

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Public Employee Relations Board



Public Roundtable on

**PR23-0539, “Public Employee Relations Board Harriet Segar Confirmation
Resolution of 2019”**

**Testimony of
Harriet Segar**

Before the

Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Elissa Silverman, Chairperson

December 11, 2019
10:00 AM
Room 500
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Good morning, Chairperson Silverman, councilmembers, and staff of the Committee on Labor and Workforce Development. My name is Harriet Segar, and I am honored to be nominated by Mayor Bowser to serve on the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB). I want to also thank Chairperson Silverman for convening this hearing today to provide me the opportunity to discuss my qualifications and desire to serve on this Board.

I was born in the Bronx, New York to a father who worked for the New York Transit Authority and a mother who worked for the New York City Board of Education. My parents' work ethic and pride in their jobs showed me not only the importance of public service, but also the need for a just and fair work force. I received my Bachelor of Science degree from the Cornell University-New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, where my studies focused entirely on comprehensive labor and management perspectives. For example, I studied labor history which allowed me to understand and appreciate the role that meaningful communication between labor and management play in society. I then received my Juris Doctor degree from New England School of Law. Following my studies, I moved to the District where I have been a proud resident for almost 38 years.

My entire legal career has been focused on working exclusively in labor relation positions. Initially, I worked for approximately seven years in the federal government with the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA). FLRA is an independent agency that governs labor relations between the federal government and its employees. During my time at FLRA, I handled a range of responsibilities, such as writing negotiability decisions and conducting unfair labor practice investigations. I also investigated unfair labor practice complaints, conducted interviews, and created investigative reports.

Following FLRA, I served as an Attorney-Advisor in the District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) Office of the General Counsel for 10 years. Through the general counsel's office, I represented DCPS in litigation matters before administrative agencies—including the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) and the Office of Employee Appeals (OEA), and was responsible for the enforcement of collective bargaining agreements. Lastly, I served as the Supervisory Attorney-Advisor in the Office of the Attorney General, Office of the General Counsel for DCPS for five years. In this role, I provided legal advice and services with respect to questions, regulations, policies, and procedures in the labor and employment area.

As my experience shows, I have served as an impartial decision-maker for the federal government and as a management representative for the District government which strongly informs my commitment to the effective and fair implementation of labor and management rules, regulations, and laws. If confirmed, I would continue to promote the consistent and reasoned decision-making of PERB. As a member of PERB, I would also aggressively promote PERB's mediation services so that opposing parties could clearly communicate and understand the underlying issues causing the dispute.

In my spare time, I have been a volunteer at the National Museum of African Art since 2009. I provide informational tours to school age groups and adults for exhibits. I attend classes on African art to remain informed, and I also enjoy volunteering with Reading Partners DC.

In conclusion, I am honored to be nominated for this important position. If confirmed, I pledge to put in the time and work necessary to successfully fulfill my responsibilities as a member of the Public Employee Relations Board. I look at this opportunity as a way to come full circle on my career. I've been a neutral, a management member, and if confirmed would be a neutral again. I am excited and humbled to be considered for this position and the opportunity to

serve because my career has shown me that labor relations work well when all parties communicate. I want to facilitate that outcome. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I welcome any questions you may have at this time.