

**Opening Statement of Denise E. O'Donnell**  
**March 30, 2011**

Good Afternoon. Thank You Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Grassley, and members of the Judiciary Committee for allowing me to present my testimony today. I also wish to thank Senator Whitehouse for chairing this hearing, and my own Senator, Senator Schumer for his very generous introduction.

I am honored that President Obama nominated me to be Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and that Attorney General Holder has supported my nomination. If I am confirmed, I will do my best to demonstrate that I am worthy of their trust, and yours.

I appreciate the opportunity to introduce my family. First, my husband, the Honorable John O'Donnell, who is a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, and who has served as an example for me, during his more than twenty years on the bench, of the importance of integrity, compassion and dedication in public service. I want to recognize another very special person, my son, Jack O'Donnell, who got his start in government working for one of the best, Senator Charles Schumer, and now is a partner in the government relations firm, Bolton St. John. Our daughter, Maura, her husband Kevin Corbett, and their beautiful four month old son, David O'Donnell Corbett, could only be here in spirit today. I am very proud of Maura, who is an Assistant United States Attorney in the Western District of New York, where I had the privilege of serving as United States Attorney and Assistant United States Attorney for over 16 years.

Were they alive, my parents, Ken & Shirley Mullane Beiter would be extremely proud today. They struggled during their lifetime to make sure that my five brothers and sisters and I had the best possible education, so that we would have opportunities they never had. Because of their sacrifice, I was the first member of my family to graduate from college, and each of my brothers and sisters followed, several of them going on to earn professional degrees and excelling in careers in law, health care and business.

My parents were very proud Americans. My father was a World War II veteran. They taught us about the importance of giving back, and I am forever grateful for the example they set for me. They instilled values that I have embraced throughout my life and professional career.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.