

**Statement for the Record**  
**Senate Select Committee on Intelligence**

**CIA General Counsel Nominee Kate Heinzelman**  
April 6, 2022

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. Senator Bennet, thank you for the generous introduction. I am deeply honored by the President's nomination and by the trust that he, Director Burns, and Deputy Director Cohen have placed in me.

Throughout my years in public service, I have been blessed to have extraordinary mentors. These individuals—who have served with distinction across administrations—have taught me about the national security issues we face and how to be a rigorous lawyer and effective partner.

I believe this is a critical moment for the Intelligence Community. Intelligence is key to helping decisionmakers and can serve as the country's best first line of defense. Ensuring the CIA conducts its mission within the bounds of the law is integral to that defense and an example to the world about the rule of law in America.

It would be a great privilege to serve as the CIA's general counsel.

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I first came to the Intelligence Community as a summer intern analyst at the agency. That experience opened a window for me into the professionalism and dedication of CIA officers. It had a lasting impact on me.

After graduating college, I joined the staff of President Bush's Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), which was charged with investigating the intelligence failures about Iraq's WMD program and recommending a path forward.

I then served in the office of the first Director of National Intelligence.

Following law school, and two clerkships where I had the chance to see national security issues from another vantage point, I worked in the National Security Division at the Department of Justice—the creation of which had been one of the WMD Commission's recommendations.

I then went to the White House Counsel's Office and later served as a Deputy General Counsel at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, where I helped lead an office of hundreds of lawyers.

In 2017, I joined the law firm Sidley Austin, where I focused on cybersecurity and privacy law.

Since January 2021, I have been honored to serve as the Chief Counselor in the Office of the Attorney General at the Department of Justice.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will bring each of these experiences to bear in helping the CIA navigate the challenges from nation-state and non-state actors that we face today. Among these: Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China's efforts to expand its power worldwide, cyber attacks against networks of all kinds, terrorist threats, and a multitude of others.

Director Burns has established his priorities for the agency: China, technology, people, and partnerships. The General Counsel's office can play a critical role in enabling CIA to do its vital work, and implement its priorities, in a manner that is fully consistent with the law.

To this end, the first objective of the General Counsel's Office should, in my view, be to provide clear and accurate legal advice on the full range of matters confronted by the agency. Just as we seek rigor and timeliness in intelligence, so too should we demand these things from the agency's talented and dedicated lawyers.

Second, the office should be an important contributor to the agency's compliance work. I believe agency lawyers should not just deliver advice on the law, but also make sure their advice is actionable and anticipates, to the extent possible, what is around the next corner.

Third, the office should help maintain the public trust and reinforce accountability to the American people. This includes working closely with this Committee to help enable the congressional intelligence committees' critical oversight work, and helping to provide appropriate transparency about the basis for CIA's actions. This is particularly indispensable at the CIA, given that the agency's activities are generally conducted outside of public view.

To achieve these three objectives, the General Counsel must maintain an office that invests in its workforce and partnerships—two of Director Burns' priorities. If confirmed, I would view these as two foundational priorities.

To provide top-notch legal counsel in this operational environment requires that lawyers not only have subject-matter expertise and close relationships with their clients, but also the independence that enables lawyers to deliver advice, at times, that clients may not want to hear.

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I am here, as I noted at the outset, because I have had the chance to learn from extraordinary public servants. I am also here because of the friends, teachers, and family who have supported me.

My husband is the rock of our family. There are not words enough to thank him. And our children—with a third due to arrive any day—are a daily reminder of what we work, as public servants, to protect.

I have brought my children with me in the hope that seeing these halls, and the great American tradition that these proceedings represent, will leave as indelible an impression on them as my encounters with the great institutions of our government have left on me.

Thank you for considering my nomination and for holding this hearing today. I look forward to answering your questions.