

**Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**Hearing on the Nomination of Robert D. Jamison to be Under Secretary for the  
National Protection and Programs Directorate, Department of Homeland Security**

**November 9, 2007**

Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to President Bush and Secretary Chertoff for their confidence in my ability to lead the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD). I believe in the missions of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Directorate and know they are critical to our Nation's security. I am honored to be considered as part of that effort.

I have had the privilege of serving in several posts in this administration. I served as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), overseeing an agency that supports locally planned and operated public mass transit systems throughout the United States. While at FTA, I was asked to fill in as Acting Administrator of the

Federal Railroad Administration, the agency charged with ensuring the safety of the Nation's railroad system.

Prior to my current position, I served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Transportation Security Administration. It was an honor to serve with the more than fifty-thousand people who share the duty of ensuring the security of the Nation's transportation system. In addition to my Federal service, I have held leadership roles with the American Red Cross and United Parcel Service, where I enjoyed a thirteen-year career.

While most of my previous positions had the common underpinnings of transportation or logistics, the mission, operational structure, and business culture of each organization were quite different. I believe I was able to operate in those diverse environments effectively by relying on the fundamental principles I was taught early in my career. I worked to enhance my proficiency in applying these principles throughout my later assignments. Those fundamental principles are: have a commitment to attract and retain skilled people, focus on outcome-based results, and instill and insist on a culture of accountability and integrity.

Those are the fundamentals that I have focused on since I was named Deputy Under Secretary of NPPD in April. Those are the fundamentals I would continue to pursue if confirmed.

NPPD is a diverse organization with an important, cross-cutting, and unifying mission of risk reduction. The Directorate works to reduce risk in distinct mission areas, such as in the Office of Infrastructure Protection (OIP), which coordinates national efforts to reduce risk to our critical infrastructure and key resources. A top priority in OIP is the implementation of the recently developed chemical facility regulation regime.

Concurrently, OIP must strive to continue to improve the security posture in all 17 critical infrastructure and key resource sectors. The Office of Cybersecurity and Communications is focused on reducing risk to the Nation's cyber network and maintaining the resilience of our communications systems. US-VISIT drives down risk by using biometric and biographic information to enhance the security of our citizens and visitors and to facilitate legitimate travel and trade. One of the most important keys to success is the continued collaboration and information sharing with our partners. NPPD plays lead roles in these areas as well as managing the Department's collaborative approach to quantify risk.

I believe that my background in the public and private sectors prepares me well to dedicate myself to NPPD's broad and important portfolio. My focus on accountability, outcome-based performance metrics, and reliance on the abilities and dedication of those working in the Directorate would guide my decisions and drive our risk-reduction

mission. Further, those principles would serve to support an environment where every individual clearly perceives how his or her work in the directorate contributes to fulfilling our mission, securing the homeland, and protecting its citizens.

If confirmed, I commit to strengthening an organization that works closely with the Department's security partners and stakeholders across the country. NPPD would also continue to be an organization that respects and relies on the direction and guidance provided by the Administration and by the Congress. For example, I have emphasized since my arrival at NPPD the importance of improving the function of the directorate through the recommendations offered by the Government Accountability Office and the Office of the Inspector General. I intend to work closely with and draw from all those individuals and entities to assist the Directorate in fulfilling its mission.

I believe that NPPD, in addition to having a critical mission, is the right place to serve for those who are highly skilled, highly motivated, and profoundly dedicated to the security of our Nation. If confirmed, I would be proud to serve alongside the men and women of NPPD.

**Testimony**  
**W. Ross Ashley, III, Nominee**  
**Assistant Administrator, Office of Grant Programs, Federal Emergency**  
**Management Agency,**  
**Department of Homeland Security**  
**United States Senate**  
**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**November 9, 2007, 9:00 a.m., 342 Dirksen Senate Office Building**

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins, and Members of the Committee. My name is Ross Ashley. I'd like to thank Senator Warner for his statement of support.

I am appearing before you today as the nominee for Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs at the Federal Emergency Management Agency within the Department of Homeland Security. It is a great honor to be nominated by the President for this position and to have the opportunity to answer your questions as you consider my nomination. I cannot express enough how honored I am to be nominated for a position that will continue to further the preparedness, response and recovery capabilities of our State, local and tribal partners and the Nation as a whole.

I'd like to begin today by first thanking my wife Lauren for her patience and encouragement over the past ten years as our family has grown. As each of you know public service requires dedication and commitment from the whole family. Also with us today are our oldest daughter and two sons, Catherine, Cailan and Patrick who inspire me with the eagerness in which they approach the start of every day. Our two year old daughter Caroline thought best to hold down the fort while the rest of the family came for the hearing today. My mother is here from Alabama and I'd like to thank her for making the trip to be with us.

I have had the privilege of growing up in a family full of public servants. My father retired from serving both in the United States Air Force and the National Guard, and my mother worked in rural Mississippi as a social worker. My brother, Major John Ashley is here today from serving on active duty in the National Guard. John is the true picture of the citizen soldier having piloted F-16s on multiple combat deployments to Iraq and now preparing himself and others for deployment again in a new theater-based reconnaissance aircraft. John, his wife Tracy, and their four children's dedication to their country is an inspiration to all of us who know them.

If confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs my responsibility will be to ensure that Federal investments into State, local and tribal preparedness, response and recovery capabilities provide the greatest return on investment for the American public. I will bring to this position many years of experience in military service, financial management and executive leadership.

I spent twenty years in the National Guard and Reserves serving both as an enlisted member and as a commissioned officer. Early in my National Guard career I volunteered on a number of occasions to fill sand bags and to pre-position supplies and equipment in order to prepare for hurricanes and floods threatening the Commonwealth of Virginia. Immediately following 9/11 as a reserve officer I volunteered to augment active duty personnel at the Pentagon manning a 24 hour intelligence watch center. From the time I was eighteen years old, the educational and professional opportunities afforded me in the National Guard have been the foundation for every endeavor in my life and, if confirmed, I will bring this foundation with me to this new challenge.

One of the most important aspects of this position is to ensure that Federal investments and partnerships with State, local and tribal first responders provide support to meet the National Preparedness Guidelines and the Target Capabilities List. This process requires financial experience in grant programs, fiscal responsibility and accountability.

Since 1997, I have had the opportunity to work as a commercial partner with State, local and tribal first responders specifically in the areas of information sharing, incident management and communications interoperability. As founder and President of The Templar Corporation I worked with individual States and localities on regional information sharing grants and supported all aspects of the grants process from interpretation of guidance, preparation of submission packages, and financial and programmatic compliance. If confirmed, I believe I will bring the necessary perspective of our State, local and tribal partners to the execution of all grant programs.

Prior to 9/11, I supported initial efforts to provide regional interoperable capabilities to our Nation's first responders. Shortly after the killing of Gianni Versace in 1997 it was discovered that his killer Andrew Cunanan pawned property under his real name while there was a nation-wide hunt underway for his apprehension. As a result of this and other multi-jurisdictional events I worked with the Department of Justice and other partners to develop a real-time distributed information sharing system for Broward, Brevard and Monroe Counties in South Florida. Since these early efforts I have had the opportunity to support similar interoperability efforts for both voice and data communications in a number of states and multi-jurisdictional regions to include the National Capital Region.

My financial management experience includes efforts with my business partner to mortgage our houses and start a successful small business, participating in complex multimillion dollar corporate sales both in the commercial and nonprofit sectors and leading a high performance financial management team in a turn around of a challenged nonprofit. As the CEO of an 1100 person nonprofit I was responsible for multiple cost centers and funding agencies at both the State and Federal level that cut across all aspects of the lives with people with developmental disabilities. When I took over as CEO of the National Children's Center the previous fiscal year audit included thirty-two findings of significant deficiency. Working with and leading a great team we were able to, in one short year, reduce the number of audit findings to two, neither of which was in the area of financial management.

It is also critical at this point to ensure that the resulting organizational changes in grant programs have a minimum affect on our stakeholders. Over the years working with states and localities, one of the common themes in grant programs is the need for consistency year over year. If confirmed, I will ensure that the transition to a one-stop-shop for grants continues to fully support all of our stakeholders. In addition, if confirmed, I am committed to an effective transition to the next administration and will ensure that my successor has all the tools necessary to continue the tremendous work already accomplished by this Congress and the Administration.

Our Nation's grant programs are critical to ensure adequate all-hazard planning and operational capabilities for emergency managers, firefighters, law enforcement, medical response and everyday citizens. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Administrator Paulison, the FEMA leadership team, across the Department of Homeland



Security and with all our partners continuing the efforts to develop a new FEMA and a culture of preparedness across our society.

In closing, the Congress continues to support the efforts of our Nation's first responders and has provided the necessary guidelines in the Post Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 and the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act. If confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to continue these efforts to support our Nation's first responders and respectfully ask this committee to confirm my nomination to serve as Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs at the Federal Emergency Management Agency within the Department of Homeland Security. I want to thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to appear before you, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.