of Treasury on matters impacting MBEs. Minority depository institutions (MDIs) are federally insured depository institutions for which 51 percent or more of the voting stock is owned by minority individuals, and thus, are MBEs. Just as with all MBEs, the Agency will ensure that MDIs are represented in intergovernmental/agency discussions and prioritized to ensure their success and growth in an everchanging market and economy.

Federal Suppliers. The U.S. Federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. Federal government purchases can have a substantial impact on the success of small businesses. The current government target is that 5 percent of all procurement should go to small, disadvantaged businesses, a significant portion of which are minority-owned.

Question. What role do you see the Minority Business Development Agency in encouraging a diverse base of Federal suppliers?

Answer. It is my understanding that MBDA already plays a role in this space, specifically through the Business Center & Specialty Center Programs which provide technical assistance to MBEs seeking Federal contracts. The MBDA also funds a Federal Procurement Center which is located right here in Washington, D.C. The MBDA Act also provides MBDA with the authority to coordinate across the Federal government on matters involving MBEs, including Federal procurement. If confirmed, I commit to working with the team on this matter and leveraging the tools Congress provided MBDA through the MBDA Act. If fully funded, MBDA regional offices will allow the Agency to build and strengthen relationships with state and local officials and work to make MBEs more competitive for federally funded programs at the local level.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. ROGER WICKER TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

Question 1. In June 2018, the MBDA awarded nearly \$2 million in grants to four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). These grants allowed HBCUs to increase their ability to compete for and receive Federal research and development funds, establish partnerships with Federal laboratories and other technology resources, increase STEM entrepreneurship, and compete for Federal contracts. At NOAA, for example, none of the agency's 19 cooperative institutes is at an HBCU.

- Mr. Cravins, I have been working with Federal agencies to increase participation of HBCUs in Federal research programs. I am particularly concerned with the fact that none of NOAA's Cooperative Research institutes are located at an HBCU. The MBDA has a history of working with HBCUs to increase their ability to compete for Federal research and development funds.
- Will you commit to continue working with me to ensure that Federal research agencies are working with HBCUs?

Answer. Yes. Research on Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) is sorely lacking and HBCUs, as well as other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) can play an important role in working with Federal research agencies, including MBDA, in closing this gap. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your team on this issue.

Question 2. The MBDA has previously worked with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to share knowledge and develop strategies to increase the number of minority businesses participating in NIST programs, services, and contracting opportunities. NIST's mission is to develop and promote measurements, standards, and technology to enhance productivity, facilitate trade, and improve the quality of life. NIST runs both the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program (MEP), and the Manufacturing USA institutes.

Mr. Cravins, what role do you see NIST and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) network playing in supporting minority businesses? How can the MBDA help identify those small-to-mid sized minority businesses that could benefit from the MEP programs and services?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with fellow Commerce bureaus on advancing MBE and minority entrepreneurs' interests. Through MBDA's existing programs, the Agency works with many MBEs, including those in manufacturing. MBDA also has a number of Specialty Centers focused on providing technical assistance to MBEs in advanced manufacturing.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN TO
DONALD CRAVINS, JR.

Question 1. The Covid-19 pandemic took a significant toll on small businesses across the country. Through no fault of their own, many of them did not survive and were forced to close. Fortunately, we have seen a resurgence, with many people shifting careers to take a step towards entrepreneurship.

However, not all places are experiencing this. In low-income, rural areas, it is increasingly hard for entrepreneurs to get the support they need to get their businesses off the ground.

- How do you plan to ensure minority business owners in rural America receive the help they need?
- How can Congress best support and reach entrepreneurs in low-income areas?

Answer. As I mentioned in my opening testimony, rural communities are very important to me as someone who grew up in rural south Louisiana. You are absolutely correct that lowincome communities were, and still are, disproportionately impacted by the economic toll of the pandemic and, in many ways, are precisely a community of entrepreneurs that MBDA is positioned to help uplift. The MBDA Act provides a clear framework for how this Committee expects MBDA to expand its presence in rural communities, which includes the creation of Rural Business Centers across the country by partnering with Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) as well as regional offices to provide direct assistance to areas that need tailored support to fit their community needs. If confirmed, I will work with you and your colleagues to secure the necessary funding and ultimately implement these important tenants of the MBDA Act.

Finally, I plan to listen. I would like to hear directly from rural communities about what more MBDA can be doing to support them, hear from MBDA career staff about what they think should be done, hear from you and your colleagues about what more MBDA can do to make itself more accessible to communities.

To best serve lowincome entrepreneurs, I implore Congress to engage with the MBDA to provide much needed resources and support to their local MBEs, MSIs, and MBCs, and also request appropriations funding that aligns with the MBDA Act's authorization.

