



**Chairman Blunt's Opening Statement
Nomination Hearing for James E. (Trey) Trainor To Be a Member of the
Federal Election Commission
March 10, 2020**

Mr. James E. (Trey) Trainor III is the President's nominee to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission, for a term expiring on April 30, 2023. Mr. Trainor is joined by his wife, Lucy, and by several friends today. I would also like to recognize the Trainors' children who are watching today's hearing back home in Texas: James, Abigail, Patrick, Mary Catherine, Charles and Andrew.

An election law attorney from Driftwood, Texas, Mr. Trainor has been practicing law for nearly 20 years and has represented candidates, political figures, local governments, corporations and other groups with respect to election law, campaign finance law and ethics. His clients have included the Republican Party of Texas, the Texas Secretary of State and President Trump's campaign. He has also served on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Standards Advisory Board.

The confirmation of Mr. Trainor, would fill a vacancy, correct a political imbalance, and most importantly create a quorum at the FEC.

The Federal Election Commission plays a vital role for federal campaign committees. As a former Secretary of State, I worked with the FEC on a regular basis and, since that time, I have run in nine federal elections. I know how important a fully-functioning FEC is to federal candidates who need to avail themselves of the FEC's guidance and advisory opinions. This is particularly true in an election year.

The FEC has been without a quorum since August 31, 2019. Since then, the FEC has not been able to hold hearings, make new rules, issue advisory opinions, conduct investigations, or approve enforcement actions.

In fact, while the Commission is authorized to have six commissioners, it currently only has three. And the terms for the three remaining commissioners expired years ago:

Commissioner Hunter's term expired in 2013; Commissioner Walther's in 2009; and Commissioner Weintraub's in 2007. It should be noted that the full term of a commissioner is six years.

Mr. Trainor was first nominated to the FEC in September of 2017 and has been re-nominated three times – in 2018, 2019 and, now, in 2020. Since 2017, the Senate has received no other nominations to the Federal Election Commission.

We hear a lot about the FEC and its deadlocked decisions and its inability to get anything done. But, without a quorum, the FEC can do nothing.

I look forward to hearing your testimony today, Mr. Trainor. And, I look forward to having a quorum at the FEC again.

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