

Hearing before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget

Ms. Shalanda Young
Nominee to be Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget
March 2, 2021

Chairman Sanders, Ranking Member Graham, and Members of the Committee—

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today as President Biden’s nominee for the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

I want to thank Chairman Leahy for introducing me to the Committee today. One of the joys of being Staff Director of the Appropriations Committee has been seeing the amazing relationships and results that have come from Senator Leahy, Senator Shelby, Ranking Member Granger, and my former boss, Chairwoman Lowey. I still vividly remember those four meeting to avert another government shutdown back in February of 2019. Even in those tense moments, Senator Leahy still took the time to show me pictures of his beloved family before announcing to the press that a compromise had been reached. I will be forever grateful for the kindness Senator Leahy has always shown, even in the most stressful environments.

I am accompanied today by my parents, Loyce and Ronald Smith, who are here from Louisiana. My 92-year-old grandmother, who is still in Louisiana, could not make it due to COVID-19 precautions. I want to thank them and my extended family for their unwavering support over the years.

Members of this distinguished Committee, I come before you today as someone who grew up in rural America. I spent most of my youth in Clinton, Louisiana. Back then, Clinton had a population of around 2,000. It’s where my maternal great grandparents lived, got married, and had my grandmother in 1928. Somehow, even then, in the segregated South, my great grandparents sent their child, my grandmother, to college. I am grateful they prioritized education—a commitment that has stayed in my family for generations.

All families deserve to see their children have that same opportunity to pursue their potential. Another former boss of mine, Chairman Obey, used to say a budget is your values. I share that belief, and firmly believe the federal budget can and should help make the promise of this country real for all families in every community.

I have spent the last four years as both the Minority and Majority Staff Director of the House Appropriations Committee. I care deeply about the institution of Congress and have been very proud to serve in a position that required compromise to ensure the American people had not only a functioning government, but one that invested in their future.

My work on the Appropriations Committee taught me that both sides can compromise without compromising their values—even when that means no one gets everything they want. I will forever be indebted to this institution, and if confirmed, I look forward to using my experience in

these halls to ensure both branches operate with mutual respect and work toward solutions that will improve the lives of those we serve.

I am not naïve about the challenges we face. Last year, I worked on the first COVID-19 supplemental that Congress passed in March of 2020. We were using models of past supplementals for Ebola and Zika because the full scale of the pandemic was still unclear. With COVID-19 deaths surpassing 500,000, our focus must remain on beating the virus, delivering immediate relief to millions of struggling Americans, and ensuring that we emerge from these crises even stronger than we were before. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with members of Congress from both parties on this and other important work.

Chairman Sanders, Ranking Member Graham, and other Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to appear before this Committee, and I look forward to your questions.