

Jeremiah Workman

Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)
Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Opening Statement

Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and Members of the Committee—

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored and humbled to be considered for the role of Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Veterans' Employment and Training Service. This nomination is a call to serve those who have served us all.

I am grateful to President Donald Trump for nominating me to serve in this role. He has demonstrated an unrelenting support for our military and veterans, placing a renewed national focus on honoring their service and expanding their opportunities after they leave the uniform behind. I would also like to thank Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer and Deputy Secretary Keith Sonderling for their leadership and support of my nomination.

I especially would like to take a moment to thank someone very important to me—my wife, Jessica Workman. Jessica and I have been together since high school. She's the mother of our two incredible children, Devon and Delaney, and all three are here in support today. Throughout my military career, through my deployment, injury, and reintegration, Jessica has been a constant source of strength, grace, and resilience. They say the toughest job in the military is that of a military spouse—and Jessica has fulfilled that role with a quiet determination that has shaped the man I am today. Jessica, thank you. You are my rock.

Public service has long been a part of my family's story. My grandfather served in World War II and my father is a U.S. Army veteran. For me, the decision to serve came early - I enlisted in the Marine Corps at age 17. On the morning of September 11, 2001, I was in a barber shop at Parris Island. A few years later, in December 2004, I was deployed with a team of Marines to Fallujah, Iraq, as part of Operation Phantom Fury. Our mission was going house to house clearing insurgents in one of the fiercest urban battles of the Iraq War. During one operation, we engaged more than two dozen insurgents fortified inside a safe house. The details of that day are well documented, and I won't recount them all here—but I will say this: the bravery and sacrifice I witnessed from my fellow Marines on that day continue to inspire my life's work.

Since leaving active duty, I've committed myself to serving veterans. Through my work with the Wounded Warrior Regiment, the VA, and the private sector, I've always had the same focus—making sure veterans don't fall through the cracks. I've seen how powerful the right support at the right time can be. And I've also seen what happens when we fail to deliver.

As a Marine Corps combat veteran, I've experienced firsthand both the immense pride of military service and the complex challenges of transitioning back into civilian life. I've also seen the untapped potential that every veteran carries with them **after service**. Our nation owes these men and women more than gratitude—we owe them an opportunity, dignity, and a pathway to purpose, post-service.

If confirmed, I will lead the Veterans' Employment and Training Service with that mission at its core: to empower every transitioning service member, veteran, and military spouse with the tools they need to succeed in the workforce—and in life. Regardless of the length of their service, they deserve the chance to build a meaningful, fulfilling civilian career.

VETS manages a portfolio of programs that play a vital role delivering on that mission. The **Jobs for Veterans State Grants** help states place veterans into employment through dedicated specialists. The **Transition Assistance Program**, delivered at military installations around the world, helps prepare service members before they even take off the uniform. The **Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program** helps those who've fallen on hard times reconnect with the workforce. And through the **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)**, we enforce veterans' workplace rights—ensuring their service is honored, not penalized.

VETS will also continue to develop innovative programs like the **Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot**, which pairs transitioning service members with career coaches, and the **National Veterans' Training Institute**, which provides professional development to the frontline workforce serving our veterans every day.

Even though these programs are strong, there is more work to do.

Veterans continue to face challenges reentering the workforce, particularly those with service-connected disabilities. We must ensure that disability is not a disqualifier. Employment is more than a paycheck—it's a sense of identity, purpose, and contribution. It's one of the most powerful protectors of mental health. I believe when veterans thrive in the workforce, their families, communities, and our country all benefit.

If confirmed, every decision we make at VETS will start with one question: *What does this mean for the veteran?* That will be our guiding principle.

I will lead with urgency, compassion, and accountability. We will work to strengthen our programs, improve interagency coordination, and embrace innovation—from digital training platforms to expanded employer partnerships. Our focus will be on outcomes that matter: quality jobs, long-term careers, and the dignity that comes with meaningful work.

We will ensure that veterans are not only welcomed in the workforce—but that they are prepared, empowered, recruited, and valued.

This is the greatest professional honor of my life, and I am ready to continue my service to our great Country. Thank you again for your time and consideration. I respectfully ask for your support of my nomination, and I look forward to your questions.