

**Statement for the Record of John C. Cruden
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee
February 25, 2014**

Thank you, Chairman Franken, Ranking Member Grassley, and distinguished Members of this Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today, and I thank you for considering my nomination. I appreciate the trust and confidence that both the President and the Attorney General have shown in me.

My career path may be considered unusual. I grew up in a small town in Michigan, the adopted son of a wonderful set of parents. After graduating from West Point, I became a military officer for the next several decades, first in ranger, airborne, and special forces units in Germany and Vietnam, and then as a military lawyer in a number of positions, starting as prosecutor and ultimately rising to the rank of Colonel and serving as the Chief Legislative Counsel of the Army. I am quite proud of my military service and continue to honor the patriotism and courage of our armed forces. The framed print on my wall in my office is of the West Point parade ground, with the names from the Vietnam memorial of my classmates who perished in that war superimposed, a constant reminder to me of what service means.

Following my military service, I became the Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, Environment and Natural Resources Division, U.S. Department of Justice. In that position I was responsible for enforcing the nation's environmental laws in federal courts, and was fortunate to have an extraordinary group of attorneys and environmental professionals working with me. Later, I was selected to become the Division's career Deputy Assistant Attorney General, and was Acting Assistant Attorney General during two different Administrations. I continued in that position until I was selected to become the President of the Environmental Law Institute three years ago. ELI is a non-partisan organization that provides environment, energy, and natural resource publications, education, and research. The Institute has a governing board of distinguished corporate leaders, academicians, environmental organizations, and private practitioners, with a vision statement promoting "A healthy environment, prosperous economies, and vibrant communities founded on the rule of law."

It is a distinct honor to be considered for return to the Department of Justice to lead the Environment and Natural Resources Division, which has the responsibility of enforcing the laws enacted in Congress and defending federal agencies' implementation of those laws. In existence for over one hundred years, the Division is built upon a history of service, integrity, and adherence to the rule of law. It has broad responsibilities present in the thousands of cases under the Division's jurisdiction: enforcing the nation's civil and criminal pollution-control laws, defending environmental challenges to federal agency programs and activities, protecting the public fisc, representing the United States in matters concerning the stewardship of the nation's natural resources and public lands, acquiring real property, bringing and defending cases under the wildlife protection statutes, and litigating cases concerning Native American rights.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to spend two decades at the Department of Justice and to have received the Presidential Rank Award from three different Presidents of both parties. During my time in the government I witnessed the extraordinary efforts of career public servants who work countless hours, representing the United States in federal courts across our great nation. The Division's backbone is those career professionals who have dedicated their lives to public service: upholding our laws, improving the environment, protecting our natural resources, and assuring the health and safety of our citizens. And I have had the pleasure of working with leaders from virtually every federal agency and the privilege to work collaboratively with a number of U.S. Attorneys and State Attorneys General. I have also enjoyed working with members of Congress and their staff in various roles, ranging from the critical oversight function that Congress serves as well as providing briefings and background information on important legal developments

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will focus on advancing the mission of the Environment and Natural Resources Division and zealously representing the United States in all of its activities, while adhering to the law, promoting integrity, listening to all sides of an issue, providing candid advice, treating everyone I encounter with fairness and respect, and honoring, supporting, and advancing the efforts of the career professionals who are the core of the Division.

Finally, I would like to recognize my family, for their love and support over the years. Without them, I would not be here. My wife, Sharon, who I first met in high school, married immediately after I graduated from West Point, and who has had a distinguished career as an educator of learning disabled young people. My two daughters, Kristen and Heather, are also superb professionals, who are also with me today, along with their husbands: Major Scott Campbell, and Travis Mason. Their children are Ryan, Lauren, Jonathan, and Katelyn and two of them are here today.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your consideration. I look forward to answering your questions.