

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Opening Statement of Jenni R. LeCompte Before the United States Senate Committee on Finance

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Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Public Affairs

As Prepared for Delivery

Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Hatch and members of the Senate Finance Committee, it is a privilege to have my nomination come before you today. As a former Senate staffer, I have tremendous respect for this institution and for the relationship between the Legislative and Executive branches.

I am honored to be President Obama's nominee for this position and deeply grateful to Secretary Geithner for his trust in presenting me, if confirmed, with this opportunity to grow my role within the Department.

I would like to introduce my husband, Theodore LeCompte. Always patient, always full of support, I am incredibly fortunate to have him at my side today and every day.

I grew up in Wisconsin, the daughter of public school teachers. My mother, Kathleen, served nearly 20 years teaching art education before she retired. My father, Arne, taught mathematics for 29 years. He passed away in 1998, but I know he would be extremely proud to see me sitting here today.

I was a college journalism major who came to Washington, DC for a summer internship at the White House and found that I shared a passion for public service with my parents. After starting on overnight news clips duty and then serving as a press assistant in the White House, I came here to the Senate, working in the press offices of Senators Schumer and Durbin. Since leaving the Hill, I have held communications positions on campaigns for public office and at two nominating conventions, most recently serving as the Deputy CEO for Public Affairs at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver. I now find myself back in the Executive branch of the Federal government.

Without question, the past two years at Treasury have been the most challenging of my career. I was welcomed on day one of this Administration by a career staff that never skipped a beat, and I am awed on a daily basis by my colleagues at Treasury, who have carried tremendous responsibility in pulling our country back from the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression. The institutional knowledge of the Department and the issues that I have come to know during this time, as well as my strong skills in strategic planning, operational management and project execution, make me well suited to serve as Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.

At Treasury, the Public Affairs team is responsible for developing and implementing communications strategy for the Department and advises officials within the Department and its bureaus on how best to communicate with the American people on issues and priorities of public interest. While Public Affairs does not develop or set policy, it carries a front-line responsibility for communication with the media, the business community and the public at large.

It is a privilege to be considered for this position – and even more so at this particular time. Economic news continues to dominate home pages and front pages with great frequency. It permeates conversation during broadcast roundtables and at kitchen tables across the country.

The Treasury Department and the Treasury Secretary are central to that dialogue. And today, there are unprecedented expectations and obligations on the ways in which we communicate and the clarity with which we do it. I look forward to continuing and expanding my contribution to this effort should the Senate choose to confirm me.

Thank you Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Hatch for this opportunity, and I look forward to taking your questions.

