

**BURMAN, COMBS, DABBAR, DOMENECH, JONAS
AND MENEZES NOMINATIONS**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

TO

CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF BRENDA BURMAN, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF RECLAMATION; SUSAN COMBS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR; PAUL DABBAR, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY; DOUGLAS W. DOMENECH, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR; DAVID S. JONAS, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY; AND MARK WESLEY MENEZES, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY

—————
JULY 20, 2017
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**BURMAN, COMBS, DABBAR, DOMENECH,
JONAS AND MENEZES NOMINATIONS**

THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2017

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m. in Room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lisa Murkowski, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. The Committee will come to order. Welcome. We are here this morning to consider six nominations, three from the Department of the Interior (DOI) and three from the Department of Energy (DOE).

Our Interior nominees are Brenda Burman, to be Commissioner of Reclamation; Susan Combs, to be Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget; and Doug Domenech, to be the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas. Our Energy nominees are Paul Dabbar, to be Under Secretary for Science; David Jonas, to be General Counsel; and Mark Menezes, to be Under Secretary.

I would like to welcome all six nominees to our Committee and thank them for their willingness to serve our country.

To begin this morning we will hear introductions from several colleagues, beginning first with Senator Cornyn and then Congresswoman Radewagen. Senator Flake and Senator Cassidy also wish to provide introductions of some of our nominees.

At this point in time, before moving to our opening statements, I would like you to begin, Senator Cornyn, with the introduction that you wish to make before the Committee this morning. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN CORNYN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS**

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell. It is a pleasure to be back with you to introduce my friend and fellow Texan, Susan Combs, to be the next Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget at the Interior Department. I will keep coming back as long as the President keeps nominating Texans for these jobs.

[Laughter.]

I have known Susan a long time, when we were both practicing lawyers in San Antonio, Texas. She grew up on her family's ranch

and is a fourth generation rancher. She understands the nature of our nation's precious resources and heritage better than most.

In Texas, Susan has served in multiple levels of government, including the state house, and later as the first female agriculture commissioner for Texas. But most recently, she was our state's comptroller, where she worked tirelessly to develop innovative strategies to address regulatory issues relating to the Endangered Species Act.

Susan's efforts to promote conservation were even recognized by the Fish and Wildlife Service during the Obama Administration. I have absolutely no doubt she is the right person for this job. She understands not only how to set goals, she is relentless in accomplishing those goals once set, and bringing other people along with her in the process. Her unique background makes her the perfect choice to help Secretary Zinke and his team manage America's vast natural and cultural resources.

We are fortunate to have Susan, that she has agreed once again to answer the call to public service. I am glad to see her husband, Joe, and her family, who I know are supportive of her desire to continue her public service. I am honored to support her nomination here today. Thank you for letting me make these brief remarks.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cornyn. I appreciate you being here. I do note the number of Texans that are coming forward. Maybe we will get a few Alaskans, too. It is good to have you here.

Let's turn to Congresswoman Radewagen. Welcome to the Committee.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN,
U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN FROM AMERICAN SAMOA**

Congresswoman RADEWAGEN. Thank you, Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee. Talofa.

I am here this morning to introduce a close friend of mine, who I have known for some time now, Mr. Doug Domenech, of Virginia, who has been nominated to the position of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas at the Department of the Interior. Mr. Domenech currently serves as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior and is also Secretary Zinke's appointee to the Advisory Council of the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico, where he has lived and from where his family originally hails.

Previously, he served as the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia, overseeing six state environmental, recreation and historic resource agencies. Prior to his service to the State of Virginia, Mr. Domenech worked for the Forest Resources Association, whose mission is to sustain forest resources for future generations while creating jobs, a reflection of his environmental background.

During the George W. Bush Administration, Mr. Domenech served at the Department of the Interior as the White House liaison and Deputy Chief of Staff to Secretaries Gale Norton and Dirk Kempthorne. Additionally, he served as the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs during that time. Today he is interviewing for a promotion from acting to actual Assistant Secretary.

I have known Doug for several years now, and I am proud to call him a true friend. The position for which he is seeking your support is very important to the people of the insular areas. My home district of American Samoa is an insular area, and I can think of no one I would like to see in the position more than Doug Domenech. His knowledge and experience of the region and the mission of the office is unparalleled, and I know that his leadership will be welcomed as we seek to craft real solutions for the constituents we serve. In fact, I have had the pleasure to see him in action and know that he will hit the ground running.

I think I speak on behalf of all the territories when I say we are truly thankful for the time he took to meet with each of us prior to this hearing.

Be forewarned though, Doug, should you be confirmed there will be many more meetings to come.

[Laughter.]

I want to thank my friend Doug for his willingness to serve our great nation and thank this Committee for allowing me to come before you today. I hope that you will support his confirmation.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Congresswoman, thank you. I appreciate those introductions from both of you. I know that it is a busy morning and you have obligations elsewhere, so thank you for joining us here and for those introductions.

Senator Cassidy, we made arrangements that you also could provide an introduction, and you can do it from the dais here or—

Senator CASSIDY. I will do it from the dais.

The CHAIRMAN. We are trying to keep things moving because we have a busy calendar this morning and lots going on.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL CASSIDY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA**

Senator CASSIDY. Thank you, Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Cantwell, and my colleagues on the Committee for holding this hearing to consider Department of Energy and Department of the Interior nominees. I also thank you for allowing me to introduce Luling, Louisiana, native, Mark Menezes, a President Trump nominee for Under Secretary of the Department of Energy. Mark's congressional and private experience make him eminently qualified for this position.

Proudly, I will say he is a fellow LSU Tiger. Mark earned both a bachelor's and law degree from Louisiana State University, and Mark is the Vice President of Federal Relations for Berkshire Hathaway Energy where he developed extensive experience interacting with federal agencies in Congress. The organizations he represents employs working Americans across the globe building our energy economy with better benefits and better wages in these jobs provided by these companies.

Prior to joining Berkshire Hathaway, Mark was a partner at Hunton & Williams where he managed the Regulated Markets in Energy Infrastructure Practice Group. Throughout his career Mark has worked extensively with FERC, EPA, SEC, FCC, DOE, and other state and federal regulatory bodies.

On Capitol Hill, Mark served as Chief Counsel on energy and environment issues for the House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce. Mark secured the enactment of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 as a chief negotiator and legislative architect for the House majority.

Before working with the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Mark worked as Counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, where he focused on maritime and energy matters.

One thing I do not have in my notes, but I think I recall from the CV, is that you also worked as a roustabout on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, and that is a complete breadth of experience but one which most recognizes roustabouts' concerns, and that is what we need to recognize more in Washington, DC.

Mark Menezes is qualified with a wealth of experience for the position before him. Thank you, and I look forward to today's hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cassidy. I will note that our former colleague from Louisiana, Mr. Tauzin, is with us this morning, and I know that he has strong words of support for Mr. Menezes, so it is nice to have you here.

Senator Flake.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF FLAKE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ARIZONA**

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I am pleased to introduce today Brenda Burman, the nominee to be the next Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation and the first female Commissioner in the Bureau's 100-year history. While I look forward to having an Arizonan in this position, a glance at Brenda's resume will show anyone that my enthusiasm comes from more than just an in-state bias. She served for 3-1/2 years as lead water policy expert for my predecessor, Senator Jon Kyl, who is certainly a western water legend and who strongly supports her confirmation as well. She then went on to serve in the Department of the Interior as Deputy Commissioner of Reclamation and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. She also spent four years working for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, or "Met." She has negotiated key water supply issues for an agency that supplies one out of every 15 Americans. That certainly demonstrates her ability to navigate some thorny situations. Finally, in her current role with the Salt River Project, she is back home in Arizona working on water projects that ensure continued water supply for Central Arizona, including tribal settlements. She has built a reputation of expertise and fairness that is reflected in the nearly 40 letters that I have received—40 letters from local, regional, and national groups urging her confirmation. I know many of those individuals are here in support of her nomination today. I would like to, for the record, submit those letters.

The CHAIRMAN. They will be included as part of the record.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, and I urge my colleagues quickly to advance her nomination.

Finally, as Chairman of the Water and Power Subcommittee, I look forward to working closely on crucial water issues, western water issues, with the Bureau under Brenda's leadership.

So thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Brenda, for your willingness to serve and for bringing so much expertise to the position.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Flake.

I appreciate all those introductions.

I would now ask the nominees to take their seat at the table. You will see your appropriate name tags there. I will now make a brief statement, and Senator Cantwell will make hers. We will then swear in each of you and hear your testimony, including the introductions of your family members if you have any that are with you today.

You can go ahead and be seated here.

The first thing I would like to say is that I am glad you are here. I appreciate that. I appreciate the fact that we are at a nominations hearing with six nominees sitting at the witness table. I think this process has been a little bit slower than most of us had anticipated, from the receipt of nominations to the delays that we are seeing just in confirmations.

Given that we have a total of 38 nominees to process before our Committee alone, we have only confirmed two, and reported just four others so far, I think this is a good sign this morning to have a full table.

This is an important step as we seek to ensure that Secretary Zinke and Secretary Perry have the members of their leadership teams in place as soon as possible.

Secretary Zinke has already proven to be an ambitious leader of the Department of the Interior. I had an opportunity to travel with him along with several other colleagues here. We went to the Arctic in Norway and in Greenland and then flew across to the top of the United States there in Alaska. He made a very strong impression on many Alaskans while he was there.

So, Ms. Burman, Ms. Combs, Mr. Domenech, I appreciate your willingness to join Secretary Zinke at the Department of the Interior. Should you be confirmed, you will be responsible for identifying the challenges and the opportunities that exist for our federal lands, water management, and territories. Ms. Burman, I also want to note that should you be confirmed, you are going to be the first female Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, so that is good to note. We appreciate that.

Now I have not yet been able to host Secretary Perry in the state, but I look forward to doing so and to working with him to continue the Department of Energy's pursuit of scientific breakthroughs, transformative technologies, and energy dominance.

Mr. Dabbar, Mr. Jonas, Mr. Menezes, I also appreciate your willingness to serve, and I look forward to hearing more about what you would do, should you be confirmed, to help increase access to energy, make it more affordable, and improve its environmental performance.

For members who have questions for our nominees, know that we are going to be trying to work through as many questions as possible. There is an Appropriations full committee markup that is beginning in 15 minutes, so I am going to be jumping in and out of that, but if members have additional questions after the hearing concludes, any questions for the record will be due at the close of

business today. Given the fact that our August session has been extended, I also want members to be aware that it is my intention to try to move these nominees as quickly as we can should they prove qualified and have sufficient support within our Committee, hopefully to give them a chance, some chance, of being confirmed before we leave in August.

Finally, I have a large number of letters of support for these nominees. Senator Flake mentioned some that he provided for Ms. Burman, but I would ask unanimous consent that they be made a part of the hearing record, and they will do so.

With that, I now turn to Senator Cantwell for her opening remarks, and then we will swear in the nominees.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARIA CANTWELL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WASHINGTON**

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be brief this morning since we have so much on the agenda and we actually have a lot to consider. We will be considering the nomination of six senior officers in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Energy, and those offices are responsible for a wide range of important functions in both those agencies. I will have a number of questions for each of the nominees, and I am sure my colleagues will as well.

Part of our task this morning is made a little more confusing by the action taken at the agency. We know what the two Under Secretaries did previously under these titles at the Department of Energy. We know that Secretary Perry plans to reassign some of their functions. But exactly how those reorganization plans will work and what these individuals will be doing will be of question.

Also, I am concerned about press reports just yesterday that Secretary Zinke is reassigning some Senior Executives at the agency, including scientists involved in climate issues, to other unrelated positions, and I will have some questions about that as well.

We also have Mr. Jonas here for his nomination hearing, and while we just got some documentation related to your time at the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, those have not been fully reviewed since we just got them either late last night or early this morning. We know that there was a dispute as you left there, and we will have questions in regards to that.

So I greatly appreciate the Chair's willingness to ask for those documents. We just simply have not had a chance to review them. I know there will be lots of issues for all of these nominees this morning, Madam Chair, and I know we have a busy agenda here, so I will keep the rest of my comments and put them in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

**Senator Maria Cantwell
Opening Statement
Interior and Energy Nominations Hearing
Thursday, July 20, 2017**

We have a lot to get our minds around this morning. We will be considering nominations for 6 senior offices in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Energy. Those offices are responsible for a wide range of important functions in the two departments.

I will have a number of questions for each of the nominees. I am sure many of my colleagues will have as well.

Our task is not made easier by the confusion that seems to exist over what a couple of them may be doing. We know what the two Under Secretaries did at the Department of Energy under Secretary Moniz. We know that Secretary Perry plans to reassign some of their functions. But we don't know how he plans to reorganize the two offices or who will be doing what.

Hopefully, the two nominees will be able to shed some light on what they expect their roles to be.

Our job is further complicated because we have not yet seen certain documents pertaining to Mr. Jonas's departure from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

We know there was a serious dispute between Mr. Jonas and the former Chairman of the Safety Board. But we have two very different accounts of what the dispute was all about, and we have not yet been able to review the written record to see which side of the story is true.

I greatly appreciate the Chair's willingness to ask the Board for the documents and to work with me to put the matter to rest before we vote on Mr. Jonas's nomination.

I look forward to hearing from all 6 nominees and welcome each of them to the Committee.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

At this time, the rules of the Committee, which apply to all nominees, require that they be sworn in connection with their testimony, so I would ask you all to rise and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

[Chorus of yeses.]

Before you begin your statement, I will ask you three questions addressed to each nominee before this Committee. Will you be available to appear before this Committee and other Congressional committees to represent departmental positions and respond to issues of concern to the Congress?

[Chorus of yeses.]

Are you aware of any personal holdings, investments, or interests that could constitute a conflict or create an appearance of such a conflict should you be confirmed and assume the office to which you have been nominated by the President?

[Chorus of noes.]

Are you involved or do you have any assets held in blind trust?

[Chorus of noes.]

With that, please be seated, and we will proceed. Again, I think we have heard some good introductions, and I appreciate the comments from colleagues as they have introduced our nominees.

So what we will do is just begin to my left here with Ms. Brenda Burman, to be the Commissioner of Reclamation, Department of the Interior. She will be followed by Susan Combs, who is nominated to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management, and Budget; Mr. Paul Dabbar, to be Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. He will be followed by Mr. Douglas Domenech, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas. Mr. David Jonas has been nominated to be General Counsel for the Department of Energy, and Mr. Mark Wesley Menezes has been nominated to be Under Secretary for the Department of Energy.

I would ask that you try to keep your comments limited to about five minutes. I am pleased to have you introduce, again, any family members that you might have. We appreciate you coming before the Committee and your willingness to serve. Ms. Burman, if you would like to lead off, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF BRENDA BURMAN, NOMINATED TO BE
COMMISSIONER OF RECLAMATION**

Ms. BURMAN. Thank you, Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee. I am humbled and honored to appear here today as President Trump's nominee for the position of Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Thank you also, Senator Flake, for your kind remarks, for your kind introduction, and for your leadership and service to the Grand Canyon State and to the United States.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to recognize the members of my family who have joined me today. My parents, Tim and Pat Burman, are out of the country, but they are joining us online. And here in the room I have the Minnesota Burmans, with my

brother, Mark; my sister-in-law, Linnea; my niece, Annika; and my nephew, Collin. They flew out on short notice to support me, and I'm very glad they're here.

The CHAIRMAN. Welcome.

Ms. BURMAN. I deeply appreciate the trust Secretary Zinke has placed in me by asking me to serve as Commissioner of Reclamation. I ask for your consent to the President's nomination.

While I was born a westerner in California, my parents moved to Minnesota and then to New Jersey, all good places to grow up with lakes, rivers, woods, camping, hiking, canoeing, and in New Jersey, the shore. Through this upbringing I witnessed firsthand the importance of water in all its forms, from East to West, from lakes to oceans.

I fell in love with the Southwest working for the Park Service, both in New Mexico and in the Grand Canyon, before going to law school. But in my career, I've been fortunate to work on many complex water and power issues across the West.

In Arizona, my first meeting as a young lawyer in 1998 was a negotiating session for a Navajo and Hopi water settlement. I remember the tribal representatives. I remember the Department of the Interior and the Bureau officials and all the local stakeholders: ranchers, water districts, local towns, utilities. Hours and hours were spent by all of us trying to reach an agreement. In that case it did not come together, but it taught me a valuable lesson: as long as people keep working together, there is always hope it will work.

I soon represented a party that was working to negotiate with the Zuni Indian Tribe and settling their water rights in Arizona for the Zuni Heaven Reservation. After four years of work and on my last day in private practice, the parties signed a settlement agreement.

I left private practice to move to DC to work for Senator Kyl as his water and energy attorney. One of my first tasks was to support Senator Kyl in actually passing the Zuni Indian Tribe Water Rights Settlement. Knowing the tribe and the parties well, I was thrilled to see that settlement through the Congressional authorization process. The tribe, the Department of the Interior, and the parties back home then did the hard work to bring together everything needed to make that settlement effective.

The Zuni settlement was relatively small, which served as great preparation for staffing the largest Indian water settlement in our country's history, the Gila River Indian Community, a tribe with significant land in the heart of the Phoenix metropolitan area, downstream from important ranching, farming, and mining operations, and nestled between the many cities of Arizona's largest metropolitan area. Senator Kyl gave significant personal time to bring the parties together, and I supported him as he fought for Congressional passage of the settlement. When it finally passed, it was one of the proudest moments of my career.

What I learned from supporting Senator Kyl and working with all the parties to the Gila settlement, as well as the Central Arizona project settlement with the United States and the Tohono O'odham Nation Indian Water Rights Settlement, was how important it is to understand each party's needs and wants, strengths and weaknesses, and their political pressures back home.

Water rights settlements take years of negotiation, they take years to secure Congressional passage, and then years to implement. You have to learn when to push, when to get out of the way, and at times where to draw the line. Cooperation and principled leadership are key.

In 2005, I joined the Department as a member of President George W. Bush's Administration and was soon appointed to be Deputy Commissioner for External and Intergovernmental Affairs, the number two position at the Bureau of Reclamation. Later, I was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. With the Department and Reclamation, I was given the opportunity to work on issues directly impacting the Colorado River, as it affected all seven Basin states and the country of Mexico. This service took place in the form of negotiation and analysis of the 2007 Shortage Guidelines and as the Secretary's designee for the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program. I worked on other difficult water issues across the West as well, including the Klamath Basin, the Central Valley Project, and the Rio Grande.

After I left Interior, I worked for the Nature Conservancy in Arizona as their senior water policy advisor, working on Colorado and local river issues as well as forestry issues. From there I was hired by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to work in their Sacramento office on, among other things, California drought, Bay-Delta matters, and Colorado River issues.

I currently work for the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District, which operates one of the oldest Reclamation projects in the country, providing water and power to the Phoenix metropolitan area.

Collectively, I believe these series of experiences have prepared me to serve Secretary Zinke and the American people in facing today's top water challenges. If confirmed, I promise to perform my duties with integrity, I promise to provide the best informed advice possible to Secretary Zinke, and I promise to listen to and work with this Committee and Congress, to listen to and work with Western water interests, and to listen to and work with Reclamation's impressive employees who use their expertise every day to deliver water and generate power across the West.

Chairman Murkowski, thank you for the opportunity to appear here before the Committee today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Burman follows:]

Statement of Brenda Wren Burman
Nominee for the Position of Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation,
Department of the Interior
Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources United States Senate
July 20, 2017

Thank you Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee. I am humbled and honored to appear here today as President Trump's nominee for the position of Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation.

Thank you also to Senator Flake for your kind introduction, and for your leadership and service to the Grand Canyon State and the United States.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to recognize the members of my family who have joined me today. My parents Tim and Pat Burman are out of the country but are watching online.

Here in the room I have the Minnesota Burmans, with my brother Mark, my sister-in-law Linnea, my nephew Collin, and my niece Annika who were kind enough on short notice to fly out to support me.

I deeply appreciate the trust Secretary Zinke has placed in me by asking me to serve as the Commissioner of Reclamation. I ask for your consent to the President's nomination.

While I was born a westerner in California, my parents moved to Minnesota and then to New Jersey, all good places to grow up, with lakes, rivers and woods, camping, hiking, canoeing and in New Jersey – the shore. Through this upbringing, I witnessed firsthand the importance of water in all forms, from East to West, from lakes to oceans.

I started moving myself back westward by choosing Kenyon College in beautiful rural Gambier, Ohio, next to the Kokosing River. But I fell in love with the southwest after working as a volunteer trail crew member at Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico and visiting my best friend in Arizona during winter break. At Carlsbad I worked in the backcountry for the summer and one of the things I distinctly remember is that it was a wet year – lots of rain – and yet we did not find waterholes or running washes. The only water we found was in the caves. This was a truly dry and unique place. A few years later, I worked as a Park Ranger at Grand Canyon National Park. It was a beautiful high desert with Ponderosa pine forest on the rim, which became progressively dryer and hotter as you hiked down into the Canyon and towards the Colorado River. In the Canyon, we counted on scarce springs in the backcountry for our water supply, and on the rim we counted on a rickety old pipeline that often broke to bring water from Roaring Springs up to the rim and the tourist area. It was a learning experience that taught me the value of water and the hard work it often takes to get it.

From those first days working in the southwest, I have been fortunate in my career to work on many complex water and power issues across the west. In Arizona, my first meeting as a young lawyer in 1998 was a negotiating session for a Navajo and Hopi water settlement. I remember the tribal representatives, the Department of the Interior and Bureau officials, and all of the local stakeholders—ranchers, water districts, local towns, utilities. Hours and hours were spent by all of us trying to reach an agreement. In that case, it did not come together, but it taught me a valuable lesson: as long as people keep working together, there is always hope.

I soon represented a negotiating party with the Zuni Indian Tribe in settling their water rights in Arizona for their Zuni Heaven Reservation. After four years of work, and on my last day in private practice, the parties signed the settlement agreement.

I left private practice to move to D.C. to work for Senator Jon Kyl as his water and energy attorney. One of my first tasks was to support Senator Kyl in passing the Zuni Indian Tribe Water Rights Settlement. Knowing the Tribe and the parties well, I was thrilled to see that settlement through the Congressional authorization process. The Tribe, the Department of the Interior, and the parties back at home then did the hard work to bring together everything needed to make that settlement effective.

The Zuni settlement was relatively small, which served as great preparation for staffing the largest Indian water settlement in our country's history with the Gila River Indian Community, a Tribe with significant land in the heart of the Phoenix metropolitan area, downstream from important ranching, farming, and mining operations and nestled between the many cities in Arizona's largest metropolitan area. The Community's water rights claims created a large uncertainty for other water users—natural resource uncertainty, economic and financial uncertainty—and it is a credit to the Tribe and to the parties that they were able to settle. Senator Kyl gave significant personal time to bring the parties together and I supported him as he fought for Congressional passage of the Settlement. When it finally passed, it was one of the proudest moments of my career.

What I learned from supporting Senator Kyl and working with all the parties to the Gila Settlement, as well as the Central Arizona Project settlement with the United States and the Tohono O'odham Nation Indian water rights settlement, was how important it is to understand each party's needs and wants, strengths and weaknesses, and their political pressures back home. Water rights settlements take years of negotiations, years to secure Congressional passage, and then years to implement. You have to learn when to push, when to get out of the way, and at times, where to draw the line. Cooperation and principled leadership are key.

These experiences were a tremendous building block for working at the Department of the Interior. In 2005, I joined the Department as a member of President George W. Bush's Administration and was soon appointed to be Deputy Commissioner for External and Intergovernmental Affairs, the number two position at the Bureau of Reclamation. Later, I was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Water and Science. While serving Senator Kyl, I had

worked closely with Arizona, New Mexico, and California interests on Colorado River issues and other matters. With the Department and Reclamation, I was given the opportunity to work on issues directly impacting the Colorado River, as it affected all seven basin states and the country of Mexico. This service took place in the form of negotiation and analysis of the 2007 Shortage Guidelines and as the Secretary's designee for the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program.

I worked on other difficult water issues across the west as well, including the Klamath Basin, the Central Valley Project, and the Rio Grande.

Right before I came to Reclamation, the Bureau faced criticisms from our contractors, customers, and stakeholders about its costs and lack of efficiency. Reclamation embarked on both an internal and external review of how we operated to directly address this criticism with quarterly public meetings, methodic analysis, and increased accountability. I joined the Bureau as this process was beginning. My job was to ensure our "external" partners across the west and on the Hill were heard and their problems were addressed. In the end, I believe we improved management decision-making and made Reclamation more accountable.

It was a privilege to serve the west and our country at the Department of the Interior and an honor to work with the many fine, dedicated people at the Department and at Reclamation. After I left Interior, I worked for The Nature Conservancy in Arizona as their Senior Water Policy Advisor, working on Colorado and local river issues, as well as forestry issues. From there I was hired by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to work in their Sacramento office on, among other things, California drought, Bay-Delta matters, and Colorado River issues.

I currently work for the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District, which operates one of the oldest Reclamation projects in the country, providing water and power to the Phoenix metropolitan area. As the Director of Water Strategy, my team and I are an integral part of Salt River Project's work with the State, with Tribes, and with other water providers to pursue new solutions for moving water where it is needed to address drought, potential shortages on the Colorado River, and eventual growth.

Collectively, I believe these experiences have prepared me to serve Secretary Zinke and the American people in facing today's top water challenges. If confirmed, I promise to perform my duties with integrity. I promise to provide the best-informed advice possible to Secretary Zinke, to listen to and work with this Committee and Congress, to listen to and work with western water interests, and to listen to and work with Reclamation's impressive employees who use their expertise every day to deliver water and generate power across the west.

Chairman Murkowski, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. I appreciate your statement and your willingness to serve the Administration.

Ms. COMBS.

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN COMBS, NOMINATED TO BE AN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR**

Ms. COMBS. Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior. President Trump and Secretary Zinke have paid me an enormous compliment by recommending me for this role. As Chief Financial Officer, I was, of course, tremendously honored by the very kind introduction by Senator Cornyn.

I do have a member of my family here. My husband, Joe Duran, is here, and our three sons are, we hope, glued to an iPad or something else.

I'm the fourth generation of my family to own and operate a ranch in the Big Bend area of Texas just up the road from Big Bend National Park. I not only learned how to ride, hunt, and shoot, but also that we had to be careful stewards of the land and to nurture it for the next generation. We are all proud of this national park and glad that nearly 400,000 visitors came to our part of the Chihuahuan Desert last year. This area is rich in history, flora, fauna, ancient artifacts, and a can-do spirit. This arid high desert teaches that you have to be self-reliant, innovative, and practical.

I saw firsthand the devastating effects of the 1950s drought and the toll it took on the land and everyone connected to it. The ranch and its income were my father's only source of funds. He said you had to be as tight as the bark on the tree with your money, and I have learned that lesson well and have worked hard to apply this both on the ranch and in my years of public service, balancing needs with fiscal prudence.

As Agriculture Commissioner in 2005 and '06, I was very fortunate to work with the great staff of Fish and Wildlife as well as with the military at Fort Hood Army Base in Central Texas. Through a very collaborative process, we worked together to assemble the Recovery Credit System, which the Service adopted to work for the recovery of the Golden-cheeked Warbler and the Black-capped Vireo while also assisting the Army in its national defense goals. We had a diverse range of partners: Environmental Defense Fund, Texas Nature Conservancy, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas Farm Bureau, Central Texas Cattlemen, and other agriculture partners. This project made it clear that a cooperative approach to a common goal could indeed produce good results for all participants.

After being elected Comptroller in 2006, we had the chance to use a successful method again when there was a proposal to list as endangered the Dunes Sagebrush Lizard. Once again, the Fish and Wildlife Service was a great partner, along with various agriculture and ranching groups as well as oil industry officials. The result was the Texas Conservation Plan, which was approved by the Service. Its development was a long and complex process but

resulted in a success for the species and the region. I was touched and surprised when I received the Regional Director's Conservation Partnership Award in 2014 based on that recent work.

The position for which I have been nominated would, should the Senate confirm my nomination, allow me to work across a broad swath of budget, management, and policy areas in order to advance the mission of the Department and that of Secretary Zinke. I believe that my prior eight years as Comptroller of the State of Texas have given me the tools and the ability to analyze, understand, and consider in an open and transparent manner how we are going to achieve this mission. Secretary Zinke has talked extensively about enhancing human capital as well as maximizing the public's access to the nation's land and resource heritage.

From a fiscal perspective, lessons that I learned in spending and purchasing can be utilized at the Department. Secretary Zinke has also mentioned a large maintenance backlog that must be addressed. I would hope to find ways to enhance revenues as well as trim costs. While Comptroller, we were able to save nearly \$400 million by just revising the state's procurement processes.

This Department has a mission covering the entire nation and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure the success of the President's and the Secretary's goals for the Department, and I will do so in an open, bipartisan, and collaborative manner for these vital natural resources.

As a former legislator, I have a keen appreciation of the constitutional roles and responsibilities of the Legislative Branch and very much appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.
[The prepared statement of Ms. Combs follows:]

Statement of Susan Combs

**Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management
And Budget**

of the Department of the Interior

**Before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior. President Trump and Secretary Zinke have paid me an enormous compliment by recommending me for this role as the Department's Chief Financial Officer.

Let me first tell you about my background. I am the fourth generation of my family to own and operate a ranch in the Big Bend area of Texas, and that experience taught me the importance of being tied to the land and its natural resources. I learned how to ride, hunt, and shoot on this ranch with views of the neighboring mountains. From my earliest memories, I learned that we had to be careful stewards of the land, which we hoped to pass on to the next generation. I was raised to think about water and its availability, grass, forbs, habitat, the animals – both wild and domestic on the land –and to think about how we could improve the ranch for future generations.

I saw firsthand the devastating effects of drought in the 1950's and the toll it took on the land and everyone and everything connected to it. That event taught me an indelible lesson about taking care of the land that was taking care of us. Income generated from the ranch was my father's only source of funds.

My father particularly enjoyed saying that you had to be as "tight as the bark on a tree" with your money. I have learned that lesson well, and have worked hard to apply it both on the ranch and in my years of public service, balancing needs with fiscal prudence.

Our ranch is located about thirty miles north of the eastern entrance to Big Bend National Park. We are all proud of this national park, and glad that nearly 400,000 visitors came to our part of the Chihuahuan Desert last year. This area is rich in history, flora, fauna, ancient artifacts and a Texas can-do spirit. This arid high desert teaches that you have to be self-reliant, innovative, and practical.

In later years, I was privileged to serve as a State Representative and then as the Texas Agriculture Commissioner. Traveling across the State and meeting other commissioners from every other state illustrated for me the common bond we all had; we love the land, its people, and the rich array of natural resources everywhere.

As Agriculture Commissioner in 2005 and 2006, I was very fortunate to work with the great staff of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as with the Army at Fort Hood in central Texas, along with a diverse range of partners including the Environmental Defense Fund, Texas Nature Conservancy, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Texas Farm Bureau, Central Texas Cattlemen and other agriculture partners. Through a very collaborative process, we worked together to assemble the Recovery Credit System which the Service adopted, to work for the recovery of the Golden Cheeked Warbler and the Black Capped Vireo while also assisting the Army in its national defense goals. This project made it clear that a cooperative approach to a common goal could indeed produce good results for all participants, and it is the approach that continually I strive for.

After being elected Comptroller in 2006, we had the chance to use this successful method again when there was a proposal to list the Dunes Sagebrush Lizard as endangered. Once again, the Service was a great partner, along with various agriculture and ranching groups as well as oil and gas industry officials. The result was the Texas Conservation Plan that was approved by the Service. Its development was a long and complex process, but resulted in a success for both the species and the area. I was grateful when the Service honored me with the Regional Director's Conservation Partnership Award in 2014 for that work.

The position for which I have been nominated would allow me to assist the Secretary in advancing his goals and priorities for the Department. I believe that the eight years that I served as Comptroller of the State of Texas have given me the ability to analyze, understand and consider how to achieve this mission in an efficient, open, and transparent manner. Secretary Zinke has talked extensively about enhancing human capital as well as maximizing the public's access to our public lands, national treasures and natural resources. The Secretary has committed to addressing the enormous deferred maintenance backlog on lands managed by the Department's bureaus. While Comptroller, we in Texas were able to save nearly \$400 million by revising the State's procurement processes. Lessons that I have learned and skills that I have gained, for example in agency spending and purchasing, will serve as assets as we work to balance the books, make smart investments and increase the efficient operation of the Department's important programs priorities.

The Department of the Interior plays an important role in our national economy. Its many important missions include ensuring the responsible development of energy resources on our public lands, serving as steward of our beautiful parks and public lands, and working to strengthen tribal sovereignty in Indian Country. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the success of the President's and the Secretary's goals for the Department, and I will do so in an open and collaborative manner. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Combs. I appreciate your commitment on several different levels, and it is nice to have you here. Mr. Dabbar, welcome to the Committee.

STATEMENT OF PAUL DABBAR, NOMINATED TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee.

It is an honor to be here today. I thank you for the productive meetings with you and your staff as we prepared for this hearing, and I appreciate your insights that were given to me on the important topics about energy both in your states and in the nation.

I would like to thank the President and Secretary Perry for their trust and confidence in me for this nomination as Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. If I have the honor of being confirmed by this body, I look forward to working with all of you on the important items that the nation faces in the energy sector to meet our energy needs.

I would like to introduce the most important individuals in my life, and that is my family members who are here today. Behind me is my wife of 17 years, Andrea, and my kids, Will and Katie. I appreciate them being here and giving me the opportunity to serve again. Also here are my brother and his wife, and his guidance throughout my life has been very important to me. And also here are friends of mine from my hometown in Oklahoma and my classmates from the Naval Academy.

If my nomination is confirmed by this body, this will be the third time I will have sworn to support and defend the Constitution. The first time was when I was 17 years old when it was Induction Day at the U.S. Naval Academy. I felt a strong desire to serve based on the experience of my family: my mother, who joined the Foreign Service from a small town in North Dakota right after World War II, and my father, who came to this country to escape political oppression. The second time was when I was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy and joined the nuclear submarine force, and I had the honor to serve in many interesting and sensitive operations, including a deployment to the Arctic where I helped lead teams supporting the Arctic Laboratory as they deployed solar-powered environmental monitoring stations.

Since my time in the Navy, I have worked at J.P. Morgan's investment bank for the last 21 years. I had an opportunity to lead energy sector investments and transactions in all 50 states and around the world. These include all major areas including renewables, oil and gas production, mining, efficiency, and the electric grid, as well as significant volumes of global nuclear work. As a result, I have gained experience with energy technologies both in research and development, many of which started in various research laboratories before being deployed.

As a result of my technical and investment experience, I was appointed by then Secretary Bodman and reappointed by the subsequent Administrations' Secretaries of Energy to the Department of Energy Environmental Management Advisory Board. Accordingly, I have traveled to much of the DOE Complex and visited both science and engineering program sites as well as environmental

management sites. Through this I have developed a keen understanding of the breadth, opportunities, challenges, and skills of the people who work in the DOE Complex.

This is a very exciting time in the energy sector. Over the past decade, technological developments have accelerated significantly. Some of those amazing developments in the applied area include significant improvement in wind turbine efficiency, solar PV installed costs, battery storage, carbon capture, and microgrids.

In the areas of fundamental science, opportunities exist for significant leaps in machine learning and artificial intelligence as well as exascale computing and quantum information science. The opportunities are significant, and the Department is in a unique position with the world's leading researchers and physical plant capabilities to help drive that progress for the nation. I will ensure that our continued leadership and knowledge and technology will help spur economic well-being for our nation and our fellow citizens.

So I have approximately 20 years of private energy experience and 20 years of service to the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy. I believe I bring a strong mix of public and private sector experience required for this position because of my energy industry engineering expertise and management depth and skills. With your kind consideration of this nomination, I can assist the Department of Energy and the nation to move forward the bounds of what we can accomplish together.

I thank you again for the opportunity to be here, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dabbar follows:]

Opening Statement
Paul Dabbar
Nominee to be Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy
Nomination Hearing
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017

Thank you Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to be here today, and thank you for the productive meetings with you and your staff as we prepared for this hearing. I appreciate the insights you have given me on the important topics in the energy sector for your states and the nation.

I would also like to thank the President and Secretary Perry for their trust and confidence in me with this nomination to be Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy (DOE). If I have the honor of being confirmed by this body, I look forward to working with all of you on the important items that the nation should focus on to address our energy needs.

I would like to introduce the most important individuals in my life, and that is my family members, who are here today. Behind me are my wonderful wife of seventeen years, Andrea, and my children Katie and Will. I greatly appreciate them being here today, and allowing me the opportunity to potentially serve again. Also here are my brother and his wife; his guidance throughout my life has been very important to me. Also here are friends of mine from my hometown in Oklahoma, and classmates from the Naval Academy.

If my nomination is confirmed by this body, this will be the third time I will have sworn to support and defend the Constitution. The first time, I was seventeen years old, when it was Induction Day at the US Naval Academy. I felt a strong desire to serve, based on the experience of my parents. My mother who joined the Foreign Service from a small town in North Dakota right after WWII, and my father who came to this country to escape political oppression. The second time was when I was commissioned a Navy ensign. I joined the nuclear submarine force and had the honor to serve in many interesting and sensitive operations, including a deployment to the Arctic, where I helped lead teams supporting the Arctic Laboratory as they deployed solar powered environmental monitoring stations.

Since my time in the Navy, I have worked at J.P.Morgan's investment bank for the last twenty-one years, where I had the opportunity to lead energy sector investments and transactions in all 50 states and around the world. These involved all major areas: renewables, oil and gas production, mining, efficiency, and the electric grid, as well as significant volumes of global nuclear work. As a result, I have gained significant experience in energy technologies, supporting both research and development, many of which started in various research laboratories before being deployed.

As a result of my technical and investment experience, I was appointed by then Secretary Bodman, and re-appointed by the subsequent administration's Secretaries, to the DOE Environmental Management Advisory Board. Accordingly, I have travelled to much of the DOE complex, and visited both Science and Energy program sites as well as Environmental Management sites. Through this, I have developed a keen understanding of the breadth, opportunities, challenges, and the great skill sets of the people who work across the DOE complex.

This is a very exciting time in the energy sector. Over the past decade, technological developments have accelerated significantly. Some of those amazing developments in the applied area include significant improvements in wind turbine efficiency, solar PV installed costs, battery storage, carbon capture, and micro-grids. In the area of fundamental science, opportunities exist for significant leaps in machine learning and artificial intelligence, as well as Exascale computing and quantum information science. The opportunities are significant, and the Department is in a unique position, with the world's leading researchers and physical plant capabilities, to help drive addition progress for the nation. This will ensure our continued leadership in knowledge and technology, and help spur economic well-being for our nation and our fellow citizens.

I have approximately twenty years of private industry energy experience, and twenty years of service in the Department of Defense and DOE. I believe I will bring a strong mix of public and private sector experience required for this position because of my energy industry engineering expertise, and management depth and skills. I hope with your kind consideration of this nomination that I can assist the Department of Energy and the nation to move forward the bounds of what we can accomplish together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Dabbar.
Mr. Domenech, welcome to the Committee.

**STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS W. DOMENECH, NOMINATED TO BE
AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. DOMENECH. Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and the members of the Committee, I am deeply honored and humbled to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas at the Department of the Interior. I am also deeply grateful to Secretary Zinke for recommending me to the President for this important position. And I especially want to thank Congresswoman Radewagen, of American Samoa, for her gracious introduction.

Joining me this morning are members of my family: my wife of 38 years, Jeanne, whom I met in forestry school; my son Ben, who worked at one point in the office of Senator John Cornyn; and my daughter Emily, who is the Energy Subcommittee Staff Director for the House Science Committee. My daughter, Florence, was unable to attend today, and my son Ellis could not attend as he is currently deployed in the war on terror.

As you know, the Office of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas coordinates federal policy for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In addition, the Office is responsible for administering and overseeing the U.S. federal assistance to the Freely Associated States of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. The Office also manages nine little-known American territories with no permanent populations, like Palmyra, Baker, and Howland islands.

I am truly honored and thankful to have received the endorsement of the four territorial Governors for this nomination: Governor Moliga, of American Samoa; Governor Torres, of the Northern Mariana Islands; Governor Mapp, of the Virgin Islands; and Governor Calvo, of Guam.

I would also like to thank all of the Congressional delegates from the insular areas who have each taken the time to meet with me before this hearing. I appreciate their input and, should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with each of them moving forward.

I regret that my parents could not be here to witness this moment. Unfortunately, both have passed away and are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. My father, born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, spent his career serving our country in the United States Army. In many ways, my father's service to the country brings me here today. Like many military families, we moved around the country with each new assignment. As a native Spanish speaker, my father's deployments were often to Latin America, so we lived in Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. In fact, while attending Antilles High School in Puerto Rico, I took my first trip to the Virgin Islands. I was playing defensive end on my high school football team, and we flew to the island of St. Thomas to play against their high school team. We lost. In fact, we lost every time we played the Virgin Islands team.

After receiving my college degree in forestry and wildlife management from Virginia Tech and undertaking a career in that field, I had the opportunity to serve in the George W. Bush Administration in a number of positions at the Department of the Interior. During that time, I was asked by then Secretary Dirk Kempthorne to serve as his appointee to the Advisory Council for the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico and later as Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas.

That appointment gave me the opportunity to work on issues and travel to Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Mariana Islands. These visits afforded me the occasion to work on health care capacity issues, foreign worker policy, invasive species concerns, and the unique challenges of affordable energy on the islands. Of special note, I had the unique assignment to lead a U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist team to the remote northern island of Pagan to investigate its energy potential.

After the end of the Bush Administration, I was honored to be selected and confirmed as Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources. In that role, I oversaw six state environmental, recreation, and historic resource agencies and worked with the Governor to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay, achieve the best year on record for clean air, build oyster and blue crab populations, and reintroduce elk into Southwest Virginia. We invested in land conservation and worked with Virginia's 11 state-recognized Indian tribes to permanently protect historically significant Werowocomoco, the Indian village of Chief Powhatan.

These experiences together bring me before you today. The people living on these remote islands face unique economic, national security, and environmental challenges. Our fellow Americans should feel confident that the U.S. Government will help address these concerns. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the members of this Committee to do just that.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Domenech follows:]

Statement of Douglas William Domenech
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Insular Areas
Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
July 20, 2017

Chairman Murkowski, Senator Cantwell, and Members of the Committee, I am deeply humbled and honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas at the Department of the Interior.

I am also deeply grateful to Secretary Zinke for recommending me to the President for this important position.

Joining me this morning are members of my family: my wife of 38 years, Jeanne, whom I met in forestry school, my son Ben, who worked at one point in the office of Senator John Cornyn, my daughter Emily, who is the Energy Subcommittee staff director for the House Science Committee, and my son-in-law Eric, who retired this week as a Sergeant First Class in the U.S. Army. My daughter Florence was unable to attend and my son, Ellis, could not be here today as he is currently deployed in the War on Terror.

As you know, the Office of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas coordinates federal policy for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In addition, the Office is responsible for administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance to the freely associated states of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau.

The office also manages nine little known American territories with no permanent populations such as Palmyra, Baker, and Howland islands.

I'm truly honored and thankful to have received the endorsement of the four territorial Governors; Governor Moliga of American Samoa, Governor Torres of the Northern Mariana Islands, Governor Mapp of the Virgin Islands, and Governor Calvo of Guam.

I would also like to thank all of the Congressional Delegates from the Insular Areas who have each taken the time to meet with me before this hearing. I appreciate their input and should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with each of them moving forward.

I regret that my parents could not be here to witness this moment. Unfortunately both have passed away and are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. My father, born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, spent his career serving our country in the United States Army.

In many ways, my father's service to the country brings me here today. Like many military families, we moved around the country with each new assignment. As a native Spanish speaker, my father's deployments were often to Latin America and so we lived in Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

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That appointment gave me the opportunity to work on issues - and travel to - Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Mariana Islands. These visits afforded me the occasion to work on health care capacity issues, foreign worker policy, invasive species concerns, and the unique challenges of affordable energy on the islands. Of special note, I had the unique assignment to lead a US Geological Survey volcanologist team to the remote northern island of Pagan (paw-gun) to investigate its energy potential.

After the end of the Bush Administration, I was honored to be selected and confirmed as Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources. In that role I oversaw six state environmental, recreation, and historic resource agencies and worked with the Governor to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay, achieve the best year on record for clean air, build oyster and blue crab populations, and reintroduce elk to southwest Virginia. We invested in land conservation and worked with Virginia's 11 state recognized Indian tribes to permanently protect historically significant Werowocomoco, the village of Indian Chief Powhatan.

These experiences together bring me before you today.

The people living on these remote islands face unique economic, national security, and environmental challenges. Our fellow Americans should feel confident that the U.S. government will help address their concerns. If confirmed I pledge to work with the members of this Committee to do just that.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Domenech.
Mr. Jonas, welcome to the Committee.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID S. JONAS, NOMINATED TO BE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Mr. JONAS. Thank you and good morning. Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for considering my nomination to be the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Energy. It is a privilege to be considered and an honor to appear before you today.

I also want to thank those Committee members and staff who have met with me in the weeks leading up to this hearing and for sharing your insights about how we can work together, if I am confirmed, to make America more energy-secure and to fulfill DOE's legal obligations, as well as other commitments, to clean up nuclear waste sites that date back to the Manhattan Project and the Cold War.

Let me also express my appreciation to President Trump and to Secretary Perry for the confidence they have placed in me and for asking me to serve in the Administration.

I especially want to thank my wife, Tina, who has been by my side for the last 23 years and is here with me today. I want to thank her for her love and support. And I would also like to take a moment to thank my parents, a special thank you to them, who are unable to be with us today. I'm hoping that they are maybe watching remotely. Last, I thank my friends and colleagues and even two former supervisors who are with us here today for showing their support. I'm truly honored.

The responsibilities of the General Counsel include providing legal advice and counsel to the Secretary and senior departmental officials to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The General Counsel also leads the outstanding career staff of lawyers and legal support personnel at DOE.

I come before this Committee with more than 30 years of professional legal experience in the military, the Federal Government, and the private sector. My experience includes more than 20 years as a Judge Advocate in the United States Marine Corps, followed by almost a decade as a career member of the Senior Executive Service. I have been the General Counsel of two federal agencies, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as well as the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. These positions are relevant to the position you consider me for today.

NNSA represents a major part of the operating activities of the DOE, and as the General Counsel of NNSA, I worked in close cooperation with the DOE General Counsel, two of whom have written letters of recommendation to the Committee on my behalf, one Democrat, who happens to be here, and one Republican. The Defense Board advises the Secretary regarding public health and safety issues at DOE defense nuclear facilities.

In terms of legal practice, I have extensive litigation experience at the trial and appellate levels. I was privileged to become the first uniformed Judge Advocate in the history of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps to argue a case at the U.S. Supreme Court.

I have also negotiated numerous international agreements in the nuclear realm, including the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement. I have previously rendered advice to government officials covering the waterfront of federal legal issues including international law, government contracts, appropriations, administrative, legislative, personnel, ethics, labor, and environmental law. I have expertise in national security law and nuclear nonproliferation law, which I taught at Georgetown and George Washington University law schools for more than a decade.

Some recent press articles point to a writing of mine from more than two decades ago. The opinion piece was about women and homosexuals serving in the military. It was a reflection of the time it was written and does not reflect my current views. It's important for each of you to hear this directly from me, that my views have evolved. A lot has changed since that was written, and I believe the change has been for the better. As a Marine, I have the utmost respect for anyone, no matter gender, race, or sexual orientation, who is willing to serve our great country.

Since these proceedings don't always allow for the opportunity to know us personally, I wanted to share my personal commitment to serving the Department and the men and women who would be my colleagues if I'm honored to be confirmed. If confirmed, I will bring all this experience, including the experience of changed minds, to bring to bear as the DOE General Counsel, and will diligently apply and faithfully observe the laws passed by Congress.

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of my nomination and, if confirmed, look forward to working with you and your colleagues as well as the Committee and personal staff. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jonas follows:]

Opening Statement
David S. Jonas
Nominee to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy
Nomination Hearing
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for considering my nomination to be the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). It is a privilege to be considered and an honor to appear before you today.

I also want to thank those committee members and staff who have met with me in the weeks leading up to this hearing, and for sharing your insights about how we can work together, if I am confirmed, to make America more energy secure and to fulfill DOE's legal obligations, as well as other commitments, to clean up nuclear waste sites that date back to the Manhattan Project and the Cold War.

Let me also express my appreciation to President Trump and to Secretary Perry for the confidence they have placed in me and for asking me to serve in the Administration. I especially want to thank my wife Tina, who has been by my side for the last 23 years and is with me here today, for her love and support. I would like to take a moment to say a special thank you to my parents, who wanted to attend, but were unable to do so. Lastly, I thank my friends and colleagues who are in attendance for showing their support. I'm truly honored.

The responsibilities of the General Counsel include providing legal advice and counsel to the Secretary and senior Departmental officials to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The General Counsel also leads the outstanding career staff of lawyers and legal support personnel at DOE.

I come before this Committee with more than 30 years of professional legal experience in the military, the federal government and in the private sector. My experience includes more than 20 years as a judge advocate in the United States Marine Corps, followed by almost a decade as a career member of the Senior Executive Service. I have been the General Counsel of two federal agencies: the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as well as the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB). These positions are relevant to the position you consider me for today. NNSA represents a major part of the operating activities of the DOE and as the General Counsel of NNSA, I worked in close cooperation with the DOE General Counsel, two of whom have written letters of recommendation to the Committee on my behalf. The DNFSB advises the Secretary regarding public health and safety issues at DOE defense nuclear facilities.

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administrative, legislative, personnel, ethics, labor, and environmental law. I have expertise in national security law and nuclear nonproliferation law, which I taught at Georgetown and George Washington University law schools for more than a decade.

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Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of my nomination and, if confirmed, look forward to working with you and your colleagues, as well as, committee and personal staff. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Jones.
Mr. Menezes, welcome to the Committee.

**STATEMENT OF MARK WESLEY MENEZES, NOMINATED TO BE
UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY**

Mr. MENEZES. Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, distinguished members of the Committee, and personal staff, thank you for scheduling this hearing this morning and taking time from your busy schedules to be here.

Thank you to those who have met with me prior to the hearing to present your views and recommendations on how we can improve the Department. These meetings have increased my appreciation about the Department and the importance of its missions and priorities.

It is an honor and I am humbled to be the President's nominee for Under Secretary of Energy. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee, Secretary Perry, and the dedicated workforce at the Department serving the American people.

Joining me for the hearing are my family and friends, without whom I would not be here today. Sitting behind me, my wife, Dr. Yun-hyang Lee, my inspiration for public service as the Division Chief of Interpreting Services at the State Department; my daughter, Paige Jennings, a former Barrow and Carper Senate staffer, now an attorney here in town; and Will Cho, a businessman from New Jersey. Unable to be here are my daughters Stephanie Cho, a biomedical engineer in Tokyo; my daughter Marisa, an attorney advisor for the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, another public servant; my brother Lewis, from Texas; my sister Donah; grandniece Miss Jolie; Mr. Kayden, my grandnephew; my sister-in-law Cheryl; and other family members and friends who have been supportive over the years and share in my honor are here or are streaming the hearing live at various places throughout the country. And the person most responsible for my life's achievements, my mother, a retired public school teacher, Doris.

The CHAIRMAN. We welcome them all. I think we have a full family complement today in the Committee, and that is great to see.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you.

As described by Senator Cassidy, this will not be my first time in public service. Being in this grand committee room, I see former colleagues, and I am reminded of our work together on the Energy Policy Act, referred to by Senator Cassidy. It was a comprehensive energy bill that has helped shape our nation's energy policy in many ways and put in place several programs in existence today at the Department. It was the work of several Congresses begun by then Chairman Frank Murkowski and then Ranking Member Jeff Bingaman, refined by subsequent Congresses, and finally enacted under the leadership and dedication of Senators Domenici and Bingaman, and House Chairmen Billy Tauzin, who was here early this morning, Joe Barton, and Ranking Member John Dingell.

I recall late in the evenings we would gather in Senator Domenici's small office off the Capitol Rotunda, and frequently we would have breakout sessions in the Capitol dome to work out the very difficult issues and prepare issues to bring to the Congress that we

could not work out. To this day, when I see the light at the top of the Capitol dome shining above the Mall with its grand monuments gracing our nation's capital, I see a symbol of what can be accomplished with bipartisanship, collaboration, and dedication to working together to serve all Americans.

The bill was not perfect; we didn't get everything right. Subsequent Congresses changed it, multiple agencies have promulgated rules interpreting and implementing it, and courts have decided the fate of several of its provisions, but it was a product of our system of government working as it was designed, with all three branches doing their part. That experience of understanding opposing views, creating options, and developing solutions will serve me well at the Department should this Committee approve my nomination and the Senate confirm me.

I have learned valuable lessons working for several of our nation's largest utilities: Central and South West, which merged with American Electric Power, and, most recently, my time with Berkshire Hathaway Energy. These positions provide a shared experience of managing collectively almost \$150 billion in energy assets, over 38,000 employees, and serving over 17 million customers in almost half of our states. I gained management experience of large corporations with diverse workforces, worked to accomplish stretch goals under budget, faced the challenges in today's competitive energy markets, embraced the 24/7/365-days-a-year obligation to meet customer demands for affordable, reliable energy, and gained an understanding of the regulatory labyrinths of state commissions and the several federal agencies that regulate energy companies today.

These corporations trained me in leadership and management styles and how to plan, set goals, and measure performance. At Central and South West, I learned the Grid® Management system that trains leaders to cultivate a culture of empowerment so all employees contribute in the pursuit of goals. This training calls managers to promote the best in leadership and empathy, essentially teaching us the most important lesson that not one of us is smarter than all of us, and that plans to achieve goals must be constantly critiqued and evaluated with set measures of success. At Berkshire, I recently participated in management training in the "3-G Way," which emphasizes treating people with greatness, fulfilling dreams, and instilling a culture of shared values. Goals are achieved through a constant process of planning, acting, measuring, and correcting. Performance is systematically improved through "gap" analyses to ensure goals are being achieved. This training and experience I will bring with me to the Department, should I be confirmed.

As others have said before me, these are exciting and challenging times to be in the energy space. Evolving, innovative technologies, many developed at our national labs and the Department's R&D programs, have improved the quality of all aspects of our lives, not just energy, but communications, transportation, science, health, and the environment.

Indeed, in my professional career I have experienced the march of technological developments through the establishing prototypes of early wind and solar projects in West Texas to the more recent

technological advancements installed by Berkshire's MidAmerican Energy in many of its wind projects across Iowa, making Iowa second only to Texas in wind production.

Members of the Committee, I wish to thank you again for allowing me to be here today. It is indeed an honor to come before the Committee, and I ask for your favorable consideration of the President's nomination. I look forward to hearing your questions to learn more about the challenges facing the Department.

And, Chairman Murkowski, I would like to express a thanks for having received letters of support from the Solar Energy Industry Association, the American Wind Energy Association, the American Council on Renewable Energy, as well as the Geothermal Association, and there are several other letters in the record of support.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Menezes follows:]

**OPENING STATEMENT
MARK WESLEY MENEZES
NOMINATION HEARING
U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
JULY 20, 2017**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, distinguished Members of the Committee, and personal staff: Thank you for scheduling this nomination hearing and taking time from your demanding schedules to be here this morning. Thank you to those who met with me prior to the hearing to present your ideas and concerns, and make recommendations about the Department of Energy. These meetings have increased my appreciation for the importance of the Department's missions and its priorities. Thank you, Senator Cassidy for introducing me to the committee. It is an honor, and I am humbled, to be the President's nominee for Under Secretary of Energy. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, Secretary Perry, and the dedicated workforce at the Department serving the American people.

Joining me for the hearing are my family and friends, without whom I would not be here today: my wife, Dr. Yun-hyang Lee, my inspiration for public service as the Division Chief of Interpreting Services at the State Department; children Paige Jennings, a former Senate staffer, now attorney here in town, Will Cho, a businessman in New Jersey. Daughters Stephanie Cho, a biomedical engineer in Tokyo, and Marisa, an attorney advisor for the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, another public servant, are unable to be here. My brother, Lewis, my sister, Donah, grandniece Miss Jolie, grandnephew Mr. Kayden; my sister-in-law Cheryl and other family members and friends who have been supportive over the years and share in my honor are here or are streaming the hearing live at various places throughout the country. And, the person most responsible for my life's achievements, my mother, a retired public school teacher, Doris.

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Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Very good. Thank you.

At this time, we will proceed to the first round of questioning for our nominees before the Committee.

Ms. Combs, let me start with you. I can't ever have discussions with my colleagues from Texas before we start talking about the size of our respective states—

[Laughter.]

—but one of the things that is very unique between the two, and I am always very envious when I think of Texas, is most of the lands in Texas are not held under federal ownership, unlike Alaska, where some 63 percent are under federal management. And we say a lot back home that the Department of the Interior is effectively our landlord. One of the things that I think made Secretary Zinke's visit so positive back home was he said, "I don't think I like the landlord description, I like the partner description." We would certainly hope that you adopt that same view and perspective.

But truly your challenge, one of them, as I see it, is to oversee the management of over 245 million surface acres and over 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate. Over one-fifth of it is in my state, which again means that even some seemingly simple decisions made here in Washington have a great deal of impact on us.

So give me just very quickly your view, your understanding, of the role between state and local governments as well as other stakeholders in terms of the role of management on our public lands because this is important to us on a host of different levels. So if you can speak to that aspect of your role as well as what it means from the permitting process and how states like Alaska can most effectively access some of the resources that are on our lands.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator, for that question. I'm going to reuse the word "partner" and I think add to that collaboration and conversation, and I think the picture you laid out of the amount of land that you have that you obviously would like to see used and maintained and having access to, Secretary Zinke has talked about responsible use and also engaging with partnerships.

So whether it is tribal communities or whether it is cities and counties, local governments, I certainly believe in that. I have used that collaborative approach on the endangered species issues I referred to in my opening remarks. But I think that the issue I'm also aware of from your staff is about the transfer of some lands and the selection process, and that is something I very much am eager to help you and Secretary Zinke move that forward. I know it's been quite a long time. So thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate that. There is a recognition that there have been a lot of promises that have been made to Alaska on statehood and to Alaskans, whether they be Alaska Native veterans or Native allotments, promises made that have yet to be delivered on, so we look forward to working with you on that.

I want to ask a question about the Arctic Energy Office, and this is for you, Mr. Dabbar and Mr. Menezes. Right now, in the Appropriations markup going on with Energy and Water, the bill includes language that we included that supports a renewed focus on the Arctic region, and it encourages the Energy Department, as a cross-cutting activity, to use the Arctic Energy Office as a central-

ized area to support the use of energy resources and innovative activities. So I'm looking for a commitment from you, gentlemen, to come to Alaska to see the opportunities that we have to produce the energy, our need for affordable energy, but also how the focus on the Arctic and the utilization of the Arctic Energy Office can continue.

Mr. MENEZES, do you want to comment on that?

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you very much for that question. That was precisely one of the questions that we talked about with your staff, and we appreciate very much you making your staff available to us. But we discussed at length the office and the needs of the Alaskans. And indeed you have my commitment that, should I be confirmed, that we will look very seriously at that and work with Congress to ensure that we have adequate resources to reestablish that office, as I think it had been in existence before.

The CHAIRMAN. Correct. I appreciate that.

Mr. Dabbar.

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I have a reasonable amount of experience with Arctic energy issues. I fully appreciate in particular remote villages that have harder access to energy and the importance of that, and the amount that technology can improve the opportunity for energy. I welcome the opportunity to visit your state again, hopefully this time above the surface of the water.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. We look forward to that as well.

Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Madam Chair. I know how important this hearing is, but I am almost—there is just so much to talk about, so much for each of you and each of your positions. There are a couple of broad things that is kind of striking to me this morning. One, we have this issue with the Department of Energy as it relates to Secretary Perry saying he wants to reshuffle some things. And then over at Interior, we have the Secretary, who is basically saying, "I'm reassigning some people who are in charge of science." So it is a lot of confusion and, in my sense, a lot of undermining of science.

For me, in the State of Washington, our big concern is Hanford cleanup—making sure that Hanford gets cleaned up and that we have people dedicated to that mission.

So, Mr.—it is—

Mr. MENEZES. Menezes.

Senator CANTWELL. —Menezes, first I wanted to ask you because under Secretary Moniz, he tasked the Under Secretary with various management functions, including the Environmental Management program responsible for Hanford cleanup. He also made the Under Secretary responsible for the Environmental, Health, and Safety program, which is responsible for protecting the cleanup. Secretary Perry has indicated he plans to reassign those functions, but he has not told us how. What is your understanding of what your role is to be at the Department?

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you very much, Ranking Member Cantwell, for that question. The first question that I got from your staff when we met was in fact this question. And, of course, it arises out of

the fact that we, back in '05, had created the Under Secretary for Science. You know, it's expected of any incoming administration, of course, to review the organization and management of the past administration and to make changes where necessary, but also to continue things, you know, in existence.

The naming of the Unders, of course, is consistent with historical practices going back to 2005 and as statutes define them. But it's the current organizational nomenclature that's the historical anomaly. But, so—

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. I'm sorry I have to interrupt because of the overwhelming amount of people that are here and these are important questions. So are you going to be responsible for Hanford cleanup? Is it going to be your responsibility?

Mr. MENEZES. On day one—

Senator CANTWELL. Do you understand the moral obligation here and the size and scope of the largest nuclear waste cleanup site in the entire world and the billions of dollars we spend annually on trying to achieve this goal?

Mr. MENEZES. Yes, I do.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. So you—

Mr. MENEZES. On day one, it will be under my management.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. You have been told by the Secretary that is the case.

Mr. MENEZES. I have not had direct conversations with the Secretary on this at all. I have not been briefed on this, but it is my understanding that on day one I will assume the Under Secretary for Management and Performance as currently in existence.

Senator CANTWELL. Mr. Dabbar, what is your understanding of your role and responsibilities, and where are you on the urgency and critical importance of making sure there is adequate funding for Hanford and Hanford cleanup?

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator. I fully appreciate the importance of this to your state and to the nation. As someone who has worked in the nuclear power industry both from an engineering and from an investment point of view for my whole adult life, I fully appreciate that. In addition to that, I've been to the Hanford Reservation many, many times, more times than I can remember, visiting both the National Lab and the full EM Complex as well as Columbia Generating Station. So I think I have a very good understanding of the urgency.

I understand the moral imperative associated with what Hanford accomplished during World War II and subsequently during the Cold War and the obligation of the nation to clean it up. I have a very keen understanding and sympathy for the Tri-City area and some of the obligations both morally, but also legally, under the Tri-Party Agreement. In my position, as Under Secretary of Science, clearly I will run the science complex, Office of Science.

As a restructuring might move things around, and once again, I have not been fully briefed, I feel I bring full skill sets and appreciation in particular on the science side of technology. I have a full appreciation for the requirements of the Tri-Party Agreement and the requirements, in particular the tank farm that technology is going to be needed that has not been produced in order to meet the requirements of the Tri-Party Agreement.

Senator CANTWELL. And what about worker safety?

Mr. DABBAR. I completely have a very strong feeling around vapor point and around other things that have come up, the PUREX incident that just occurred. Once again, as an operating nuclear engineer, I have a full sympathy to make certain that safety is paramount for an organization, certainly in the nuclear waste complex.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, I know my time has expired, Madam Chair, but this is such an important issue. It is not just for Washington, it happens to reside in our state, and we do have a Tri-Party Agreement, but I think everybody in this nation deserves an answer on how this is going to be managed and who is going to have what responsibilities. Every OMB director takes a stab at trying to redo this as well and comes up with an idea that they want to foist on all of us, and then all of us, as the oversight committee, try to make sure that the actual cleanup and the funding is there. So I just cannot imagine moving forward without having clarity. But I so appreciate your depth and knowledge on that subject, and thank you for the commitment on the worker safety as well.

Madam Chair, I am going to come back to this. These subject matters are so important and so broad and so in-depth, and I am sure my colleagues feel the same way. I will come back to the rest of the witnesses on the second round.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

Senator Gardner.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thanks to all the nominees who are here today. Thank you for your willingness to serve, and welcome to your families.

Ms. Combs, I apologize that we ended up missing yesterday's meeting. Lunch with your new boss took a little bit longer than I think any of us anticipated at the White House yesterday.

I wanted to just visit with you a little bit about the effort that I have been leading to move the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) headquarters to the Western part of the United States. Of the 248.3 million acres of public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, 248.2 of that 248.3 million acres are located west of the Mississippi River—it is over 99 percent of the land located out West. There is no question that having some headquarters located in the West could result in better policies for our tribes, ranchers, constituents, recreationalists, and energy producers. I would just like to get your commitment that, if confirmed, you will work with me to make moving the BLM headquarters to the western states a reality.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator. You, of course, have my commitment. I've seen those numbers before. And Secretary Zinke has also talked about, you know, fielding the folks where the land is and the fielding is, and I'm sure that he will be visiting with you as well. But I look forward to visiting with you about that.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you very much. Northwest Colorado had a naval oil shale site that needed cleanup, and that cleanup was finished a few years ago. The fund that was generated within the Department to collect oil and gas mineral revenue in the area to assist with the cleanup contains revenue that needs to, by law, be returned to Colorado. Members of the Colorado Congressional

delegation have been trying to get this returned to our state for years. With this new Administration, I would like to work to get this situation rightfully addressed. Will the Department look to find ways to return this money to Colorado, as the law says?

Ms. COMBS. Yes, Senator. Your office briefed me on that yesterday. I think the sum is \$77 million. And I certainly, the minute, if I'm confirmed, I will be calling you on the phone.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you. And if it must be done legislatively, I would hope that you would make it a priority to ask Congress to assist. Can I get that assurance?

Ms. COMBS. Yes, sir, you do.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you. Thank you.

Ms. Burman, we had the opportunity to visit not too long ago talking about water issues. We talked about the Arkansas Valley conduit, which was approved by John F. Kennedy, signed into law by John F. Kennedy, but still not built yet, something that we will continue to work on. We talked about the need for permit reform so that it does not take a decade-plus to build water storage projects when we know in a state like Colorado we are just a few decades away from needing \$15 billion worth of water storage projects, and we have to find a way to help meet the needs of future growth, industry, municipalities, and agricultural to make sure that we can get that.

But I wanted to focus on something that has happened more recently in states like Colorado and Montana. In the most recent farm bill a couple years ago, Congress authorized a pilot program for the production of hemp. Unfortunately, the ability for farmers in Colorado to move forward on hemp production has been stymied and in other states has been stymied because they are using water which may move through federal facilities to grow these crops.

Earlier this week, I joined with colleagues from Colorado, Montana, Senator Daines, and in Oregon to introduce legislation that would allow for the production of hemp using federal water so long as it complies with state law. I would just like your commitment to review the Bureau of Reclamation's policies toward hemp production to ensure states' rights when it comes to water are properly respected.

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, thank you again for meeting with me this morning. I appreciated having our discussion about water supply, about the Arkansas conduit. I commit to you to going back, if confirmed, and taking a look at that legislation and working with you to see what we can do.

Senator GARDNER. Yes. Thank you. And, again, I think it is very clear in federal law, whether it is the Supreme Court precedent that states' primacy over water right determination should hold. And so I believe this is a matter of state right and state water law that should be supreme.

Mr. Dabbar, a question for you on the role of science. I want to make sure that I am clear on just how you view science overall, how you view something like DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, if you would.

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator. And thank you for the conversation I had with you and your staff on the importance of that site in your state, but also the importance for it for the nation.

Clearly, the Lab, the Renewable Lab, in your state is at the forefront of a lot of development on technologies about wind and wind modeling around PV and new different types of technologies around PV production as well as batteries and storage.

It is obviously very important. The amount of growth in renewables that the private sector is growing in those areas is at very high rates, and the importance of that to our nation that can translate from research into manufacturing so that the maximum amount of those sort of resources that are made in this country as a production basis are manufactured here.

So I look forward to hopefully coming to visit the site and learning more about the specific programs and hopefully be an advocate for those programs.

Senator GARDNER. All right. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Gardner.

Senator King.

Senator KING. Thank you, Madam Chair. You mentioned Texas and Alaska. When I was up with you for the field hearing in Alaska, I remember a t-shirt that had a picture of Alaska, and Texas was in the middle, and the title was "Poor Little Texas." It was a—

[Laughter.]

I wish I had brought it. I should have brought it back for you.

The CHAIRMAN. [Off microphone.]

[Laughter.]

Senator KING. You are very generous. For those of you who have mentioned that this hearing is streaming, I can tell you that is not an unmixed blessing. On Tuesday morning, I made a presentation down here that was streamed. I talked to my wife last night and said, "How did it go?" She said, "I watched it on streaming. The second half was good." It was a kind of qualified praise.

[Laughter.]

So you have to be careful with streaming.

Mr. Dabbar, I was doing some research on your background. I must say I saw some of the most colorful comments about your skills, two I cannot resist mentioning. You were characterized as "one bright cookie." I like that one. But the one I really liked is, "There ain't no such thing as a stupid nuclear Navy guy."

[Laughter.]

So I congratulate you on those, I think, high compliments.

[Laughter.]

Ms. Combs, the Department of the Interior needs to talk about the National Park Service. And what concerns me is that there is a very big backlog, as you know, of maintenance aside from roads. I believe the total backlog is about \$11 billion, but the roads are about \$5 billion so we are talking about \$6 billion, and yet in the budget that has been submitted this year, the Park Service is cut by 11 percent.

How do you plan to deal—briefly, because I have a limited amount of time—how do you plan to deal with the backlog of main-

tenance in our national parks which are more and more popular every year? Last year Acadia National Park had named, just from '15 to '16, a 20 percent increase in visitors.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator. That is obviously a very important issue for Secretary Zinke as well. I was not a part of creating the budget, I'm not at the Department, but I will commit to working with you to find ways, for one thing, to increase revenues as well as reduce costs. I know that the national parks are a giant economic driver in the communities where they are located. The public loves to visit them, which is why I mentioned the 400,000 people just running down the road near me. This is important—

Senator KING. It's 3.2 million at Acadia in Maine, 3.2 million visitors at Acadia in Maine, so—

Ms. COMBS. Yes. And it's very, very important, and I look forward to working with you and ensuring that we have a good process in place to reduce and get rid of the backlog, the \$5 billion.

Senator KING. Now, to our three nominees for the Department of Energy, budgets represent policy. In 2017, Congress appropriated funds for various offices in the Department of Energy. The budget that was submitted by this Administration cuts energy efficiency and renewable energy by 70 percent; electric delivery and reliability by an unbelievable 40 percent; Office of Science at the labs, 17 percent; ARPA-E, a basic science research, 93 percent, essentially eliminated; weatherization, very important in my state, eliminated; state energy programs, eliminated. There was even a cut to the Energy Information Administration, which I just cannot believe because data is so important. Congress is not going to go along with those cuts. In fact, the Appropriations Committee is working on them right now.

Here is my question to the three of you, and yes or no answers, you can do it in unison as we did it with your swearing in, I hope. If funded by the Congress and the appropriations process, will you see to it that these programs will be fully implemented and appropriated funds expended in accordance with Congressional intent?

Mr. MENEZES. Yes.

Mr. JONAS. Yes.

Mr. DABBAR. Yes, Senator.

Senator KING. Those were the right answers.

[Laughter.]

Will you see to it that these programs are adequately staffed in accordance with Congressional intent?

Mr. MENEZES. Yes.

Mr. JONAS. Yes, Senator.

Mr. DABBAR. Yes, Senator.

Senator KING. I appreciate your straightforward answers.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Flake.

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you. Sorry I had to go, but I enjoyed hearing, Brenda, your testimony and your introduction.

With Reclamation, obviously, everybody knows the importance of water to Arizona. It is our lifeblood. And fortunately you have a lot of experience—you mentioned your experience with Senator Kyl's of-

fice. Can you talk about the Indian water settlements and how important that is to states like Arizona and other Western states?

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, thank you for raising that. I've been working on Indian water rights settlements my entire career. For Arizona and for the other states in the West, it's hard to explain how important they are. Indian tribal rights are often first in time, first in right, which means that they call into question rights that came after them. By negotiating, by settling these rights, by not going to litigation, you can come up with solutions that are good for all parties, and that's—I would like to say there has been a great history in Arizona of doing that. I think that's true across the West. I think that the best solutions come from collaboration, they come from negotiation, and they come from the parties coming together to settle those claims.

Senator FLAKE. Well, I can tell you, as a Senator following Senator Kyl, it is a bit daunting, given the work that he has done on water and in particular with these Indian water settlements. As you say, they are vital because it gives some kind of certainty and surety moving ahead for not just the tribes involved but other water users as well.

Obviously, the Colorado River is extremely important to Arizona, all the Lower Basin and Upper Basin as well. Can you talk about what needs are there with regard to the Colorado River going ahead that Reclamation is going to be vital to?

Ms. BURMAN. The Colorado River, as you said, is the lifeblood to Arizona, but also to seven basin states and to the country of Mexico. I'll be working with Secretary Zinke, if confirmed, to prioritize our work on the Colorado River. The Secretary has a very special role under the 1928 Boulder Canyon Project Act as the water master of the Lower Basin.

There are issues right on the table. There is an agreement with Mexico that expires this year. I'll work with Secretary Zinke, if confirmed, to work on reaching agreement with Mexico before the end of the year if at all possible.

The states have been working together to address drought and possible upcoming shortages. They are working hard right now. I hope to be confirmed swiftly and to work with them and to step into the Bureau of Reclamation and to see what we can accomplish as quickly as possible.

Senator FLAKE. There is a drought contingency plan being worked out now I understand. What role will you play there?

Ms. BURMAN. If confirmed as the lead of Reclamation, I'll be Secretary Zinke's prime adviser on working with the Basin states and Mexico on coming to agreement on a drought contingency plan.

Senator FLAKE. Why is that important moving ahead?

Ms. BURMAN. The Lower Basin and the Upper Basin are looking at shortage. There have been 18 years of shortage on the Colorado River. The Upper Basin states have been working together to try and shore up to make sure that they can keep critical elevations in Lake Powell, while the Lower Basin states have been working together and with Mexico to make sure that they can maintain critical elevations in Lake Mead.

Looking ahead and looking at shortage, this is a way to prevent the system from, some would say, collapsing. What you need to do

is you need to keep Lake Mead at a healthy level so that it can serve all the states and it can serve the constituents and people can look ahead and plan for what the possible shortages could be.

There are a lot of commitments on the table. I am not part of those discussions right now, and I haven't been, but I do look forward to joining those and to staffing and serving Secretary Zinke as we work those out.

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you. Obviously, it is important in Arizona. Some water users have voluntarily left water behind the dam at Lake Mead to make sure that those levels stay where they need to be before mandatory arbitrary levels are hit that nobody wants to see. We have been given a bit of a reprieve with a very wet winter, particularly further West, but with the Upper Basin, it has been pretty good. Lake Powell seems to be going up. How much of a reprieve have we been given with regard to Lake Mead?

Ms. BURMAN. I am going to leave that to the experts.

[Laughter.]

It has been a wet year, and that has been a blessing.

Senator FLAKE. Well, certainly we know that it is going to take a lot of very wet winters to get us out of the woods here, and that is why this drought contingency plan is so important, to make sure that we plan. Nobody likes to talk about shortages—I think we refer to them as imbalances on the river—but those are significant in the future, and it is going to take a lot of planning. I am glad you have brought the expertise to the table that you bring from a number of different angles, and so I am excited to see you there and look forward to working with you if confirmed.

Ms. BURMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Flake.

Senator Franken.

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome to all of you. And I would like to welcome all the family members here, but especially the Minnesota Burmans.

[Laughter.]

They seem to be a cut above the other family members here.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Jonas, I just want to thank you for your statement regarding the article you wrote 20 years ago on the role of women and LGBT and the military. I like that you wrote and testified, "I will bring all this experience, including the lesson of changing minds," to your new job if you are confirmed. Thank you for making that statement.

Mr. Domenech, prior to your nomination for this position, you led the Fueling Freedom Project at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a conservative think tank that receives funding from Koch brothers and ExxonMobil. Your job was to fight against any action that would reduce greenhouse emissions.

Now, Mr. Domenech, you have been nominated to lead federal policy for U.S. territories, including a number in the Pacific and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These territories all happen to be islands in the Pacific and the Caribbean and are already seeing climate change impacts through rising sea levels, changing precipitation

patterns, and ocean acidification. So I would like to better understand your views on the subject of climate change.

The National Climate Assessment found that unless we take action, sea levels are expected to rise over three feet on average by the end of the century, possibly much more. Do you accept that view? And yes or no will do as an answer.

Mr. DOMENECH. I'm not familiar—thank you for that question, Senator. I'm not familiar with that particular number, but I wouldn't be surprised if it's not true. I do agree that the climate is changing and that man has a role in that, and especially for the islands, they are particularly vulnerable, especially the low-lying atolls and islands are very vulnerable to sea level rise. And I've committed to the Governors and to the delegates that I would work with them on that issue.

Senator FRANKEN. Well, you did write in an op-ed last year, and I quote, "Is man making an impact on the climate? Perhaps, but in very small ways." Is that what you meant when you answered my question?

Mr. DOMENECH. Yes, and thank you again for reminding me of what I wrote. My understanding of where scientists are today is that man definitely has an impact on the climate, and the question is just, is it catastrophic? How much of an impact do they have? And that that is—

Senator FRANKEN. Is it your understanding that climate scientists say that man's effect on climate happens in a very small way? Is that your understanding? Because that's what you wrote.

Mr. DOMENECH. Yes. I mean, I think—

Senator FRANKEN. So, but that is at odds with about 97 percent of climate scientists.

Mr. DOMENECH. Well, I would say to you, Senator, that the study that is cited on the 97 percent of climate scientists agree has been, my understanding, debunked in the past as a particular number, but I think the most—

Senator FRANKEN. Really?

Mr. DOMENECH. Yeah, that's my understanding of it.

Senator FRANKEN. That is your understanding.

Mr. DOMENECH. That was their study.

Senator FRANKEN. What is your understanding based on? I am really curious about that.

Mr. DOMENECH. Well, I've read—thank you again for that question. I've read reports—

Senator FRANKEN. You are welcome.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DOMENECH. I've read reports that have looked at that particular study that said the 97 percent, and have indicated that there were flaws in that particular study, and I would be glad to follow up with you—

Senator FRANKEN. Well, could you tell me right now what you are talking about, what studies you are talking about?

Mr. DOMENECH. I can't off the top of my head, no. It's not something I dwell on.

Senator FRANKEN. Did you find these studies on the prestigious Internet?

[Laughter.]

Mr. DOMENECH. I find—yes, I understand your point.

Senator FRANKEN. Okay. Well, I find this very disturbing. If confirmed, you are going to be responsible for some vulnerable communities, these island communities. So given your history of downplaying or ignoring climate change, why do you think you are the right person to help these communities?

Mr. DOMENECH. Well, I've—again, thank you for that question. I've—my whole life has been spent trying to help people who are involved in the environment. In Virginia, when I was Secretary of Natural Resources, 100 miles from here we have Tangier Island, which is probably a better example to use of a fishing community in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay that is experiencing erosion and sea level rise and impacting that community. We worked with them quite a bit in terms of reinforcing their shoreline and those kinds of activities with the Corps of Engineers.

And so I take it very seriously. I don't at all minimize that the climate is changing, and I would only say that the head of the U.S. Geological Survey himself has said that we need to always keep in perspective that the climate of the Earth has always changed since the beginning of the planet, and it always will change. So we have to put that in perspective when we deal with these natural—

Senator FRANKEN. Well, I think when we put that in perspective, we have to look at how it has changed since the Industrial Age and look at how it has changed and how the weather has changed in relation to the amount of carbon dioxide that is in the air. I believe you will see a correlation between temperature and the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let's go to Senator Heinrich.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Burman, I want to start off with you, and I do want to say I find you have a very impressive resume. You have a broad array of experiences that I think you bring to this job, and you have a history of reliance on science and data. I want to start by saying frankly what worries me the most about the current Administration have been some of the expressions of disdain and distrust directed at science data and, in particular, scientists.

Do you share any of that concern? And probably more importantly, what are you going to do to protect the Bureau's historic role as a science-driven, honest broker in water basin management?

Ms. BURMAN. Thank you, Senator. In my past, when I worked at the Department, we continuously worked with the United States Geological Survey, with the USGS, to bring the best science possible to Reclamation and the interpretation of that science. We did that with climate change, we did that through the series of river gauges that exist over the United States that help the operators of water projects across the West be on the front lines and look at what's coming in the future.

I am not with the Administration at this point, but I continue and I foresee continuing to work to make sure that Reclamation has the best science and the best understanding when moving forward.

Senator HEINRICH. If you were in a position where you felt like decisions might be made that were not in concert with the facts, with the best available science from USGS, how would you approach that?

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, Secretary Zinke is putting his trust in me to lead Reclamation, and he's putting his trust in me to give him independent advice, and I'll call it as I see it.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you.

Mr. Menezes.

Mr. MENEZES. Yes.

Senator HEINRICH. One of the things I continue to hear about is the need for additional funding at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) to recapitalize critical infrastructure. I hope you are aware of the issue over the last couple of years, the accident, the recovery from that accident; I suspect you are. But WIPP is now reporting a backlog of roughly \$25 million in critical upgrades to key fire safety systems, instrumentations, and infrastructure.

Having been through that experience, having seen WIPP shut its doors, I just think safety has got to be the absolute number one critical priority above all else for our DOE workers. I want to know if you are committed to finding the resources to make sure that WIPP cannot just operate, but operate safely.

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you, Senator, for that question. I have not been fully briefed on that; however, when meeting with your staff I said that one of our number one commitments, of course, would be worker safety at all of the critical sites, and certainly at WIPP, and we'll continue that commitment.

Senator HEINRICH. Well, I just want to reinforce that it is great to say that, and I trust that you mean exactly what you say, but we have had situations like the accident at WIPP that we simply, I think in the Complex, cannot tolerate. We cannot put people in those positions. When you make a compact with a state and with a community, part of what goes along with that, as the Carlsbad community is accepting this true waste from all over the country, all over the Complex, is that we have to make good on our side of that bargain, which is to make sure that those workers absolutely and always work in a safe environment. So I look forward to working with you to make sure that we make good on those promises.

Mr. MENEZES. Senator, you have my commitment to be a strong advocate for worker safety.

Senator HEINRICH. Mr. Dabbar, is the climate warming?

Mr. DABBAR. Senator, the climate is absolutely changing. And I appreciate the question and the sensitivity to it. And I appreciate that, if I understand correctly, as the only engineer in the Senate, that I would love to work with you on this topic.

Senator HEINRICH. I do not want to throw my colleague from Montana under the bus, he is a chemical engineer, and we still count those. So there are a couple of us.

[Laughter.]

Do you concur that human activities are driving that? And, more importantly, what should we do about it? What are you going to do about it at DOE?

Mr. DABBAR. Senator, thank you for the question. I absolutely agree that humans are contributing. My job, as Under Secretary of

Science, should I be confirmed by this body, is to provide the data and to provide the technology for policymakers and appropriators to properly make decisions. My job, as a manager and focused on operations, is to execute on the appropriations. And as appropriated, I will absolutely go and spend those resources to provide you, the rest of the Senate, and the nation with the data and the technology for you to make those decisions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

We will now turn to Senator Lee. I have to excuse myself to go down to an Appropriations Committee hearing. Senator Hirono will follow Senator Lee. My hope is that we will have other members coming in and out and I will be able to get back before we run out of questioners. But if in fact that is the case, I certainly will have more questions for the record. Again, remember that we will leave the record open until close of business today.

Senator Lee, thank you for helping out here.

Senator LEE [presiding]. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thanks to each of you for being here and for all you do.

Ms. Burman, I would like to start with you if possible. I would like to bring to your attention a problem that we have been having in connection with the Flaming Gorge Dam which is, of course, in Northeastern Utah. The dam is located on the Green River, and it is one of four units in the Colorado River Project. Among a lot of functions that this particular dam performs, the dam regulates water flow, it controls flooding, and it provides recreational opportunities and a lot of related economic benefits to all the communities that are in place downstream from it.

In 2006, the Bureau of Reclamation decided to operate the dam using an adaptive management approach. The approach was supposed to give the Bureau more flexibility in managing flow and flow releases in order to protect fish that were endangered. Although well-intended, that decision ended up having some dire consequences for some of the downstream communities. For example, in 2011, an ill-timed flow release at the dam during a period of particularly high spring runoff caused flooding along the river, resulting in many millions of dollars of property damage. Additionally, increased release volumes have severely hampered the tourism, outfitting, and fishing industries, all of which are pretty important essential economic pillars of these communities, and a lot of the impact on this has, of course, hit those who are least able to absorb it.

State and local leaders are understandably anxious to resolve the problem. Earlier this year, a group of legislators sent a letter to the Bureau of Reclamation requesting to work collaboratively with the Bureau on a long-term solution that will ensure that local interests are not drowned out by their efforts to help fish. So if confirmed, Ms. Burman, will you commit to listen to state and local leaders and work with them to find a reasonable, workable solution to problems like this?

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, I will. Your staff was kind enough to give me some background on the issues facing Flaming Gorge Reservoir, and when confirmed, I look forward to learning more, to working with Reclamation and with your staff to understand it better.

Senator LEE. Thank you. I appreciate that commitment very much.

Ms. Combs, Secretary Zinke has emphasized the importance of restoring trust between the American people and the U.S. Department of the Interior. This is, as you can imagine, especially important for many millions of Americans across the Western United States who feel ignored during and as a result of major land management decisions that have a tendency to disrupt their lives and their livelihoods in a somewhat unique way.

I appreciate Secretary Zinke for the steps that he has already taken to restore trust among people in Utah, such as his listening tour through San Juan County in Southeastern Utah and his interim report to the President dealing with the Bears Ears National Monument, but there is still a lot of work to do.

Ms. Combs, if confirmed, what role will you and your office play in helping to restore trust between the American people, particularly those most affected by decisions made by the Interior in places like the western United States and the Interior Department?

Ms. COMBS. Senator, thank you for that question. I think Secretary Zinke did, of course, discuss trust a number of times. He also talked about being sure that the federal personnel are actually near where some of the actions are taking place, and he really does want to be sure that the field offices are out there and that they're working in an open, collaborative, cooperative way where people really at all levels, whether it's city, state, county, local, et cetera, are talking with the Department of the Interior. And I would very much welcome the chance to work with you if I am confirmed.

Senator LEE. Thank you.

Mr. Dabbar and Mr. Menezes, I would like to direct my next question to both of you. You both have experience in the private sector, and you know that there are always difficult decisions to be made when you are investing limited resources. The last few decades have seen a lot of significant developments in the energy sector, but we have seen a lot of new ventures fail in that area as well. This is a good thing and actually a healthy thing, it is a healthy part of the process of innovation.

In a free market, investments flow to the most promising technology, the most useful technology, but when government intervenes and supports a particular technology that happens to be politically favored, it has the potential to distort markets and discourage investment and other potentially more beneficial technologies.

So if confirmed, what can each of you do to make sure that the Department of Energy is not using taxpayer dollars to pick winners and losers in the energy sector?

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator Lee, for the question. And I fully appreciate given my both public and private sector experience in capital allocation across the energy industry, certainly, in my position as Under Secretary for Science, my primary focus will be to execute on the capital or the appropriation, to use either word, that's assigned by this body.

Obviously, the Administration focuses on basic research, and there is obviously a tremendous amount of basic research opportunities within my potential area. I will execute, once again, on what-

ever is assigned, and I will make certain that that capital, whether it's in basic or applied, will be spent prudently.

Senator LEE. Mr. Menezes.

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you, Senator. And to add to what my colleague said regarding appropriations, we will stand by ready to follow the intent of Congress on these things. You know, we're in an all-of-the-above position here. My company, Berkshire Hathaway, my experience there is you don't really pick winners and losers; you develop projects where you can to provide affordable, reliable service. In this case, renewables are developing very well.

But having said that, there was a time when I recall that Congress passed a Fuel Use Act, which one of my companies was 100 percent natural gas, which then forced us to go to coal. So I have shared experience in that, and I will bring a commitment to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent as Congress intends.

Senator LEE. Thank you.

Senator Cortez Masto.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Welcome. Please excuse me for coming in and out. I have three committees going on at the same time, but I thank you for your willingness to serve. And welcome to your very large families.

[Laughter.]

It is nice to see everyone. So I only have five minutes. I am going to just ask a couple of questions here, and I will start with Mr. Menezes, is it?

Mr. MENEZES. That's correct.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. And Mr. Dabbar.

Geothermal energy is one of the fastest growing industries in Nevada. In 2013, there were 29 geothermal power plants operating in 9 of Nevada's 17 counties. The Nevada Department of Energy has estimated that at least 6,000 jobs will be created through geothermal energy investment. The proposed cuts to DOE will not provide for adequate funding for the Geothermal Technologies Office to continue researching geothermal energy innovations. Do you believe investments in geothermal energy should be prioritized? I will ask both gentlemen, Mr. Menezes and Mr. Dabbar, whoever wants to start.

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you very much. You have my commitment to be a strong advocate for spending the monies as sent to us by Congress, as directed by Congress, that we will follow the intent of Congress there, and particularly with geothermal. Both with my company's experience and my own personal experience with geothermal, it is indeed a very dynamic area. It's even becoming baseload in many instances.

So it's an exciting time in the technological advancements with geothermal, and you certainly have my commitment to be a strong advocate for fully funding the geothermal activities following the will of Congress.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I agree with everything that my colleague, my hopefully future colleague, answered. I would just add that I've done a significant amount—I have investment experience in Nevada. I know that the largest geothermal company in the United States is headquartered in Reno,

and I have personal experience with them. So I completely agree with that commitment, and I know that Nevada is a leader in this area.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. I appreciate those commitments.

So let me ask Ms. Combs an additional question with respect to geothermal power, because the Administration budget repeals the 25 percent share of revenue distribution for geothermal royalties that is provided to many of our rural counties. These royalties provide up to 10 percent of revenue. Do you agree with repealing these payments? And isn't this a promise to rural areas like those in my home state?

Ms. COMBS. Well, thank you for that question, Senator. I, of course, have not been at the Department and taken a look at this. I'm actually a big fan of geothermal, and I will not say that I've seen it here, but I went to Iceland, and how much power they do is just extraordinary. And so I'm sort of an all-of-the-above person, so whether it's wind, solar—I've got solar pumps on my ranch. I've seen geothermal. We don't—we're hot, but we're not that hot.

[Laughter.]

As well as, of course, support for gas.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Fantastic. Three out of three, I will take it. Being from Las Vegas, that is great odds.

[Laughter.]

Thank you very much.

Let me ask, Ms. Burman. Thank you, first of all, for coming to visit with me. I really appreciate the conversation. There was one thing I did not get to talk to you about, and I know you are just getting into the office, but just let me put it out there. If you have the opportunity to respond or you want to look into it further, I also understand.

The Bureau of Reclamation has determined that the Boca Dam in Nevada needs safety modifications. Typically, under the Safety of Dams Act, 15 percent of the costs incurred by the modifications are reimbursed and allocated to the, quote, "authorized purposes" of the structure. Boca Dam's authorized purposes, per our Truckee River Operating Agreement, does not fit well under the Act's definition. So as Commissioner, do you think you would support an amendment to the Act to reflect a broader set of, quote, "authorized purposes" so that Boca Dam can apply under the statute to help expedite important safety modifications?

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, I'm familiar with the Safety of Dams Act. I'm not familiar with the issues that are facing Boca Dam, but I do commit to working with you, with your staff, and to going back and working with the Department and Reclamation to understand it better and to work with you.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. I appreciate that. And then, just in general, renewable energy obviously is an important part of our future in Nevada and across this country. The current budget administration—Trump Administration—wants to cut a number of the budget implications that would have a positive impact on renewable energy in this country. I hope I can work with all of you to not only continue to promote, fund, and support innovation research in this

area, but I am looking forward to that collaboration. So I appreciate it.

I know my time is up, but I thank you for your willingness to serve and being here today to answer all these questions.

Senator LEE. Thank you. That completes the first round. I do not have any additional questions so starting on the second round, we will go to Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Lee.

Ms. Burman, we had a chance to talk about all of the Bureau of Reclamation projects and our philosophy and ideas and the challenges that we are facing. Our colleagues have had a chance to ask you a few questions on this, but I wanted to ask you specifically about collaboration and your experience. Obviously, the Yakima Basin Project is one of these examples. Do you think this is the path forward for us to get more work done on very, very thorny water issues in the West?

Ms. BURMAN. Senator, I've been working on thorny water issues for 19 years now, and where I've seen victories and I've seen accomplishments, they've been accomplished through collaboration and working with the local communities. I'm just starting to learn about the Yakima Project. I've always heard that it's a project that's shown collaboration and has a lot of respect. I look forward to learning more about that.

But absolutely, I think where projects work, where you fix issues, where you untie some of those thorny knots, is through working with everyone on the ground.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay, thank you.

Ms. Combs, obviously, in your new job, you will have oversight over a lot of individuals within the Department of the Interior. I mentioned earlier in my opening statement that Secretary Zinke has reportedly ordered the reassignment of as many as 50 Department Senior Executive Service members. They are people who have special skills and extensive knowledge from the jobs that they have held, and they are being removed or given unwelcome reassignments. One of these individuals was revealed in the Washington Post this morning. You could say that he was a whistleblower—and is being reshuffled within the organization.

So I, obviously, want to get answers to this, but I wanted to hear what your thoughts are on making sure that, as someone who would oversee these individuals, what are you going to do to protect the SES, Senior Executive Service, at the Department, these members, and make sure that they do not just get arbitrarily reassigned just because someone else does not believe in science?

Ms. COMBS. Senator, thank you for that question. I obviously have not been part of any decision-making in the Department, but I do understand the role of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget. And I know that—I believe I've been told that SES folks are supposed to be mobile, to add to their resumes. With respect to the particular matter you described, I don't have any information, but I certainly, if confirmed, will look forward to working with you on that, but I don't have any particular—

Senator CANTWELL. But you are aware of it?

Ms. COMBS. Somebody sent me a press release, a comment, this morning. That's the first I had heard of it.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. Well, I am concerned enough that I intend to ask the Inspector General to look into it. As my colleague from New Mexico was talking about, the importance of science across both of these agencies is critically important, and so we need to make sure that those individuals who have the experience, who are involved in science, are going to continue to fulfill those responsibilities. There are always reorganizations at an agency, but making sure that people are there to fulfill the mission and that the people who have those experiences are not being reassigned simply because they have those experiences, so that someone, say, more political but without science experience, comes in to take their job.

So I will definitely be asking the Inspector General to look into what the Department is doing. I would hope that you would take this as a very important message that we consider this, from an oversight perspective, a very important subject.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Senator Lee.

Senator LEE. Thank you.

Senator Cortez Masto, do you have any additional questions?

[No audible response.]

Senator LEE. Senator King.

Senator KING. Just one follow-up.

Mr. Domenech, I was interested in your exchange with Senator Franken on climate change. You and I could spend a lot of time discussing it. I would just commend to you an analysis of CO₂ in the atmosphere since about 1850, the inauguration of large-scale burning of fossil fuel. It has gone up from the band that it occurred over the last million years from about a maximum of 180 to 200, 300 parts per million to 400, a place it has not been for five million years. The coincidence of that rise in CO₂ and the rise of the burning of fossil fuel is unmistakable. I would just like you to take a look at that data from Mauna Loa in Hawaii and other ice core data. I would be glad to provide that to you.

Secondly, you may see the results of this in your jurisdiction because some of the islands you are responsible for may well disappear on your watch. I would suggest one interesting step in your stewardship of this responsibility would be to immediately, upon taking office, ask the residents of the islands in the Pacific to mark the main high water mark today, and then have it checked on the day you leave office. My guess is there will be a noticeable change.

This is one of the most serious challenges facing our country and our world. I hope you will, as we have had one of the witnesses already testify, take the occasion to look at the data and open your mind to change.

Thank you.

Mr. DOMENECH. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you, Senator King.

Mr. Menezes, I want to bring up an issue that we discussed with Secretary Moniz when he was Secretary of Energy, and this relates to the Office of Energy, Indian Policy and Programs. It is one of the smaller DOE offices, but it also accounts for all of DOE's employees in Alaska, both of them. We have two.

[Laughter.]

Two. For a considerable period of time, it was down to just one. I was home last weekend and was at church and ran into the one gentleman that has basically been holding down the fort all these years. When Secretary Moniz was in the state with us when we went out to Oscarville, he made the commitment that, yes, we have to address the issues with regard to the Office of Indian Energy and make sure that we are doing all that we can to help the communities, not just in Alaska, but around the country, to be more energy-sustainable. And the commitment was, "Look, we've got to have at least three."

Well, we are not to three, we are sitting at two. And it is not typical for me to be pushing for more employees, but you have one-fifth of the—excuse me—one-half of the tribes in the country that are in Alaska. We have extraordinary energy potentials within the state, and certainly opportunities within the microgrid systems, again ways that we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels in these high-cost areas.

So I need to know whether you support the Office of Indian Energy and will work with us to make sure that these offices have the support that they clearly need in order to do what will help benefit not only those in rural parts of Alaska, but rural parts of our nation as well.

Mr. MENEZES. Thank you, Senator, for that question. I certainly support the Office of Indian Energy, going back to 2005, when we put it in the bill, and today my commitment continues. Alaska continues to be a unique place, not only for the tribes that it serves, but also for R&D for our labs. So we look forward to working with you with that, and you have my commitment to be a strong advocate for the Office of Indian Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we really need that commitment. Again, we need the commitment to make sure that we have the resources on the ground to really help these small communities.

I want to broaden the question a little bit and include you, Mr. Dabbar, with regard to microgrids. As folks know on this Committee, our grid system, our energy grid system, is pretty much limited to the rail-built area. When you have over 80 percent of your communities that are not connected by road, that also means that they are not connected most times by any kind of an energy intertie. How can we take steps to again reduce reliance on diesel generation, because that is how many of these smaller communities are powered.

Senator Cantwell came with me when we had a field hearing in Cordova, Alaska, and it was an opportunity to focus on what I think are some of the exciting prospects when it comes to microgrids, those things that we can do to really help integrate our renewable energy sources to bring down costs, to provide greater reliability. It is an area that I get excited about. It is an area that I think not only Alaska should be leading on, we are pioneering in so many of these ways.

I am curious as to how you might structure a more comprehensive research program in microgrids to leverage the assets that we have within the Department and the expertise that we have, whether it is within our universities or whether it is what our local communities have, because we clearly saw that level of expertise

at that field hearing. So how can we do more when it comes to our opportunities with microgrids? This impacts not only us in Alaska, but certainly our friends in Hawaii as well that are in the same type of structure.

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I have quite a bit of experience, not in the Arctic, but in microgrids in Hawaii, in Texas, in California. What's truly exciting is that the technology changes that have taken place both on the renewable side as well as in the natural gas side and in storage has been dramatic in the last few years.

The amount of—the ability for economically advantaged production of generation on a microgrid scale has jumped from not being very viable economically without some incentives to actually working without incentives in many places. And clearly Hawaii is one example of that, being a bit unique, but in many other areas of the country, even in Texas, I've seen microgrids and distributed generation work very well.

I am not familiar with all of the work that the labs have done in this area, but I know the technology is there, and I know that it is economically viable, and it was not as economically viable just 5 or 10 years ago.

So you have my commitment that I will dig into what the resources are and the research in this area at the Lab Complex, and I look forward to progressing that even further.

The CHAIRMAN. We will invite you all up to Cordova and Oscarville and parts in between.

Senator Hirono.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Dabbar, as you know, during your tenure at J.P. Morgan you worked directly with Hawaiian Electric Industries (HEI). In fact, I just heard from Connie Lau, who is the CEO and President of HEI, in support of your nomination. As you know, of course, Hawaii has relied on imported fossil fuel for 90 percent of our energy production in the electricity area.

Thanks in large part to the technical assistance provided by the Department of Energy and its world-class scientists and engineers, Hawaii has been making real progress shifting to sustainable, locally produced, renewable energy with the goal—the most ambitious goal of any state in the country—of attaining 100 percent electricity from renewable sources by 2045. This is why I was shocked to see the President drastically slashing funds for the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy program and eliminate the State Energy Program, something that Senator King has also talked about.

If confirmed, you will be charged with overseeing DOE's world-class research and development capabilities at the labs, and I, of course, would want to work closely with you to build upon the progress Hawaii and DOE have made on renewable energy. Let's assume that we will restore the funding of these drastic, terrible cuts, will you commit to working with me to find ways to help achieve its renewable energy objectives?

Mr. DABBAR. Thank you, Senator. I fully appreciate everything that you just said. I have lived in Hawaii a couple times in my life, both when I was growing up in Japan and coming to Hawaii and

going to Punahou, as well as in the Navy and in the commercial area. I have a great degree of sympathy for aina and how renewables fit, and not even all renewables fit perfectly at all points in each county. I know exactly which type of renewables at which time with familiarity with Punahou and others. So I have a great degree of general understanding, having been on the ground and the sort of things that you're dealing with.

Senator HIRONO. So your answer would be a strong yes.

[Laughter.]

And whatever we can find in our collaboration with regard to Hawaii will have application to other jurisdictions, and I would say particularly to the island nations in the Asia Pacific area.

Mr. Domenech, it was a pleasure to meet with you yesterday. In your role in administering the Compact of Free Association (COFA) with Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau, your position, as far as I am concerned, is very important because these areas often get neglected. I am looking for someone who is going to be a real advocate for our compact friends to whom we have an obligation, and we have not always lived up to our obligations.

I just want to reconfirm with you that we will work together to keep our COFA commitments, including providing relief to affected states such as Hawaii, because our COFA citizens go to certain states more than any other states. We have seen some 15,000 COFA citizens coming to Hawaii, and we discussed their health care needs and other needs that impact Hawaii more than any other state in the country. Thirty million dollars a year for compact impact assistance to states like Hawaii is woefully short of what we actually need, so I would want to have your commitment that we will work together to keep our COFA commitments.

Mr. DOMENECH. Yes. And thank you for taking the time yesterday to meet with me. And you do have my commitment.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you.

For Ms. Combs, Hawaii is the endangered species capital of the world. Hundreds of our native plants and animals, which are very important to Hawaiian culture and our way of life, are threatened and endangered and require federal protection. Your critics claim that while you were Comptroller in Texas, you limited protections for endangered species and viewed them as a threat to the economy, referring to listings as, quote, "incoming Scud missiles," end quote.

As Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget, one of your duties will be to serve as the agency's Chief Financial Officer, and this includes being a steward of the financial resources for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, one of two federal agencies that administers the Endangered Species Act. As Assistant Secretary, I would like your commitment that you will support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's important duty to administer the Endangered Species Act to protect species in Hawaii and across the U.S.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator. I do believe that my past work on the Dunes Sagebrush Lizard and the Golden-cheeked Warbler, and Black-capped Vireo, and the great relationship that I had with Fish and Wildlife are important. Former Fish and Wildlife employee Dale Hall sent a letter in, he's the CEO of Ducks Unlimited, and he said that we had a wonderful working experience. I abso-

lutely—you have my commitment that I will work with you and follow the law always.

Senator HIRONO. Madam Chair, if you do not mind, I just have one short question for Mr. Jonas.

I am glad that you noted that your views, as expressed in the op-ed that you wrote in 1993 expressing some positions relating to women serving in the military as well as homosexuals in the military, were I would say even for 1993, pretty extreme. You noted that your views have evolved and I would like to know, was there some experience that you had that caused your views to evolve? I am concluding that you no longer hold these kinds of discriminatory views with regard to women serving in the military and homosexuals in the military, but was there something that happened that you no longer hold these kinds of extreme views?

Mr. JONAS. Thank you very much for the question, Senator. I do, of course, stand by my opening statement, but I wouldn't say that there was a particular event, but my views did evolve. And I would certainly refer you to the fact that one of the interns that I hired in my office when I was the NNSA General Counsel was, clearly from his resume, gay, and he also, to show his leadership abilities on his resume, noted that he was the president of the student college Democrats. I hired him because I thought he was the best qualified individual, and I gave him good work to do, we have a great relationship. I have supported his career, as he has moved forward, with providing him recommendations for a number of positions.

As he has moved up—as a personal matter, one of my goals is to help people grow and advance, and I'm not concerned whether they're men, women, gay, Jewish, Catholic, it doesn't matter. I want to help people as a personal goal, and that's what I do. That's what I did for that individual, and I no longer hold the views expressed in that article.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hirono.

Ms. Combs, I want to ask a quick question about PILT, Payment in Lieu of Taxes, that the Department of the Interior administers and, of course, is a very, very important program. Looking at the President's budget, the FY18 budget proposed funding PILT through discretionary dollars. Can you just give me some information in terms of how you think the Administration might be able to secure stable, long-term funding through mandatory spending for the program? This is something that so many of our local governments, particularly our rural governments, rely on, and whether or not you think making any additional categories of lands, whether it is military or Indian lands, possibly eligible for PILT, and if so, why?

I just want to get a sense from you on where you think we can go with PILT, because this is something that the Ranking Member and I talk a great deal about—not only PILT but Secure Rural Schools—and you would clearly have the oversight on the PILT side of it.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator. I'm familiar with PILT. Brewster County, where my ranch is, is the largest county in Texas, and

the town I'm nearby has 450 people. And PILTs are very, very important when you take land off of the tax rolls, whether it's forest or whatever, the obligation of the government, of course, through PILT is to reimburse them. And I know from an education perspective, or county repairs, whatever, those are important. I obviously was not involved in the creation of the budget, but I also am well aware, having submitted my own budgets before and then working with the Appropriations Committee, that things get changed in the process. And so I look forward to working with you to ensure that these rural communities, which are so important all across the country and in Hawaii and in Alaska and everywhere, that they not be forgotten, that they be paid and compensated for that loss of revenue.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I look forward to working with you on this. I know that the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Ranking Member—Senator Hatch and Senator Wyden—have been keyed in on this, and we have certainly as well. But it is something that we would like to get some certainty on because, as you note, particularly for these smaller communities, these payments are significant as part of their budget goes.

Senator Hirono, I am glad you asked the question of Mr. Domenech about where we are with some of the compacts out there. The Palau agreement is one—the agreement to extend that financial assistance has been unfulfilled now for about seven years, and as you point out, there is a commitment there. But we keep coming back to, well, we cannot find the funding. At some point in time, we have to make good on the promises and the commitments.

I am not going to ask you if you have any ideas, but I need to have your commitment that you will work to find that necessary funding so that we do make good on these promises, on these compacts.

Mr. DOMENECH. Yes. If I'm confirmed, I will work with you and the Committee to try to find these funds. My understanding is the \$123.9 million compact impact funding—or compact funding is in the NDAA in both the House and the Senate, so we're moving along.

The CHAIRMAN. It is not there until it is there. I recognize that. [Laughter.]

Mr. DOMENECH. It's an authorization, not a—

The CHAIRMAN. That is exactly right. Let me ask you one more question, and this relates to the CNMI workers permit program, the CW permit program. This is one where I have had some ongoing discussion with folks. They are seeing economic growth in CNMI, and we applaud that. We see it particularly in the tourism sector; but the law sunsets that program by 2019, and there is a great deal of concern that the ability to find the available workers, to abide by the law, to make it all knit together within the timeframe is going to be very challenging. Do you have any familiarity with this permit program, and do you have any suggestions in terms of how we might address this upcoming deadline here?

Mr. DOMENECH. I appreciate that question. I need to be briefed on that. I have personally not been involved in any of the Insular Office issues on purpose because I felt like it was inappropriate,

but I am aware of the issue that they're having quite a challenge with workers, and we need to figure out a way to fix it.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, it is significant. Again, we talk about payments that come to the states, the payments that we are responsible for to our territories. I think at the end of the day the best solution for so much of this is if they have stronger economies, then things are working within these islands. But making sure that the policies that we have in place are helping to assist build those economies rather than dragging them back is something that we need to be working on and doing that together.

Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to ask you, Ms. Combs, obviously in your role in Texas you know a lot about royalty rates. One of the things I find surprising is Secretary Zinke recently decided to cut royalty rates paid by oil and gas leases in the future on offshore sales from 18.75 percent down to 12.5 percent. I think your rate in Texas is much higher than that?

Ms. COMBS. Thank you, Senator, for that question. I'm not familiar with the matter that you talked about, but I know that in the private sector in Texas, generally people get about 25 percent royalty rate, just about. It used to be 17, 18, 20, and now that it bumped up in the Eagle Ford and Permian Basin to about 25. I don't know what the offsets are, though. I don't know to what extent things such as transportation or other embedded costs are removed. It depends on the particular lease that people have. And this is something I will certainly take a look at, but I'm not familiar with it right now.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. We definitely want to make sure that we get a fair deal for the taxpayer and that royalties obviously are reviewed and updated. We have concerns on the coal side that we feel like it has not been reviewed and assessed in a while as it relates to impact, so we want to make sure that we do that. I look forward to working with you on that issue.

Ms. COMBS. Absolutely.

Senator CANTWELL. Mr. Jonas, I was struck by your comment. You said that you thought someone was gay by their resume?

Mr. JONAS. Thank you for the question, Senator. Yes, this individual made it very clear. He was very proud of being gay, and he made it very clear on his resume that he was a member of a number of LBGT groups. I believe that he did that—I think he told me he did that because he wanted it known, and he was very proud of that.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. So he communicated that to you. I just wanted to make that clear for the record.

Mr. JONAS. Yes.

Senator CANTWELL. He communicated that to you.

Mr. JONAS. That's correct.

Senator CANTWELL. It is not like you looked at a piece of paper and made an assumption about someone.

Mr. JONAS. That's correct, Senator.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

Senator King, any further questions?

[No audible response.]

Well, I have no more that I will include right now. I will probably submit a couple for the record. We have a vote that is supposed to be starting right now at 12:15.

Thank you each for being here. Thank you for giving us this time this morning and allowing us to learn more about you and your qualifications and your interest in serving this Administration and our country. We appreciate the support of all of your families. I think that we all know that we cannot do nearly the job that we need to do without the support of those around us, so we thank you for being part of this morning's hearing. We look forward to the process moving forward.

With that, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:16 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Questions from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Will you commit to support and advance the Yakima Integrated Plan if confirmed?

Response: Senator, I appreciated you bringing this to my attention in your office. While I am just beginning to learn about the Yakima Integrated Plan, I look forward to being briefed on the matter, if confirmed.

Question 2: Will you commit to continuing Reclamation's leadership, funding, and support for legislation to implement the Yakima Integrated Plan?

Response: I still have much to learn about Yakima but commit to getting up to speed on the matter, if confirmed.

Question 3: Do you believe that we must balance the needs of fish and the environment with other demands for water in building and operating Reclamation projects?

Response: Every success in my career occurred because of collaboration and finding common ground to resolve complex issues. I remain committed to working with all stakeholders to determine the best path forward on Reclamation projects.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Questions from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: Ms. Burman, thank you for taking the time to meet with me. As we discussed in our meeting, water in the Klamath Basin continues to be a challenge. Oregon has had its fair share of water issues, but we also have a tradition of stakeholder collaboration to work through these issues. Several years ago I brought together folks in the Klamath Basin to reach agreements on how to manage scarce water in the Basin for a variety of critical needs – tribal, agricultural irrigation, fish and wildlife, and recreation. We got close to passing a bill last Congress that would have formalized the three Klamath Basin agreements, but unfortunately some of the agreements expired before a bill passed.

Will you walk me through your thoughts on how to address these water issues going forward?

Response: While it has been several years since I have worked directly on issues in the Klamath Basin, I have first-hand knowledge of the importance the Bureau of Reclamation plays in Basin. If confirmed, I intend to continue Reclamation's coordination with other federal agencies, states, tribes, and the public, and moving us closer to our shared interest in resolving the Klamath Basin's water management issues. I look forward to working with you on this long-standing and very complex issue.

Question 2: Will you commit to working with all stakeholders to achieve success in the management of water in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Yes, it is critical to ensure that all stakeholders have a seat at the table, in order to achieve a sustainable, long-term settlement, and to avoid ending up in the court system, which ultimately increases acrimony, adds costs, and risks picking winners and losers.

Question 3: We also discussed an Oregon project, Scoggins Dam just outside Portland, that is one of the first dams in the country to be assessed using a Joint Authority to consider the possibility of additional water capacity while at the same time addressing the seismic issues at a facility. What is your familiarity with the Bureau of Reclamation's new "Joint Authority"?

Response: As I indicated when we had a chance to meet last, I am not familiar with the new joint authority provided under the amended Safety of Dams Act. However, if confirmed I look forward to working with you and local partners to address dam safety and water supply objectives at the Scoggins Dam on the Tualatin Valley Project.

Question 4: I wanted to flag this for you so you know of its importance. Can I get your commitment to working in a collaborative way with local partners to help this Joint Project move forward?

Response: Yes.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Response: I believe climate change is not a hoax and that man has an influence.

Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Response: I believe that man has an influence on climate change. I agree we need to produce renewable energy.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Response: Yes.

Question 4: Do you believe that DOI has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Response: I am not aware that Congress has ever provided that direction to the Department of the Interior.

Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Response: I will work to understand it better and pursue adaptive management strategies, as appropriate.

Question 6: Which improvements to the management of federal public lands do you hope to achieve, if confirmed?

Response: If confirmed as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, I will work with Secretary Zinke and in consultation with Congress, stakeholders, and tribes to address many of the immediate water issues facing the west.

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman

Question 7: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.” If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: I have spent my entire career working with tribes, particularly on Indian water rights settlements, and know firsthand how important it is to consult on a government-to-government basis. Collaboration yields tremendous results, which I witnessed when helping secure Congressional passage of the Zuni Indian Tribe Water Rights Settlement and Gila River Indian Community Water Rights Settlement. I take consultation seriously and commit to consult with Tribes, if confirmed as Commissioner.

Question 8: DOI’s eight regional Climate Science Centers (CSC) cover the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. Each CSC is based out of a host university in their region and most are comprised of multi-institution consortia, which include university and non-university partners. In 2016, the work of the centers included assessments of warming on river flow, working with tribes to assess management strategies, and developing tools for decision-making. If confirmed, will you support the CSCs? If so, how?

Response: I was at the Department when the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center was established by Congress but am not familiar with the regional Climate Science Centers. I look forward to learning more, if confirmed.

Question 9: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: Yes.

Question 10: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOI employees based on political whims?

Response: I am committed to following the law.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Question from Senator Jeff Flake

Question: Last year in the reauthorization of the federal Desalination Act, Congress provided that when considering projects to fund, the Secretary of the Interior prioritize those that 'demonstrably leverage the experience of international partners with considerable expertise in desalination, such as the State of Israel.' What role do you see the Bureau of Reclamation having in implementing the partnerships highlighted in PL 114-322?

Response: Water desalination is one of several tools available to water managers, which has considerable potential to create new water supplies and relieve stress on drought-strained communities. Under the Water Desalination Act, I understand that Reclamation has the authority to support desalination demonstration and development projects. If confirmed, I will ensure Reclamation complies with the statutorily required prioritization criteria for these projects, including prioritizing projects that leverage the experience of international partners such as Israel.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Questions from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Should you be confirmed as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, will you continue Reclamation's support of the Lower Yellowstone Intake Project and ensure this vital lifeline providing water for northeastern Montana is not disrupted?

Response: While I am not familiar with the particular details of the Lower Yellowstone Intake Project, I recognize the importance of the Lower Yellowstone Project to the State of Montana and look forward to working towards resolving any issues that threaten to disrupt irrigation from this Project.

Question 2: Will you work to ensure the streamlined construction of authorized rural water projects?

Response: I understand the importance of encouraging vibrant rural economies and ensuring safe, reliable sources of drinking water for rural residents. I would be happy to work with you to explore options to streamline the construction of authorized rural water projects, if confirmed.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Do you believe in sound science determining policy?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Do you believe the government should adequately invest in the programs that make a difference in lives of the communities in my state and across the country?

Response: I believe Reclamation is a great example of the federal government investing in communities across the west. It is often said Reclamation built the west and if confirmed, I look forward to continuing this legacy forward.

Question 3: What more can DOI do for our communities?

Response: Reclamation has played an integral role in providing for communities across the west. As we look go its next 100 years, I believe there are ways to improve our operations and increase efficiencies. If confirmed, I look forward to leading Reclamation to be a better neighbor and partner, working directly in conjunction with those closest to the ground to address complex issues.

Question 4: What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Response: Reclamation's budget priorities will be coordinated with Secretary Zinke, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with him to address Reclamation's needs.

Question 5: Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

Response: I have worked for 19 years on complex water issues across the west involving tribes, states, water districts, ranchers, local communities, mines, and often, Reclamation. In addition, I was previously Reclamation's Deputy Commissioner for External and Intergovernmental Affairs, the number two position at the agency. I believe these experiences have provided me with a good internal and external perspective about what Reclamation can accomplish.

Question 6: If Secretary Zinke reassigns functions in some of your offices/departments and moves forward with decentralizing the Washington, DC office to regional offices, what do you believe should be reassigned to regional offices?

Response: I am not familiar with any plans to decentralize the Washington, DC, office but, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to ensure Reclamation continues to perform its duties across the west with efficiency, ingenuity, and in close coordination with local communities.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Brenda Burman**

Question 7: What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office?

Response: My priorities, if confirmed as Commissioner, will be determined in coordination with the Secretary.

Question 8: Your agency, like so many others within the federal government, have dealt with continued shortfalls in budgetary funding, which has hurt our government's ability to partner effectively with private industry and have inflicted negative impacts on our nation's parks, forests and wildlife conservation programs. Do you believe more funding would allow the Interior Department to be a better partner to industry and the taxpayer?

Response: I am not at the Department and do not have information to comment on budgetary impacts on partnerships. Should I be confirmed, I will work with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, and the Congress to facilitate appropriate funding as consistent with the President's budget and priorities.

Question 9: The FY 2018 request for the Bureau of Reclamation is \$1.1 billion, a cut of \$209 million. The request proposes cuts for WaterSMART grants, water recycling and reuse projects, drought response, and rural water projects. The state of Nevada gets the least rainfall than any other state in the Nation so we have to be incredibly mindful of persistent drought conditions as well as infrastructure improvements. Do you believe these cuts will undermine these successful programs that help Nevada and the West respond to drought conditions in innovative ways?

Response: I am currently not working at the Department and did not play a role in the FY 2018 budget. If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, and the Congress to facilitate appropriate funding as consistent with the President's budget and priorities.

Question 10: The Bureau of Reclamation operates significant facilities in both the Upper and Lower Colorado River Regions. How will these budget cuts affect needed rehabilitation of aging water delivery infrastructure in both regions?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, and the Congress to facilitate appropriate funding as consistent with the President's budget and priorities.

Question 11: In rural communities, the availability of funding and resources to meet treatment standards and improve water reuse is more challenging. Do you believe that funding cuts will undermine your mission if you are confirmed?

Response: I will work with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, and the Congress to facilitate appropriate funding as consistent with the President's budget and priorities, if confirmed.

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Question 12: The Bureau of Reclamation has determined that the Boca Dam in Nevada needs safety modifications. Typically, under the Safety of Dams Act, 15 percent of the costs incurred by the modifications are reimbursed and allocated to the “authorized purposes of the structure.” Boca Dam’s authorized purposes per the Truckee River Operating Agreement don’t fit well under the Act’s definitions. As Commissioner, do you think you would support an amendment to the Act to reflect a broader set of authorized purposes so Boca Dam can apply under the statute to help expedite important safety modifications?

Response: Senator, I appreciated you bringing up the Boca Dam issue at the hearing. While I am not familiar with the dam’s modifications needs, I look forward to looking into this matter further, if confirmed.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Susan Combs**

Questions from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Are you familiar with the problem we face each year ensuring that the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior have adequate funds to fight fires on the public lands?

Response: Yes, I am familiar with this issue.

Question 2: If confirmed, will you commit to working with us to find a solution to the problem of “fire borrowing,” which has diverted funds needed to maintain and improve the health of our forests and make them more fire-resistant to pay to fight fires?

Response: Yes, you have my commitment to work with you and the Committee to address this serious issue.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Susan Combs**

Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Response: I believe that the climate is changing and man has an influence.

Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Response: I do believe that the climate is changing and that human activity has contributed to that. In terms of energy development, I believe in an all-of-the-above approach that includes both conventional oil and gas development and renewable energy sources to meet our nation's critical needs.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Response: Yes.

Question 4: Do you believe that DOI has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Response: I am not aware that Congress has ever provided that direction to the Department of the Interior. I believe in the responsible development of our nation's natural resources as well as the renewable energy sources to fulfill the Secretary's goal of establishing American energy independence.

Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Response: Should I be confirmed for this position, I would work collaboratively with my colleagues in the Department to provide legally and scientifically sound policy advice to Secretary Zinke as it relates to the Department's mission and the influence of climate change to advance his priorities. My advice and decision-making as Assistant Secretary will be rooted in robust engagement with affected constituencies and this Committee. I commit to carrying out this work with efficiency, openness and transparency.

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Question 6: Which improvements to the management of federal public lands do you hope to achieve, if confirmed?

Response: Among my priorities as Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, should I be confirmed, would be to enhance the Department's human capital, to maximize the public's access to public lands and resources, to address the deferred maintenance backlog on lands managed by the Department's bureaus, and to craft responsible budgets for the Department and its bureaus that are balanced in a way that increases operational efficiency among various programs and maximizes use of limited taxpayer dollars.

Question 7: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs "assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States' trust responsibility to the federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship." If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 8: DOI's eight regional Climate Science Centers (CSC) cover the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. Each CSC is based out of a host university in their region and most are comprised of multi-institution consortia, which include university and non-university partners. In 2016, the work of the centers included assessments of warming on river flow, working with tribes to assess management strategies, and developing tools for decision-making. If confirmed, will you support the CSCs? If so, how?

Response: If confirmed, I will evaluate CSCs as I would each program under the Department's purview and that would entail assessing program effectiveness, efficiency and compatibility with Secretary's Zinke's priorities and those of the Administration.

Question 9: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

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Question 10: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOI employees based on political whims?

Response: Congress sets its rules. If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to follow the law and advise the Secretary on any proposal that effects the Department, and I will do so.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Susan Combs**

Questions from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Should you be confirmed to your position as Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management and Budget, you will play a leading role in the management of employees and will be responsible for their health and safety. As my first action as Chairman of the National Parks Subcommittee I held an oversight hearing focusing on the increase of sexual harassment cases in the parks. It is one of my top priorities to solve this problem and make the Park Service and Department of Interior a safe and healthy place to work. Will you work with me and Secretary Zinke to address this problem and foster a culture of 'Zero-Tolerance' at DOI?

Response: Sexual harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and I echo Secretary Zinke's zero tolerance policy. You have my commitment to work with you to address this very serious issue, should I be confirmed.

Question 2: The Deferred Maintenance Backlog is a problem that needs serious thought and consideration. If confirmed, you will play a chief role in the budget of DOI and the Park Service. Will you work with me and the other members of this committee to find a solution to the ever-increasing backlog?

Response: Yes. I know addressing the deferred maintenance backlog on nation's public lands, namely our National Parks, is one of Secretary Zinke's top priorities.

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Susan Combs**

Questions from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Ms. Combs as you know well, President Trump is a vocal advocate for coal miners—a priority we both share given West Virginia’s economy and history. The Department of the Interior’s Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) distributes millions of dollars of federal funds to the United Mine Workers of America Health and Retirement Funds. OSMRE transfers the funds from two sources: the excess of the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Fund and the General Fund of the U.S. Treasury. President Trump’s budget for FY2018 proposes \$134 million dollars in payments to United Mine Workers of America Health benefit Plans from Treasury Funds. This is a remarkable reduction of \$45 million from FY2016 spending levels. The Budget Justification for OSMRE has a notation that says, “FY 2018 estimates are based on economic assumptions as of March 2017.” I think we need additional details on those assumptions. But, additionally, I secured passage of a permanent health care fix for 22,600 orphan UMWA miners in the May 2017 spending bill. These UMWA beneficiaries were within days of losing rightfully earned healthcare coverage. Ms. Combs, given the importance of your role in the Department, I want to be certain that you understand that when it comes to these funds, we actually are talking about life and death.

Will you commit to working with me to ensure that OSM is appropriately resourced to ensure that the UMWA reserves the appropriate amount of funding in keeping with current law and that all eligible health beneficiaries receive their health care?

Response: I am not familiar with the intricacies of funding for the United Mine Workers of America Health and Retirement Funds, and I would need to learn more about the specifics of this issue. I would be happy to do so, if confirmed.

Question 2: I’d like to get a better understanding of the Administration’s plans for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which you will play a critical role in managing. My constituents would like to see increased recreation access for our sportsmen and sportswomen. It is a priority for me to find ways to maintain a vibrant outdoor economy, and to honor the deep connection Americans have with our national parks and public lands. For more than 50 years, LWCF has been a persistent success for some of the most cherished public lands and the communities that depend on them. In my state, LWCF is the reason you and your agencies have the Harpers Ferry and the Gauley and New Rivers National Recreation Areas. In 2016, West Virginia received more than \$400,000 in grants from the state side of LWCF. These funds were used for all sorts of upgrades that will make West Virginia outdoors even more wild and wonderful. So, I was disappointed by the President’s FY18 budget recommendation for LWCF to gut the program by 84% and stop many conservation and access projects dead in their track. Furthermore, the budget offers what I consider a false a choice between addressing the maintenance backlog in our parks and conserving public access. Good management requires that you do both, just as I worked to do with West Virginia’s state parks when they were under my care as governor. That’s what you did as Comptroller of Texas.

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Simple yes or no question, do you support permanent reauthorization of LWCF?

Response: Yes, I believe the LWCF program has been an important and valuable program.

Do you have any recommended policy proposals for permanent LWCF reauthorization that you would like to share with the Committee today?

Response: As I am not at the Department or a member of the Administration, I do not have any policy proposals to recommend at this time. Should I be confirmed, I would look forward to getting up to speed on the specifics of LWCF and to working with you and this Committee on where and how this program could be improved to be more prudent with taxpayer dollars and to ensuring appropriate state and local support for LWCF projects.

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Questions from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: In 2014, Congress made improvements to sec. 365 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to provide additional resources to seven of BLM's busiest field offices to hire and support sufficient staff to meet current demands. Subsection 365(e) requires BLM to report to Congress annually on the allocation of the additional funds among the seven Project offices and the accomplishments of each office. The first annual report, due February 2016, has never been submitted to Congress as required by law. The second report was due in February 2017. Will you work to expedite the completion of BLM's two long-overdue reports as required by law?

Response: Although I am not aware of the status of the reports, I will look into this if confirmed.

Question 2: I continue to hear about problems arising from the large number of long-standing job vacancies in BLM's field offices in New Mexico. Of particular concern are significant vacancies in Farmington, the Federal Indian Minerals Office and Carlsbad. Currently there are about 60 vacant positions in BLM offices in New Mexico, with as many as 21 vacant positions in Carlsbad alone. Clearly the administration's hiring freeze contributed to the delay in filling these important federal jobs. What actions will you take to address promptly the need to fill the large number of job vacancies in New Mexico's various BLM offices?

Response: Although I am not aware of the status of current job vacancies within the Department's bureaus or efforts to fill those positions, Secretary Zinke has stressed one of his priorities is to get the right tools and resources out to the field, and I will look into this if confirmed.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Ms. Susan Combs**

Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Do you believe in sound science determining policy?

Response: Yes, I do.

Question 2: Do you believe the government should adequately invest in the programs that make a difference in lives of the communities in my state and across the country?

Response: Yes, I believe in smart investments of public dollars that are targeted, effective and appropriately balance needs with available resources.

Question 3: What more can DOI do for our communities?

Response: I believe fundamentally that DOI can be a better partner with communities and state and local governments that are most directly affected by the decisions the Department makes. I believe this can be achieved through close collaboration and conversation and I believe my record in the state of Texas working with a variety of stakeholders demonstrates my commitment to this goal. This includes working with Native American communities through a commitment to tribal consultation and strengthening tribal sovereignty in Indian Country. I fully agree with Secretary Zinke's priority of being a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary and should I be confirmed, this would be a foundational principle of my service.

Question 4: What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Response: Broadly, among my priorities would be to refocus decision-making to the front lines, address the maintenance backlog on our public lands and increase public access to public resources, as articulated by Secretary Zinke.

Question 5: Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

Response: I believe that the eight years that I served as Comptroller of the State of Texas have given me the ability to analyze, understand and consider how to achieve the Department's mission in an efficient, open and transparent manner. Additionally, I share Secretary's priorities for the Department – refocusing decision-making to the front lines, addressing the maintenance backlog on our public lands and increase public access to public resources. The lessons that I learned and the skills that I have gained will serve as assets, should I be confirmed, in the Department in balancing the books, making smart investments and increasing the efficient operation of the Department's important programs.

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Question 6: If Secretary Zinke reassigns functions in some of your offices/departments and moves forward with decentralizing the Washington, DC office to regional offices, what do you believe should be reassigned to regional offices?

Response: Because I have not had a role at the Department, I cannot speak with any specificity on the issue of Departmental reorganization. However, should I be confirmed, I look forward to exploring in greater depth how we can better align bureau resources to improve decision-making and I would welcome the opportunity to working with you and members of this Committee in doing so.

Question 7: What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office?

Response: The office of Policy, Management and Budget is home to a wide array of departmental functions including budget formulation, personnel management and hiring, law enforcement, wildland fire management, IT security, and resource revenue accounting to name only a few. I have not yet had the opportunity to fully assess these specific programs, but as a general matter, I would prioritize the need to balance fiscal prudence with needs in making these assessments.

Question 8: Your agency, like so many others within the federal government, have dealt with continued shortfalls in budgetary funding, which has hurt our government's ability to partner effectively with private industry and have inflicted negative impacts on our nation's parks, forests and wildlife conservation programs. Do you believe more funding would allow the Interior Department to be a better partner to industry and the taxpayer?

Response: From my time as Comptroller of the State of Texas, I know that sufficient resources are needed to carry out any public function. I also know that resources are limited and the money alone cannot solve any problem. I believe that decisions with public dollars must be fully informed and made very carefully with the objective of maximizing efficiencies with those resources.

Question 9: Nevada is second in the nation in the amount of geothermal power produced and has the country's largest untapped geothermal resources. However, the Administration's budget repeals the 25 percent share of revenue distribution for geothermal royalties that is provided to counties. These royalties provide up to 10% of revenues to counties in Nevada, so the repeal would be harmful to our local economies. Do you agree with repealing these payments? Isn't this a promise to rural areas, like those in my home state?

Response: As the former Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, I am aware that federal revenue payments can be important to state and local economies. However, I need to learn more about the specifics of this issue. I would be happy to do so, if confirmed.

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Questions from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Which DOE program offices will fall under your supervision, if you are confirmed?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to align the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 2: How will you ensure that research is coordinated between the Office of Science and other offices within DOE?

Answer: Coordination between the Office of Science and the other program offices is critical to ensure research is not being duplicated and is being done in the most efficient manner. If confirmed, I look forward to looking into this issue and ensuring communication throughout the Department.

Question 3: Do you agree the national laboratories are valued strategic partners of the Department?

Answer: Yes, our national laboratories are cutting-edge and lead the nation and world in innovative research. I plan to support and advocate for their work.

Question 4: What steps will you take to ensure that the national laboratories are viewed and treated by you and your staff as such?

Answer: I plan to visit all the Department of Energy Science labs and to learn from our outstanding men and women who work there. Our national laboratories are the crown jewels of the nation and I plan to support and advocate for their work.

Question 5: Will you commit to continue to value and support the important work of the 17 national laboratories?

Answer: Yes, I am committed to valuing and supporting the important work of the national laboratories.

Question 6: Will you commit to continue to implement the recommended reforms from the Commission to Review the Effectiveness of the National Energy Laboratories?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the CRENEL report, but look forward to learning more about the recommendations if confirmed.

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Question 7: What steps will you and the Department's leadership take to maintain a continuous and active engagement with the national laboratories?

Answer: If I am confirmed, I plan to visit all the DOE Science labs and to learn from our outstanding men and women who work there. Our national laboratories are the crown jewels of the nation and I plan to support and advocate for their work.

Question 8: What are your views on the DOE Office of Science and federal investments in basic research?

Answer: I support basic research and development to bring about technological breakthroughs that will allow for any number of new technologies. I am committed to both investing in energy innovation and using taxpayer dollars responsibly. If I am confirmed, I will explore ways to make technology and scientific development at the Department and the labs available to interested parties.

I also believe in engaging with the private sector. The Department can be a great resource in cooperating with the private sector to spur innovation, particularly by investing in cutting-edge research without duplicating the private sector efforts.

Question 9: Do you understand how the Department's science programs underpin all the other mission objectives of the Department?

Answer: Yes.

Question 10: What is your definition of sound science?

Answer: My definition of sound science is science that is fact-based, reliable, conforms with scientific methodology, and is un-biased.

Question 11: If confirmed, do you commit to protecting scientific research conducted and funded by the Department of Energy?

Answer: Yes, it is important that science be fact-based, reliable, conforming with scientific methodology, and un-biased.

Question 12: What are the research priorities for the Office of Science?

Answer: The President's FY 2018 budget request set the priorities for the Office of Science. From what I understand, those priorities focus on early-stage research and development.

Question 13: Do you commit to support the Scientific Integrity Policy and protect the scientific integrity of the work of the Department of Energy?

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Answer: Though I am not familiar with the Scientific Integrity Policy, should I be confirmed, I look forward to learning more. I strongly believe in the importance of objective research and the freedom of scientific inquiry.

Question 14: The budget proposes to eliminate ARPA-E, which advances high-potential, high-impact energy technologies that are too early for private-sector investment. Do you support eliminating ARPA-E?

Answer: I support the Department's shift to focus on early-stage research and development at our national laboratories to more efficiently and cost-effectively advance American dominance in scientific and energy research. Congress and the President will ultimately arrive at an agreement regarding the funding of ARPA-E, and the Department will implement it accordingly.

Question 15: The budget proposes to cut 17 percent of the Office of Science, which is the largest federal sponsor of basic research in the physical sciences. Do you agree that Federal investments in basic research are critical for maintaining U.S. leadership in science and technology and creating future jobs?

Answer: The President's FY 2018 budget request set the priorities for the Department. The budget focuses on basic, early-stage research and leaves more room for the private sector to invest in promising energy technologies.

Question 16: These proposed budget cuts would result in thousands of direct job losses of scientists and engineers working at the national labs, universities, research institutions, and businesses throughout the country. The innovation funded at DOE creates a pipeline for increasing competitiveness and job creation. Do you agree that DOE plays an essential role in energy research and development and will you commit to supporting increased funding for energy R&D conducted by the Department?

Answer: The Department of Energy does play an important role in energy R&D. The President's FY2018 budget request set the priorities for the Department. I commit to follow the appropriations law passed by Congress and signed by the President.

Question 17: Do you realize that the proposed budget cuts would result in over 17,000 scientist jobs lost from the national labs, universities, research institutions, and businesses throughout the country?

Answer: The President's FY 2018 budget request set priorities for the Department. I commit to follow the laws passed by Congress and signed by the President.

Question 18: During Secretary Perry's confirmation process, he said: "the Department can be a great resource in cooperating with the private sector to spur innovation, particularly by investing in cutting-edge research." And he further stated: "I hope to explore all the avenues available to

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transfer more of the great work performed at our national laboratories to the marketplace.” However, the budget proposal jeopardizes the very science and technology programs that Secretary Perry said he values, which undermines U.S. energy leadership and kills American jobs. What are you going to do to be a more effective steward and champion of the vital programs?

Answer: The President’s FY 2018 budget request set priorities for the Department, particularly with its emphasis on basic scientific research. I commit to follow the laws passed by Congress and signed by the President.

Question 19: How do you propose to address the infrastructure needs of the national laboratories?

Answer: Infrastructure issues are very important to the Department of Energy (DOE) national labs. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and the DOE laboratories to find balanced answers to this issue.

Question 20: Do you agree that Office of Science user facilities are an important part of our nation’s scientific ecosystem?

Answer: I believe user facilities are a valuable tool and among the best assets the national laboratories have. If confirmed, it will be a goal of mine to increase access to the user facilities for federal priorities but also ensure opportunities for the private sector and research institutions to utilize these facilities.

Question 21: Will you commit to keeping Office of Science user facilities open and available to the broader scientific community and ensure that they operate at current levels and in an optimized fashion?

Answer: I believe user facilities are a valuable tool and among the best assets the national laboratories have. If confirmed, it will be a goal of mine to increase access to the user facilities for federal priorities but also ensure opportunities for the private sector and research institutions to utilize these facilities.

Question 22: Would you maintain DOE’s support for these innovative partnerships, such as Energy Frontier Research Centers and Energy Innovation Hubs, and equip them to continue to deliver the science and technology that we have seen flow from these investments?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the specifics of this issue. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about these partnerships.

Question 23: What will be your plan to keep DOE’s high performance computing and exascale efforts at the world’s leading edge?

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Answer: From what I understand, the President's FY 2018 budget request increased funding for exascale computing. I believe achieving exascale computing is a priority for the Secretary and if confirmed, look forward to assisting the Department achieve this goal.

Question 24: Do you believe it is in our nation's best interest to continue to collect and make available to the scientific community the data and modeling capabilities necessary to understand how our climate is changing, and what it means for our national security, our infrastructure investments, our economy and our citizens?

Answer: I believe data and sound science are important in the Department's execution of its mission. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the Department's data collection processes and how scientific data can best be used to support the Department's work.

Question 25: Do you commit to protecting the climate science and data functions at DOE?

Answer: Should I be confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on the Department of Energy's science and data functions.

Question 26: How do you plan to engage the national laboratories in developing the strategic directions of the Department going forward?

Answer: The national laboratories perform important cutting edge research. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the laboratories to develop policies that will keep the United States a global leader in innovation.

Question 27: What steps will you take to ensure a coordinated approach to these challenges, and to include the national laboratories as key contributors?

Answer: As I stated above, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the national laboratories to further scientific advancement.

Question 28: Do you agree that technology transfer is an important component of DOE's work?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the Office of Technology Transitions but can commit to learning more about it. If I am confirmed, I will explore ways to make technology development at the Department of Energy available to interested parties. I hope to explore all the avenues available to transfer more of the great work performed at our national laboratories to the marketplace.

Question 29: What are your plans to encourage and increase the transfer of DOE technologies to strengthen U.S. economic competitiveness?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the Office of Technology Transitions, but can commit to learning more about the office. If I am confirmed, I will explore ways to make technology

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development at the Department of Energy available to interested parties. I hope to explore all the avenues available to transfer more of the great work performed at our national laboratories to the marketplace.

Questions 30: What steps will you take to ensure that DOE remains in compliance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that required DOE to create a Technology Transfer Coordinator to oversee the Department's technology transfer efforts, and also to establish an energy Technology Commercialization Fund to match private funds to advance promising technologies?

Answer: If confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on the role of the Technology Transfer Coordinator and the Technology Commercialization Fund.

Question 31: The budget proposes to eliminate the Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program, which provide critical technical assistance and state-controlled competitive grant funding to all 50 states to support state- and county-level energy projects. Do you support eliminating the Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program?

Answer: I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 32: The budget proposal includes draconian cuts to the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, and other applied energy programs. These programs invest in all stages of innovation across a diverse portfolio of energy technologies to enhance economic competitiveness and secure America's long-term energy security. Do you agree with these cuts? Do you believe there is a Federal role in investing in R&D in these areas?

Answer: I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. I believe there is a federal role in investing R&D especially at the earliest stages.

Question 33: What is your view of where our country should be headed in the development and promotion of renewable energy? What types of technologies do you believe DOE should be supporting, and at what budgetary level?

Answer: I believe that the future for renewable energy is bright. During my time in the private sector, I saw firsthand the positive role renewables, such as hydro, wind, and solar, can have in meeting our nation's energy needs. In general, I believe that when industries can stand on their own – without government support – they should do so.

Question 34: Do you agree with the scientific consensus that the earth's climate is changing and is primarily caused by human activity?

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Answer: I believe the climate is changing. Some of it is naturally occurring and some from our activities.

Question 35: What actions should be taken to mitigate climate change and its impacts?

Answer: I believe a strong, vibrant economy is the best way to mitigate any impacts from climate change. If confirmed, I will work to implement policies at DOE that will empower innovative approaches and technologies to mitigate climate change.

Question 36: Can you commit to reviewing the findings and recommendations from the first and second installments of the Quadrennial Energy Review and consider continued support of the recommendations as they have received bipartisan support in the past?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the Quadrennial Energy Review (QER). If confirmed, I will seek more information about the value of the QER, including input from key stakeholders. I would certainly look to leverage the expertise of the DOE staff in any multi-agency energy review process.

Question 37: What is your view on the best way to address critical challenges that span DOE's diverse mission areas?

Answer: The Department of Energy has a vast and diverse mission executed by the tremendous career workforce and the national labs. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with my counterparts across the agency to ensure the program efforts are not only well defined at the outset but are also coordinated, well managed and aligned with the Department's mission.

Question 38: How do you view DOE's role in protecting the electric grid and energy systems from cyber attacks?

Answer: Energy cybersecurity is a critical issue and a significant part of DOE's mission. If my nomination is confirmed, I will work to build on the work of the Administration and Congress to give this the high priority attention it deserves.

Question 39: What steps will you take to ensure that cybersecurity efforts, to protect the grid and energy systems and also to protect DOE assets, are coordinated across the Department?

Answer: The reliability and security of our electric grid is very important to me, and protecting the grid is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to a discussion about how to harden our grid and prioritize cybersecurity efforts. The Department of Energy should coordinate across the Department and other agencies, and with the private sector, to develop a seamless and coordinated plan for addressing major attacks. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that communication across the Department, between principals, CEOs, and my office is strong, and that the efforts of this group continue to focus on removing barriers to information sharing and technology development.

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Question 40: What is your view on the role of DOE's national laboratories in DOE's cybersecurity efforts?

Answer: The national labs are the crown jewels of the nation; the security of our electric grid is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring ways in which the national labs can advance scientific development to harden our grid and prioritize cyber security efforts.

Question 41: What is your view of the role DOE's national laboratories should play in a U.S. government cybersecurity strategy?

Answer: I believe the national laboratories play a similar role across the federal government as they do in the Department. The national labs are the crown jewels of the nation; the security of our electric grid is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring ways in which the national labs can advance scientific development to harden our grid and prioritize cyber security efforts.

Question 42: Do you think that voluntary cybersecurity guidelines that may not be practiced by all of the pipeline industry are sufficient to protect our national security assets from foreign state actors?

Answer: The reliability and security of our electric grid is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to discussion about how to harden our grid and prioritize cyber security efforts. If confirmed, I would work to ensure communication and technology development efforts are strong.

Question 43: Should any additional measures be implemented to fortify pipeline cybersecurity?

Answer: Ensuring robust physical cybersecurity measures is vital to our national security. However, because I am not an Administration official at this time, I would defer this question to the Department of Energy.

Question 44: What steps will you take to make sure our energy networks are protected against the constant threat of cyberattack?

Answer: The reliability and security of our electric grid is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to discussion about how to harden our grid and prioritize cyber security efforts. I would also work to ensure communication and technology development efforts are strong.

Question 45: Will you commit to maintain the efforts of the previous administration to keep Hanford safe and work on making Hanford safer for workers and the community?

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Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance to me. I am committed to working with the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders to clean up the Hanford site in a safe and responsible manner.

Question 46: Do you acknowledge the extreme risk to workers at the Hanford site and commit to improving worker safety and improving the worker compensation program and the Departments contribution the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program?

Answer: As I stated above, I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance to me. I am committed to working with the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders to clean up the Hanford site in a safe and responsible manner.

Question 47: Do you acknowledge that the Department has a lot of work to do to improve how it helps sick workers? Will you commit to work with me to fix the Departments deficiencies and work with the unions and advocacy groups to get to the bottom of the problems plaguing the workers compensation program at Hanford?

Answer: Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance to me. I am committed to working with the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders to clean up the Hanford site in a safe and responsible manner.

Question 48: Will you commit to working with us to ensure the workers at Hanford are receiving the proper training and equipment and that they are not exposed to chemical vapors?

Answer: Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance to me. I am committed to working with the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders to clean up the Hanford site in a safe and responsible manner.

Question 49: Do you understand the moral and legal obligations as well as the urgency for the Department of Energy to properly fund and proceed with the cleanup effort at the Hanford site, including construction of the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant? In your respective role will you commit to providing the necessary resources to complete the construction of the direct feed low-activity waste facilities as well as the high activity waste facilities?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. I understand that the Department of Energy is actively working to meet its cleanup commitments while continuing key risk reduction and remediation activities at Hanford. I am committed to working with the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders to clean up the Hanford site in a safe and responsible manner.

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Question 50: Do you understand that any change in the Department's approach to treating tank waste at Hanford must include input from the state of Washington before moving forward? This is critical to avoid costly litigation that will only hamper progress. Do I have your word you will work with the Washington delegation and state of Washington on the Hanford cleanup?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. I will work with the Washington Congressional delegation and State of Washington officials on the Hanford cleanup where appropriate. I will also work to ensure we are making sustainable, risk-informed, and fiscally wise decisions regarding our Environmental Management obligations at Hanford.

Question 51: Will you commit to including science and technology as an important component of cleanup work at EM sites, including Hanford?

Answer: Yes.

Question 52: Will you commit to ensuring that existing lab capabilities that support Hanford will be stewarded and utilized before investments are made in new capabilities?

Answer: If confirmed, I will work to ensure we are making sustainable, risk-informed, and fiscally wise decisions regarding our Environmental Management obligations at Hanford.

Question 53: As you may be aware, many cleanup contracts around the EM complex are expiring. Because much of the funding for investments in science and technologies come through the cleanup contractors, new EM contract mechanisms are needed that provide appropriate incentives to these contractors to invest in innovative technologies to reduce costs, something that is not reflected in existing contract mechanisms. What will you do to ensure that EM utilizes contract mechanisms to provide these incentives in contracts that it will be re-bidding in 2017 and beyond?

Answer: I recognize the importance of effective contract management and ensuring that the right incentives are built in. I am aware that the Department of Energy faces many challenges, among them project management and the accuracy of cost estimates, particularly for large projects. If confirmed, I will be certain to review the existing contract mechanisms and work with Secretary Perry to improve performance and management.

Question 54: Do you agree that grid modernization is an important component of DOE's mission?

Answer: Yes, Secretary Perry has stated his goal is to make modernizing the electric grid a priority and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid and the supply chain that supports it.

Question 55: What steps will you take to ensure that national laboratories remain a strategic and important part of the Department's grid modernization and cybersecurity work?

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Answer: While I value the national labs as the crown jewels of our nation and am aware of the Department's Grid Modernization Initiative (GMI) and Grid Modernization Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP), I have not been fully briefed on either the initiatives or the program plan. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid.

Question 56: What steps will you take to build upon the strong public-private partnerships that exist in this area, including the role of public/private demonstrations at the regional level to accelerate grid modernization, resilience and security?

Answer: While I am aware of the Department's Grid Modernization Initiative (GMI) and Grid Modernization Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP), I have not been fully briefed on either the initiatives or the program plan. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid and will utilize the national laboratories as appropriate.

Question 57: Do you agree that a priority for the Department is to ensure system reliability as energy sources continue to evolve?

Answer: Yes.

Question 58: Do you agree that investing in transactive controls increases the reliability of our nation's energy system?

Answer: This is an issue I look forward to being more fully briefed on if confirmed. I assure you that I am committed to energy reliability, affordability and to fulfilling this important mission of the Department.

Question 59: What steps will you take to advance the reliability of our nation's energy system?

Answer: Secretary Perry has stated his goal is to make modernizing the electric grid a priority and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid. The Secretary has also commissioned an agency-wide study on electricity markets and reliability of the electric grid. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this study to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the grid and how we can advance the reliability of the nation's energy system.

Question 60: Do you agree that energy storages is a critical component of a resilient, reliable grid? What steps will you take to move forward on energy storage if you are confirmed?

Answer: I do believe there is a role for storage. Secretary Perry has commissioned an agency-wide study on the electric grid. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this study to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the grid and how energy storage can assist in strengthening the grid.

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Question 61: What is your view on energy efficiency standards? How will you meet the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) and other statutory requirements for energy efficiency standards?

Answer: Energy efficiency has been a priority of Congress and DOE the Department of Energy has helped provide significant energy savings to many Americans. I have not been briefed on the full array of Departmental efforts in this area. If confirmed, I will commit to learning more about the Department's role in meeting America's energy efficiency needs.

Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing, and I concur with others who have stated that we must have some impact. I agree with Secretary Perry that the question is how we address it in a thoughtful way that further supports economic growth, improves affordability of energy, and American jobs.

Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Answer: I believe that the climate is changing and that we have some impact on it. I believe that the costs and benefits of climate-related policies need to make sense for American families and the American economy.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing and that we have some impact on it. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and the experts in the Department to advance efforts to address climate change.

Question 4: Do you believe that DOE has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Answer: I support an "all of the above" approach smartly using our energy resources. The Department of Energy Organization Act states that "a strong national energy program is needed to meet the present and future energy needs of the Nation consistent with overall national economic, environmental and social goals." I believe in those goals, and, if confirmed, will follow the law.

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Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing and we have some impact on it. If confirmed, I look forward to getting a better understanding of these dynamics and helping the Department implement its policies in accordance with the law.

Question 6: DOE's Office of Science is the single largest funder of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States. What do you see as the most pressing priorities for the office?

Answer: The President's FY 2018 budget request refocuses the Department's energy and science programs on early-stage research and development at our national laboratories to advance American primacy in scientific and energy research in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Question 7: What role should DOE play in advancing clean energy innovation in the U.S.?

Answer: The Department of Energy plays a critical role in early-stage, fundamental energy research and innovation. This early-stage research is critical to our efforts and is often used by our private sector in competing.

Question 8: Secretary Perry requested a study in April to ascertain whether wind and solar power are threatening electric grid reliability. It has been reported that the study found no such threat. Do you agree with the science that demonstrates wind and solar can in fact improve reliability while decreasing costs?

Answer: I support the Administration's "all of the above" energy strategy, and believe renewable energy has an important role in that strategy. Ensuring the reliability of the grid and energy supply chain is important to supporting the American economy. I have not seen any drafts of the internal study but look forward to reading it when it is released.

Question 9: The National Academy of Sciences was asked to conduct an assessment of the progress Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) has made toward achieving its congressionally mandated mission and goals. It found that "there are clear indications that ARPA-E is making progress toward its statutory mission and goals." If confirmed, do you commit to fully supporting ARPA-E?

Answer: I support the Department's shift to focus on early-stage research and development at our national laboratories to more efficiently and cost-effectively advance American dominance in scientific and energy research. Congress and the President will ultimately arrive at an agreement regarding the funding of ARPA-E, and the Department will implement it accordingly.

Question 10: The president has called for "energy dominance," yet China leads the world in solar photovoltaic manufacturing. The largest markets for solar and wind are also in China. Do

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you believe the US is falling behind in the international clean energy market? Will competing with China to develop renewable technology be a priority if you are confirmed?

Answer: I understand that competing globally to develop not only renewable technology, but all kinds of energy technologies, will be a priority of the Department. This includes our efforts in exascale computing.

Question 11: When I met with Secretary Perry, we discussed subsidies for the fossil fuel industry. He reminded me that he made a campaign promise to “eliminate direct subsidies and tax credits” for energy. Will you commit to working with him to repeal all fossil fuel subsidies?

Answer: If confirmed, I commit to reviewing existing programs at DOE and working with Secretary Perry to ensure that they are in the best interests of the American people. Since many of the subsidies for various forms of energy are defined in laws, we will work with you and your colleagues in Congress to prioritize.

Question 12: President Trump’s FY 2018 budget proposal would revive the approval process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste site. If confirmed, will you commit to blocking the unsafe Yucca Mountain proposal and instead work to find a publicly-accepted, safe, long-term solution to this country’s significant problem of nuclear waste disposal?

Answer: If I am honored to be confirmed, I will be committed to following the law, including the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the final arbiter to determine whether Yucca Mountain is safe and should they approve it, I will implement any DOE activities in accordance with that direction. I recognize that the problem of nuclear waste management is extraordinarily complex and, if confirmed, am committed to working with all stakeholders to meet our commitments.

Question 13: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Answer: Yes.

Question 14: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOE employees based on political whims?

Answer: I have briefly read about the Holman Rule, but would defer to the Office of General Counsel as to how any action under it should be applied.

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Question from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question: Considering your familiarity with private financing, you surely understand that early-stage technologies are often too risky for private-sector investment. Hence, it is critical that we have public-private partnerships to bring these high-potential and high-impact energy technologies to market.

Since its inception in 2009, ARPA-E has provided over \$1.3 billion in grants and funding to more than 475 projects across the country. These projects have created over 30 new US companies; attracted more than \$1.25 billion in new, private funding; and advanced our national security, economic prosperity, and energy independence.

Recognizing ARPA-E's outstanding record and success rate, how can you justify the Administration's proposed elimination of ARPA-E and unprecedented cuts to DOE research and development programs?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are described in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. The President's budget will spur world-leading energy innovation, while also reducing costs to the taxpayer. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question from Senator Steve Daines

Question: If confirmed as Undersecretary for Science, you will play an important role in investment and research in new and emerging energy technology. It is important that the government does not pick winners and losers in energy technology, but instead promotes an all-of-the-above approach to energy research. Will you work to encourage research and investment in all forms of energy including coal and hydropower, as well as other fossil fuels, renewables and nuclear?

Answer: If confirmed, I will pursue the investments that have the greatest return and benefits for American taxpayers based on the available evidence. Advocating for an "all of the above" energy approach, in a fiscally responsible manner to be accountable to taxpayers, is something I will strive to do.

Questions from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: As you know, the United States is entirely far too dependent on other nations for our supply of rare earth elements. These elements, also called "REEs" or "critical minerals", are used in countless consumer products such as cell phones, televisions, and medical equipment. And these elements are increasingly the subject of national security concerns because our supply is

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imported from China. In fact, the Congressional Research Service reports that “refined rare earth metals are almost exclusively available from China. The United States has the expertise but lacks the manufacturing assets and facilities to refine oxides into metals...” That wasn’t always the case. So, it’s time we took a hard look at how to redevelop a domestic industry for these. West Virginia University is doing a lot of great work on extracting these materials from coal mine byproducts. Once commercialized, these processes could be a critical means of standing up a domestic market for rare earth elements. In the FY 2017 spending bill, we included a \$15 million plus-up for R&D into the extraction and recovery of rare earth elements and minerals from U.S. coal and coal byproducts. I’ve introduced legislation – the Rare Earth Elements Advanced Coal Technology Act – which would authorize \$20 million a year in R&D funds for this type of research at DOE. That authorization provides certainty to researchers and sends a clear signal that we are serious about re-establishing a domestic market.

Mr. Dabbar, would you be willing to work with me to ensure this research continues and these researchers are given the resources they need?

Answer: Yes. Rare earth minerals research is a national security priority.

Question 2: I’d like to discuss the loan guarantee program at the Department of Energy for clean energy innovation which was established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Mr. Menezes, I believe you were a lead staffer on that bill. It has been proposed for elimination in the FY2018 budget, the House energy appropriations bill and the Senate subcommittee bill. This program was created by a Republican Congress on a bipartisan vote and signed into law by a Republican President – President George W. Bush. It has a 97.78% repayment rate. It has a demonstrated success of bringing advanced energy technology to market and makes money for the government.

What are your thoughts on why this program is being proposed for elimination despite its strategic importance to our nation’s energy goals?

Isn’t its elimination essentially a conclusion that there is no additional innovative project out there that the federal government should partner with the private sector on?

Answer: I understand that Mr. Menezes is also answering this question, but to the extent you are also asking me, should Congress eliminate future program’s funding, if confirmed, I will review how to make the best use of the remaining funds to continue successful programs.

Question 3: My home state is known for coal. But what we’re less known for is the work we’ve done to burn that coal more cleanly. The bulk of DOE’s fossil energy research is centered at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL). One of NETL’s facilities is in Morgantown, West Virginia, where NETL has worked with the private sector on the technologies we use to remove particulates and other harmful substances from coal. The National Energy Technology Lab in Morgantown, West Virginia is an extraordinary complex that is near and dear to my heart and employs 612 people. The budget proposed consolidation of the 3 lab facilities that make up

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NETL in a phased approach. I had the opportunity to sit down with Secretary Perry at NETL earlier this month and I was encouraged by his interest in the work that these world-class researchers have undertaken. I believe that research and development is critical to the Department of Energy mission and the national lab system is vital to ensuring that we are on the cutting edge of energy technology development. The Morgantown facility is seen as a mainstay of fossil fuel technology development. Their projects on carbon capture, efficient utilization of coal, and how to integrate fossil fuel systems with renewable energy are vital to our energy future. So you can understand why the consolidation proposal may cause me and many West Virginians some heartburn.

If you could each tell me about an experience you had with our national labs that better qualifies you to help oversee them?

I would encourage each of you to visit the NETL Morgantown facility to get an up-close look.

Answer: I have approximately 20 years of private industry energy experience, and 20 years of service in the Department of Defense and Department of Energy. Like Secretary Perry, the more I learn about the work of the National Labs, the more I am impressed. I believe I will bring a strong mix of public and private sector experience required for this position because of my energy industry engineering expertise, and management depth and skills. If confirmed, my goal is to assist the Department of Energy and the nation to move forward the bounds of what we can accomplish together.

I would welcome the opportunity to visit Morgantown and work closely with you to continue the great work of the men and women at NETL.

Questions from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: In 2012, the Blue Ribbon Commission's report on nuclear waste made very clear that the only viable path forward is through a consent-based approach to siting both temporary storage and permanent disposal facilities for spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste. Do you support consent-based siting of all nuclear waste facilities? What in your view would legally constitute local "consent?"

Answer: If I am honored to be confirmed, I will be committed to following the law, including the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the final arbiter to determine whether Yucca Mountain is safe and should they approve it, I will implement any DOE activities in accordance with that direction. I recognize that the problem of nuclear waste management is extraordinarily complex and, if confirmed, am committed to working with all stakeholders to meet our commitments.

Question 2: For several years I've worked to improve the process to transfer innovative technologies from DOE's national laboratories to the private sector. Do you support DOE's Office of Technology Transition's continuing implementation of tech transfer via the

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Technology Commercialization Fund? And do you agree that tech transfer should be a priority mission for the national labs?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the Office of Technology Transitions but can commit to learning more about it. If confirmed, I will explore ways to make technology development at the Department of Energy available to interested parties. I believe in engaging with the private sector. While being careful not to duplicate private sector efforts, the Department can be a great resource in cooperating with the private sector to spur innovation, particularly by investing in cutting-edge research.

Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: I want to make sure that all nominees for the Department of Energy understand the important relationship between renewable energy and economic development. How does the proposed DOE budget support its R&D programs that have helped develop clean energy technologies, improved national security, and grid reliability?

Answer: My understanding of the President's FY 2018 budget request is that it focuses on early-stage research and development that will allow the United States to remain a leader in science and technological innovation. Such leadership is important, not only for science, but for the economic growth of our nation.

Question 2: What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are laid out in the President's FY 2018 budget request. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 3: Do you believe DOE and the National Labs' R&D and clean energy technology work is integral to the United States securing energy independence and staying globally competitive?

Answer: Yes.

Question 4: Are there areas where DOE should do more?

Answer: I am not an Administration official at this time; however, I commit to work with the Administration, the Secretary and Congress to prioritize the work of the Department.

Question 5: Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

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Answer: I have approximately 20 years of private industry energy experience, and 20 years of service in the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy. I believe I will bring a strong mix of public and private sector experience required for this position because of my energy industry engineering expertise, and management depth and skills. If confirmed, my goal is to assist the Department of Energy and the nation in moving forward the bounds of what we can accomplish together.

Question 6: Secretary Perry has indicated that he may reassign functions in some of your offices. What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to return the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 7: Reassigned to another office?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to return the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 8: Should anything be reassigned to another office?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to return the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 9: Geothermal energy is one of the fastest growing industries in Nevada. In 2013, there were 29 geothermal power plants operating in nine of Nevada's seventeen counties. The Nevada Department of Energy has estimated that at least 6,000 jobs would be created through geothermal energy investment. The proposed cuts to DOE will not provide for adequate funding for the Geothermal Technologies Office to continue researching geothermal energy innovations. Do you believe investments in geothermal energy should be prioritized?

Answer: As I stated during the hearing, I recognize the value of geothermal energy. I support the President's budget request and, if confirmed, look forward to finding alternative solutions to advance these goals. I will also ensure that the will of Congress is carried out.

Question 10: Through its SunShot Initiative, DOE funds have been granted to universities,

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private companies, and national labs with the aim to make solar energy a low-cost source for all Americans. In 2012, DOE's SunShot program established five Regional Test Centers (RTCs) across the United States, including a location in Henderson, Nevada, to spur research and development in solar technology. These test centers are generating the data needed to attract financial investors and drive widespread solar energy deployment. But under President Trump's proposed budget there is a proposed 71% funding reduction. These cuts will hurt a thriving industry and clean energy jobs in Nevada. Do you agree with these proposed budget cuts and how would you prioritize programs like these moving forward if confirmed?

Answer: The President's FY 2018 budget request set the priorities for the Department. I commit to follow the appropriations law passed by Congress and signed by the President.

Question 11: The nominee for Deputy Secretary, Dan Brouillette, commented in his nomination hearing that if the science is not there that he would **not** support Yucca Mountain as a permanent repository. Yucca Mountain has serious safety and environmental concerns which are detailed in the hundreds of contentions filed by the state of Nevada, the most the NRC has ever considered. The contentions alone will take up to 4 years to adjudicate, but even if the site was greenlighted, it would take up to 50 years to build infrastructure in Nevada and across the country and to allow the waste to cool and be shipped through heavily populated communities. I know that you may not be engaged with the Yucca Mountain project, but I want to quickly note that even if you are involved in the most peripheral way, that data, sound science, and consent have to be at the forefront of this conversation. Do you agree with that statement?

Answer: All scientific decisions related to Yucca Mountain should be based on sound science. If confirmed, I will ensure that scientific decisions related to Yucca Mountain continue to be based on sound science.

Question 12: In Nevada, DOE has provided the essential funding for state-run energy programs that are helping local communities save taxpayer dollars. For example, Nevada's Pershing County School District is saving \$72,000 every year after installing rooftop solar panels on schools, while energy efficient lighting in the Carson City school district is saving close to \$80,000 a year for taxpayers. Do you believe federal funding cuts to state-run energy programs will harm state initiatives that save taxpayers money and create clean energy?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are described in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 13: How would you prioritize these programs if you were to be confirmed?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are described in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

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Questions from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Addressing the labor violations in the 1990's and 2000's that Jack Abramoff famously helped perpetuate took both local and federal action. What steps will you take on the federal level to prevent deplorable labor practices that are beginning to remind us of the Abramoff era?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, given my nomination to this position I have not been directly involved in Insular Area policy decisions. While I would need to be briefed on this matter to understand the current extent of the problem, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas I will work with the governments of the territories to ensure that the appropriate laws are followed. I had the privilege of meeting with Congressman Sablan after my nomination, and he alerted me to the worker-visa issue. If confirmed, I look forward to working with him and the rest of Congress on this important issue.

Question 2: Are you aware of a Treasury Department investigation into the Best Sunshine casino activities?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, given my nomination to this position I have not been directly involved in Insular Area policy. I am vaguely aware of a Treasury Department investigation into Best Sunshine casino activities, but have not been involved in the process.

Question 3: What will you do to ensure that money laundering will not be tolerated in the Northern Marianas, or any other Territory?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, given my nomination to this position I have not been involved in insular area matters. While I would need to be briefed on this matter to understand the current extent of the problem, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas I will work with the governments of the territories and U.S. Federal agencies, as appropriate, to ensure that the appropriate laws are followed. Where necessary, I would also work with Congress on this issue.

Question 4: What will you do to ensure the Palau compact is implemented?

Response: If confirmed I will work with the Committee to ensure that the Administration meets its obligations with regard to the Palau compact. I understand that the President's FY 2018 budget request includes funding for the compact within the Department of Defense budget request and, as I said at the hearing, both the House and Senate have included funding in their respective defense authorization bills for next year.

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Question 5: What will you do to ensure the economy of the United States Virgin Islands does not destabilize?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, given my nomination to this position I have not been involved in insular area matters and would need to be briefed on this matter to better understand it. I am aware, however, that the Department has recently provided a number of grants to the U.S. Virgin Islands through its Technical Assistance Program, including to develop a new Consumer Price Index that will provide data for use in assessing the economy and prospects for future growth and develop. I also had the privilege of meeting with Congresswoman Plaskett prior to my hearing to get her perspective. We discussed multiple issues including permanently extending the Rum Cover-Over, infrastructure needs and National Park Service. I look forward to working with her, the Governor, and Congress to continue supporting these efforts.

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Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, the climate is changing and man has an influence.

Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, the climate is changing and man has an influence. I the territories – especially lower lying islands and atolls - are uniquely impacted by sea level rise.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Response: Yes

Question 4: Do you believe that DOI has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Response: I am not aware that Congress has ever provided that direction to the Department of the Interior. I believe in the responsible development of our nation's natural resources as well as the renewable energy sources to fulfill the Secretary's goal of establishing American energy independence.

Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Response: As I stated in the hearing, I will pursue the best available science to make informed management decisions on the behalf of the Department and the Insular Areas.

Question 6: Which improvements to the management of federal public lands do you hope to achieve, if confirmed?

Response: Secretary Zinke has made the maintenance backlog one of his top priorities. I will work with him, Members of Congress and our Insular Area constituents in a cooperative manner to address these issues.

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Question 7: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.” If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: I have been nominated for Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, which is separate from the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs position you cited. However, I do share Secretary Zinke’s belief that tribal consultation is vital and if confirmed will continue to hold that position.

Question 8: DOI’s eight regional Climate Science Centers (CSC) cover the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. Each CSC is based out of a host university in their region and most are comprised of multi-institution consortia, which include university and non-university partners. In 2016, the work of the centers included assessments of warming on river flow, working with tribes to assess management strategies, and developing tools for decision-making. If confirmed, will you support the CSCs? If so, how?

Response: As stated before, I will always pursue the best available science to make informed management decisions on the behalf of the Department and the Insular Areas.

Question 9: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 10: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOI employees based on political whims?

Response: Congress sets its rules. If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to follow the law and advise the Secretary on any proposal that affects the Insular Areas, and I will do so.

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Questions from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Questions: I understand you previously worked for the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a think tank that depreciates climate change as simply, “justification for onerous climate policies that will limit or eliminate the use of fossil fuels.”

As Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs you will be responsible for carrying out federal policy for, and administering federal assistance to, U.S. territories - many of which are especially vulnerable to the earliest and worst impacts of climate change due to their geographical location, concentration of infrastructure along coastlines, and dependence on unique and fragile ecosystems.

In your opinion, how severe of a problem is climate change? What is the role of the federal government in addressing the current and future impacts of climate change?

Response: As I indicated at the hearing, the climate is changing and man has an influence and I will pursue the best available science to make informed management decisions on the behalf of the Department and the Insular Areas. As I also mentioned in my hearing, throughout my time as Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia, I worked hard to deal with shoreline erosion issues on Tangier Island in the Chesapeake Bay. If confirmed, I will apply the same pragmatic, solutions-driven approach with the Insular Areas.

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Question from Senator Steve Daines

Question: Do you see the position of Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs as playing a prominent role in the economic growth, security, and well-being of the U.S. territories?

Response: Yes

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Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Do you believe in sound science determining policy?

Response: Yes

Question 2: Do you believe the government should adequately invest in the programs that make a difference in lives of the communities in my state and across the country?

Response: Yes

Question 3: What more can DOI do for our communities?

Response: Secretary Zinke has made it a priority for the Department to be a good neighbor. If confirmed, I look forward to partnering with the Insular Areas Congressional delegation, Governors and constituents to craft real solutions that will last.

Question 4: What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Response: Secretary Zinke has made the maintenance backlog one of his top priorities and the President's budget request included funding to fulfill our compact obligations in the Pacific. After meeting with each of the Congressional members from the territories, they echoed the same message. If confirmed I will work with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, Members of Congress and our Insular Area constituents in a cooperative manner to address the most pressing issues facing our territories.

Question 5: Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

Response: I have a true passion for the Territories and have extensive experience that will serve the Insular Areas well. During my time in the Bush Administration, I was asked by then Secretary Dirk Kempthorne to serve as his appointee to the Advisory Council for the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico and later as the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas. That appointment gave me the opportunity to work on issues and travel to Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Mariana Islands. These visits afforded me the occasion to work on health care capacity issues, foreign worker policy, invasive species concerns, and the unique challenges of affordable energy on the islands. After my service with the Bush Administration, I was honored to be selected and confirmed as Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources. In that role I oversaw six state environmental, recreation, and historic resource agencies and worked with the Governor to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay, achieve the best year on record for clean air, build oyster and blue crab populations, and reintroduce elk to southwest Virginia. We invested in land conservation and worked with Virginia's 11 state recognized Indian tribes to permanently protect historically significant Werowocomoco, the village of

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Indian Chief Powhatan. In addition, I worked hard to combat shoreline erosion on Tangier Island. I was able to share these on-the-ground experiences with each of the Governors and Congressional Delegates from the territories and was honored to receive endorsements from each of the territories.

Question 6: If Secretary Zinke reassigns functions in some of your offices/departments and moves forward with decentralizing the Washington, DC office to regional offices, what do you believe should be reassigned to regional offices?

Response: I share Secretary Zinke's priority of making sure the Department gets the right tools and resources out to the field. If confirmed, I look forward to making sure we implement this vision in the territories.

Question 7: What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office?

Response: If confirmed, we must seek to fulfill our compact obligations, serve our Insular Area constituents in a collaborative manner and craft real solutions to challenges before our territories.

Question 8: Your agency, like so many others within the federal government, have dealt with continued shortfalls in budgetary funding, which has hurt our government's ability to partner effectively with private industry and have inflicted negative impacts on our nation's parks, forests and wildlife conservation programs. Do you believe more funding would allow the Interior Department to be a better partner to industry and the taxpayer?

Response: I support the goals and mission of the President's budget. I know that sufficient resources are needed to carry out any public function. I also know that resources are limited and the money alone cannot solve any problem. I believe that decisions with public dollars must be fully informed and made very carefully with the objective of maximizing efficiencies with those resources. However, the budget request is part of process that requires collaboration with Congress. Should I be confirmed, I commit to working with Secretary Zinke, the Administration, and the Congress to facilitate appropriate funding for our Insular Areas that is consistent with the President's budget and priorities and the intent of Congress.

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Question from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question: Since 1993 the Department of Energy's Power Marketing Administrations, including the Bonneville Power Administration, have reported to the Deputy Secretary. If you are confirmed as General Counsel will you advise the Secretary that the PMAs should continue to report directly to the Deputy Secretary?

Answer: I recognize the importance of the PMAs to Western states, especially the Bonneville Power Administration's importance to your home state of Washington. I have not been fully briefed on the reporting structure of the Department, nor do I have any details about the future of that structure. However, I will commit to working with you and your staff on the issue to ensure that the Department operates in accordance with the law and in an efficient manner that is respectful to the American taxpayer.

Question from Senator Ron Wyden

Question: Protection of whistleblowers is an issue I take very seriously. As you know, Sen. Grassley and I head up the bi-partisan Senate Whistleblower Protection Caucus and over the years, I have found whistleblowers play an essential role in uncovering the facts, especially at places like the Department of Energy's Hanford reservation. In my view, DOE has a terrible record on the treatment of whistleblowers; a view confirmed by a U.S. Government Accountability office report issued last year ("Department of Energy – Whistleblower Protections Need Strengthening; GAO-16-618, July 2016) and the new administration is off to a bad start. One of the first things the administration did at DOE was to suspend recently issued regulations that would allow the Department to take action against contractors who retaliate against whistleblowers.

If confirmed, please tell me what you are going to do as General Counsel to end the Department's hostile whistleblower practices, especially with regard to its contractors?

Answer: I know when we met that you made it clear how important this issue is to you and I appreciate your commitment to ensuring that the Department of Energy (DOE) is a safe work environment for our employees and contractors. I share that goal. All workers should feel empowered to come forward with concerns without fear of retaliation. If confirmed, I will look into current protocols in place. It is my intention to emphasize the processes under that structure and to protect the people who take pride in looking after the good work of the Department. I will also make sure the laws, regulations and policies regarding whistleblowers are enforced, including the protections offered under the Whistleblower Protection Act. If confirmed, I hope to help instill a culture of safety and openness for DOE's federal and contractor employees.

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Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing. I also believe that we are having some impact. I agree with Secretary Perry that the focus should not be so much on if the climate is changing, but how we address this issue in a way that doesn't compromise economic growth, the affordability of energy, or American jobs.

Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Answer: I believe that the climate is changing and that we are having some impact. I agree with Secretary Perry that the focus should not be so much on if the climate is changing, but how we address this issue in a way that doesn't compromise economic growth, the affordability of energy, or American jobs.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing and that we are having some impact. If confirmed, I look forward to getting a better understanding of these dynamics.

Question 4: Do you believe that DOE has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Answer: According to the Department of Energy Organization Act, I believe that the Department's roles were created by Congress and may be updated by Congress. For example, Congress has stated that, "a strong national energy program is needed to meet the present and future energy needs of the Nation consistent with overall national economic, environmental and social goals." I believe in those goals, and, if confirmed, I will advise the Department on how to implement policies in accordance with the law.

Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy as a whole. I do not believe that the role of the General Counsel is a policy making role and therefore, if I was confirmed, I would not be taking a position on climate change. If confirmed, I look forward to helping the Department implement its policies in accordance with the law.

Question 6: DOE's Office of Science is the single largest funder of basic research in the

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physical sciences in the United States. What do you see as the most pressing priorities for the office?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, the President's FY18 budget refocuses the Department's energy and science programs on early-stage research and development at our National Laboratories to advance American primacy in scientific and energy research in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Question 7: What role should DOE play in advancing clean energy innovation in the U.S.?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy (DOE), as a whole. I believe the Department's roles were created by Congress and may be updated by Congress. For example, Congress has stated that, "a strong national energy program is needed to meet the present and future energy needs of the Nation consistent with overall national economic, environmental and social goals."

As to the policy question, DOE plays a critical role in early-stage, fundamental energy research and innovation. I believe that Secretary Perry is working hard to promote further clean energy innovation at the Department of Energy because he believes it is American innovation and technology that will clean up the environment.

Question 8: Secretary Perry requested a study in April to ascertain whether wind and solar power are threatening electric grid reliability. It has been reported that the study found no such threat. Do you agree with the science that demonstrates wind and solar can in fact improve reliability while decreasing costs?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I support the Administration's "all of the above" energy strategy, and renewable energy plays an important role in that strategy. From what I understand, the study is an internal review of the affordability, reliability, and resiliency of the electric grid. At the time of these answers, I do not believe that the final grid study has been issued.

Question 9: The National Academy of Sciences was asked to conduct an assessment of the progress Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) has made toward achieving its congressionally mandated mission and goals. It found that "there are clear indications that ARPA-E is making progress toward its statutory mission and goals." If confirmed, do you commit to fully supporting ARPA-E?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I support the Department's shift to focus on early-stage research and development at

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our national laboratories to more efficiently and cost-effectively advance American dominance in scientific and energy research. Congress and the President will ultimately arrive at an agreement regarding funding of ARPA-E, and I will advise the Department about honoring that agreement in accordance with the law.

Question 10: The president has called for “energy dominance,” yet China leads the world in solar photovoltaic manufacturing. The largest markets for solar and wind are also in China. Do you believe the US is falling behind in the international clean energy market? Will competing with China to develop renewable technology be a priority if you are confirmed?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I understand that competing with China to develop not only renewable technology, but all kinds of energy technologies, will be a priority of the Department. The United States is the world’s leader in clean energy technology and I understand that the Secretary is committed to keeping it that way. One of the things that makes America great is that we have a vibrant private sector that is actively competing with China.

Question 11: When I met with Secretary Perry, we discussed subsidies for the fossil fuel industry. He reminded me that he made a campaign promise to “eliminate direct subsidies and tax credits” for energy. Will you commit to working with him to repeal all fossil fuel subsidies?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. If confirmed, I commit to working with Secretary Perry to ensure that the Department’s programs are operating in the best interests of the American people in accordance with the law. Since many of the subsidies for various forms of energy are defined in laws we will work with you and your colleagues in Congress to prioritize.

Question 12: President Trump’s FY18 budget proposal would revive the approval process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste site. If confirmed, will you commit to blocking the unsafe Yucca Mountain proposal and instead work to find a publicly-accepted, safe, long-term solution to this country’s significant problem of nuclear waste disposal?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. If I am honored to be confirmed, I will be committed to follow the law, including the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the final arbiter to determine whether Yucca Mountain is safe and should they approve it, I will implement any DOE activities in accordance with that direction. I recognize that the problem of nuclear waste management is extraordinarily complex, and if confirmed, am committed to working with all stakeholders to meet our commitments.

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Question 13: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Answer: Yes.

Question 14: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOE employees based on political whims?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. I am committed to the outstanding staff and work of the Department.

Question 15 (a-d): The Trump administration, following in the footsteps of its predecessor, is seeking to end construction of the mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel fabrication plant at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. The U.S. effort to dispose of its plutonium via the MOX fuel path has suffered from large cost increases and schedule delays that put the project in jeopardy. NNSA estimates the total construction of the project at \$17 billion, of which approximately \$5 billion has already been spent. The agency projects the annual cost to operate the facility at \$800 million to \$1 billion.

The alternative “dilute and dispose” process would down-blend the plutonium with an inert material for direct disposal in a repository, namely the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. That approach can be implemented decades sooner at a much lower cost and with fewer risks, according to NNSA. The agency plans to spend \$500 million to get the alternative approach up and running and \$400 annually to implement it.

Despite the Energy Department’s efforts to terminate the MOX fuel project, Congress has refused to abandon it. Meanwhile, Russia last fall suspended implementation of the 2000 Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, which committed each country to dispose of the 34 tons of plutonium.

- a) Does the United States plan to stick to its commitment under the PMDA to dispose of the 34 metric tons of plutonium despite Russia's suspension of the agreement?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I have not been fully briefed on the particulars of the PMDA and as such cannot comment on the official position of the Administration.

- b) What is the Energy Department's plan to convince Congress to abandon MOX and fund

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the alternative dilute and dispose approach?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I understand that the President's FY 2018 budget request proposes to terminate the MOX project and pursue "dilute and dispose."

- c) Does the Department of Energy believe that all of the 34 tons of plutonium declared excess to U.S. military needs will be able to fit in the underground storage spaces at WIPP?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I am not an Administration official at this time, so I cannot comment on the official positions of the Administration.

- d) Is it possible to emplace most, if not all, of the diluted plutonium at WIPP without changing the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I am somewhat familiar with the Act, but will need to carefully review legal issues relating to WIPP before commenting on the matter.

Question 16 (a, b): The United States already has the world's most formidable nuclear arsenal. It is on track to spend more than a trillion dollars over the next three decades to sustain, replace, and refurbish delivery systems, warheads, and their supporting infrastructure. The plans include the pursuit by NNSA of the so-called "3+2" nuclear warhead modernization strategy.

Congress has repeatedly questioned the wisdom of the 3+2 approach, which could cost over \$60 billion, citing the cost and risks involved with the interoperable warheads.

In addition, a report published in April by the Government Accountability Office disputed NNSA's claim that its long-term plans to sustain and rebuild U.S. nuclear warheads and their supporting infrastructure are affordable, calling this conclusion "optimistic."

- a) Does the Energy Secretary plan to undertake a comprehensive review of the need and affordability of NNSA's modernization plans?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I believe that the Department is committed to nuclear security, including

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its modernization functions.

- b) Would the Secretary, in consultation with the White House and Nuclear Weapons Council, be open to altering the pace and scope of the current modernization plans if it is clear significant taxpayer savings can be achieved while meeting deterrence requirements?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, while I am not an Administration official at this time, I believe that the Administration is committed to spending taxpayer dollars in a cost-effective manner while maintaining our national security.

Question 17 (a, b): Twenty years ago, the United States was the first country to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which now has 183 signatories. Today only one state – North Korea – conducts nuclear test explosions.

But the treaty has not yet formally entered into force because the United States and seven other states have not yet ratified the pact. Nevertheless, Democratic and Republican administrations have supported the U.S. nuclear test moratorium in place since 1992 and the global monitoring system to detect and deter nuclear testing, and we have worked hard to prevent the resumption of nuclear testing by others.

- a) What in your view would be the strategic consequences if the United States withdrew its signature from the CTBT?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I have not been briefed on the particulars of the CTBT, and I commit to receiving appropriate briefings should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

- b) How do you think other nuclear-armed states would react if the United States withdrew from the CTBT?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy as a whole. As to the policy question, I have not been briefed on the particulars of the CTBT, and I commit to receiving appropriate briefings should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Question 18 (a, b): A series of investigative reports published in June by the Center for Public Integrity cites numerous internal reports and other documents outlining federal regulators' concerns about safety lapses at Los Alamos National Laboratory over the years, including spilled plutonium and workers positioning plutonium rods in a way that could have been

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disastrous. The report also described how the penalties imposed by the government for these errors were typically small, relative to the tens of millions of dollars the NNSA gives to each of the contractors annually in pure profit.

- a) What is the Department doing to address all identified issues with its plutonium program?

Answer: If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I commit to receiving briefings on this subject.

- b) Have all of the identified safety issues been resolved? If not, why not?

Answer: If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I commit to receiving briefings on this subject.

Question 19: A February report by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board said Los Alamos needs 27 fully qualified safety engineers specialized in keeping plutonium from going critical (i.e. fissioning out of control), but that the lab only has 10. What is the Department doing to increase the number of engineers to the recommended level as quickly as possible?

Answer: I am not an Administration official at this time, so I cannot comment. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I commit to receiving briefings on this subject.

Question from Senator Steve Daines

Question: With your extensive experience within the military and in the National Nuclear Security Administration, do you agree that it is important for the U.S. to continue to be a world energy leader?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. However, I know that the President and Secretary Perry believe that the U.S. must maintain its global leadership in the energy industry.

Question from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question: My home state is known for coal. But what we're less known for is the work we've done to burn that coal more cleanly. The bulk of DOE's fossil energy research is centered at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL). One of NETL's facilities is in Morgantown, West Virginia, where NETL has worked with the private sector on the technologies we use to

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remove particulates and other harmful substances from coal. The National Energy Technology Lab in Morgantown, West Virginia is an extraordinary complex that is near and dear to my heart and employs 612 people. The budget proposed consolidation of the 3 lab facilities that make up NETL in a phased approach. I had the opportunity to sit down with Secretary Perry at NETL earlier this month and I was encouraged by his interest in the work that these world-class researchers have undertaken. I believe that research and development is critical to the Department of Energy mission and the national lab system is vital to ensuring that we are on the cutting edge of energy technology development. The Morgantown facility is seen as a mainstay of fossil fuel technology development. Their projects on carbon capture, efficient utilization of coal, and how to integrate fossil fuel systems with renewable energy are vital to our energy future. So you can understand why the consolidation proposal may cause me and many West Virginians some heartburn.

If you could each tell me about an experience you had with our national labs that better qualifies you to help oversee them?

Answer: I agree that our national laboratories are a critical part of the Department of Energy enterprise and are national treasures. Our national laboratories are the crown jewels of the nation and I plan to support and advocate for their work in accordance with the law, even though the General Counsel does not directly oversee the labs.

I would encourage each of you to visit the NETL Morgantown facility to get an up-close look.

Answer: If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and my official duties and budget permit, I would like to visit NETL Morgantown and the other national laboratories. In so doing, I would not only meet with the federal and contractor officials there, but with the outstanding federal and contractor attorneys there.

Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: I want to make sure that all nominees for the Department of Energy understand the important relationship between renewable energy and economic development. How does the proposed DOE budget support its R&D programs that have helped develop clean energy technologies, improved national security, and grid reliability?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. My understanding of the President's FY 2018 budget is that it focuses on early-stage research and development that will allow the United States to remain a leader in science and technological innovation. Such leadership is important not only for science but for the economic growth and security of our nation.

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Question 2: What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, the budgetary priorities are laid out in the President's FY18 budget proposal. I support the President's budget, but also recognize that through the budgetary process Congress will make appropriations decisions.

Question 3: Do you believe DOE and the National Labs' R&D and clean energy technology work is integral to the United States securing energy independence and staying globally competitive?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, I believe that all forms of energy contribute to the nation's energy independence and global leadership.

Question 4: Are there areas where DOE should do more?

Answer: Because I am not an Administration official at this time, I feel constrained in commenting on this topic. However, if confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I look forward to working with the President, Secretary Perry, and the Department's leadership to provide the highest level of service to the American people.

Question 5: Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

Answer: My extensive experience in litigation, international law, general law, government contracting, national security law, academia, and previous service as the General Counsel of two federal government agencies, including the NNSA, a separately organized agency within the Department of Energy (DOE), has prepared me for the role of DOE General Counsel. In his letter to this Committee, Scott Harris, the DOE General Counsel under President Obama, noted that "Dave may well be among the most prepared to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy of all those to have been nominated for the position."

Question 6: Secretary Perry indicated that he may reassign functions in some of your offices. What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office and what should be assigned to your office?

Answer: Since I am not an Administration official at this time, I feel constrained to comment on this topic. However, if confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I look forward to working with Secretary Perry and the Department's leadership to make the best use of resources within the Department and the talent of the Department's employees.

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Question 7: Should anything be reassigned to another office?

Answer: If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I look forward to working with Secretary Perry and the Department's leadership to make the best use of Department resources and the talent of the employees.

Question 8: The nominee for Deputy Secretary, Dan Brouillette, commented in his nomination hearing that if the science is not there that he would **not** support Yucca Mountain as a permanent repository. Yucca Mountain has serious safety and environmental concerns which are detailed in the hundreds of contentions filed by the state of Nevada, the most the NRC has ever considered. The contentions alone will take up to 4 years to adjudicate, but even if the site was greenlighted, it would take up to 50 years to build infrastructure in Nevada and across the country and to allow the waste to cool and be shipped through heavily populated communities. I know that you may not be engaged with the Yucca Mountain project, but I want to quickly note that even if you are involved in the most peripheral way, that data, sound science, and consent have to be at the forefront of this conversation. Do you agree with that statement?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, all scientific decisions related to Yucca Mountain should be based on sound science. If confirmed, I will ensure that such actions related to Yucca Mountain will be in accordance with applicable law.

Question 9: In Nevada, DOE has provided the essential funding for state-run energy programs that are helping local communities save taxpayer dollars. For example, Nevada's Pershing County School District is saving \$72,000 every year after installing rooftop solar panels on schools, while energy efficient lighting in the Carson City school district is saving close to \$80,000 a year for taxpayers. Do you believe federal funding cuts to state-run energy programs will harm state initiatives that save taxpayers money and create clean energy?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, the budgetary priorities are laid out in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's budget, but also recognize that through the budgetary process, Congress will make appropriations decisions.

Question 10: How would you prioritize these programs if you were to be confirmed?

Answer: It is my understanding that the role of the General Counsel is primarily to provide legal advice to the Secretary and the Department of Energy, as a whole. As to the policy question, the budgetary priorities are laid out in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's budget, but also recognize that through the budgetary process Congress will make appropriations decisions.

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Questions from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: Alaska faces some of the highest energy costs in the nation. It's not uncommon for our more than 200 rural villages to pay more than ten times the national average to heat their homes. Many households spend over half of their income on heat. If confirmed, what will you do to help reduce energy costs for Alaska's rural villages?

Answer: I agree Alaska has many unique challenges and opportunities to address. I believe energy costs can be addressed several ways, including technological improvements in diverse fuel generation, infrastructure, micro-grids and an increase in supply. Should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I commit to reviewing what previous Administrations have done, or failed to do, and develop new options designed to reduce energy costs for Alaska's rural villages.

Question 2: Much of Alaska was electrified more than forty years ago. The majority of our rural energy infrastructure is now at the end or beyond its useful life, leading to frequent power outages and increased costs. What role can DOE play in helping our rural villages modernize their infrastructure? How will you support energy reliability and address emergency preparedness in these regions?

Answer: I will work with your staff to more fully understand the challenges faced by the State of Alaska with its aging rural energy infrastructure. Should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will review existing DOE authorities and programs to determine what specific roles DOE can play to help your rural villages have reliable and affordable power.

Question 3: Will you follow the statute governing the Department of Energy's Office of Arctic Energy, which directs the office be located at a university with expertise in the matters specified by 42 U.S.C. 7144d(b)?

Answer: Should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will follow all applicable statutory and budgetary requirements, with input from the Office of General Counsel at the Department of Energy.

Question 4: The Department of Energy currently has only two employees based in Alaska. However, the Department has acknowledged in past years that it should have at least four individuals for the Alaska office. Will you commit to review staffing in Alaska and consider additional employees?

Answer: Yes, should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Question 5: The needs of rural Alaska and Indian Country are significant and well documented. Should you be confirmed, how would you approach energy development on Native lands, including Alaska Native lands? Do you support continued funding for energy development on

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Native-owned lands and do you support allowing the funds to be used as grants to actually build energy projects, or only to be used to provide research or technical assistance for such projects?

Answer: I support energy development on Native lands, including Alaska Native lands. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for energy development on such lands. I will review current and past practices regarding the use of grants and assistance, as well as the statutory requirements, and look forward to learning more about this issue and getting recommendations from your staff. I will also work with the Department's Indian Energy office to ensure we are aligned and leveraging all our resources to safely and effectively develop energy on Native lands.

Questions from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: The budget proposes to eliminate the Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program, which provide critical technical assistance and state-controlled competitive grant funding to all 50 states to support state- and county-level energy projects. Do you support eliminating the Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program?

Answer: I support the President's FY2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 2: The budget proposal includes draconian cuts to the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, and other applied energy programs. These programs invest in all stages of innovation across a diverse portfolio of energy technologies to enhance economic competitiveness and secure America's long-term energy security. Do you agree with these cuts? Do you believe there is a Federal role in investing in R&D in these areas?

Answer: I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. I believe there is a federal role in investing R&D especially at the earliest stages.

Question 3: What is your view of where our country should be headed in the development and promotion of renewable energy? What types of technologies do you believe DOE should be supporting, and at what budgetary level?

Answer: I believe that the future for renewables is bright. During my time in the private sector, I saw firsthand the positive role renewable energies, such as hydro, wind and solar, can have in meeting our nation's energy needs.

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Question 4: Do you agree with the scientific consensus that the earth's climate is changing and is primarily caused by human activity?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing. Some of it is naturally occurring and some from our activities.

Question 5: What actions should be taken to mitigate climate change and its impacts?

Answer: I believe a strong, vibrant economy is the best way to mitigate any impacts from climate change. If confirmed, I will work to implement policies at DOE that will empower innovative approaches and technologies to mitigate climate change.

Question 6: Do you commit to protecting the climate science and data functions at DOE?

Answer: I strongly believe in the importance of objective research and the freedom of scientific inquiry.

Question 7: Can you commit to reviewing the findings and recommendations from the first and second installments of the Quadrennial Energy Review and consider continued support of the recommendations as they have received bipartisan support in the past?

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the Quadrennial Energy Review (QER). If confirmed, I will seek more information about the value of the QER, including input from key stakeholders. I would certainly look to leverage the expertise of the DOE staff in any multi-agency energy review process.

Question 8: What is your view on the best way to address critical challenges that span DOE's diverse mission areas?

Answer: The Department of Energy has a vast and diverse mission executed by the tremendous career workforce and the national labs. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with my counterparts across the agency to ensure that program efforts are not only well defined at the outset but are also coordinated, well managed and aligned with the Department's mission.

Question 9: How do you view DOE's role in protecting the electric grid and energy systems from cyber attacks?

Answer: Energy cybersecurity is a critical issue and a significant part of DOE's mission. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will build on the work of the Administration and Congress to give this high priority attention it deserves. The Department has taken a number of steps internally, across the interagency and with the private sector to be working together to identify, mitigate and respond to threats.

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Question 10: What steps will you take to ensure that cybersecurity efforts, to protect the grid and energy systems and also to protect DOE assets, are coordinated across the Department?

Answer: The reliability and security of our electric grid and energy systems are very important to me and are a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to a discussion about how to harden our grid, energy systems and prioritizing cyber security efforts. DOE should coordinate across the Department and other agencies, as well as the private sector, to develop a seamless and coordinated plan for addressing major attacks. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that communication across the Department, between principals, CEOs, and my office is strong, and that the efforts of this group continue to focus on removing barriers to information sharing and technology development efforts.

Question 11: What is your view on the role of DOE's national laboratories in DOE's cybersecurity efforts?

Answer: The national labs are the crown jewels of our nation. The security of our electric grid and energy systems is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring ways in which the national labs can further build on existing efforts to advance scientific development to harden our grid, our energy systems and prioritize cybersecurity efforts.

Question 12: What is your view on the role DOE's national laboratories should play in a U.S. government cybersecurity strategy?

Answer: I believe the national laboratories play a similar role in the U.S government as they do in the Department. The national labs are the crown jewels of our nation. The security of our electric grid and energy systems is very important to me and protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring ways in which the national labs can advance scientific development to harden our grid, our energy systems and prioritize cybersecurity efforts.

Question 13: Do you think that voluntary cybersecurity guidelines that may not be practiced by all of the pipeline industry are sufficient to protect our national security assets from foreign state actors?

Answer: The reliability and security of our electric grid, our energy systems, including our pipelines, are very important to me; protecting it is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to a discussion about how to harden protection of our pipelines, the grid, other infrastructure assets, and prioritizing cybersecurity efforts. I will also work to ensure communication and technology development efforts are strong. I will work to increase participation of the pipelines in the Department of Energy's energy sector cybersecurity coordination.

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Question 14: Should any additional measures be implemented to fortify pipeline cybersecurity?

Answer: Ensuring robust physical cybersecurity measures is vital to our national security. However, I am not an Administration official at this time and have not been fully briefed. If confirmed, I will commit to looking further into this issue.

Question 15: What steps will you take to make sure our energy networks are protected against the constant threat of cyberattack?

Answer: The reliability and security of our energy networks are very important to me and their protection is a crucial role of the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to a discussion about how to harden our energy networks and prioritizing cybersecurity efforts. I will also work to ensure communication and technology development efforts are strong.

Question 16: Will you commit to maintain the efforts of the previous administration to keep Hanford safe and work on making Hanford safer for workers and the community?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a top priority if confirmed. Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance. I look forward to getting up to speed on these issues and working with you and your staff, the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders.

Question 17: Do you acknowledge the extreme risk to workers at the Hanford site and commit to improving worker safety and improving the worker compensation program and the Departments contribution the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. As stated to your staff prior to my confirmation hearing and expressed during the hearing, protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance. I look forward to being fully briefed on these issues and working with you and your staff, the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders.

Question 18: Do you acknowledge that the Department has a lot of work to do to improve how it helps sick workers? Will you commit to work with me to fix the Departments deficiencies and work with the unions and advocacy groups to get to the bottom of the problems plaguing the workers compensation program at Hanford?

Answer: Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance. Should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I am committed to being fully briefed and working with you and your staff, the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders.

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Question 19: Will you commit to working with us to ensure the workers at Hanford are receiving the proper training and equipment and that they are not exposed to chemical vapors?

Answer: Protecting workers and the surrounding communities is of paramount importance. Should my nomination be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, you will have my commitment to be fully briefed on these issues and working with you and your staff, the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders.

Question 20: Do you understand the moral and legal obligations as well as the urgency for the Department of Energy to properly fund and proceed with the cleanup effort at the Hanford site, including construction of the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant? In your respective role will you commit to providing the necessary resources to complete the construction of the direct feed low-activity waste facilities as well as the high activity waste facilities?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. I understand that DOE is actively working to meet its cleanup commitments while continuing key risk reduction and remediation activities at Hanford. I look forward to being fully briefed on these issues and working with you and your staff, the State of Washington, its Congressional delegation, and other relevant stakeholders.

Question 21: Do you understand that any change in the Department's approach to treating tank waste at Hanford must include input from the state of Washington before moving forward? This is critical to avoid costly litigation that will only hamper progress. Do I have your word you will work with the Washington delegation and state of Washington on the Hanford cleanup?

Answer: I am committed to cleaning up the Hanford site and will make it a priority if confirmed. I will work with the Washington delegation and State officials to ensure we are making sustainable, risk-informed, and fiscally wise decisions regarding our Environmental Management obligations at Hanford.

Question 22: Will you commit to including science and technology as an important component of cleanup work at EM sites, including Hanford?

Answer: Yes.

Question 23: Will you commit to ensuring that existing lab capabilities that support Hanford will be stewarded and utilized before investments are made in new capabilities?

Answer: Should I be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will work to ensure we are making sustainable, risk-informed, and fiscally wise decisions regarding our Environmental Management obligations at Hanford.

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Question 24: As you may be aware, many cleanup contracts around the EM complex are expiring. Because much of the funding for investments in science and technologies come through the cleanup contractors, new EM contract mechanisms are needed that provide appropriate incentives to these contractors to invest in innovative technologies to reduce costs, something that is not reflected in existing contract mechanisms. What will you do to ensure that EM utilizes contract mechanisms to provide these incentives in contracts that it will be re-bidding in 2017 and beyond?

Answer: I recognize the importance of effective contract management and ensuring that the right incentives are included. I am aware that DOE faces many challenges, among them project management and the accuracy of cost estimates, particularly for large projects. If confirmed, I will review the existing contract mechanisms and work with the Secretary to improve performance and management.

Question 25: Do you agree that grid modernization is an important component of DOE's mission?

Answer: Yes, the Secretary has stated his goal is to make modernizing the electric grid a priority and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid and the supply chain that supports it.

Question 26: What steps will you take to ensure that national laboratories remain a strategic and important part of the Department's grid modernization and cybersecurity work?

Answer: I value the national labs as the crown jewels of the nation and am aware of the Department's Grid Modernization Initiative (GMI) and Grid Modernization Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP). I have yet to be fully briefed on either the initiatives or the program plan. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid and will continue to utilize the national laboratories as appropriate.

Question 27: What steps will you take to build upon the strong public-private partnerships that exist in this area, including the role of public/private demonstrations at the regional level to accelerate grid modernization, resilience and security?

Answer: I am aware of the Department's Grid Modernization Initiative (GMI) and Grid Modernization Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP). However, I have not been fully briefed on either the initiatives or the program plan. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid.

Question 28: Do you agree that a priority for the Department is to ensure system reliability as energy sources continue to evolve?

Answer: Yes.

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Question 29: Do you agree that investing in transactive controls increases the reliability of our nation's energy system?

Answer: This is an issue I look forward to being more fully briefed on if confirmed. I am committed to energy reliability and fulfilling this important mission of the Department.

Question 30: What steps will you take to advance the reliability of our nation's energy system?

Answer: The Secretary has stated his goal is to make modernizing the electric grid a priority and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is focused on modernizing and improving the electric grid. The Secretary has also commissioned an agency-wide study on electricity markets and reliability of the electric grid. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this study to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the grid and how we can advance the reliability of the nation's energy system.

Question 31: Do you agree that energy storage is a critical component of a resilient, reliable grid? What steps will you take to move forward on energy storage if you are confirmed?

Answer: I do believe there is a role for storage. As previously stated, the Secretary has commissioned an agency-wide study on the electric grid. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this study to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the grid and how energy storage can assist in strengthening the grid.

Question 32: What is your view on energy efficiency standards? How will you meet the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) and other statutory requirements for energy efficiency standards?

Answer: Energy efficiency has been a priority of Congress and DOE and has helped provide significant energy savings to many Americans. I have not been briefed on the full array of Departmental efforts in this area. If I am confirmed, I will commit to learning more about the Department's role in meeting America's efficiency needs.

Questions from Senator Bernard Sanders

Question 1: President Trump has suggested in the past that climate change is a hoax. Is the President correct? Is climate change a hoax?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing, and I agree with others who have stated that we must have some impact. I agree with Secretary Perry that the question is how we address it in a thoughtful way that further supports economic growth, improves affordability of energy, and American jobs.

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Question 2: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, and that we must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal?

Answer: I believe that the climate is changing and that we have some impact on it. I believe that the cost of the benefits of climate-related policies need to make sense for American families and the American economy.

Question 3: Do you agree with the vast majority of scientists that the combustion of fossil fuels contributes to climate change?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing and that we have some impact on it. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and the experts in the Department to advance efforts to address climate change.

Question 4: Do you believe that DOE has a role in reducing the extraction and use of fossil fuels?

Answer: I support an “all the above” approach smartly using our energy resources. The Department of Energy Organization Act states that “a strong national energy program is needed to meet the present and future energy needs of the Nation consistent with overall national economic, environmental and social goals.” I believe in those goals, and, if confirmed, I will follow the law.

Question 5: If confirmed, how will you work to address climate change?

Answer: I believe the climate is changing and that we have some impact on it. If confirmed, I look forward to helping the Department implement its policies in accordance with the law.

Question 6: DOE’s Office of Science is the single largest funder of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States. What do you see as the most pressing priorities for the office?

Answer: The President’s FY 2018 budget request focuses the Department’s energy and science programs on early-stage research and development at our national laboratories to advance American primacy in scientific and energy research in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Question 7: What role should DOE play in advancing clean energy innovation in the U.S.?

Answer: DOE plays a critical role in early-stage, fundamental energy research and innovation. This early-stage research is critical to our efforts and is often used by our private sector in

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competing across the globe.

Question 8: Secretary Perry requested a study in April to ascertain whether wind and solar power are threatening electric grid reliability. It has been reported that the study found no such threat. Do you agree with the science that demonstrates wind and solar can in fact improve reliability while decreasing costs?

Answer: I support the Administration's "all of the above" energy strategy, and believe renewable energy has an important role in that strategy. Ensuring the reliability of the grid and energy supply chain is important to supporting the American economy. I have not seen any drafts of the internal study but look forward to reading it when it is released.

Question 9: The National Academy of Sciences was asked to conduct an assessment of the progress Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) has made toward achieving its congressionally mandated mission and goals. It found that "there are clear indications that ARPA-E is making progress toward its statutory mission and goals." If confirmed, do you commit to fully supporting ARPA-E?

Answer: I support the Department's shift to focus on early-stage research and development at our national laboratories to more efficiently and cost-effectively advance American dominance in scientific and energy research. Congress and the President will ultimately arrive at an agreement regarding the funding of ARPA-E, and the Department will implement it accordingly.

Question 10: The president has called for "energy dominance," yet China leads the world in solar photovoltaic manufacturing. The largest markets for solar and wind are also in China. Do you believe the US is falling behind in the international clean energy market? Will competing with China to develop renewable technology be a priority if you are confirmed?

Answer: I understand that competing with China to develop not only renewable technology, but all kinds of technology, will be a priority of the Department. This includes our efforts in exascale computing.

Question 11: When I met with Secretary Perry, we discussed subsidies for the fossil fuel industry. He reminded me that he made a campaign promise to "eliminate direct subsidies and tax credits" for energy. Will you commit to working with him to repeal all fossil fuel subsidies?

Answer: If confirmed, I commit to reviewing existing programs at DOE and working with Secretary Perry to ensure that they are in the best interests of the American people. Since many of the subsidies for various forms of energy are defined in laws we will work with you and your colleagues in Congress to prioritize.

Question 12: President Trump's FY 2018 budget proposal would revive the approval process

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for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste site. If confirmed, will you commit to blocking the unsafe Yucca Mountain proposal and instead work to find a publicly-accepted, safe, long-term solution to this country's significant problem of nuclear waste disposal?

Answer: If I am honored to be confirmed, I will be committed to following the law, including the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the final arbiter to determine whether Yucca Mountain is safe and should they approve it, I will implement any DOE activities in accordance with that direction. I recognize that the problem of nuclear waste management is extraordinarily complex and, if confirmed, am committed to working with all stakeholders to meet our commitments.

Question 13: Do you promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Answer: Yes.

Question 14: The Holman Rule allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing any acts of Congress to individually target DOE employees based on political whims?

Answer: I have briefly read about the Holman rule, but would defer to the Office of General Counsel as to how any action under it should be applied.

Question from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question: As you know, the SuperTruck program is a 50/50 cost-shared, public-private partnership at the Department of Energy that promotes the research, development, and demonstration of technologies that improve the efficiency of Class 8 tractor-trailer trucks by more than 100 percent by 2020. These trucks haul as much as 80 percent of the goods transported in the country, and although they only make up 4 percent of vehicles on the road, they use about 20 percent of the fuel. The first phase of SuperTruck produced enormous achievements that exceeded benchmarks for freight and engine efficiency.

What is your assessment of the SuperTruck program?

Answer: While I am not familiar with the SuperTruck program, the achievements you describe seem commendable, and, if confirmed, I commit to being fully briefed on the program.

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Question from Senator Steve Daines

Question: Coal plays an important role in the economy of Montana. The development and production of coal creates good-paying jobs and provides cheap, reliable energy across the state. With the advancements in technology coal has also become a cleaner form of energy that supplies consistent baseload power to the grid. With the production and consumption of coal expected to grow in the next decades it is important that we craft policies that will help foster the growth of coal in a responsible manner. Will you work with congress and Secretary Perry to promote research in clean coal and carbon capture technology so that we can reduce emissions while still protecting jobs and fostering economic growth through the production of our natural resources?

Answer: Yes.

Questions from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: I'd like to discuss the loan guarantee program at the Department of Energy for clean energy innovation which was established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Mr. Menezes, I believe you were a lead staffer on that bill. It has been proposed for elimination in the FY2018 budget, the House energy appropriations bill and the Senate subcommittee bill. This program was created by a Republican Congress on a bipartisan vote and signed into law by a Republican President – President George W. Bush. It has a 97.78% repayment rate. It has a demonstrated success of bringing advanced energy technology to market and makes money for the government.

What are your thoughts on why this program is being proposed for elimination despite its strategic importance to our nation's energy goals?

Isn't its elimination essentially a conclusion that there is no additional innovative project out there that the federal government should partner with the private sector on?

Answer: Should Congress eliminate future program funding, if confirmed, I will review how to make the best use of the remaining funds to continue successful programs.

Question 2: I spoke with Secretary Perry regarding the grid study that the Department has undertaken at our budget hearing in June and when he visited West Virginia earlier this month. I understand that just the undertaking of this study drew some criticism which is interesting because I think examining whether our grid reliability is at risk is a reasonable question to ask. As you know, West Virginia's existing installed capacity is over 90% coal – and those are reliable and resilient assets. For example, the Longview Power Plant in Madsville, WV which Secretary Perry visited with me, is one of the most efficient coal-fired power plants in the world. This is a 700 megawatt mine-mouth plant that continuously produces enough electricity to power about 500,000 homes. Longview Power is a clean coal facility with best-in-class air pollution

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Mark Wesley Menezes

control systems that result in much lower emissions than its permit limits, which are among the lowest in the nation for coal plants. In addition, Longview emits significantly less CO₂ than most other coal plants. But, merchant plants like Longview are having a harder time competing because of the lack of recognition of what baseload plants offer to the reliability of our grid. If we aren't asking these questions, we are not being vigilant in pursuit of a reliable and resilient electric grid on behalf of our constituents. So, I am looking forward to see what the experts at DOE find and, if confirmed, working with you to address these challenges.

Can you please comment on your experience with issues related to grid reliability?

Answer: My experience with grid reliability is fairly extensive. I was involved in the enactment of the mandatory reliability standards in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and advised many utilities in compliance and implementation of those standards. As a utility executive, I have gained much experience in grid operations to ensure reliability during peak loads and stress periods across wide portions of the United States.

How would you seek to balance the reliability of our grid with ensuring an all of the above energy mix?

Answer: Grid reliability must be maintained with a combination of a diverse fuel mix, both to ensure the integration of variable resources and maintain baseload. Our energy markets are both regulated and evolving. If confirmed, I will review this matter and work with your office, Congress, and the other agencies to ensure a diverse fuel mix and a reliable, resilient grid.

Question 3: My home state is known for coal. But what we're less known for is the work we've done to burn that coal more cleanly. The bulk of DOE's fossil energy research is centered at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL). One of NETL's facilities is in Morgantown, West Virginia, where NETL has worked with the private sector on the technologies we use to remove particulates and other harmful substances from coal. The National Energy Technology Lab in Morgantown, West Virginia is an extraordinary complex that is near and dear to my heart and employs 612 people. The budget proposed consolidation of the 3 lab facilities that make up NETL in a phased approach. I had the opportunity to sit down with Secretary Perry at NETL earlier this month and I was encouraged by his interest in the work that these world-class researcher have undertaken. I believe that research and development is critical to the Department of Energy mission and the national lab system is vital to ensuring that we are on the cutting edge of energy technology development. The Morgantown facility is seen as a mainstay of fossil fuel technology development. Their projects on carbon capture, efficient utilization of coal, and how to integrate fossil fuel systems with renewable energy are vital to our energy future. So you can understand why the consolidation proposal may cause me and many West Virginians some concern.

What is your experience with the national labs and what specifically qualifies you to work with them and/or oversee the labs?

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Answer: As Chief Counsel to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I gained extensive experience in the oversight of our nation's labs. In private practice, I worked with clients who interacted with the labs to deploy the latest technologies and to implement grants. I believe that broad knowledge of operations and programs makes me qualified to assist in the oversight of the labs.

Questions from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: I understand the Office of Environmental Management will soon announce the award of a new management contract for legacy cleanup work at Los Alamos National Lab. The regional communities and pueblos in Northern New Mexico are anxious to be active partners with EM and the new contractor in the execution of legacy cleanup work. Do you agree it will be critical for DOE and the new cleanup management contractor to engage and work closely with the local community and pueblos to assure an effective and efficient operation?

Answer: As I am not currently at the Department, I am not familiar with the details of this particular competitive process. If confirmed, I will work with the State of New Mexico, the New Mexico congressional delegation, pueblos, and other stakeholders to assure an effective cleanup and efficient operation.

Question 2: I continue to be concerned that DOE/EM lacks a strategic plan for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant and its mission of permanent disposal of defense transuranic waste. Will you make it a priority to complete an assessment of WIPP's remaining space for disposal of TRU waste to determine if it is sufficient for all currently planned sources of waste or if expansion of the facility will be necessary? In addition, EM should determine if projected plans for TRU waste disposal at WIPP will be in full compliance with each of the statutory disposal limits established in the 1992 Land Withdrawal Act, which was negotiated with the State of New Mexico.

Answer: I have not been fully briefed on the remaining space for disposal of TRU waste at WIPP. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to assess the remaining space for its disposal at WIPP.

Questions from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1. I want to make sure that all nominees for the Department of Energy understand the important relationship between renewable energy and economic development. How does the proposed DOE budget support its R&D programs that have helped develop clean energy technologies, improved national security, and grid reliability?

Answer: My understanding of the President's FY 2018 budget request is that it focuses on early-stage research and development that will allow the United States to remain a leader in science

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and technological innovation. Such leadership is important not only for science but for the economic growth of our nation.

Question 2. What do you think should be budgetary priorities for your office/Department?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are laid out in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's FY2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 3. Do you believe DOE and the National Labs' R&D and clean energy technology work is integral to the United States securing energy independence and staying globally competitive?

Answer: Yes.

Question 4. Are there areas where DOE should do more?

Answer: I am not an Administration official at this time; however, I commit to work with the Administration, the Secretary and Congress to prioritize the work of the Department.

Question 5. Why do you believe you are qualified for the position you are nominated for?

Answer: I have almost three decades of experience in the field of energy, both in the public and private sectors. As Chief Counsel to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, which has chief oversight responsibility for the Department of Energy, I developed a broad knowledge of the missions and challenges facing the Department, the national labs, and research and development programs. As a chief negotiator and drafter of several of the key provisions of one of our nation's bipartisan energy bills, which established several of the key programs at the Department, including the loan guarantee program for emerging technologies, incentives for renewables and other sources of generation and fuels, I have long recognized the need for a separate Under Secretary for Science. As I stated in my written statement, I have extensive management and performance training, and expertise in large corporations with diverse workforces and know how to measure and achieve performance goals.

Question 6. Secretary Perry indicated that he may reassign functions in some of your offices. What do you believe should remain as a priority in your office and what should be assigned to your office?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to return the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Mark Wesley Menezes

an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 7. Should anything be reassigned to another office?

Answer: It is my understanding that Secretary Perry intends to return the Under Secretary positions to their traditional roles, consistent with the statutory designations of those roles by Congress. I am not familiar with any specific plans for reassignment of duties and without being an Administration official at this time, I do not think it is appropriate for me to speculate on how the functions might be reassigned.

Question 8. Geothermal energy is one of the fastest growing industries in Nevada. In 2013, there were 29 geothermal power plants operating in nine of Nevada's seventeen counties. The Nevada Department of Energy has estimated that at least 6,000 jobs would be created through geothermal energy investment. The proposed cuts to DOE will not provide for adequate funding for the Geothermal Technologies Office to continue researching geothermal energy innovations. Do you believe investments in geothermal energy should be prioritized?

Answer: I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and, if confirmed, look forward to finding alternative solutions to advance these goals. I will also ensure that the will of Congress is carried out.

Question 9. The nominee for Deputy Secretary, Dan Brouillette, commented in his nomination hearing that if the science is not there that he would **not** support Yucca Mountain as a permanent repository. Yucca Mountain has serious safety and environmental concerns which are detailed in the hundreds of contentions filed by the state of Nevada, the most the NRC has ever considered. The contentions alone will take up to 4 years to adjudicate, but even if the site was greenlighted, it would take up to 50 years to build infrastructure in Nevada and across the country and to allow the waste to cool and be shipped through heavily populated communities. I know that you may not be engaged with the Yucca Mountain project, but I want to quickly note that even if you are involved in the most peripheral way, that data, sound science, and consent have to be at the forefront of this conversation. Do you agree with that statement?

Answer: All scientific decisions related to Yucca Mountain should be based on sound science. If confirmed, I will ensure that scientific decisions related to Yucca Mountain continue to be based on sound science.

Question 10. In Nevada, DOE has provided the essential funding for state-run energy programs that are helping local communities save taxpayer dollars. For example, Nevada's Pershing County School District is saving \$72,000 every year after installing rooftop solar panels on schools, while energy efficient lighting in the Carson City school district is saving close to \$80,000 a year for taxpayers. Do you believe federal funding cuts to state-run energy programs

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017 Hearing: Pending Nominations
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Mark Wesley Menezes**

will harm state initiatives that save taxpayers money and create clean energy?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are described in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.

Question 11. How would you prioritize these programs if you were to be confirmed?

Answer: The budgetary priorities are described in the President's FY 2018 budget proposal. I support the President's FY 2018 budget request and recognize Congress' role in the budgetary process. If my nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will ensure that the enacted budget is carried out.



Greg Abel
Chairman, President and CEO

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
304 Dickson Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski,

I am writing to convey my strong personal recommendation for the nomination of Mark Menezes as Under Secretary of Energy. In your capacity as a senior member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I ask that you support expeditious consideration of Mark's nomination, and that you strongly consider voting in favor of it.

I have come to know Mark well as part of the Berkshire Hathaway Energy team as he has served in our Washington, D.C. office as vice president of federal relations. He comes to the nomination with a very deep background on energy policy, having also served as general counsel to the House Subcommittee on Energy and Power, and as a partner chairing the energy practice at the law firm of Hunton and Williams. Along the way, he has accumulated more than 25 years of top level experience, including making material contributions to our efforts at Berkshire Hathaway Energy. Those include nation-leading renewable investments in pursuit of a low cost and diversified resource base on behalf of our customers.

Mark's high knowledge, level of organization, and management skills are matched by a critical perspective that we feel strongly about at our company: putting the customer first. And in that regard, our loss will be the American people's gain. I recommend him without reservation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to seeing you again soon and appreciate your continued efforts on behalf of the citizens of Oregon and the country.

Sincerely,

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY ENERGY

P.O. BOX 657 • DES MOINES, IA 50306-0657, U.S.A. • 515-242-4000 • FAX: 515-242-4031



PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Gregory Wetstone

July 18, 2017

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The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources

Dear Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

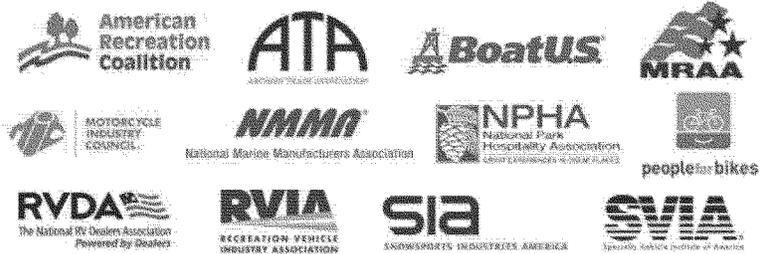
We are writing on behalf of the broad spectrum of renewable energy technologies, manufacturers, developers, end-users and investors in our membership to respectfully encourage swift approval of the nomination of Mr. Mark Menezes for Under Secretary of Energy. We believe that he is exceptionally well suited for this senior leadership role and will be a valuable addition to the new Administration.

Mr. Menezes is a broadly respected in the electric power sector and would bring an impressive range of relevant private and public sector experience to the position, along with expertise and professional judgement that will be essential in his consideration of the many energy issues facing our nation and the important role of DOE. He has served in several leading private sector organizations advancing a balanced approach to energy generation and delivery and is, in our judgement, well-positioned to make an important contribution to the mission of DOE and to the nation's energy future.

We are enthusiastic about Mr. Menezes appointment, and respectfully urge Senate approval as soon as possible. Thank you for considering our views. Please let me know if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Gregory Wetstone
President and CEO
American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE)



July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

We are writing to express our strong support for the nomination of Douglas Domenech to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The recreation and conservation community has worked with Mr. Domenech in several capacities during his service at the U.S. Department of the Interior and as Virginia's Secretary for Natural Resources. He has been receptive and responsive to public input and suggestions and has executed his responsibilities with remarkable energy and enthusiasm.

We believe that Mr. Domenech's talents will serve the nation and the residents of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands very well. He has a deep understanding of Interior programs and policies and will be able to aid in federal policy coordination for these areas. We also believe he will assist the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau with technical and financial assistance as provided under federal laws and treaties. Moreover, Mr. Domenech understands and will remain in effective communication with organizations in the recreation and conservation fields and will likely seek to enlist our support to aid the shared interests of our nation and the territories.

We urge the committee to approve his nomination and seek early action by the Senate on his confirmation. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

American Recreation Coalition
Archery Trade Association
Boat Owners Association of The United States
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Marine Manufacturers Association

National Park Hospitality Association
PeopleForBikes
Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
Recreation Vehicle Industry Association
Snowsports Industries America
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT
Telephone: (684)633-4116 Fax: (684)633-2269**

**LOLO M. MOLIGA
GOVERNOR**

**LEMANU P. MAUGA
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

March 16, 2017

Serial: 189

Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
United States Department of the Interior
United States Government
Washington D.C. 20204

Dear Mr. Secretary:

It is indeed a distinct honor, on behalf of the Government and the people of the Territory of American Samoa, to extend to you our warm and hearty congratulations for your appointment and confirmation as the Secretary of the Department of the Interior entrusted with oversight responsibilities for all the Territories of the United States.

We are very much encouraged and comforted by the three priorities you have promulgated underscoring your vision and guiding principles for desired outcomes you wish to achieve in the next four years. American Samoa's National Parks is gaining popularity among the visitors to the territory and your stated commitment will mean further development of these national assets. Your purported investment in building the capacity of the frontline workers, along with providing adequate resources, is aligned with our own capacity building program. With our current disenfranchisement with proliferated federal encroachment on local sovereignty, we are overwhelmingly gratified by your declared respect for our indigenous rights and authority.

Please excuse any possible breach of protocol by the content of this letter however, the achievement of your vision will depend on our arm's length collaboration inclusive of your Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs and the Director for the Office of Insular Affairs. We are very thankful for Mr. Nikolao Pula's continued presence in the Office for Insular Affairs for his dedicated services to the people of the Territories and given his years in the agency he is well endowed with regard to total understanding of the issues affecting the territories.

Notwithstanding, it is our hope that the person appointed to the position of Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs is knowledgeable and comprehensively in tune with our needs. More importantly, this person should be able to seamlessly collaborate with all Federal Agencies to ensure that the needs of the Territories are fully articulated, considered and effectively addressed.

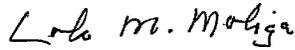
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During my last trip to Washington D.C. to attend the National Governors Association's Winter Meeting, I had the privilege to rekindle relationship forged in the past with Mr. Douglas Domenech during the Intergovernmental Group on Insular Affairs (IGIA). Mr. Domenech is well versed on territorial issues and well connected within the federal system along with solid ties with the leadership of the new administration. He served as the Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary of Interior for Insular Affairs from January 2008 to January 2009.

Accordingly, we humbly recommend that Mr. Domenech be appointed to the post of Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs. It is our hope that you will endorse and support our recommendation for this appointment. He will certainly champion the establishment of programs to improve the quality of the lives of all Americans living in our insular areas.

I look forward to working closely with you and the DOI/OIA leadership to advance our mutual vision for the development of our Nation and its Territories. Congratulations again for your appointment and confirmation to lead one of the biggest and very important departments in the federal system.

Sincerely,



Lolo M. Moliga
Governor of American Samoa

Cc: Honorable Justin R. Clark, Deputy Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs
Honorable Nikolao Pula, Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs
Mr. Douglas W. Domenech, Senior White House Advisor
Honorable Aumua Amata Radewagen, Member of Congress



Thomas C. Kiernan
CEO
202.383.2557
tkiernan@awea.org
www.awea.org

July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

This letter is to express the American Wind Energy Association's support for the nomination of Mark Menezes to serve as Under Secretary of Energy. Recognizing that your committee will examine his record and qualifications closely, we appreciate the opportunity to express our views here.

The Department of Energy has been an important partner with the nation's energy suppliers, including wind energy. In 2008, the Department published its first Wind Vision report detailing the potential of 10% wind energy by 2020, and 20% by 2030. In 2015, the Department's second Wind Vision report affirmed the goals of the 2008 report, and looked ahead to what will be possible by 2050. The workers of America's wind energy sector responded to those calls, and today the Department of Energy tallies over 102,500 men and women working to construct, operate, and maintain more than 52,000 turbines providing 82,000 megawatts of capacity to meet the nation's energy needs.

As the energy sector continues to evolve to meet customer energy needs and expectations, including the contribution of wind energy, we believe that the Department of Energy would be well served by Mr. Menezes ability to help build a national consensus on issues such as energy security, electricity markets, energy efficiency, electric transmission, and other important policies.

Mr. Menezes is Vice President of Federal Relations for Berkshire Hathaway Energy and was previously a partner at Hunton & Williams, heading its energy practice group. Prior to that, he served as chief counsel to the House Energy and Commerce Committee majority staff and played an instrumental role in the House-Senate conference that resulted in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Mr. Menezes, with a background in both government and private sector, has developed a broad understanding of nearly all aspects of the energy sector and is respected across the industry. AWEA has coordinated with Mr. Menezes in his work for Berkshire Hathaway Energy, a company that has been a leader in wind and other renewable energy development. He has capably represented the company as a strong advocate for a balanced energy strategy that recognizes the value of renewable energy to meet customer needs – a goal AWEA shares. We respectfully suggest that you favorably report his nomination to the full Senate for its prompt consideration.

Best Regards,

Thomas C. Kiernan

cc: Members of Senate Energy Committee

July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

We, as leaders of agriculture, write to you in support of Ms. Susan Combs nomination for Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget. Ms. Combs' experience of 16 years in a state-wide elected office demonstrates she has knowledge and presence to get things done and work with everyone.

Ms. Combs spent eight years as Agriculture Commissioner, there she continued the tradition of leading a robust agriculture industry and grew her knowledge of land use practices across a large diverse state. The following eight years she was in charge of the State's budget as comptroller. The comptroller is responsible for writing the State's checks and giving the legislature a revenue estimate for a biennium budget. Prior to these 16 years she served as a state representative for two sessions.

In addition to excelling in her professional career, Ms. Combs' upbringing and personality make her an ideal candidate to serve the people of our country in her role at the Department of the Interior. Coming from a West Texas ranch family, she knows first-hand what it is like to respect and care for the land while maintaining a business that must survive and is dependent our nation's great natural resources.

Again, it is with great pleasure we as the undersigned organizations support Ms. Combs nomination.

Sincerely,

Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Earth Moving Contractors of Texas
Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
South Texas Cotton and Grain Association
South Texas Private Property Rights Association
Texas Agriculture Cooperative Council
Texas Allied Association
Texas Association of Dairymen
Texas Broiler Council
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
Texas Citrus Mutual
Texas Cotton Association of Dallas, Texas

Texas Cotton Ginners Association, Inc. Texas
Texas Egg Council
Texas Farm Bureau
Texas Forestry Association
Texas Grain Sorghum Association
Texas Independent Ginners Association
Texas International Produce Association
Texas Irrigation Council
Texas Land & Mineral Owners Association
Texas Nursery and Landscape Association
Texas Pest Management Association
Texas Pork Producers Association
Texas Poultry Improvement Association
Texas Poultry Federation
Texas Turkey Federation
Texas Seed Trade Association
Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association
Texas Vegetable Association
Texas Wheat Producers Association
US Rice Producers
Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas

From the desk of

K. Suzanne Barber

1243 South Main Street

Georgetown, Texas 78626

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

I am Director of the Center for Identity and the AT&T Endowed Professor in Engineering at The University of Texas and I am writing to share my highest recommendation and strongest support for Susan Combs' appointment as Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget at the Department of Interior.

Mrs. Combs is a recognized leader, expert, and champion who understands the importance of securing our Nation's information assets and our citizens' privacy and has repeatedly and proactively led efforts to protect government data and guard against cyber threats. Mrs. Combs is a master of using data to identify problems and create solutions. Her data-driven business strategies motivated and influenced her relationship with The University of Texas Center for Identity (UT CID). Recognizing the significant and quantifiable human and economic losses resulting from identity theft and fraud, Mrs. Combs reached out to lend her hard-driving and solutions-oriented business expertise and leadership. From its inception in 2010, the UT CID has grown into an internationally recognized research and education center of excellence.

Mrs. Combs served with distinction on the UT CID Board of Advisors from 2011 to 2014. During her service on the UT CID Board, Mrs. Combs contributed significant energy, leadership and vision. Mrs. Combs chaired impactful projects such as the Child Identity Protection Task Force that produced an enormous amount of awareness and resources helping parents and children better understand the value of their identity information and how to guard against identity theft and fraud. Most notably, Mrs. Combs envisioned and championed a successful effort to fund IDWise (<https://identity.utexas.edu/idwise>), a research and education program launched at the UT CID to give citizens the knowledge and resources to protect their privacy and combat identity theft and fraud. Funded by the Texas Legislature in 2013, IDWise

was the first of its kind, and a formidable force to decrease identity-related crime and associated economic losses, reputation damage, and emotional distress. IDWise has reached millions of U.S. citizens from all walks of life including those most vulnerable to identity theft – children, older adults, veterans, active military and small businesses.

Following her service on the UT CID Board of Advisors, The University of Texas Center for Identity was honored when Mrs. Combs accepted our invitation to serve as a Center Fellow in 2014 and continue to lend her energy, vision and leadership. Throughout her service on the UT CID Board and as a UT CID Fellow, Mrs. Combs has continually challenged and motivated the Center with her data-driven business style to identify where research and education programs are needed most and subsequently, measure the effectiveness of the Center's research results and educational programs. For example, the IDWise program funded a national workforce study that identified key deficiencies in the U.S. identity workforce. These findings served to motivate and inform development of the UT Masters degree program in Identity Management and Security launched in 2016 as well as the 2017 launch of the Identity Leadership Certificate program.

It is her drive, her expertise, her passion and her leadership that come together to make our UT CID partnership with Mrs. Combs so very productive, valued and successful. The University of Texas was privileged to partner with Mrs. Combs and our Country is extremely fortunate that she has agreed to continue her public service.

In summary, Mrs. Combs has my strongest recommendation and support as our Nation will surely be the benefactor of her appointment as Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget at the Department of Interior.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Suzanne Barber', written in a cursive style.

K. Suzanne Barber

June 22, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Nomination of David S. Jonas for Department of Energy General Counsel

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

I am writing in earnest support of the nomination of my mentor and former boss, David S. Jonas, for General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

Shortly into his tenure as General Counsel of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, Dave offered me the distinct honor to serve as his Special Assistant. As a scrappy young attorney, I seized the opportunity to train under his tutelage for many reasons, the most obvious being his brilliant legal mind, recognized expertise in DOE's nuclear weapons complex, and demonstrated record of sustained leadership and service to the country. While impressive, I will not recount the long list of accomplishments meriting Dave's pending nomination. I would instead like to highlight the less conspicuous characteristics that I most admire in him, because I believe they are what best qualify him for this esteemed position.

A gentleman in the truest sense of the word, Dave is staunch in his principles and unyielding in his pursuit of justice and fairness. As a Marine, he is armed with an unmatched ability to exhibit courage of conviction under the most high-pressure situations. In the years we worked together, I bore witness to his unwillingness to subordinate the law for political expediency or to compromise his legal advice in favor of popular opinion. It is his unflappability and unwavering sense of ethical duty that has equipped him to effectively resolve vexing legal issues, while maintaining a reputation of trustworthiness and professionalism.

Dave's rectitude is only rivaled by his dedication to his colleagues. In one of our first meetings, he told me, "People won't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This statement exhibits Dave's acute understanding that employees are human beings who deserve to be treated with dignity, and that the success of any mission objective is directly correlated to employee morale and engagement. To that end, he considers it a priority to get to know his co-

workers and staff on a personal level - going out of his way to remember their birthdays, families, hobbies, and goals. Regardless of rank, gender, race, or age, he accords people respect, and invests the time to accentuate their strengths, nurture their weaknesses, and empower them to maximize their professional and personal potential. As a result of his uncompromising faithfulness, he has earned the fierce loyalty of people at all levels of government and beyond.

In sum, Dave is the embodiment of what a presidential appointee should be - a dedicated public servant; a stalwart defender of what is right, even under the toughest conditions; a passionate advocate for his employees; and a person of irreproachable character. If confirmed, I have every confidence that Dave would execute the role of Department of Energy General Counsel with the level of integrity, commitment, and prudence befitting the office, and would work assiduously to serve the President, the Secretary, and the American public.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Casey Q. Blaine". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Casey Q. Blaine, Esq.



EDDIE BAZA CALVO
Governor
RAY TENORIO
Lieutenant Governor

Office of the Governor of Guam

May 18, 2017

Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 2024

Dear Secretary Zinke:

I am writing to endorse Doug Domenech for the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs post at the Department of the Interior.

Doug is a proven leader. His background at the Department of the Interior, as a former Deputy Chief of Staff, will be invaluable to the Trump-Pence administration in this post.

As the Governor of a U.S. territory, I know firsthand how important it is to have an Assistant Secretary over Insular Affairs who is particularly knowledgeable about the unique aspects of the federal-territorial relationships. There is no question in my mind that Doug, being from Puerto Rico and being a former Deputy Chief of Staff at Interior, understands that relationship as well as anyone. I am confident in his abilities to deal with those issues unique to the territories, and I offer him my full support and endorsement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eddie Baza Calvo".

Governor Eddie Baza Calvo

JOHN R. CARTER
31ST DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

CO-CHAIRMAN
HOUSE ARMY CAUCUS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4331

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2110 Rayburn House Office Building
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(202) 225-3854
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DISTRICT OFFICES
1717 N. 81st Street, 303
Houston, TX 77064
(512) 246-1830

9544-B South General Bowers Drive
Temple, TX 76782
(254) 933-1382

July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for Susan Combs' nomination to the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget at the Department of Interior. Throughout her career, Mrs. Combs has worked tirelessly for the state of Texas and its citizens. Having worked with Mrs. Combs extensively in the past, I am confident that her experience and passion will serve in furthering the Department's mission to protect and manage the Nation's natural resources.

In 1998, Mrs. Combs was elected Texas Agriculture Commissioner, and served in this position from 1999 to 2006. The first woman to hold this position, Mrs. Combs successfully reduced the Texas Department of Agriculture's budget by 18 percent, thereby reducing wasteful government spending to the benefit of all Texans.

In furtherance of her work as Texas Agriculture Commissioner, Mrs. Combs was instrumental in the development and success of the Fort Hood Recovery Credit System, a landmark approach for incentivizing conservation of listed species. The golden-cheeked warbler (GCWA), an endangered songbird, presented unique challenges to Fort Hood. As a listed species with occupied habitat on Fort Hood, the regulatory protections given to the GCWA resulted in training constraints on the base. In 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) published a Biological Opinion, recommending the use of off-site conservation of listed species. However, there was no regulatory mechanism by which this off-site conservation could be accomplished. At the request of Army leadership, Mrs. Combs convened a diverse group of stakeholders representing agriculture and environmental organizations as well as state and federal agencies. The result of her efforts led to the development of the Recovery Credit System, a framework

which reduced restrictions on military training and incentivization of private landowners to actively manage for endangered species, while also providing an overall net conservation gain in habitat for the GCWA. Mrs. Combs's work at Fort Hood not only provided benefits to military missions, the agriculture community, and conservationists alike, but also provided an economically feasible roadmap for the conservation of endangered species.

Following her success as Texas Agriculture Commissioner, Mrs. Combs furthered her public service during her tenure as Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts from 2007 to 2015. The state of Texas has a \$1.6 trillion economy, the second largest state economy in the United States. Mrs. Combs successfully managed this wieldy budget while also leading efforts to make her office more transparent to Texas citizens. As Comptroller, Mrs. Combs also continued her outstanding work on endangered species issues, serving as Chair of the Interagency Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species established by the Texas Legislature in 2009.

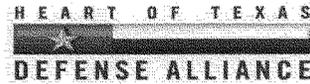
During this time, Mrs. Combs provided vital assistance to Williamson County, Texas in dealing with issues related to the Georgetown Salamander. In 2012, four central Texas salamander species were proposed for listing by the Service. These species, particularly the Georgetown Salamander, threatened to severely limit the growth of the IH-35 corridor, a vital transportation hub for Texas.

Mrs. Combs was successful in securing an extension on the decision to list any of the four central Texas salamanders, enabling the County and others involved to finish gathering additional scientific data on the status of these species. Drawing on the relationships forged during her work at Fort Hood, Mrs. Combs successfully secured direct regional involvement from the Service. In doing so, Mrs. Combs facilitated the County in development of a conservation plan that provides protections for the species while still allowing for residential and commercial growth valuable natural resources and species in Texas.

Sincerely,



John R. Carter
Member of Congress



17 July 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

I wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Ms. Susan Combs for the position of Assistant Secretary of Policy Management and Budget at the United States Department of Interior.

Ms. Combs has played a major role in enhancing the training opportunities for our Soldiers and Fort Hood during her tenure as the Comptroller for Public Accounts and personal engagements with Federal and State environmental agencies. During my time as the Deputy Commanding General on Fort Hood, she was instrumental in providing guidance and assistance to the leadership on Fort Hood to ensure impacts to endangered species were mitigated and training and maneuver space increased, allowing our Soldiers to be better trained and ready before deploying to fight and win our nation's wars. Her vision and ability to see things strategically led the way to teamwork within the interagency and set the stage for future environmental programs.

Ms Combs is a dedicated and selfless servant for our nation and her expertise and superb ability to resolve issues at the lowest levels will make her a tremendous asset within the Department of Interior. She is the consummate professional and has my highest endorsement, as she will only make the Department better.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendall P. Cox".

Kendall P. Cox
MG (R), US Army
Executive Director

2916 Illinois Avenue - Killen, Texas - 76543
254-690-4045 - kendall.cox@hotda.org



One Waterfowl Way
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 www.ducks.org

President
 Rogers S. Hoyt, Jr.
 Uvalde, Texas

Chairman of the Board
 Paul R. Bonderson, Jr.
 Sunol, California

Chief Executive Officer
 H. Dale Hall
 Memphis, Tennessee

July 19, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski:

Ducks Unlimited, the world's leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation, wishes to express our support for the nomination of Ms. Susan Combs to become Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget. Ms. Combs is a multi-generation Texan, and has served in both the private and public sectors of natural resource management. Ms. Combs' long experience of public service in Texas demonstrates her energy, knowledge and ability to serve in this critical position.

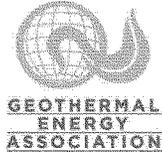
Ms. Combs has managed her family's cattle ranch in Big Bend, Texas, for more than 30 years. She has been a leader in the management of wildlife and habitat by and for private landowners, and is a strong advocate for science-based resource management. She has served the people of Texas for over 20 years, 16 of those as a statewide elected official. Her knowledge of land use practices across such a large, diverse state has helped to strengthen the robust agricultural industry of Texas. During her 8 years as Texas Agriculture Commissioner, she often touted the importance of habitat conservation and economic diversification provided by sportsmen and outdoor recreation. The following 8 years she was elected as State Comptroller serving as the chief financial officer of the state government. As comptroller, she was responsible for maintaining the state's finances, keeping accounts of state funds, acting as tax administrator and collector for the state, and furnishing research and statistics for estimating revenue. She also understands the needs of her constituents, since prior to these 16 years, she served as a state representative for two legislative sessions.

She is highly qualified and will bring a straightforward approach to conducting the business of the Department of the Interior. During my time with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, I had many dealings with her on various topics and she was always thoughtful, innovative and willing to work with diverse stakeholders to create realistic solutions to complex issues. We look forward to working with her in this role. We encourage a speedy confirmation by the Senate for this important position.

Sincerely,

H. Dale Hall
 Chief Executive Officer

Rescue Our Wetlands
Banding Together for Waterfowl



209 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, D.C. 20003 U.S.A.
Phone: (202) 454-5261 Fax: (202) 454-5265 Web Site: www.geo-energy.org

July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Nomination of Mark Menezes

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

I'm writing to express the support of the Geothermal Energy Association for the nomination of Mark Menezes, to be Under Secretary of Energy.

Mark is well known to GEA companies from his work on the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and his service as Vice President for Berkshire Hathaway Energy, a company with roots in its geothermal power operations. He is respected among his industry peers and is very knowledgeable about energy policy issues and the energy industry, including the geothermal industry.

On behalf of the GEA Board and Members, I urge the Committee to support his nomination to be Under Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karl Gawell".

Karl Gawell
Executive Director

GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

Executive Office of the Governor & Lieutenant Governor

"Putting Our People First"

Stephen Roe Lewis
Governor



Monica Lynn Antone
Lieutenant Governor

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Nomination of Ms. Brenda Burman as Commissioner of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior

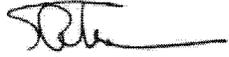
Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

I write on behalf of the Gila River Indian Community in support of the nomination of Ms. Brenda Burman to serve as Commissioner of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior. Our support stems from our experience working with Ms. Burman when she was staff for Senator Jon Kyl and her present position at the Salt River Project in Arizona.

We believe Ms. Burman is an excellent choice for Commissioner due to her extensive knowledge of the legislative process, complicated water issues in the western United States, and tribal water law. The Community has the utmost confidence in Ms. Burman's ability to tackle the many complex issues that Reclamation must address such as the drought that is affecting the West.

Based on our experience working on complex issues with Ms. Burman we have come to respect her as an experienced professional and strongly support her position as Commissioner of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior. We believe she has an understanding of tribal sovereignty and the United States' trust responsibility to tribal nations, including the Gila River Indian Community, and we look forward to working closely with her to tackle the thorny water issues impacting our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SRL", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Roe Lewis
Governor

JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN
PUERTO RICO

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1529 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-2615 FAX: (202) 225-2154

SAN JUAN OFFICE:
157 AVENIDA DE LA CONSTITUCION
ANTIGUO EDIFICIO DE MEDICINA TROPICAL
SEGUNDO PISO
SANTO JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00901
(787) 723-6333 FAX: (787) 723-7738

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-5400

COMMITTEES:
NATURAL RESOURCES
SMALL BUSINESS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

July 12, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski:

I am pleased to share my views on Douglas William Domenech, the President's nominee for appointment as the Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs.



Mr. Domenech, if confirmed, will become the highest-ranking Puerto Rican in the Administration. More than a few of us have proudly followed Mr. Domenech's career from being the White House Liaison and Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Interior, and as Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs serving as the federal liaison to five U.S. territories and three freely associated states during President George W. Bush's Administration. During that time, he also served and made valuable contributions to the White House Working Group on the Political Status of Puerto Rico, and as the Secretary's appointee on the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico. We then witnessed his exceptional work as Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia, where he was responsible for being the steward of Virginia's environmental, natural and historic resources overseeing six state agencies with over 2,000 employees, and an annual budget of \$480 million.

Many of the problems encountered by Puerto Rico over 75 years ago, when his ancestors were active in public service, are still prevalent today in some of the territories that Mr. Domenech has been nominated to oversee. His keen knowledge of Puerto Rico's political development, as well as other social, environmental and economic issues it shares with many of our nation's insular areas, will serve him well in overseeing all but one of our nation's territories if the Senate consents to his nomination.

A Forestry and Wildlife Management graduate of Virginia Tech, Mr. Domenech served on the Virginia Board of Forestry, and worked for a national forestry association for 12

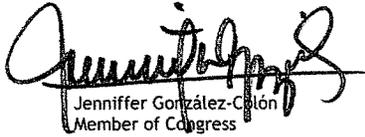
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
July 12, 2017
Page 2 of 2

years. Thus, his lifelong interest in forestry and conservation will provide a keen focus in stewarding the rich variety of natural resources in America's territories. In Puerto Rico, we have seen that first hand through the work he has performed, and continues to do, at the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico.

His close ties to the President and the administration will allow him to be a strong advocate for the territories that lack political power and need all the help they can get, both in the Executive as well as Legislative branches.

Doug Domenech's heritage, past experiences and extensive knowledge make him uniquely qualified to become the steward and advocate of our nation's insular areas. I urge you to provide your timely advice and consent and enable Doug Domenech to assume this new role as early as possible.

Sincerely,



Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress



Nationwide:
1.866.790.4769 (GROW)
chamber@kicc.com

July 14, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D. C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

The purpose of my letter is to endorse the nomination of Susan Combs to the position of Assistant Secretary of Policy Management and Budget at the United States Department of Interior.

We have worked with, and observed the work of, Susan Combs over the course of her sixteen years in statewide elected positions first as Agriculture Commissioner, where she was the first woman to hold that post, to her work as Comptroller of Public Accounts, which effectively made her our state treasurer and chief financial officer.

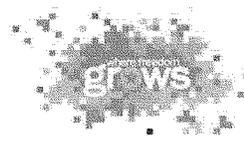
Susan's family ranching history has blessed her with a common sense approach to decision-making that is grounded in a unique feel for heritage, environment and the outdoors. She understands government, finance and the budgeting process.

Our community is the home to Fort Hood, one of the U.S. Army's largest installation. We have always found Susan to be extremely responsive to the needs of the installation, those who run it, Soldiers and their families and our community.

I doubt you could find a better qualified candidate for this position.

Sincerely,

John Crutchfield
President & CEO





7 June 2017

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Hon. Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of David S. Jonas

Dear Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Cantwell:

Eight years ago, I appeared before this Committee to testify about my pending nomination to be the General Counsel of the Department of Energy under President Obama. Today I am writing to support the nomination of my former colleague, David S. Jonas, to become the next General Counsel of the Department of Energy. In truth, his experience and background are even better suited to the position than mine were. More importantly, I know from working closely with him, that Dave has the strength of character and professional integrity to serve in the position with distinction.

Dave was, and always will be, a Marine. While serving in the Marine Corps he became the first judge advocate in the history of our military to argue before the Supreme Court of the United States. Following his military career, Dave became the General Counsel of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the position in which he was serving when I joined the Department of Energy. Even though Dave did not report to me because of the structural relationship of NNSA to the Department, he immediately reached out to me when I joined the Department and we forged a close working relationship. He became a regular at our senior staff meetings and we worked through many difficult legal issues together. I thought so highly of Dave that, when he left his position at NNSA, I brought him into my office as a senior legal and strategic advisor.

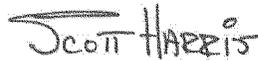
Dave may well be among the most prepared to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy of all those to have been nominated for the position. While all of the Department's missions are important, none is more important than its role in our nation's nuclear policy, and Dave is a true expert in nuclear nonproliferation law. He also has the government contract experience, national security experience, and management experience that is so helpful for a DOE general counsel.

But more important even than experience, I believe that the general counsel of a federal agency must have the strength of character and the professional integrity to give their clients advice that

they might prefer not to hear. And here is where Dave truly stands out. When I said that Dave will always be a Marine, I meant that he carries with him a profound sense of right and wrong, and the determination always to do what is right. I can testify from personal experience that Dave will not hesitate to provide the unvarnished truth to his clients and, if called upon, to Congress.

The bottom line is that if confirmed, Dave Jonas has both the personal and professional mettle to serve with distinction as the General Counsel of the Department of Energy. I hope the Committee will consider his nomination favorably.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "SCOTT HARRIS". The letters are in all caps and have a slightly cursive, connected appearance.

Scott Blake Harris

June 14, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Senator Cantwell:

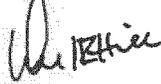
I am writing in support of the nomination of David S. Jonas for the position of General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Dave Jonas and I worked together at DOE for several years, and so I know him well. I also know the job of DOE General Counsel and the portfolio of the Department very well – having served as DOE’s General Counsel from 2005–2009, and as the Department’s deputy general for energy policy for the three years prior to that.

Dave has the knowledge, skills and temperament to be an effective and successful General Counsel of the Department of Energy. He knows the agency and its missions, and has worked with many of DOE’s offices, laboratories, contractors and external stakeholders. I believe he would be an effective advocate for the Department’s missions, and would effectively help address the difficult legal and policy issues that can arise both within the Department itself, as well as between DOE and other parts of the federal government or with external parties.

Each DOE General Counsel confronts different challenges, and those that would await Dave Jonas are of course different from the ones presented to me when I served President Bush and Secretary Bodman as DOE’s GC. But based on what I know about Dave, I believe he would do an excellent job serving the American people, the President and the Department of Energy in this position, and so strongly encourage you to favorably consider his nomination.

Sincerely yours,



David R. Hill

27 June 2017

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Hon. Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of David S. Jonas

Dear Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Cantwell:

For over thirty four years I had the privilege of serving this great nation as a member of the Civil Service. I was appointed to the Senior Executive Service under President Clinton, attained meritorious rank under President George W. Bush and distinguished rank under President Obama for work in the Department of Defense, The National Nuclear Security Administration(NNSA) and the Department of Energy.

It is from this vantage point that I am writing to support the nomination of a trusted and true public servant. David S. Jonas, to become General Counsel of the Department of Energy. A position he is well and uniquely qualified to serve in.

I spent over eleven years working closely with Dave on complex programmatic and departmental management issues confronting the NNSA and Energy Department. A number of these issues involved Government wide and interagency challenges in procurement, Human Resources, and financial management. In all areas, Dave demonstrated exceptional leadership and professionalism.

As the Department of Energy Chief Human Capital Officer I relied heavily on Dave's support in building new recruitment and intern programs to attract and hire a greatly diverse generation of public servants into service. Dave designed and championed the legal Intern and Honors program, achieving outstanding results in less than a year. A single example of his commitment to advancing diversity and equal opportunity occurred when Dave intervened with another Departmental General Counsel to assure that a number of Senior Executives and General Schedule employees were counseled on selective hiring practices which had direct potential to disadvantage women and minorities. Direct actions by Dave changed not just hiring practices but attitudes in that program office.

Dave has unique qualifications and expertise in the multifaceted mission of the Department of Energy from his varied Senior Executive Assignments within the NNSA and Energy Department General Counsel Offices. Of note is his service as General Counsel of the NNSA, where he virtually "stood up the Office" and established himself as a nationally acclaimed expert in nuclear nonproliferation law. As the NNSA General Counsel Dave consistently fostered a climate of performance accountability. Often accepting unfair criticism for holding firm to honest and complete assessment of his employees. This is not just the mark of a strong manager, but a testament to his integrity as an executive responsible for developing and demanding the best from all civil servants.

More importantly Dave has a full understanding and appreciation for the diverse cultural organizational, and business practices within the Energy Department and its separately organized administrations. A skill needed to be immediately successful in this critical appointment.

Dave has the fortitude, personal conviction and clear sense of right and wrong to ensure that the Congress and the Administration have and understand the truth. He also has the strength of character to maintain the highest professional and personal standards demanded of a Presidential Appointee and a leader of our dedicated civil servants. The Congress, the Energy Department and the American People can not be better served by a nominee.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Kane", written in a cursive style.

Michael Kane



Killeen Economic Development Corporation

July 15, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

The Killeen Economic Development Corporation is charged with creating economic prosperity in our community. In that regard, we have worked with, and observed Susan Comb's work, over the past sixteen years during which she held statewide elected positions.

The purpose of my letter is to endorse her nomination to the position of Assistant Secretary of Policy Management and Budget at the United States Department of the Interior.

Susan's family ranching history, her work as Texas Agricultural Commissioner and her work as Comptroller of Accounts give her unique experience, and an understanding of, government, finance and budgeting. Couple that with common sense, a real feel for heritage and the environment and you have someone uniquely suited for the position to which she has been nominated.

Killeen is home to Fort Hood. Obviously, there are economic benefits that come with hosting such an installation. We never knew what they were. It was Susan, and her team at the Comptroller's Office, who first developed an economic impact analysis for the installation. Because of her work, that process has now been repeated for every military installation in Texas.

Susan has also been instrumental in working with Fort Hood to effectively coordinate military training, cattle grazing and the protection of endangered species on the installation, a difficult feat. She has the talent to work with diverse groups to arrive at win-win solutions.

The members of KEDC join me in recommending her for this position without reservation.

Sincerely,

John Crutchfield
Executive Director

MARC B. LANGSTON, ESQ.

1758 Corcoran St. NW, Apt 1, Washington, DC 20009

(316) 461-0070. langston.marc@gmail.com

Attorney Licensed to Practice Law in D.C., N.C., U.S. Court of Federal Claims, and the U.S. Supreme Court

June 27, 2017

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
The Hon. Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of David S. Jonas

Dear Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Cantwell:

I am writing in support of the nomination of my former supervisor, David S. Jonas, to become the next General Counsel of the United States Department of Energy ("DOE"). Dave's sage wisdom and kind mentorship of others will undoubtedly compliment his continued public service as DOE's General Counsel.

During the fall of 2010, I interviewed with Mr. Jonas for a full-time internship position in the Office of the General Counsel for the National Nuclear Security Administration ("NNSA"), while Dave served as General Counsel for NNSA. As a proud member of the LGBTQ community, I purposefully included that important aspect of my life within my application materials. In an effort to demonstrate my leadership experience, I also indicated that I formerly served as President of the College Democrats of Kansas. To my delight, Dave selected me for the sole intern position for that office during the spring semester of 2011.

During my internship, from January 2011 to May 2011, Dave encouraged my participation in activities sponsored by the D.C. LGBT Bar Association and LGBT events sponsored by DOE. He also provided astute advice while I helped organize an event for the Alumni Association of the United States Senate Youth Program, honoring former U.S. Senator Robert J. Dole's public service.

During my internship, I observed that all of the other staff members in NNSA's Office of the General Counsel felt free to have open discussions about current events. Dave engendered a culture where people felt free to express their opinions and beliefs. His staff also knew exactly what Dave expected of them in terms of their professional responsibilities. I also interacted with numerous staff from DOE's Office of the General Counsel, who always spoke of Dave with fondness and respect.

Dave ensured that I received quality assignments, which mostly involved federal procurement law. As this was my first introduction to that area of the law, which continues to be my primary focus in private practice, Dave's mentorship proved instrumental in guiding me towards an area of the law that I very much enjoy. Dave reviewed my work and always provided insightful and constructive feedback. He remains a large influence on my legal work ethic.

As I continued to work in various positions in Washington, I often sought career advice from Dave because I value his opinion very highly. Over the years, he wrote numerous recommendation letters on my behalf. Whenever we communicated, he was always happy to hear about when I began a new relationship. He met my current boyfriend last year at a reception, and expressed great interest in his personal background and profession.

Since my internship, Dave and I discussed politics on numerous occasions. I always left those conversations feeling that Dave respected my positions on issues, even when I expressed views with which he disagreed. I know from discussing LGBT topics like the repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that Dave evolved on his views on LGBT persons serving in the military as well as other LGBT policy issues. Dave always treated me with respect and kindness, and I am confident that he would do the same toward any another member of the LGBT community working at DOE.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marc B. Langston



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0601

June 1, 2017

Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Interior
Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Subject: Letter of endorsement of Douglas William Domenech

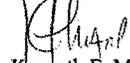
Dear Mr. President and Secretary Zinke;

As Governor of the Territory of the United States Virgin Islands, I welcome this opportunity to offer my strong support of Douglas William Domenech, an excellent choice as Assistant Secretary of the Interior. Having studied his impressive credentials and extensive experience in public service, I am confident that our mutual priorities for the territories will be advanced in the best interests of all concerned.

It is an additional reassurance of Mr. Domenech's suitability for this post that he is familiar with the work of the Office of Insular Affairs, a most critical resource for the territories in virtually all aspects of our relations with the United States. Undoubtedly, he has gained valuable insight into the issues most important to our growth and development in vital areas.

I thank you for considering my endorsement of this most competent public servant, with whom we look forward to working in the interest of American citizens wherever they reside.

Most Cordially,


Kenneth E. Mapp
GOVERNOR
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Cc: Mr. Rick Dearborn, Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff
Mr. John Destephano, Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Personnel
Mr. Justin Clark, Director, White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

2017 JUN 6 11:02 AM
6-1102
00755

MACK F. MATTINGLY

U. S. Senator Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington, DC 20510

July 17, 2017

Lisa
 Dear Senator ~~Murkowski~~;

I am writing to offer my strong support for the appointment of Douglas W. Domenech as Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs. I have known Doug personally for many years and have worked with him professionally since 2003, as I served for 10 years as the US Trustee for the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust – and continue an association with that Organization to this day. I hold Doug in highest regard and know him to be of stellar Personal Character, carrying absolute principles of work ethics and dedication.

As you already know, he currently serves as Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, and his career includes service as Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and service to the Forest Resources Association. During the George W. Bush administration, Doug served as White House Liason to the Dept. of the Interior and as Deputy Chief of Staff to Secretaries Gale Norton & Dirk Kempthorne. He has also served as the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs – and as I said, has served on the Advisory Council of the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust for many years – where he has enjoyed connecting with his family heritage in PR. Doug holds a B.S. in Forestry and Wildlife Management.

Doug is an excellent model of someone the US citizens want working for them and I know he will (continue) to serve the Department of the Interior and the Nation with tireless dedication & distinction.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



U.S. Senator Mack F. Mattingly, Ret.

CALPURNIA McLEAN
PO BOX 766
WALDORF, MD 20604

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Hon. Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Cantwell:

My name is Calpurnia McLean and I am a former Marine and former employee of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) where I worked for Mr. David S. Jonas in the Office of General Counsel (OGC). I am writing this letter in full support and with enthusiasm of his nomination to become General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

I met Mr. Jonas while serving as the liaison for the Small Agency General Council (SAGC) for federal agencies located in the District of Columbia Metropolitan area. During this time, Mr. Jonas was serving as General Counsel for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). Witnessing him "in action" during the SAGC gatherings, it was quickly apparent that he is highly intelligent and well respected among the community of General Counsels. Shortly after my meeting him, I was fortunate to work for Mr. Jonas at the DNFSB and found him to be a staunch supporter of career advancement, an impeccable leader and person of remarkable character.

Mr. Jonas has been very instrumental in my professional development and providing me with significant career opportunities that have been a spring board to where I am today.

One major responsibility of the OGC was to attend congressional hearings and provide written reports of these hearings to all Board Members and senior executives of the agency. Although this assignment had always been given to only attorneys, Mr. Jonas took a huge chance and gave me, as a paralegal, an opportunity to perform this incredible responsibility. As a result, I was recognized by the Board Chairman who personally communicated his appreciation of my capturing the crucial aspects, and the precise tone, of these hearings – which the Chairman had not commented on the other reports submitted. From that opportunity, Mr. Jonas designated me as the primary staff person to perform this critical duty.

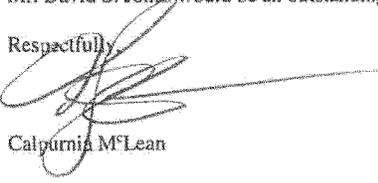
After some months passed, I expressed an interest in taking a more significant role in the agency's ethics program. When I approached Mr. Jonas about assuming a greater role of responsibility in this area, he was extremely supportive. He sanctioned it and immediately reached out to the Deputy Agency Ethics Official for me to begin training for this role within days of me sharing my interest. I gained significant experience in the area of ethics and became an integral part of the program. Moreover, this career opportunity was key to me securing a position as an ethics representative in my current agency.

CALPURNIA M^CLEAN
PO BOX 766
WALDORF, MD 20604

Another incredibly amazing opportunity that Mr. Jonas was responsible for was my attendance at the U.S. Naval War College. For weeks on end he encouraged me to apply. In support of this opportunity, he wrote a letter of recommendation on my behalf. I truly believe that his recommendation was one of the essential factors in me being selected to attend the War College. Today I stand as a graduate of this widely respected institution.

Lastly, a quality worth mentioning and one that speaks to Mr. Jonas' character is his commitment to serve, especially in the role of leadership. I have witnessed first-hand how much he values his staff and the general well-being of others. This is something one cannot teach – a person either possess this quality or does not. I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve under his stellar leadership and to have gleaned so much from his wisdom and knowledge, which still serves me well to this day. It is with this sentiment that I can unequivocally say that I know Mr. David S. Jonas would be an outstanding General Counsel at the Department of Energy.

Respectfully,



Calpurnia M^CLean



PRO-BUSINESS • PRO-TEXAS
FOR OVER 85 YEARS

July 14, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

It is my distinct pleasure to write a letter recommending confirmation of Susan Combs for the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior.

I have known Susan for nearly twenty years and know her to be thoughtful, objective, and careful in decision making. In her last elected position as Comptroller for the State of Texas, she was responsible for the Treasury, managing over \$50 billion, and also for all payments for the State of Texas, whose annual budget was in excess of \$100 billion.

She was widely respected also for her nationally recognized efforts in budget and public fund transparency, putting all state expenditures online within a matter of months of her assuming office. Her ability to transform and modernize two state agencies produced significant savings for the state, allowing much needed resources to be used more effectively.

As the CEO of the Texas Association of Business, and knowing her for so many years, I have always appreciated her non-partisan approach to state matters. She has also demonstrated a real commitment to finding solutions to difficult issues through working collaboratively and inclusively. I recommend her to you without reservation for this important post to which she has been nominated.

Sincerely,

Jeff Moseley
Chief Executive Officer



July 14, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

I am pleased to offer this letter of recommendation for Susan Combs, who has been nominated to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior. I have known Susan for a number of years in her elected capacity in Texas.

She has performed admirably in all of her positions and merited the trust and confidence of colleagues and the public. People trust her to be an impartial judge of the facts and to deliver efficient and effective public service. As Comptroller for eight years, she managed complex tax issues, management and procurement projects, and the Treasury of the State of Texas.

I have every confidence that she would be responsive and accountable to any member of the Senate or House of Representatives on any topic. She always dealt with matters on a strictly non-partisan basis, ensuring that any decision was sound and thoughtful.

As a former member of Congress, I recommend her to you without reservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy".

Randy Neugebauer
Member, United States House of Representatives, 2003-2017



15 July 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

As the Commander of the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hood, from 2001 through 2004 I had the great pleasure and opportunity to work closely with then-Agriculture Commissioner (and later Comptroller of Public Accounts) Ms. Susan Combs on an initiative she developed with national strategic importance known as the Recovery Credit System (RCS). I vividly remember the day she asked the III Corps/Fort Hood Commanding General, LTG Tom Metz, what she could do to assist Fort Hood better train Soldiers; within weeks, the 4th Infantry Division would deploy from Fort Hood to Operation Iraqi Freedom. His response was "help me mitigate the impacts of Endangered Species on training."

Almost half of the maneuver area at Fort Hood, a federal installation, was subject to habitat restrictions and encumbrances resulting from two migrating Mexican songbirds – the Golden Cheeked Warbler and Black Capped Vireo. Within weeks, Ms. Combs pulled together the Federal and State regulators and stakeholders and personally led the effort to increase the populations of both species using suitable habitat on private lands adjacent to Fort Hood. In addition to creating a process that vastly improved the ability of scientists and researchers access to both species, her Recovery Credit System saved the taxpayers of Texas and the United States untold millions of dollars. Whether her efforts can be linked to increasing the populations, or facilitating the study of the birds (or both) she removed a significant burden from me at a time when my focus was on preparing Fort Hood Soldiers to go to war.

I never sufficiently thanked her for her patriotic and unselfish service to Fort Hood. The Recovery Credit System is now a "gold standard" for recovery of endangered species. I hope this letter adequately conveys my assessment that there is no finer and qualified person suited for this position. She will be a tremendous asset to the Interagency Process and the nation.

Very Respectfully,

William H. Parry, III
City Manager

STACEY E. PLASKETT
U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

It is my pleasure and privilege to support Mr. Douglas William Domenech as the nominee for appointment as the Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs.

Through his work as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Interior, as the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and with the Forest Resources Association, Mr. Domenech has built a career devoted to public service and improving our nation's natural resources. I am pleased that Mr. Domenech is not a stranger to the Department of Interior and, if appointed, will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to his role as the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs. Based on our interactions and conversations, I am confident that his transition will be seamless and he will bring exemplary leadership to the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA).

I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Domenech both in my district and in my Washington, D.C. office and found that he understands and is willing to work with my territorial colleagues and me on issues that are unique to our constituents. His familial ties to Puerto Rico brings a personal understanding and passion to the OIA which is essential in developing a successful working relationship to address the needs of the U.S. territories.

It is my hope that Mr. Domenech will have a successful confirmation and I am happy to add my support.

Sincerely,

Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility

962 Wayne Avenue • Suite 610 • Silver Spring, MD 20910 • 202-265-PEER(7337) • fax: 202-265-4192
e-mail: info@peer.org • website: www.peer.org

July 17, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Chairperson
U.S. Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Nomination of Brenda Burman to serve as Commissioner of Reclamation, U.S.
Department of Interior**

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell,

I am writing you on behalf of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) to request that you ask Commissioner of Reclamation nominee Brenda Burman about her commitment to address illegal conduct and waste of funds that has been raised by whistleblowers represented by PEER at the Office of Special Counsel (OSC) and confirmed by the Department of Interior's Inspector General (IG). The OSC referred the matter for investigation by the Department of Interior, which tasked the investigation to its Office of Inspector General. The Inspector General issued reports confirming the whistleblowers' allegations, but the Bureau of Reclamation has refused to accept the IG's findings or follow any of its recommendations to prevent future abuses.¹ The OSC is expected to issue its report on the matter to the President and your Committee shortly.

In response to a complaint to the OSC by two Bureau of Reclamation whistleblowers, the IG found that Reclamation had entered into an illegal cooperative agreement with the Klamath Water and Power Agency (KWAPA). The agreement supplied \$32.2 million dollars in federal funds to purchase groundwater for irrigators and pay them for idling land.² Because of the

¹ The IG's Audit Report is available at https://www.doi.oig.gov/sites/doi.oig.gov/files/FinalAudit_USBR%27sKlamathBasinWaterUserMitigationProgram_101116%20%281%29.pdf

² Land idling, as used by Reclamation and KWAPA, simply means that the irrigator only agrees to not use surface water to irrigate their land. The land can still be worked for crops.



absence of legal authority for these expenditures, the IG found that all \$32.2 million was “wasted.”³ Evidence from the whistleblowers shows that Reclamation officials colluded with irrigators to create KWAPA and fund it to illegally funnel money to irrigators.

The Bureau justified these expenditures under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. § 661, *et seq.*, but the IG found that law did not apply because there was no benefit to fish and wildlife. In fact, the unsustainable groundwater pumping that occurred under the agreement reduced the total amount of water in the Klamath Basin, to the detriment of fish and wildlife, including endangered species. The record shows that excessive pumping caused groundwater in some areas of the Klamath Basin to drop 25 to 35 feet, causing private and municipal wells to run dry or produce insufficient amounts of water. The KWAPA agreement then funded well owners to deepen their wells or drill new ones to compensate them for their losses caused by the unsustainable pumping funded by the KWAPA agreement. The negative impacts to fish and wildlife from decreased groundwater table are well documented in literature. The Klamath Basin is considered an alpine desert. The recharge rate of the groundwater table will likely be slow and have long-term consequences.

The IG made recommendations for procedures to insure that future cooperative agreements are properly supported by applicable legal authority. Reclamation has so far refused to implement any of the IG’s recommendations, to hold any of its employees accountable, or to take any other action to avoid similar waste of federal funds and harm to the environment in the future.

Questions for Ms. Burman:

1. Will you implement and support the IG’s recommendations:
 - 1) USBR discontinue funding water supplementation and demand reduction activities in the Klamath Basin unless specific legal authority is provided or obtained; and
 - 2) USBR take steps to ensure that financial assistance agreements are not funded without specific and applicable legal authority and without a clear and accurate description of the activities to be performed; and
 - 3) The Department establish and implement new policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that financial assistance agreements are reviewed by the Solicitor for legal sufficiency and that the Solicitor’s basis for approval is thoroughly explained.

2. Will you commit to institute training in acquisition practices and ethics to prevent similar future abuses?

3. Will you commit to increased oversight of assistance and other contracts, such as requiring quarterly reports from vendors as to how objectives and goals are being met, to be reviewed by Reclamation contract officer representatives and grants officer representatives?

³ Prior to the creation of KWAPA, Reclamation operated a Water Bank Program for seven years at a cost of over \$32 million. The prior Water Bank Program is pertinent in that the Water Bank Program was similar to the Water User Mitigation Project (WUMP) operated by KWAPA and funded by Reclamation. Thus, it is likely that improper financial assistance to Klamath Project irrigators have been occurring since 2001 and is in excess of 60 million dollars.

4. Will you commit to insuring that all Reclamation employees receive training in whistleblower rights and laws?
5. What actions will you take to insure that the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act is not abused as authority for other assistance agreements or Reclamation programs that are not in fact designed to benefit fish and wildlife?
6. What actions will you take to discipline Reclamation employees who are responsible for the illegal expenditure of federal funds in the KWAPA agreement?
7. Will you commit to directing additional funding to environmental protection, including support for fish biologists, river ecologists and other environmental specialists, to repair the harm that has been done by the KWAPA agreement and other similar agreements that assisted irrigators instead of benefitting fish and wildlife as their authorizing authority required?

Apart from being illegal, the KWAPA agreement funded an expensive, unsustainable and ultimately counter-productive response to the ongoing problem of water scarcity in the Klamath Basin. KWAPA provided only a short-term, a year-by-year bail-out to Klamath Project irrigators. In other words, federal funds have been wasted on stop-gap and unsustainable measures that only worsened the long-term problem, and served only to put money in the pockets of Klamath Project irrigators for the short term. The expenditure of these funds has diverted large amounts of time and money from the work needed to find long-term solutions to water scarcity in the Klamath Basin.

1. What will you do to develop long-term solutions for water scarcity in the Klamath Basin and elsewhere that will increase water use efficiency, reduce demand, and support agricultural activities appropriate for a water-constrained environment while protecting fish and wildlife and environmental quality?
2. Will you commit to utilizing and enhancing your own fisheries and natural resources expert staff to take the lead in developing these solutions?

In response to the whistleblower's complaint, Reclamation stated that it is "intended to discharge the obligation of the Secretary of Interior ... under 5 U.S.C. 1213(d)." However, the statute clearly does not allow this delegation, since the statute requires a "written report setting forth the findings of the agency head." The agency head in this case would be the Secretary of the Interior.

1. Will you commit to following the regulation by not allowing the delegation of the agency head's obligation for the written report under 5 U.S.C. 1213(d)?

We would appreciate your assistance in posing these questions to Ms. Burman, and would be glad supply any further information you may seek these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula Dinerstein". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent initial 'P'.

Paula Dinerstein
Senior Counsel



July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman
 Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Public Lands Council (PLC) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) would like to take this opportunity to express our support for the confirmation of Susan Combs to be the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management, and Budget. PLC is the only national organization dedicated solely to representing the roughly 22,000 ranchers who hold federal grazing permits and operate on federal lands. NCBA is the beef industry's largest and oldest national marketing and trade association, representing American cattlemen and women who provide much of the nation's supply of food and own or manage a large portion of America's private property.

Ms. Combs has a wealth of experience in financial management and the livestock industry. She grew up in a ranching family in West Texas, has served on the boards of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association and the Texas Beef Council, and today runs a cow-calf operation. In addition to her noteworthy agriculture background, she also served in the Texas House of Representatives and two terms as the Texas Commissioner of Agriculture—the first woman to be elected to the position. After her service to the Texas Department of Agriculture she was elected as Comptroller of Texas in 2006, where she served with distinction until 2015. Ms. Combs is well respected within the agriculture industry and understands the vital role that livestock grazing plays in boosting the rural economy and maintaining America's public lands.

Western ranchers own approximately 120 million acres of the most productive private land in the west and manage nearly 250 million acres of public land. Ranchers who hold grazing permits on public land do vital work that benefits public land including the improvement of water sources, improvement of wildlife habitat, and maintaining the open space that Americans enjoy. Having leadership at the Department of Interior who understand the agriculture industry and role it plays in the stewardship of America's public lands is vital to ensure the continuity of this national heritage.

PLC and NCBA appreciate the opportunity to provide our input on behalf of our members – the nation's food and fiber producers. We urge the Senate to confirm Susan Combs without delay.

Sincerely,

Dave Eliason
 President
 Public Lands Council

Craig Uden
 President
 National Cattlemen's Beef Association



July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Public Lands Council (PLC) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) would like to take this opportunity to express our support for the confirmation of Douglas Domenech to be Assistant Secretary of Interior for Insular Affairs. PLC is the only national organization dedicated solely to representing the roughly 22,000 ranchers who hold federal grazing permits and operate on federal lands. NCBA is the beef industry's largest and oldest national marketing and trade association, representing American cattlemen and women who provide much of the nation's supply of food and own or manage a large portion of America's private property.

Mr. Domenech is well qualified for this position. His leadership at the Department of the Interior during the presidential transition was invaluable, as was his service there as Deputy Chief of Staff during the George W. Bush Administration. In addition, he served the Commonwealth of Virginia as the state's eighth Secretary of Natural Resources. As a Puerto Rican and the Interior Secretary's representative on the Advisory Committee of the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico, his knowledge of insular affairs will be of great value to the American people. Mr. Domenech has the full support of the ranching community.

Western ranchers own approximately 120 million acres of the most productive private land in the west and manage nearly 250 million acres of public land. Ranchers who hold grazing permits on public land do vital work that benefits public land including the improvement of water sources, improvement of wildlife habitat, and maintaining the open space that Americans enjoy. Having leadership at the Department of Interior who understand the agriculture industry and role it plays in the stewardship of America's public lands is vital to ensure the continuity of this national heritage.

PLC and NCBA appreciate the opportunity to provide our input on behalf of our members – the nation's food and fiber producers. We urge the Senate to swiftly confirm Douglas Domenech.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Eliason".

Dave Eliason
President
Public Lands Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Craig Uden".

Craig Uden
President
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

July 18, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
709 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

I write today regarding the Nomination Hearing to Consider DOE and DOI Nominees, and specifically in regard to Mr. Douglas W. Domenech, Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs.

My career has crossed paths with Doug's career throughout the decade and I have always found him to be a good partner in our work to improve recreation. Doug is open and transparent and has dedicated himself to the management of our nation's public lands, during his time in the Bush administration, within the Virginia governor's office, and in his acting roles in the Trump administration.

I am familiar with Doug's work to help improve recreation in Virginia when he worked for the governor. During his tenure as secretary of natural resources, Doug promoted the creation and development of new Virginia state parks, including Powhatan State Park, which includes several miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, and a kayak and canoe launch on the James River. This park frequently hosts mountain bike and trail running races. As secretary, Doug supported and helped organize the various agencies necessary to plan and construct an International Mountain Bike Association certified rider center at Pocahontas State Park. The mountain bike park is the first located in a Virginia state park and one of the only mountain bike parks in the nation that accommodates off-road handcycles. This mountain bike park is also unique in that it includes the urban trails found in the city of Richmond's James River Park.

Doug not only supports outdoor recreation but is an avid hiker and outdoorsman. Recreation in Virginia benefitted from his work as secretary of natural resources, and his love for the outdoors has been apparent throughout our time knowing each other. I hope Doug will receive a fair hearing and a smooth confirmation process.

Sincerely,



Amy Roberts
Executive Director
Outdoor Industry Association

GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT,
LEARNING AND PERSONNEL
RANGING HEADQUARTERS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN, INDIAN
AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RIVERS, FISH AND OCEANS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
AND MEDICAL AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell,

I write regarding the nomination of Mr. Doug Domenech to be Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs in the Department of the Interior, about which you are holding a confirmation hearing tomorrow.

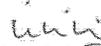
First, I appreciate that the new administration has decided to maintain the position of Assistant Secretary to lead Interior's Office of Insular Affairs. The four Delegates, who represent the U.S. insular areas over which OIA has management responsibility, made this recommendation in March to Secretary Zinke that the administration keep insular affairs at the Assistant Secretary level.

Although I would have preferred that the President nominate an individual from one of the four insular areas to be Assistant Secretary, I understand that Mr. Domenech has personal ties to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. He has also managed the Office of Insular Affairs in the past. So, he does bring an appreciation of island culture and of the array of issues that face the off-shore territories of the United States.

I have had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Domenech, since his nomination. We discussed the many concerns of the Mariana Islands that come under the purview of the Office of Insular Affairs. I appreciated that Mr. Domenech made the time to introduce himself to me and to have this discussion. I hope that this effort on his part portends a degree of collaboration between OIA and insular area congressional representatives that has sometimes been lacking.

I look forward to working productively with Mr. Domenech should he be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Sincerely,



GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN
Member of Congress

Washington, DC Office
2411 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2046

San Juan Office
P.O. Box 504879
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Rota Office
P.O. Box 1363
Rota, MP 96951
(670) 512-2667

Tinian Office
P.O. Box 520391
Tinian, MP 96952
(670) 433-2667



Consisting of 240,000 acres on the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley

July 17, 2017

JAMES E. O'BANION
Chairman

CHRIS CARDELLA
Vice Chairman

STEVE CHEDESTER
Executive Director

ADAM HOFFMAN
Water Resources Specialist

JOANN WHITE
Administrative Assistant

**MINASIAN, MEITH,
SOARES, SEXTON
& COOPER LLP**
Legal Counsel

**CENTRAL CALIFORNIA
IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

James E. O'Banion
President

Christopher White
General Manager

**SAN LUIS CANAL
COMPANY**

James L. Nickel
President

Chase Hurley
General Manager

**FIREBAUGH CANAL
WATER DISTRICT**

Mike Stearns
President

Jeff Bryant
General Manager

**COLUMBIA CANAL
COMPANY**

Chris Cardella
President

Randy Houk
General Manager

P.O. Box 2115
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Los Banos, CA 93635
(209) 827-8616
Fax (209) 827-9703
e-mail: jwhite@sjrecwa.net
Website: www.sjrecwa.net

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Support for Brenda Burman -- Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation*

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (Exchange Contractors) are pleased to support the nomination of Brenda Burman to be Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). The Exchange Contractors serve water to farmers in the San Joaquin Valley.

From her prior service as Deputy Commissioner, Ms. Burman has in-depth understanding of the missions of the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior. As a former employee with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, she appreciates the complexity of California water issues, which comprise a large component of Reclamation's portfolio.

In the view of the Exchange Contractors, Ms. Burman is well prepared to provide leadership to help Reclamation move forward with solving many of California's unique and extensive water challenges. She has a long track record of collaborating with stakeholders to implement effective water policy solutions, including implementing California's co-equal goals for water management.

Honorable Mitch McConnell, et al.
RE: *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Support for Brenda Burman –
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation*
July 17, 2017
Page 2

The Exchange Contractors urge you to work with your Senate colleagues to confirm Ms. Burman's nomination as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Ms. Burman's nomination.

Sincerely,



Steve Chedester
Executive Director

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris



Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC
901 Russell Avenue, Gaithersburg, MD 20879
301.740.7100 Fax: 301.740.7139
Toll Free: 888.871.8659

July 3, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
The United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Nomination of David S. Jonas, J.D.

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell:

We are pleased to support the nomination of David S. Jonas, J.D., to be the General Counsel for the Department of Energy. Mr. Jonas is a respected part-time faculty member at the George Washington University, and a member of Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 500, which is the collective bargaining representative for those university faculty. Local 500 is proud to represent the prestigious part-time faculty of the George Washington University School of Law, and Professor Jonas has been an active contributor to the activities of the union to improve the educational environment for GWU students, as well as working conditions for the faculty we represent.

David Jonas' involvement with the Union has been marked by his pursuit of independent non-partisan professional ideals. We anticipate that he will exhibit those same qualities as General Counsel for the Department of Energy.

Respectfully submitted,


Merle Cuttitta
President

Merle Cuttitta
President

Ruth Musicante
Executive Vice President

Crystal Barksdale
Secretary

Mitchell Tropin
Treasurer

David Rodich
Executive Director

www.seiu500.org



PETE SESSIONS
32ND DISTRICT, TEXAS

CHAIRMAN
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FINANCIAL SERVICES
(ON LEAVE)



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

2233 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4332
TELEPHONE: 202.225.2231
FAX: 202.225.5878

PARK CENTRAL VI
12250 MERT DRIVE
SUITE 1434
DALLAS, TEXAS 75261-1229
TELEPHONE: 972.392-0605
FAX: 972.392.0515
sessions.house.gov

July 14, 2017

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0001

To Senator Cantwell:

It is my honor to write you to recommend that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee promptly vote to report the nomination of Susan Combs to be the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget at the Department of Interior so that she can promptly be confirmed by the whole Senate. President Trump made a fantastic decision in nominating Susan to this important position, and I strongly recommend that she be confirmed by the Senate so that she can start in this position.

Susan is a public servant, a business leader, and an author who served the State of Texas as a state representative, as Texas' first female Agricultural Commissioner, and as Texas State Comptroller. As Comptroller, Susan brought a common sense approach to a previously unwieldy bureaucracy. There, she streamlined tax process, decreased response time to taxpayer inquiries, saved the state over \$12 million, and cut nearly \$400 million in government purchasing.

After leaving the Comptroller's office, Susan joined Lone Star Success, where she highlights the social and economic strengths of our great state. Additionally, she's the author of the book Texas Tenacity: A Call for Women to Direct their Destiny, which encourages women to overcome obstacles and push to succeed in their careers. Susan is exactly the person we need at the Department of Interior to continue to push the changes we need to make our federal bureaucracy run more like a business.

I am pleased to strongly recommend that the Senate confirm Susan to this important position. I can be reached directly at 214.215.5849 or eagle@petesessions.com if you have any questions. Thank you for consideration of this recommendation and your service to our nation.

Sincerely,

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

PS:BY



July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Democrat, Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Democrat Cantwell:

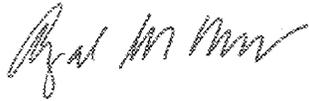
As President and Chief Executive Officer of the Solar Energy Industries Association, I would like to express the support of our association for two Department of Energy nominees currently pending before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. We believe that Mark Menezes and Paul Dabbar would provide the knowledgeable and balanced understanding on energy issues needed to ensure our nation continues to move forward in developing a world-class energy system that serves the needs of our people and our economy.

Mark Menezes has been nominated to serve as Under Secretary of Energy. Mark has the right balance of experience and temperament for this important position. He was chief majority counsel to the House Energy and Commerce Committee when the Energy Policy Act of 2005 was enacted and has a unique understanding of energy policy issues. He also has worked in the electric utility industry and in private law practice representing a broad range of energy clients. We know Mark understands the solar industry and its importance in achieving America's future energy goals.

Paul Dabbar has been nominated to serve as Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy. Paul is currently the Managing Director for Mergers & Acquisitions for J.P. Morgan, and has over \$400 billion in investment experience across all energy sectors including solar, wind, geothermal, distributed-generation, utility, LNG, pipeline, oil & gas, trading, energy technology, and has also led many of the nuclear transactions. Paul broad experience with many different sources of energy development will be an important asset for the DOE and for the Administration.

Once again, thank you Senators for your continued leadership in the Congress on important energy issues facing our nation. We believe these two nominees will make significant contributions to balanced and informed decision-making at the Department of Energy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abigail Ross Hopper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Abigail Ross Hopper, Esq.
President & CEO
Solar Energy Industries Association



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Director Emeritus

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Executive Director

Susan J. Kibbe

July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The board of directors of the South Texans' Property Rights Association heartily recommends the confirmation of Susan Combs to her appointed position with the Department of the Interior. As a non-partisan, non-profit organization, we have always found Ms. Combs to be open, transparent and competent as a public servant who had great responsibilities in state government. She fully understands and respects the interests of landowners, businesses, government, and the general public and has a long, successful record in facilitating positive outcomes among interested stakeholders.

We have been directly involved with Ms. Combs in her efforts to balance the legitimate concerns of preserving endangered species with the listing petitions for species without scientific merit. She has spoken on several occasions to our general membership and we have participated on a multi-agency task force that she headed to provide funding for state academic institutions to conduct rigorous, peer reviewed scientific studies of species with the potential of being listed as endangered.

Considering her personal background in land management and stewardship and her professional experience and record of achievement as Comptroller and Agriculture Commissioner of the second leading agricultural state in the nation, we would be hard-pressed to put forth a candidate who could surpass her credentials. We appreciate your consideration of our recommendation and anxiously look forward to working with Ms. Combs in her new capacity at the Department of the Interior. We are confident that she will do an unparalleled service to the nation.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Kibbe
 STPra, Executive Director

Sean Sullivan, Chairman
Bruce Hamilton, Vice Chairman
Jessie H. Roberson
Daniel J. Santos
Joyce L. Connery

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**
Washington, DC 20004-2901



June 28, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The United States Senate Committee
On Energy and Natural Resources

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
The United States Senate Committee
On Energy and Natural Resources

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell,

I respectfully write on behalf of Mr. David Jonas, Esq., whose nomination to be the Department of Energy General Counsel is before your Committee. I worked closely with Mr. Jonas throughout the period of his employment as General Counsel to the DNFSB. I found Mr. Jonas to be thoughtful, measured, professional, and of sharp legal acumen. Were I the rating official (I was not then Chairman of the DNFSB), I would have rated Mr. Jonas as outstanding, the highest possible rating under the Senior Executive Service Performance Management System.

Mr. Jonas produced eleven memoranda during his tenure containing detailed legal analysis and advice on significant issues for DNFSB, including the historical "adequate protection" standard as directed by Congress and interpreted by the Courts, the limits of the DNFSB jurisdiction, and legislative changes to the DNFSB organic statute. As a prior practicing attorney and new DNFSB Member, I found these memoranda to be thoroughly researched, exceptionally well written, and – most importantly – objective as regards the DNFSB duties and obligations under the law. To this day, I frequently refer to and rely upon the legal analysis and advice provided by Mr. Jonas during his DNFSB tenure. No other DNFSB General Counsel, whether serving prior to or subsequent to Mr. Jonas, has produced legal analysis of that caliber and usefulness.

If I may be of any assistance to your committee, please contact me at (202) 694-7080, or sean.sullivan@dnfsb.gov.

Very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Sullivan".

Sean Sullivan
Chairman



Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association

1361 W. SEVENTH ST. * SUITE 201 * FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-2665
817-332-7084 * 800-242-7829 * F:817-332-0441 * WWW.TSCRA.ORG



July 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) is a 140-year-old trade association and is the largest and oldest livestock organization based in Texas. TSCRA has a membership of more than 17,500 beef cattle operations, ranching families and businesses. These members represent over 55,000 individuals directly involved in ranching and beef production who manage over 4 million head of cattle on more than 76 million acres of range and pasture land primarily in Texas, Oklahoma and throughout the Southwest.

TSCRA strongly supports the nomination of Ms. Susan Combs for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget. Her 16 years of service to the citizens of Texas in state-wide elected office reflect her knowledge and commitment to getting things done.

Ms. Combs began her service to the State of Texas with four years in the Texas House of Representatives. She then, for eight years, served as Texas Agriculture Commissioner. During that time, she continued the tradition of leading Texas' robust agriculture industry and demonstrated her commitment to beneficial land use practices across a large and diverse state. Following her tenure at the Texas Department of Agriculture, she was twice elected to serve as the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. In her role as Comptroller, Ms. Combs was responsible for issuing the state's checks as well as guiding the legislature in revenue and budget matters. In her eight years as Comptroller she firmly established her aptitude for making skilled and sensible decisions on complex tax, revenue and expenditure issues.

In addition to her robust public service credentials, Ms. Combs brings to the table a unique and valuable personal perspective that make her the ideal candidate to serve our nation at the U.S. Department of the Interior. She was raised in a West Texas ranching family, and continues to be very involved in the management of her family's land. She knows first-hand the importance of caring for the land that allows her family ranching business to survive for future generations. She understands that ranchers are committed to being the best possible stewards of their land.

Ms. Combs is also an Honorary Vice President for TSCRA and her involvement with TSCRA has been extremely beneficial to the thousands of ranchers that TSCRA represents. TSCRA is confident that she will bring the same commitment, skill and expertise to her role at the Department of the Interior.

Please contact me or Jason Skaggs at (512) 469-0171 or jskaggs@tscra.org should you have any questions or need further information from TSCRA.

Sincerely,


Richard Thorpe
President

July 17, 2017



**TEXAS
CATTLE
FEEDERS
ASSOCIATION**

5501 I-40 W.
Amarillo, TX 79106-4617
(806) 358-3681
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Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski:

Texas Cattle Feeders Association (TCFA) wholeheartedly supports Susan Combs to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget. TCFA members and staff have worked closely with Susan over the last 30 years and can attest to her work ethic and passion for preserving our natural resources and protecting private property rights.

Susan was elected to statewide office on four separate occasions. She served as Texas Agriculture Commissioner for eight years and was a tireless, effective advocate for farmers, ranchers, landowners and rural economic development. She also led the creation of what is known as the Recovery Credit System, which ensured that ranchers near Fort Hood and the U.S. Army were able to find a solution to the challenging issues of dealing with endangered species. Two birds in particular, the Black Capped Vireo and the Golden Cheeked Warbler, had imposed significant limitations on the ability of the Army to use some of its training ground. This innovative credit system reversed decisions that had been adverse to both the Army and the ranchers. It is now viewed as a national model.

Following her time as Commissioner of Agriculture, Susan was elected the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and served in that capacity for eight years. She continued her steadfast work to steward our natural resources, protect landowners and ensure continued economic development, crafting an innovative plan to encourage conservation efforts without causing undue economic consequences.

During her tenure, a proposal to list the Dunes Sagebrush Lizard in the Permian Basin posed a significant threat to the ability of both Texas and the U.S. to develop its oil and gas resources. Through collaboration with landowners, the agriculture community and the energy sector along with a wide range of other interested parties, Susan developed the Texas Conservation Plan as a way to address the proposed listings under the Endangered Species Act. Because of the plan's design and innovative approach, the lizard was subsequently not listed. The plan later prevailed in federal court, setting a national precedent for rational and pragmatic thinking with regard to species conservation efforts.

These are just two of many examples of Susan's tireless efforts to uphold our economy and protect our natural resources through the development of commonsense conservation programs. She is an intelligent, passionate and experienced servant leader. Susan is the ideal candidate for Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget. TCFA fully supports her nomination.

Sincerely,

Ross Wilson
President & CEO



RUSSELL W. BOENING
President

MICHAEL WHITE
Vice President

ROBERT GORDON
Secretary-Treasurer

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SCOTT FRAZIER
Chapman Ranch

July 14, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

Texas Farm Bureau offers its support and endorsement for the confirmation of Susan Combs as Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

She has long been an advocate of private property rights while balancing the legal duties of governmental laws and regulations. Combs' background as an attorney and Texas Comptroller are all attributes fitting her appointment to the Department of Interior as well. She not only brings the required regulatory function of government, but also a dutiful accounting of government to the people.

Susan Combs is a dynamic leader with proven abilities to organize and lead a government agency. Texas Farm Bureau expects that with her abilities and energy, the results previously achieved in Texas will be amplified throughout the United States of America.

It is our pleasure to support Susan Combs in her new appointment.

Sincerely,

Russell W. Boening
President

RWB:GR:en

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Kyle Stallings
 Midland, TX

George W. Strake, Jr.
 Houston, TX

July 18, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

We at the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) are delighted to offer our unconditional support for the nomination of Susan Combs as Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior.

Susan is a spirited Texan who comes from a rural background, owning and operating her family ranch for over three decades in the Big Bend of Texas. She has served our state admirably for nearly twenty years, and her work has been marked by her steadfast insistence upon transparency, accountability, and effective public service.

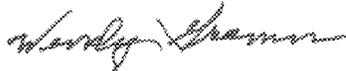
As Commissioner of Agriculture and then as Comptroller, she increased services while saving a portion of the State's budget. She accomplished this through a mixture of processes: streamlining tasks and duties, often through increased online transformation; sharing services across divisions or departments; and insisting that all state officials and employees remain accountable to the public they serve.

TPPF was thrilled when Susan joined us in 2015 as a Visiting Senior Fellow after her public service career with the state ended. She jumped straight into our work, informing Texans about innovative ways to reform public debt and spending. Her innovative approach to transmitting education information from our public school system through the Financial Allocation Study of Texas (FAST), and her insightful responsiveness to the public, brought her widespread acclaim as a policy scholar and a stalwart of common-sense conservative reform.

Since leaving public office at the end of 2015, she continues to advocate for government transparency, has established a woman's empowerment website and online platform, and carries on her education reports through Texas Smart Schools.

We urge you to confirm her appointment at the earliest possible date. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Wendy Lee Gramm
Chairman of the Board
Texas Public Policy Foundation



Ernest Angelo
Treasurer
Texas Public Policy Foundation



Brooke Rollins
President & CEO
Texas Public Policy Foundation



July 5, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

Texas Wildlife Association was founded in 1985 and currently has approximately 10,000 members who collectively own or manage over 40 million acres of rural lands in Texas. We work to educate Texans on the value of land stewardship, open spaces, and wildlife habitat.

Texas Wildlife Association strongly supports Susan Combs for the Assistant Secretary position in the Department of Interior she has been nominated to by President Trump. Ms. Combs has a well-earned reputation of pragmatism and fiscal responsibility from a lengthy career of public service here in Texas. We believe she would be a true asset in an agency that has such a large impact on the natural and wildlife resources of America.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly. Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our great nation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. David Yeates". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

R. David Yeates
Chief Executive Officer
Texas Wildlife Association
(210) 826-2904
dyeates@texas-wildlife.org



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

MAY 27 2017

Victor B. Hocog
Lieutenant Governor

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
White House
Washington, DC 20050

Dear Mr. President,

I write to congratulate you on your appointment of Douglas Domenech to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Insular Affairs. Mr. Domenech has wide ranging and notable experience with the US Insular Areas and brings with him the understanding of the many unique issues facing our islands and has specific understanding of the people and culture of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The nomination of Mr. Domenech to this role has my full support and I look forward to working alongside him as we ensure the wonderful progress your administration is achieving reaches the shores of the United States Territories and Commonwealths.

President Trump, you have been a friend and an advocate for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and this appointment is but one more example of your efforts to improve the lives of the many Americans living here. I thank you for your leadership and for assembling an exemplary team at the Department of Interior.

If I can be of any assistance in ensuring Mr. Domenech's confirmation to this position, I stand ready to be of service.

Sincerely,


RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Washington, D.C. 20314-1000

CECC-ZB

20 June 2017

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Hon. Maria Cantwell
Ranking member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Nomination of David S. Jonas

Dear Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Cantwell,

I am writing to you as a current member of the Senior Executive Service (SES) in the Federal Government. I want to express my unequivocal and enthusiastic support for Dave Jonas to become the next Department of Energy (DOE) General Counsel. I met Dave Jonas ten years ago at the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). He was serving as the NNSA General Counsel and hired me to be his Deputy General Counsel for Procurement, Technology Transfer, and Intellectual Property, (an SES position). I have told Dave several times that he is by far the best supervisor I have ever worked with/for. Dave is the kind of leader I strive to become. He is very clear about his expectations and is very consistent in the professionalism with which he treats everyone.

I believe having Dave Jonas as my supervisor has helped my career in many ways. He is the first one to hire me as a member of the SES Corps and made sure I earned the respect and trust of that title. He met with me regularly to discuss leadership and substantive legal issues. He encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and improve my communication skills. Dave is dedicated to seeing all of his legal team reach his/her full potential. There are many females in NNSA that have benefitted tremendously from Dave's leadership and encouragement. Several female attorneys started under Dave's tutelage as GS-11s and are now serving in leadership roles and at the grade of GS-15. When I decided to go to the US Army Corps of Engineers, while no longer my supervisor, Dave provided my new boss with a fantastic reference. Dave has had a tremendous impact not only on my self-esteem, but also on my career progression.

Dave had a substantial impact on improving the diversity of the NNSA legal office. He hired over seven female attorneys and several minorities during his tenure as the NNSA General Counsel. Dave has always been respectful and appreciative of diverse perspectives. He promoted those who earned it through hard work and dedication to the NNSA legal mission. Dave is a man of unquestionable integrity. As a Marine, Dave commands respect and loyalty. I have worked with many supervisors/leaders in my 29 years of service, as a former US Army

CECC-ZB

JAGC Officer, a DOD civil servant, the Deputy General Counsel for NNSA, and now the Deputy Chief Counsel for the US Army Corps of Engineers. None of those supervisors/leaders demonstrated the strength of character possessed by Dave. Dave Jonas has been an exemplary role model of leadership and motivation. I have taken some of his leadership techniques and applied them to my own. In addition to what I mention above, this has also resulted in my further career development and growth. I still reach out to him for leadership advice and consultation, as he will always be an invaluable mentor to me.

Not only is Dave a great leader, he is also a subject matter expert in nuclear nonproliferation, national security, and nuclear policy. He has worked with DOE legal teams on numerous other legal issues like contracts, fiscal law, environmental law, and personnel matters. Dave also built great relationships both inside the legal community and with some more difficult DOE/NNSA clients. I can think of no one better suited to be the DOE General Counsel than Dave Jonas. I whole-heartedly support his nomination.



SHELLEY P. TURNER
Deputy Chief Counsel
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20314
(202) 761-0018

June 29, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: David S. Jonas Nomination

Distinguished Senators Murkowski and Cantwell,

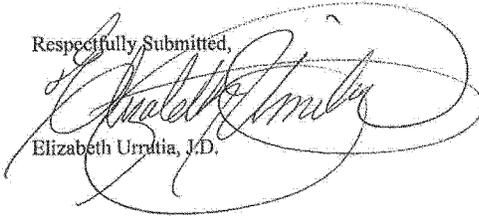
I write to you today in support of the nomination of David S. Jonas for General Counsel of the United States Department of Energy. I have known Dave for almost two years. I was a student of his at The George Washington University Law School. I was also his research assistant, working closely with him on publications relating to nuclear nonproliferation.

As a female professional, a feminist, and a registered Democrat, I readily attest to Dave's professionalism and character. Throughout the time that I have known him, Dave has treated me and his students with the utmost respect—regarding us at all times as valued colleagues. He takes everyone's opinions and work seriously and is, consequently, highly regarded among his students. I, and many others, have benefited greatly from his expertise, support, and professionalism.

Dave is also extremely competent. Having studied and worked with him, I know that he holds himself and those around him to the highest standards. He takes his work, both academic and professional, very seriously. I am continually impressed by his knowledge and by his ability to consider the merits of opposing positions. I cannot speak highly enough of his qualifications.

I know Dave as a mentor, a colleague, and a friend, and I know him to be a person of great character. I have no doubt that, if confirmed, Dave would be a credit to the United States Government both by his conduct and by his competence. I appreciate your attention to this letter and hope you will consider favorably David Jonas's nomination.

Respectfully Submitted,


Elizabeth Urrutia, J.D.