

Statement of Governor Minner
DRAFT
11/23

Let me begin today by thanking our state's longest serving United States Senator – Joe Biden. No one has had a bigger impact on our state—or demonstrated a stronger commitment to our people. Senator Biden, we will be sad to see you leave, but we are all excited that you will be representing Delaware, and all of America, as the Vice President of the United States.

Senator Biden's election as Vice President has left to me the decision of who should replace him in the United States Senate. I have carefully weighed this decision, consulting with Senator Biden, Senator Castle, many of our state's leaders, and my own conscience. I have in this decision, as I have in all my decisions as Governor, been guided by one overriding principle: What is best for Delaware?

I have used a number of criteria that you would expect in making this decision: Is this person qualified to do the job? Will this person put the interests of Delaware first? Does this person share Delaware's values.

I have also considered two other factors which I believe make sense in this unique circumstance. First, does this person reflect a political philosophy close to Senator Biden's? I believe this is important because at least in part it is this philosophy that the voters just cast their ballot for. And second, will this person agree to serve only until 2010? I believe it is critical for whoever is appointed to this position to be solely focused on what's best for Delaware, and not be thinking about the next election. In 2010, it should be the voters' decision, not mine, about who should be in the Senate.

Now I know there has been a lot of speculation about our Attorney General, Beau Biden, being appointed to this seat. And in truth, I would have been strongly inclined to appoint him based on the job he's done and the support he's earned all across our state. But I respect his decision to take his name out of consideration.

More than that, I respect the decision he has made to serve our country. Every day, I see the sacrifice that thousands of Delawareans and their families are making to serve our nation. The fact that Beau Biden has committed to fulfilling this obligation and not seek appointment to this office tells us everything we need to know about his character. Should Beau choose to run for this office in 2010, he will, as will whoever runs, have to earn the seat on his own. And that is how it should be.

So, today, after careful consideration I am pleased to appoint Ted Kaufman to the United States Senate. I have known Ted for over 30 years. I have worked with him as a state legislator, lieutenant governor, and now governor. For years, many of us in Delaware knew that if we were talking to Ted Kaufman, we were talking to Senator Biden. Throughout those years, I came to respect his skills, his integrity, and his

commitment to serving the people of Delaware. There are few people who have worked on as many issues for our state or been involved as helping as many constituents as Ted Kaufman. He doesn't need any on the job training. He'll be an effective Senator for Delaware from day one.

Of course, while Ted's career in public affairs may have begun with Joe Biden, it did not end there. In the years since he left the Senate, Ted has been a lecturer at the Duke University Law School and Business School, a representative of Delaware to the Democratic National Committee, and a four-term member of the Board of Broadcasting which runs the Voice of America. He's also been an important advisor and sounding board for a number of Delaware's leaders, including myself.

I believe that Ted Kaufman meets every test I set for this appointment. He has superb qualifications. He has a proven record of putting the interests of Delaware first. He shares Delaware's values. His political views are close to Senator Biden's. And he has agreed to solely focus on doing the people's work and not seek election to the office in 2010. In short, I have no doubt that Ted Kaufman's appointment meets by basic test—it's the best thing to do for Delaware.

Over the upcoming weeks, Senator Kaufman will work with Senator Biden and his staff to ensure an orderly transition. Based on the information I've received, Senator Biden will need several weeks to wrap up the work in his Senate office in Washington, his Senate office here in Delaware, and to transition the Foreign Relations Committee to a new Chairman. My expectation is that Ted will be sworn in as Delaware's new Senator in early to mid January. My one directive is that at no point in this process can the work of the people of Delaware fall through the cracks. Senator Biden has assured me that will not happen.

Let me end by saying to Senator Biden thank you for all you have done for our state and we wish you the very best as you move to the Vice Presidency. And to Senator Kaufman—congratulations, I am sure you will be a great public servant for the people of Delaware.