

**STATEMENT OF BENJAMIN B. TUCKER
NOMINEE FOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
OF THE
UNITED STATES SENATE**

Chairwoman Klobuchar, Ranking Member Sessions, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, I am honored to come before you today seeking your confirmation of my nomination as Deputy Director for State, Local and Tribal Affairs of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

As a criminal justice professional whose commitment to, and vision of, justice has been shaped by more than 35 years of life experiences, I am honored and eager to work with the many talented and dedicated professionals at the state and local level to reduce drug production, trafficking, use, and the consequences of the drug trade in our communities. Throughout my career, I have been steadfast in my commitment to improving the health and safety of others. When I joined the New York City Police Department at the age of 18, I had just gotten married and enrolled at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. It was the beginning of a personal and professional journey I could not have imagined; one that has prepared me to take on the role and responsibilities required of the position for which I am nominated.

Before sharing the specifics of what I bring to this position, I would like to introduce members of my family who are here with me today: my wife Diana, our son Scott, and my mother-in-law Constantia Beecher; all of whom have provided their love, unconditional support, and inspiration throughout my career.

For more than three and a half decades, I have been an advocate for innovation in criminal justice practice. After joining the New York City Police Department in 1969, I was one of sixty young Precinct Service Officers to receive special training from substance abuse experts. After the training, I was assigned to develop and conduct drug prevention education programs in New York City schools and colleges. That experience had a profound influence on my future as a police officer and every other position I have held throughout my career, including my role as

mediator and liaison for the police department to communities in Brooklyn experiencing racial strife and violence as a result of school busing policies in the 1970s. In July 1983, I was sworn in as Assistant Director of the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board. I spent the next three years leading efforts to eliminate case backlogs, reviewing the dispute resolution process and improving the complaint and investigations processes. Later, I served as Deputy Assistant Director for Law Enforcement Services in the Mayor's Office of Operations.

After leaving City government, I joined the staff of the Substance Abuse Strategy Initiative (SASIP) Project at New York University, where, as a senior research associate, I designed and oversaw implementation of the community policing and public safety component of the "Children at Risk" program, a research demonstration program focused on preventing pre-adolescent youth from becoming involved in drugs and crime. Following the merger of SASIP with the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, I served as director of field operations and senior research associate, and worked on the development and implementation of the "Opportunity to Succeed" demonstration program, which was designed to provide post-incarceration services for substance abusing ex-offenders. The outcomes of both of these research efforts resulted in better understanding among law enforcement officials, educators, families, communities, and policy makers of how to more effectively reduce risk and create safer communities.

With respect to my service at the Federal level, I had the privilege of serving at the Justice Department during the Clinton Administration as Deputy Director of Operations in the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. My primary responsibility was directing the grant making operation and overseeing the distribution of several billion dollars in grant funding. The role required broad collaboration, not only with my Federal colleagues and Members of Congress, but also with state and local law enforcement agencies, state and local government officials, community organizations, and school officials. That collaboration helped ensure a grant making process that was rigorous, practical and effective, and reminds me of how my collective life experiences, from walking the streets of Brooklyn as a beat cop to walking the halls of the Justice Department as an advisor to the Attorney General of the United States, all serve to broaden and inform my worldview, and my approach to questions of policy. In my

conversations with Director Kerlikowske, I've been impressed with how much value he places on cooperating across jurisdictions. I look forward to working with him on such endeavors.

In closing, I want to assure the Committee that my experiences have taught me a great deal about the challenges we face in reducing drug use and consequences. At the same time, I know there is much to learn, and I am eager to join Director Kerlikowske, the ONDCP staff, this Congress, and our Nation's communities in developing thoughtful, comprehensive, and effective solutions to the drug problem. Thank you for the opportunity to address your Committee. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.