

Testimony of

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Nominee for Deputy Administrator

U.S. Small Business Administration

Thank you, Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Paul, and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear here today. Thank you also to Senator Kaine for the kind introduction. I am deeply honored to be nominated by President Biden to serve as Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

America's 30 million small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy. SBA's mission of supporting these entrepreneurs is more critical today than at any point in its history.

The economic challenge created by the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed millions of American livelihoods, and so many of its small businesses. In the wake of this crisis, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a more supportive, equitable, and resilient environment for small business owners in every community across our great country.

I am an entrepreneur who has navigated a company through these difficult times. During the past year, like many other small businesses, we have had to make critical decisions to save jobs and preserve livelihoods.

I also know full well that there are many small businesses that have been impacted to a far greater degree. Entrepreneurs in Black and Brown communities, rural and underserved regions need our commitment and support more than ever.

For over two decades, I have built early-stage businesses and run companies in software, consumer, and now health care and artificial intelligence. I am proud to have led teams that have built digital tools used by thousands of Main Street businesses across America. Today, I guide a team of scientists and engineers to help improve health outcomes. I have learned how to build passionate teams that tackle intractable challenges; how to foster an empowering culture; and how to create products that serve millions.

While my business career has been gratifying, it's my work as a civic entrepreneur that I value most, and what has driven me to serve.

My civic journey spans a decade serving communities that have too often been left behind. I have spent time in Central Valley of California; Detroit; Philadelphia; and Atlanta—advising entrepreneurs in regions that many people would fly over or drive through, but that are brimming with talent, promise, and aspiration.

After the Great Recession, as a White House AAPI Commissioner, I led engagement with Asian Americans across the country, hosting listening sessions with small businesses, regional SBA teams, and resource partners.

In my home state, which has over 4 million small businesses, I co-founded the California Entrepreneurship Task Force to bridge regions like the San Joaquin Valley with networks in Silicon Valley. I partnered with chambers of commerce, incubators, and universities to drive inclusive entrepreneurship and innovation in rural heartland of our state.

During the pandemic, I led a campaign to raise awareness of resources, including the Paycheck Protection Program, reaching more than 20,000 businesses. Our startup, like millions of small businesses, received critical help through the PPP and the EIDL programs. I am grateful for the assistance which allowed the company to keep all its employees, stabilize, and then repay the PPP and EIDL loans.

During these challenging times, I saw firsthand the heart, skill, and resilience of our amazing team. Through it all, they persevered.

I believe that my experience as a business leader and civic entrepreneur can help serve the SBA and all those who rely on it.

If confirmed, I commit to leading the SBA – in partnership with Administrator Guzman and its committed public servants – with urgency and purpose.

I will provide hands-on leadership to continue implementation of COVID relief for small businesses and help rebuild those most affected by the pandemic.

I share Administrator Guzman's commitment to be transparent, accessible, and responsive to this Committee.

I want to thank my family for their support in this endeavor. I am sorry that they couldn't be with us today.

In closing: I am an immigrant. I came to America 30 years ago as a young student in pursuit of education and opportunity. At that time, I never could have imagined that I would sit in this chamber with this committee having been called to serve by the President of the United States at this critical juncture.

This moment calls me like it should call all of us, including those in business, to roll up our sleeves to build a better future.

What we do next will matter for generations of Americans. I welcome this challenge and the opportunity to work alongside all of you. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

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