

Statement for the Record of Noel J. Francisco
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee
May 10, 2017

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Feinstein, and members of the Committee, thank you for taking the time to consider my nomination to be Solicitor General of the United States.

I'd also like to thank President Trump and Attorney General Sessions for the trust they've placed in me in nominating me to the position of Solicitor General.

Mr. Chairman, if I could take a moment to introduce my family.

I am joined by my wife, Cynthia, who agreed to marry me 18 years ago (our anniversary was Monday). Cynthia is an accomplished attorney in her own right, with degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill, the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies, and Stanford Law School. She also served for over a decade as an attorney in the United States Department of State, before leaving to spend more time raising

our children. I am immensely grateful for the support she gives to our family, which is the only reason that I am able to be here today.

I'm also joined by my and Cynthia's pride and joy, our daughters Caroline and Maggie. Caroline is in the 10th Grade at the Field School, and Maggie is in the 3rd Grade at the Lowell School. Both of them are grateful for a day off.

I'm also joined by my wife's father Charles Stewart and stepfather Edwin Speas. While my mother, Therese Francisco, and my brother David and sister Dina, could not be here today, I am sure they're watching this from home.

Mr. Chairman, it is with a deep sense of honor and gratitude that I sit here today. My father, Nemesio Majaraiz Francisco, was born in the Philippines in 1935. He grew up amongst the ravages of World War II. He once told me how, as a young boy, he was forced to live in the remnants of a bombed out tank. Whenever I've faced the joys or difficulties of life, I think of that little boy. He could not possibly have dreamed that his son would one day have the high honor of sitting before

this august body. I am so grateful to you for helping to fulfill what that scared little boy dared not dream.

My father also brings to mind my home town—a small city on the shores of Lake Ontario called Oswego, NY. A little known fact is that, during World War II, Oswego provided refuge to almost 1,000 Jews fleeing Nazi Germany—to my knowledge, the only place in the country to do so. But those who know Oswego, and know Oswegonians, as we call them, would not be surprised. The good people of Oswego welcomed my father—a Filipino immigrant who barely spoke the language—with open arms. It is in Oswego that my father became, and died, an American. To me, Oswego will always represent the promise of this great Nation.

And that is why I am so honored to be here today. The Office of Solicitor General plays a special role in our system of government. Its duty is to represent the citizens of this great land before the United States Supreme Court and thereby play a role in safeguarding the rights and liberties of which this Nation is justly proud. In so doing, it serves

at the intersection of all three branches of our government—a system of separated powers that our framers understood to be the surest bulwark of freedom.

Unlike most attorneys in the Executive Branch, the Solicitor General owes responsibilities to all three branches of our government. The Solicitor General does, of course, serve as an attorney for the President and the Executive Branch. But he or she also is responsible for defending the laws passed by Congress when they are challenged in federal court. And in so doing, the Solicitor General, while an advocate, owes a special duty of independence and candor to the courts. After all, the Department of Justice's goal is not just to win, but to ensure that justice is served.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, it would be the greatest honor of my professional life to stand before the Supreme Court on behalf of the citizens of this great land. More importantly to me, I could not imagine a better way to honor my father—the truest American that I ever knew. I look forward to answering your questions.