

**BEYER, TRAVNICEK, GARRISH,
AND ABBEY NOMINATIONS**

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

TO

CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF LESLIE BEYER TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR (LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT), ANDREA TRAVNICEK TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR (WATER AND SCIENCE), THEODORE GARRISH TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (NUCLEAR ENERGY), AND TRISTAN ABBEY TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

—————
APRIL 30, 2025
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AND ABBEY NOMINATIONS**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025

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

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mike Lee, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE LEE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH**

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will come to order.

Before turning to my formal opening statement, I want to let members know how we will proceed this morning. I also want to thank Senator Heinrich and his staff for working with us.

Recognizing the demands on the schedule of every Senator, and to be as efficient as possible, the Committee meets today for a short business meeting, followed immediately after that by a hearing on four nominations—two for senior positions within the Department of the Interior, and two for senior positions within the Department of Energy.

[Recess to business meeting.]

The CHAIRMAN. We are now going to turn directly into our hearing, our fifth nominations hearing for the 119th Congress, and we are going to receive testimony from four well-qualified Americans nominated by the President for senior offices within our Committee's jurisdiction, two at the Department of the Interior and two at the Department of Energy.

I am going to recognize Senator Murkowski to introduce Mr. Abbey. She is apparently not here yet, so we will hold off on that for a moment. Senator Hoeven has also already recognized Dr. Travnicsek.

Senator HOEVEN. I can do it again, if you would like.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Senator HOEVEN. Do you want to hear it? I mean, I have a lot more to say about her if you want. Martin would probably like to hear a lot more, right? I will do another introduction if you want.

The CHAIRMAN. That would also be fine.

[Senator Hoeven's introduction of hearing witness Dr. Andrea Travnicsek was delivered during the business meeting. The text of his introduction appears on page 5 of this hearing document, preceding Dr. Travnicsek's opening statement.]

The CHAIRMAN. Now, in a moment, Senator Risch, who graciously supplied us with the vote necessary to have a quorum, has asked that I provide him a quorum in a competing markup about to start in the Foreign Relations Committee. So here, in just a moment, I will have Senator Hoeven preside in my absence. So why don't you get these guys started. I will be back in a few minutes.

Senator HOEVEN. That's fine.

The CHAIRMAN. And then, we can give you some notes. If Senator Murkowski is not here for the introduction, you can introduce the other witnesses, swear them in, and then let them begin the opening statements. I will be back soon.

Thank you.

Senator HOEVEN [presiding]. Are we ready to proceed to have the witnesses come forward?

I want to welcome all of our witnesses here today.

The rules of the Committee require that all nominees be sworn in connection with their testimony. So if you would please stand and raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

[Witness panel sworn.]

Senator HOEVEN. Let the record show that they all responded in the affirmative. Thank you.

Before you begin your opening statements, I will also ask the witnesses three questions that are posed to nominees appearing before the Committee.

First, this will be for all of you, and your response will be, "I do," if in fact, you do.

First, will you be able to appear before this Committee and other Congressional Committees to represent Department positions and respond to issues of concern to the Congress?

[All witnesses respond, "yes."]

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

[All witnesses respond, "no."]

Senator HOEVEN. And third, are you involved or do you have any assets in a blind trust?

[All witnesses respond, "no."]

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you.

All right, I have already introduced Dr. Travnicsek, and I guess we will just, for right now, we will hold and see if Senator Murkowski gets here in time to introduce Tristan Abbey, but we will just hold on that introduction for a minute.

Senator HEINRICH. Senator Hoeven.

Senator HOEVEN. Yes.

Senator HEINRICH. Why don't I give my opening statement? That will save you a filibuster.

Senator HOEVEN. All right, sounds good.

[Laughter.]

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARTIN HEINRICH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Senator Hoeven. Welcome, Ms. Beyer, Dr. Travnicek, Mr. Garrish, and Mr. Abbey.

This is our fifth nominations hearing this year, and although the breadth of responsibilities of the offices that we are considering is narrowing as we go on, their importance is not diminished. We meet this morning to consider three assistant secretaries and the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration. Each of these offices we are considering carries with it enormous responsibilities of the utmost importance to the members of this Committee and to the American people.

Ms. Beyer has been nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management. If confirmed, she will oversee four of the principal offices of the Department of the Interior: the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, and the Office of Surface Mining. All told, she will oversee more than 244 million acres of land that belongs to the public, 700 million acres of onshore mineral estate, 3.2 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf, 30 national monuments, and 25 national conservation areas. It will be her job to both preserve and protect our public lands and to provide for the development of their natural resources in a safe and environmentally responsible way.

Dr. Travnicek has been nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science. If confirmed, she will oversee two of the oldest bureaus in the Department—the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation. The Geological Survey is one of our nation's oldest and most respected scientific institutions, and it is our principal source of knowledge about our lands and waters, our mineral wealth, and the natural hazards we face. The Bureau of Reclamation oversees the water supplies upon which millions of Americans in 17 western states depend. It manages nearly 500 dams and nearly 300 reservoirs. It is the second largest producer of hydroelectricity and it irrigates 10 million acres of land to grow crops on which we all depend.

Mr. Garrish has been nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Energy. Nuclear power generates about 20 percent of the nation's current electricity. It does so cleanly and reliably. We cannot do without it. We depend on it to meet our energy needs and our climate goals. But the current generation of nuclear power plants, built many decades ago, will not last forever. At some point, they will need to be replaced by newer, safer, and more affordable reactor technologies, which will only come about through the sustained research and development efforts of the Office of Nuclear Energy.

Finally, Mr. Abbey has been nominated to be the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, which collects and analyzes the information about energy resources, production, and demand, upon which the Department, Congress, private industry, and the public depend.

Senator Moynihan famously remarked that “everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts.” Each Senator is entitled to their own opinion about energy policy, but we must share a com-

mon set of non-partisan facts. It has long been the Energy Information Administrator's task to provide those facts, and it is absolutely essential that the administrator stick to the facts and not color them with partisan opinion.

But as qualified as each of these nominees may be, no single person can perform all of the important tasks with which they will be entrusted by themselves. They are not expected to. Instead, they are expected to inspire, to manage, and to lead organizations staffed with dedicated and experienced professionals who have devoted their careers to public service. The career civil service in both of these departments and across the entire government has been under relentless attack by the current Administration. So the fundamental question I have for each of the nominees this morning is whether, if you are confirmed to these positions of public trust, you will support and defend, rather than demolish the offices and programs entrusted to your care, and if you will faithfully execute the authorities delegated to you by Congress and follow the law, as interpreted by the courts.

Which brings me to something that you said, Mr. Garrish, 42 years ago, at your first confirmation hearing before this Committee. I had to check on that the first time I read that line. You gave the Committee your "unqualified assurance" that you would faithfully execute the public trust in a manner that would "properly reflect the legislative intentions of the Congress without regard to the political views or personal preferences of the Secretary or the Administration" and that you would discharge your duties "on the basis of your best professional judgment as to what the law is, not what you or the Secretary or others might like it to be." You assured the Committee that you were committed to that approach both intellectually and philosophically, and I hope that is still the case, Mr. Garrish. And I hope that all four of our nominees can make that same commitment and give us that assurance this morning.

Thank you, Senator Hoeven.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

I have already introduced Dr. Travnicsek. I am going to give brief introductions for the other three. These were prepared by the Chairman of the Committee.

Ms. Leslie Beyer, nominated to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, will manage roughly 245 million acres of federal service lands and 1.7 billion acres on the Outer Continental Shelf. She will oversee the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and the Office of Surface Mining—agencies that shape how we access and develop hundreds of millions of acres of public land and offshore resources. Ms. Beyer is a defender of American energy, recognizing that oil and gas have been fundamental to driving our economy and lifting billions of people worldwide out of poverty. She understands that America's strength is tied directly to our ability to produce reliable, affordable, and cleaner energy, especially from our abundant resources here at home. This is exactly the kind of leader we need to unlock American energy potential, cut through unneeded red tape, and drive prosperity.

Mr. Ted Garrish, nominated as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy, will lead America's nuclear energy initiatives. Mr. Garrish

is uniquely prepared for this role, having served in senior nuclear positions dating back to the Reagan Administration. Great. He has championed nuclear energy as a clean, safe, reliable, and affordable solution already powering one-fifth of America. He acknowledges that nuclear power will be central to our future and that this technology will ensure American energy stability for decades to come.

And finally, Mr. Tristan Abbey, nominated as Administrator for the Energy Information Administration, will oversee the independent agency responsible for producing energy data that guides policymakers, industry, and consumers. With Mr. Abbey at the helm, we will have accurate, objective, and actionable energy data crucial to unleashing America's energy strength and reclaiming our global leadership.

Each nominee here today is more than qualified. They represent exactly the type of bold leadership America needs now. American energy has always been a cornerstone of American strength. When we produce energy here at home, we power our economy, we lift entire communities out of poverty, and we undercut our adversaries. Energy dominance means good jobs, strong families, and a safer country. When we unleash American production, it's the folks on the rigs, in the trucks, and in the plants who win, for the path forward isn't more rules from DC, it's more trust in the men and women who know how to get the job done. We need pipelines, plants, permits, and a purpose.

President Trump's first 100 days back in office have made one thing clear: the America of energy decline is over.

With that, we will proceed to the opening statements for each of the witnesses here today—nominees—and if you would proceed, Dr. Travnicek.

[Senator Hoeven's introduction of Dr. Travnicek, which was delivered during the business meeting held immediately before the hearing, is inserted below to precede Dr. Travnicek's opening statement.]

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN HOEVEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA**

Senator HOEVEN. I am introducing this morning Dr. Andrea Travnicek, and she has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science, and she has just got a stellar background for that position, and so, I am very pleased to provide her introduction, not only because she is a fellow North Dakotan, but because of her tremendous background and skill set for this position.

She has some family with her today—her father, Pat, and I actually thought she had two sisters, Jean and Heather, but I guess Jean is actually her mother, and I was confused when I saw them, I thought there were two sisters, but it's really great to have you guys here, and of course, I am kidding just a little bit.

Her father Pat has over 40 years, I think, with the United States Air Force, both as a pilot in uniform, and also then in civilian work as well. And I had the great good fortune when I was Governor of North Dakota to fly with him. He flew B-52s, and we did a practice run over the State Capitol in Bismarck, at about 50,000 feet, which was a lot of fun. And I think the only reason we got clearance to

do it was maybe because I was Governor at the time, I'm not sure, unless you guys were doing that all the time and you just didn't bother to tell us, because at 50,000 feet, we were way up there, but anyway, a great record of service.

And actually, when I was Governor, I hired Andrea to come work for us. She graduated from our outstanding land grant university, North Dakota State University, which, of course, everybody knows is the home of the Bison. I don't have to tell anybody that, certainly on the Republican side, because they hear me talk about it quite a bit.

She was a stellar student, but she was also a stellar athlete. She was a tremendous soccer player, and so, just an all-star performer all around. I hired her in the Governor's office, and after that, she worked for Governor Dalrymple, who succeeded me, and then another guy you might have heard of, and that is Governor Burgum, who is now the Secretary of the Interior. So it's no surprise that he wanted to bring Andrea with him, and she, actually, during the first Trump Administration, she was the Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, so she has got some great background for this job.

And so, I strongly recommend that people support her for this position. She is the kind of person who understands—these jobs are about getting things done. And Senator King, that means working with everybody, even Independents. Not just Republicans and Democrats, but Independents, too, to get things done, and I highly recommend her and ask for your support for her. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF DR. ANDREA TRAVNICEK, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR (WATER AND SCIENCE)

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you.

Good morning, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of the Committee. I am both humbled and honored to be nominated by President Trump to serve the American people as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the Department of the Interior. Furthermore, I am grateful for the support and trust of Secretary Burgum. And thank you, Senator Hoeven, for that kind introduction today.

I would like to begin by recognizing and thanking my parents Pat and Jean, and my sister Heather, who traveled from North Dakota to be here today, while my grandma, Norma, and my nephews, Ethan and Logan, and other family, are cheering me on back home. I would also like to thank my friends, colleagues, teammates and the Bison—with a “z”—family, some of whom are here today, for their continued guidance and support. I grew up in a military family, moving about every three years through high school, with roots grounded in northern Minnesota and North Dakota. My roots are further tied to an Interior site, actually—Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, located in Minnesota—where my parents met. Who knew we would all end up here today when Mom asked Dad to go for a walk along the lake.

Both of my parents set the example early on of the importance of serving others, through my dad's 44-year military career service

to the country that you heard about already, 28 of those active duty, and through my mom's service temperament in her business, work as a travel agent, and as a military spouse. Core values of dedication, integrity, and respect for others were ingrained at a young age. Our parents also raised us to have great respect for the natural world. We visited national parks and national wildlife refuges across the country between moves and spent summers back at the lake and farm in Minnesota. These treasured experiences—hunting, fishing, camping, and spending countless hours outdoors on the water, set a foundation for my passion for natural resources. Spending time in the field or kayaking are still my favorite places to be.

I am a proud graduate of North Dakota State University three times over. My master's research was located in the Badlands of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, where I conducted a land management study to reduce invasive species in the park. My Ph.D. research focused on stakeholder perspectives and network relationships as they related to lake management decisions in Minnesota. For over 20 years, my professional career has been connected to the management of natural resources in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. Through research, grassroots efforts, and working directly with landowners, project sponsors, and industries, I have been able to quickly provide assessments, identify opportunities, and provide solutions to meet management objectives across competing frameworks.

My work with the Army Corps in the Sacramento District provided a backdrop to an understanding of the complexities associated with the management of water in California. Participating firsthand in federal and state regulatory processes revealed inefficiencies in the bureaucratic system and set my public service mission—to achieve management decisions through accountable timely responses, process improvements, and collaborative and common-sense approaches. In 2011, record flooding took place across the State of North Dakota, impacting major communities along several rivers. As the senior policy advisor to the Governor, I worked with various international, federal, state, and local agencies and tribal nations to quickly identify changing conditions and determine needs. During this time, my parents' house was flooded waist-high, and my sister's house was flooded to the rooftop. This experience impressed upon me, both professionally and personally, the importance of real-time data, timely collaborative operations, and long-term management solutions, not only within a specific community or state, but within a shared watershed.

While serving in various leadership roles at the Department of the Interior during the first Trump Administration, I was fortunate to work on several Administration priorities, including those related to water and science initiatives. At the state level, I led the Department of Parks and Recreation, and during my tenure as the first Director of the Department of Water Resources, federally recognized tribal nations were added as partners for North Dakota cost-share for water projects. Over \$1.5 billion of state commitments were provided to cost-share partners to build both water supply and flood protection projects, and access to affordable and reliable water supply through two state-owned regional projects

was expanded. As we look across the West today, maintaining critical water infrastructure and managing water resources is crucial. Thoughtful, collaborative approaches will be important to meet management objectives for water users. And further identifying and mapping our nation's own mineral assets and energy assets through the U.S. Geological Survey's capabilities will assist in fulfilling President Trump's priorities related to increasing American mineral production and unleashing American energy.

If confirmed as the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, I will bring my core values and natural resources and management experiences to the role. I look forward to leading and working again with the dedicated teams of engineers, hydrologists, and scientists at the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Geological Survey to implement the Bureaus' core missions. I commit to working in cooperation with you and with the American people as decisions are made, and to implement the President and the Secretary's priorities to increase accountability and responsiveness, implement innovation over regulation, and manage America's resources for American prosperity and national security.

Thank you for meeting with me earlier this week and for having me here today. I look forward to answering any questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Travnicek follows:]

Statement of Dr. Andrea Travnicek
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
at the Department of the Interior
Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
April 30, 2025

Good morning Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and the Members of the Committee. I am both humbled and honored to be nominated by President Trump to serve the American people as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the Department of the Interior. Furthermore, I am grateful for the support and trust of Secretary Burgum.

I would like to begin by recognizing and thanking my parents Pat and Jean, and my sister Heather, who traveled from North Dakota to be here today, while my grandma, Norma, and my nephews, Ethan and Logan, are cheering me on back home. I would also like to thank my friends, colleagues, teammates and the Bison family, some of whom are here today, for their continued guidance and support.

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Our parents also raised us to have great respect for the natural world. We visited National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges across the country between moves and spent summers back at the lake and farm in Minnesota. These treasured experiences; hunting, fishing, camping, and spending countless hours outdoors on the water, set a foundation for my passion for natural resources. Spending time in the field or kayaking are still my favorite places to be.

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I commit to working in cooperation with you and with the American people as decisions are made, and to implement the President and the Secretary's priorities to increase accountability and responsiveness; implement innovation over regulation; and manage America's resources for American prosperity and national security.

Thank you for meeting with me earlier this week and for having me here today. I look forward to answering any questions.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Dr. Travnicek.
And now, Ms. Beyer, your opening comments, please.

**STATEMENT OF LESLIE BEYER, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR (LAND AND MINERALS MAN-
AGEMENT)**

Ms. BEYER. Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the Department of the Interior. I am deeply grateful to President Trump and to Secretary Burgum for their confidence in my ability to ensure responsible stewardship of America's public lands for the benefit of all Americans. I am also very thankful to have my friends and family here today, my parents Stan and Connie, my children Grant and Olivia, my oldest son, Ethan, watching us from Oklahoma State, where he should be studying for finals, and my Godparents, Charlie and Kathie.

From the time that my Grandfather Leslie began his career as a roughneck, and my Great Aunt Faye was one of the first and only female toolpushers in the oilfield, we have seen extraordinary feats of innovation in energy development that took our country from being a net energy importer, to the world's largest energy exporter, all while leading the world in reducing emissions. Growing up on our family farm in West Texas, I have been surrounded by the energy workforce my entire life, and I have witnessed firsthand how America has proven time and again that we can develop our resources cleaner, safer, and more efficiently than anyone else in the world. The advanced drilling equipment, the e frac systems, and the underwater remote vehicles that I am involved with today are vastly different than the tools of my grandparents' time, but the commitment to responsible production and the respect of our natural resources remains with me.

From spending my birthday weekend each year in Alaska hiking glaciers and running the Anchorage half marathon, to our annual family dove hunting season opener, and now managing my own farm, my family taught me to love and appreciate our lands, public and private. The Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management plays a critical role in balancing multiple uses of our public lands, recognizing the lands as a vital asset of the American people and an important contributor to our nation's financial health and security. If confirmed to serve as Assistant Secretary, I pledge to be a responsible steward of more than 245 million acres of surface, 700 million acres of subsurface, and over three billion acres offshore, ensuring that critical energy development takes place alongside other important uses of recreation, conservation, grazing, timber management, and housing. I appreciate and understand the significant responsibilities of the role, with its management of the four bureaus—the BLM, BOEM, BSEE and OSMRE. And if confirmed, I commit to working collaboratively with the members of this Committee regarding the decisions related to the Department's stewardship of federal lands and waters, including the management and development of their mineral and non-mineral resources.

As a former CEO of an organization representing over 650,000 U.S. energy workers, and now as a corporate director, I have responsibility for executive oversight, governance, and the health and safety of a combined global workforce of over 10,000 men and women. I bring a record of leadership and extensive experience managing large organizations, qualities that I will carry into the role of Assistant Secretary. Throughout my career in both the public and private sectors, I have emphasized collaboration, and will bring this approach to the Department of the Interior, working closely with states, tribes, local communities, and industry to develop decisions that benefit all. I also commit to ensuring that the bureaus under my authority carry out the directives established by Congress. This includes working to ensure that lease sales are conducted on a regular and predictable basis, providing the certainty necessary for long-term investment, meeting our national resource needs, and fulfilling the requirements of the law amid rapidly growing energy demand.

As a young White House staffer 20 years ago, I served on multiple trips overseas as efforts were made to secure oil and gas imports due to our perceived national energy scarcity. In the following years, in my career in the energy services and equipment sector, I had a front-row seat to the shale revolution that has taken us from energy scarcity to energy abundance and enabled the ability to strategically provide resources to our allies. It has driven my passion for American innovation, energy resilience, and respect for our nation's resources.

I appreciate meeting with many of you and learning of your specific focus areas in public lands management. And if confirmed, I will always keep at the forefront of my mind the critical mission of protecting and managing our natural resources, ensuring that we fully utilize our federal lands and waters to benefit all Americans. Thank you for the honor of appearing before you today, and for considering my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Beyer follows:]

Statement of Leslie Beyer
Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the Department of the Interior.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump and Secretary Burgum for their confidence in my ability to ensure responsible stewardship of America's public lands for the benefit of all Americans. I'm also very thankful to have many friends and family here today, my parents Stan and Connie, my children Grant and Olivia, my oldest son Ethan watching us from Oklahoma State, and my Godparents Charlie and Kathie.

From the time that my Grandfather Leslie began his career as a roughneck, and my Great Aunt Faye was one of the first and only female toolpushers in the oilfield, we have seen extraordinary feats of innovation in energy development that took our country from being a net energy importer, to the world's largest energy exporter, all while leading the world in reducing emissions.

Growing up on our family farm in West Texas, I have been surrounded by the energy workforce my entire life and witnessed firsthand how America has proven time and again that we can develop our resources cleaner, safer, and more efficiently than anyone else in the world.

The advanced drilling equipment, e frac systems, and underwater remote vehicles that I'm involved with today are vastly different than the tools and technologies of my grandparents' time, but the commitment to responsible production and respect of our natural resources remains with me.

From spending my birthday weekend each year in Alaska hiking glaciers and running the Anchorage half marathon, to our annual family dove hunting season opener, and now managing my own farm, my family taught me to love and appreciate our lands, public and private.

The Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management plays a critical role in balancing multiple uses of our public lands, recognizing these lands as a vital asset of the American people and important contributor to our nation's financial health and security.

If confirmed to serve as Assistant Secretary, I pledge to be a responsible steward of more than 245 million acres of surface, 700 million acres of subsurface and over 3 billion acres offshore, ensuring that critical energy development takes place alongside other important uses of recreation, conservation, grazing, timber management and housing.

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Department's stewardship of federal lands and waters, including the management and development of their mineral and non-mineral resources.

As a former CEO of an organization representing over 650,000 U.S. energy workers and now as a corporate director, I have responsibility for executive oversight, governance, and the health and safety of a combined global workforce of over 10,000 men and women. I bring a proven record of leadership and extensive experience managing large organizations—qualities I will carry into the role of Assistant Secretary.

Throughout my career in both public and private sectors, I have emphasized collaboration and will bring this approach to the Department of the Interior, working closely with states, tribes, local communities, and industry to develop solutions that benefit all.

I also commit to ensuring that the bureaus under my authority carry out the directives established by Congress. This includes working to ensure that lease sales are conducted on a regular and predictable basis—providing the certainty necessary for long-term investment, meeting our national resource needs, and fulfilling the requirements of the law amid rapidly growing energy demand.

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I appreciate meeting with many of you and learning of your specific focus areas in land and minerals management. If confirmed, I will always keep at the forefront of my mind the critical mission of protecting and managing our natural resources, ensuring that we fully utilize our federal lands and waters to benefit all Americans.

Thank you for the honor of appearing before you today, and for considering my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Ms. Beyer.
And now, Mr. Garrish.

**STATEMENT OF THEODORE GARRISH, NOMINATED TO BE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (NUCLEAR ENERGY)**

Mr. GARRISH. Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, members of the Committee, and professional staff, thank you for the opportunity to appear today as the nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. It is truly an honor to appear before the Committee, and I appreciate the confidence President Trump and Secretary Wright have shown in nominating me for this role.

First, I would like to thank my family, and especially my wife, Dory Stacks, who has been my strength and support as I embark on this position and this important task. Unfortunately, due to a scheduling conflict, she has to watch this on the web, although I have a number of friends here and colleagues that have joined me today.

My career has largely been devoted to energy, mainly in the field of nuclear. And much of my time has been spent devoted to public service, largely at the U.S. Department of Energy, originally as General Counsel and later as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy and also in Congressional, Intergovernmental, and Public Affairs, and most recently, as Assistant Secretary for International Affairs. And first, I would like to thank Senator Heinrich for the note relative to the statement that I made. I cannot believe that it was 42 years ago, but I can assure the Committee that I abide by those same principles today. In addition to energy, I also served as Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System and as a member of the President's Commission on Catastrophic Nuclear Accidents, also known as the Price-Anderson Commission.

Throughout my career, I have worked closely with this Committee, and I can remember many late nights working with professional staff and Senators assisting with legislative efforts, and I hope that that would continue in the future. I had the opportunity to serve as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy in the late 1980s, and the position was organized differently at the time, and nuclear energy faced different challenges than it does today. Today we are on the threshold of making nuclear a significant contributor to our nation's energy future and making a true comeback for this important source of affordable, reliable, and safe energy, and to become a source for industrial heat for chemical production, mining, and other uses. While in the private sector, my time was spent largely on nuclear projects. Notably, I often worked with "new-comer" nuclear countries, helping them develop their programs, talent, and expertise consistent with the IAEA programs for new nuclear nations.

If I may, let me briefly give you my vision on some of the important work that I would hope to achieve if I have the privilege of confirmation. First and foremost, as soon as feasible, we need to build a new reactor, either a large or small—SMR or micro reactor. It is important for us to proceed with development of advanced reactors and their licensing and siting. Nuclear offers an extraor-

dinary capacity to meet the coming increased electrical demand in a reliable, affordable, and safe way. This is important, and we need to get on with building the next generation of nuclear plants.

Second, the development of a robust domestic enrichment industry is essential for our national security, and we must conduct a realistic evaluation of our current system under development and determine if our current methodology will work and provide the needed actions to protect our national security.

Third, we should evaluate the status of the international market for U.S. nuclear developers and supply chains overseas to ensure that we maintain strong positioning for U.S. products and services and build the long-term relationships needed for U.S. companies, building upon our strong nuclear culture with the highest standards of non-proliferation. We should also consider the further use of intergovernmental agreements to promote our U.S. interests.

And finally, we need to begin to resolve the nuclear waste dilemma and work with Congress, communities, and states on solutions. If confirmed, it would be my honor to work cooperatively with the Congress, especially this Committee, on achieving these and other objectives. Hopefully, I can contribute to the development of this important energy source. Again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear today, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this Committee and members of the staff in furthering the interests of nuclear energy for the benefit of the United States, and I look forward to responding to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Garrish follows:]

**Testimony of Theodore “Ted” J. Garrish
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy
at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 30, 2025**

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, Members of the Committee, and Professional Staff, thank you for the opportunity to appear today as the Nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. It is an honor to appear before the Committee and I appreciate the confidence President Trump and Secretary Wright have shown in nominating me for this role.

First, I would like to introduce my family here today—my wife Dory Stacks who is my strength and support as I embark on this important task.

My career has largely been devoted to energy, mainly in the field of nuclear energy. And much of my time has been spent devoted to public service, largely at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), originally as General Counsel and later as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy and also in Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, and most recently as Assistant Secretary for International Affairs.

In addition, I served as the Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System and as a member of the President’s Commission on Catastrophic Nuclear Accidents (Price-Anderson Commission).

Throughout my career, I have worked closely with this Committee, I can remember many late nights working with professional staff and Senators assisting with legislative efforts. I had the opportunity to serve as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy in the late 1980’s. The position was organized differently at the time and nuclear energy faced different challenges than it does today. Today we are on the threshold of making nuclear a significant contributor to our nation’s energy future and making a true comeback for this important source of affordable and reliable electricity and to become a source of industrial heat for chemical production, mining and other uses.

While in the private sector, my time was spent heavily on nuclear projects, and notably I often worked with “newcomer” nuclear countries helping them to develop their programs, talent and expertise consistent with the IAEA programs for new nuclear nations.

Let me briefly give you my vision on some of the important work that I will hope to achieve if I have the privilege of confirmation. First and foremost, as soon as feasible we need to build a

new reactor, both large or small (Small Modular Reactor or micro). It is important to proceed with the development of advanced reactors and their licensing and siting. Nuclear offers an extraordinary capacity to meet the coming increased electricity demand in a reliable, affordable and safe way. This is important and we need to get on with building the next generation of nuclear plants.

Second, development of robust domestic enrichment industry is essential for our national security, and we must conduct a realistic evaluation of our current system under development and determine if our current methodology will work and whether additional actions are required. Third, we should evaluate the status of the international market for US nuclear developers and supply chains overseas to ensure that we maintain strong positioning for US products and services and build the long-term relationships needed for US companies building upon our strong nuclear culture overseas with the highest standards of non-proliferation. We should consider the further use of Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) to promote our US interests.

Finally, we need to begin to resolve the nuclear waste dilemma and work with Congress, communities and States on solutions.

If confirmed, it would be my honor to work cooperatively with the Congress, and especially this Committee on achieving these and other objectives. Hopefully, I can contribute to the development of this important energy source.

Again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear today. If confirmed, look forward to working with the members of this committee and members of the staff in furthering the interests of nuclear energy for the benefits of the United States.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Mr. Garrish.

And now, we are going to turn to Mr. Abbey, but I would like to invite our colleague, Senator Murkowski, who was Chair of this Committee for quite a number of years, for an introduction of Mr. Abbey.

Senator Murkowski.

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

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you.

It is great to be able to welcome all of you here this morning—a pretty incredible group of nominees that we have in front of us. Some of you have been around for a while and we welcome you back. But it's really my honor to be able to reintroduce Tristan Abbey to the Committee. Mr. Abbey is a proud alumnus of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. He served on my team from 2012 to 2017. He took a little bit of a break and then he came back from 2019 to 2020. So he is probably more familiar with this side of the dais over here being used to sitting on the benches behind us, but really, it's a privilege, it's really an honor to have you in front of the Committee at the witness table as the President's choice to lead the Energy Information Administration.

I am going to tell you, as my colleagues, there is nobody, there is no one that I have met around here who has spent more time with EIA or with CRS. This is a gentleman who digs into the issues. He is really smart in the first place, so he knows a lot, but he goes so far below the surface to understand, to master the issues, and then, applying this knowledge to help us make really good policy. He was instrumental in helping us lift the crude oil export ban with a strategy and an implementation plan that, in my view, was quite remarkable. When I had challenges, when I had tough policy questions, I brought Tristan into it, and I did so because he is thoughtful, he is analytical, he brings rigor to everything. He is a true expert in his arena. These are all qualities that we would ask for in an EIA Administrator.

I think it's worth noting that four former EIA Administrators agree with me. They have written a letter supporting Mr. Abbey. So I would ask unanimous consent for that letter to be added to the hearing record, following Mr. Abbey's testimony.

Senator HOEVEN. Without objection.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So Tristan, again, thank you. You did extraordinary work for the Committee, and I hope that the Committee will recognize that by giving you its strongest support. But I am pleased to see you today. I don't know if your wife and baby are here, but—yeah, right behind you there. We have kind of watched everybody grow up together. So welcome back, and it's an honor to introduce you.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Murkowski.

We will start five-minute rounds of questioning. I want to check with our Ranking Member, Senator Heinrich.

Did I miss somebody?

Oh, I'm sorry. You want an opening statement too?

[Laughter.]

Senator HOEVEN. Usually after Senator Murkowski goes, you know, with her all her time as Chairwoman, nobody can improve on that, but in your case, Mr. Abbey, we are going to let you go ahead with an opening statement.

STATEMENT OF TRISTAN ABBEY, NOMINATED TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you very much, Senator Hoeven, and Senator Murkowski for that wonderful introduction. Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of this Committee. It is an honor to appear before you today. I am grateful to President Trump for the nomination to serve as Administrator of the Energy Information Administration and to Energy Secretary Chris Wright for his confidence in me to serve in this position.

My wonderful wife, Jenn, is in attendance. It was during my first tour here on the Committee's staff that I met her, and during the second that we were married. Our two children are a bit too young for this event, but in due time, I hope they watch the video. These three ladies—Jenn, Evelyn, and Josephine—bring more joyful light into my life than I ever could have imagined. When I was a kid, my parents, Phil and Wilawan, led my brother Ian and me on a couple of great adventures to the Middle East. Abqaiq leaves a lasting impression on a kindergartener and a teenager doesn't forget the Suez Canal. I can never thank my dad and mom enough for showing us the world in all of its richness. Times weren't always easy, but I hope they don't regret it, because I never will.

I could never have predicted the path of my career, one possible only here in the United States. After a brief stint in finance, I arrived here on Committee staff in 2012. Eager to learn, I worked on the economics of basically all things energy, even dabbling in the lands portfolio, the complexity of which makes the electric grid look like a game of tic-tac-toe. In many ways, I grew up here on the Committee staff. In 2017, I was honored to join the first Trump Administration, initially on the "beach head" team at the Department of Energy, and later the National Security Council and National Economic Council staff.

Following my time at the White House Complex, I returned here to the Committee staff, where I worked on Washington's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, when the oil price fell below zero. Serving the American people in various roles within the Federal Government has been the honor of my life. Each of these public-sector opportunities was a blessing. None of this work could have been accomplished without frequent and persistent engagement with the EIA. Some will say that the Administrator of the EIA should not have this deep level of exposure to the policymaking world. On the contrary, leadership that understands the demands of policymaking and the needs of policymakers is exactly what the EIA requires at this critical time.

If confirmed as Administrator, I would have three priorities. First, as a member of the President's team, I would fulfill my statutory role of providing objective energy data and analysis to the American people and to policymakers—in Ranking Member Heinrich's term, the "common set of nonpartisan facts." Having served inside the government at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue

and outside, as a think-tanker and private-sector consultant, I have seen EIA from a wide variety of perspectives. The reputation that the agency has built is one I pledge to steward carefully, if confirmed.

Second, EIA is in urgent need of revitalization. It is still the world's premier energy data agency, but this did not happen overnight. Our nation invested billions of dollars and nearly fifty years to make it so. If confirmed, I would ensure that this investment continues to pay off. In my view, EIA must clear the decks of unfinished projects, recruit and retain the best talent, develop the most powerful analytical abilities, and modernize its information systems.

Finally, I believe that existing Congressional mandates for EIA should be executed upon. Two stand out in particular. One is the expansion of global energy data collection and analysis. The other is the establishment of a critical minerals outlook. I know that this Committee is particularly interested in both issues, and I believe achieving these two goals alone would go a long way to placing the EIA on sound footing for a generation.

Thank you for your time, and thanks again to President Trump and Secretary Wright for their confidence. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Abbey and the letter mentioned by Senator Murkowski follow:]

Testimony of Tristan Abbey
Nominee for the Position of Administrator of the Energy Information Administration
at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 30, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of this Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today. I am grateful to President Trump for the nomination to serve as Administrator of the Energy Information Administration and to Energy Secretary Chris Wright for his confidence in me to serve in this position.

My wife Jenn is in attendance. It was during my first tour here on the Committee's staff that I met her, and during the second that we were married. Our two children are a bit young for this event, but in due time, I hope they watch the video. These three ladies—Jenn, Evelyn, and Josephine—bring more joyful light into my life than I ever could have imagined.

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understands the demands of policymaking and the needs of policymakers is exactly what the EIA requires at this critical time.

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Thank you for your time—and thanks once again to President Trump and Secretary Wright for their confidence. I look forward to your questions.

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

We, as former Administrators of the U.S. Energy Information Administration, representing both political parties, are writing to express our strong endorsement of Tristan Abbey to be the next Administrator.

Tristan Abbey has served ably on Capitol Hill and in the White House complex. As Administrator, he would bring to bear a reputation for the careful and fair handling of data and analysis in an environment of highly demanding policymaking. We are confident that, if confirmed, he will be a good steward of the Energy Information Administration's own reputation for objectivity. President Trump has made a solid choice.

We applaud the Committee for prioritizing this nomination and encourage speedy confirmation.

Sincerely,

Hon. Linda Capuano (2018-2021)
Hon. Adam Sieminski (2012-2017)
Hon. Guy Caruso (2002-2008)
Hon. Jay Hakes (1993-2000)

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Mr. Abbey.

At this point, we will kick off five-minute rounds of questions. I do want to check with the Ranking Member to see if he had anything before we begin the questions.

Senator HEINRICH. Go ahead.

Senator HOEVEN. Okay, thank you.

Dr. Travnicek, if confirmed, will you prioritize the development and maintenance of western water infrastructure to ensure communities, farmers, and ranchers continue to have access to reliable and affordable water supplies?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator Hoeven, for that question. We know that infrastructure for water supply is extremely important across the West. We were making sure in the State of North Dakota that we had resources to make sure that we were able to get that affordable, reliable water supply to people. So if confirmed in this role, yes, I am committed to working toward that as well.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you.

Also, talk about the importance that USGS continues on a regular basis to update estimates of recoverable oil and gas reserves and talk about what you can do to continue to enhance that energy development.

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, as it relates to the USGS, we know that their body of work is extremely important. They play a critical role as it relates, not only to the critical mineral list, but also as it relates to oil and gas assessments. So making sure that we have the expertise on that and to be able to keep up with those studies and those demands that we are seeing to make sure that we have that dominance of energy here in America, so yes, so continue to work on that as well.

Senator HOEVEN. What are your top three priorities? What are the top three things you are going to accomplish going in to the position?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, if confirmed, the top three priorities that I would be looking at—we know that there is a lot of discussion right now related to the Colorado River. We have some looming deadlines that are in front of us next year. So we are going to have to work really closely with those seven states within the Basin. At the same time, also, the critical minerals list. We know that that is due this year. We are going to have to be working really closely with our federal agencies, our different stakeholders, the public, as we work to get that list put together, get that updated based on what we are hearing from the public. And then, getting back to where we started the conversation earlier, looking at infrastructure. We know that we have drought across the West, across the country, so we are going to have to look at all those different tools in the toolbox, making sure that we have modernized systems out there, making sure that we are looking at aquifer recharge, looking at water reuse, wastewater. So really just looking at that suite of possibilities as we try to get water where it's needed.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you.

Ms. Beyer, we have a lot of resources that are owned by the public, but that interface with private ownership as well. And so, BLM runs across that all the time. Are you committed to maximizing access to development of those resources in a responsible manner?

And will you work with me on my North Dakota Trust Lands Completion Act, which helps make sure that everyone is treated fairly in that development, whether it's a public interest or a private interest?

Ms. BEYER. Yes, sir, Senator, I appreciated our visit about that, and if I am confirmed, I absolutely look forward to working with you. There are multiple uses there for those lands, and if confirmed, like I said, I look forward to working with you on that.

Senator HOEVEN. How about NEPA timelines, right? I mean, because delay can be defeat, right? We need certainty out there for everybody, for all involved. So what about these NEPA timelines and getting things done, again, in a transparent, responsible way, but getting things done?

Ms. BEYER. Sir, I think we can all agree that permitting should be streamlined. This Committee has done extraordinary work on that. And if I am confirmed, I hope to work with this Committee moving forward, but absolutely, you know, coming from the oil fields services sector of the business, this is a 650,000-plus workforce that develops energy in the U.S., and if our companies can't get permits to produce, permits to build transmission, we will be behind in answering the increasing energy demand. And so, that, sir, is a top priority for me, is to be able to assist and help with getting a more reasonable timeline on our permitting system.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you.

Mr. Garrish, how are we going to get past some of the public perceptions and concerns in regard to nuclear—or, as one of my good friends and a former President used to say, “nuclur” energy. How are we going to develop nuclear energy and get people to be comfortable that we are developing it in a safe, reliable way with a good management plan for, you know, the nuclear waste?

Mr. GARRISH. Well, Senator, nuclear is, in fact, one of the safest forms of energy available today. And I think it is a matter of communicating with the public and making sure that they understand what's happening. We need to make sure that we have a good public affairs component to every nuclear plant, that the community understands exactly what a nuclear plant is, and that the sorts of fears that they have are really unfounded.

Senator HOEVEN. So what is the one thing you would say to people and want them to remember in regard to safely handling nuclear energy?

Mr. GARRISH. Well, in terms of this, the record is indisputable in terms of the safety of nuclear plants.

Senator HOEVEN. Okay. That's strong. Appreciate that very much.

Thanks to all of you, and Mr. Abbey, I am not going to have a question for you because I understand Senator Murkowski has got a lot of them, so we will wait for that.

Ranking Member Heinrich.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Senator Hoeven.

Ms. Beyer, as Assistant Secretary, you will oversee management of more than 245 million acres of public land. This land belongs to all Americans, including every single one of my constituents, and Americans highly value their ability to access these lands for hunt-

ing, fishing, and other recreational uses. Do you support the large-scale divestment of our public lands?

Ms. BEYER. Sir, only Congress has the authority to dispose of any public lands, but I believe that our public lands have a multiple-use mandate, and they can be used for energy production, recreation, and any number of other uses for the benefit of all Americans.

Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Travnicsek, you have been on staff at the Department for several months now, and I appreciate many of our conversations. But that gives you specific insights into decisions that have already been made at the Department. The new NEPA guidance for energy projects that the Secretary announced last week does not make any mention of tribal consultation. However, it requires all reviews to be done within 14 to 28 days. I have personally never seen meaningful tribal consultation completed in that time frame. So my question is, is the Administration proposing to eliminate tribal consultation for these projects?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator Heinrich, and I also appreciated some of the conversations that we have had already. So we know that there have been a lot of conversations for a long time related to trying to streamline the permitting processes, right?

Senator HEINRICH. Yes.

Dr. TRAVNICEK. I think we have all been frustrated by that. We have seen some of the discussions here within this Committee as well. So we are really just trying to figure out how we can move forward while still meeting the different requirements as well, right? We know that ESA was mentioned in there, and NHPA. Also, we know that we will have to engage with tribes. So at the same time, how do we get the permits out the door, get the infrastructure in place, develop the resources that we need? So it's going to be trying to work on all of the above, working with ESA, NHPA, and also engaging with the tribes.

Senator HEINRICH. As someone who strongly supported permitting reform, and a majority of the members on this Committee did, I think we largely support getting to yes or no faster, but I really want to urge you to make sure that that tribal consultation process is not a "check the box" exercise, that it is meaningful.

I am going to switch gears a little bit, back to you, Ms. Beyer. Two weeks ago—actually let me quote back something that you said just a few minutes ago: "If our companies can't get permits, we will be behind." I agree with that sentiment. Two weeks ago, Secretary Burgum sent a letter to the Acting Director of BOEM, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, ordering an unprecedented stop-work order to Equinor's Empire Wind Project off the coast of New York. That's a fully permitted project. It has undergone rigorous review. It's already under construction and it would power half a million homes. Canceling this project is a job killer for the skilled trades. And my concern is that it will squash any faith that the private sector has in the federal permitting process. If you can do this to one project, of one energy type, you can do it to another of a completely different energy type.

So if fully permitted projects are subjected to arbitrary stop-work orders, how can we expect the private sector to commit capital to those large expensive projects?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, thank you for that question. As you know, I have not been confirmed, and so did not participate in that decision-making. I agree with you—

Senator HEINRICH. Speak to the larger issue, like not the specificity of that issue.

Ms. BEYER. Right. While we need all forms of energy that we can get our hands on, there is a premium to secure reliable and affordable energy. I am from Texas. We have a lot of wind energy there. I appreciate that it's additive, but there is a premium to secure affordable and reliable energy that is not weather dependent, in my view. And I will adhere to the guidance of the Secretary, if I am confirmed.

Senator HEINRICH. In your view, should permitting be transparent and predictable?

Ms. BEYER. Yes, sir.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

Senator Justice.

Senator JUSTICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, everyone here, especially these great nominees and all their families. I think about all the people that are out here in our audience and everything. I think about a young man that is intrigued and fascinated and motivated by the process of everything that's going on here. His name is Mikey Wolford, and I absolutely want everybody here to just take just a moment and try to listen to what I would have to say because I am from a real energy state and I have been in the energy business forevermore. And absolutely, I know a lot, an awful lot about energy, and I can tell everyone here, whether they are on our side of the aisle or the other side of the aisle, it does not matter to me. What really should matter to all of us is, we have a crisis right now and it's looming like Godzilla standing in the background right now for all of us, for every single last one of us. And we have got to react or Godzilla will surely have a good day and we will have a bad day.

And to react is just this simple, and I have said it over and over and over and over. You are going to have to decide, America. We are going to have to decide either for homes or jobs and industry. We are going to have to decide. And so, with all that being said, you know, these nominees, I would say to you just this: you have a responsibility here that is second to none. It's unbelievable, the pressure, the responsibility, how we are relying on you right now. As you go forward, and I surely hope and pray you will be confirmed without any problems, but with all that being said, today, like it or not like it, in this country, energy is everything—everything. No matter what anybody says, it is the answer and it is the key to Emerald City, period. Now, that's all there is to it.

So with all that being said, I am sure that you have areas of expertise like crazy. I am sure you have a passion and a love for our lands, you know, Dr. Travnicek, you know, you spoke of, you know, how you grew up and loved to hunt and fish and everything. Well, that's me all over. That is absolutely me in every way. And I am sure all of you feel exactly the same. No one wants to harm our environment. No one wants to do anything to our waters, absolutely, but we have got to react because there are bad days looming

right in front of us if we don't react. That's what our President is trying to do. That's what he does with an emergency in regard to energy.

So I would say to you just this, and I have got just a couple of real quick questions and everything. I would say, in regard to water, you know, many of our communities are very rural and we rely on private wells. What resources—and this question is for Dr. Travnicek—what resources will your Department provide to assist these communities in ensuring the safety and reliability of their water supplies?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

We know, as we are looking in rural areas and within communities, that water infrastructure is going to continue to be more important. So, as it relates to, if confirmed, the Bureau of Reclamation, I will be looking at the different authorities that we do have, looking for opportunities where there might be availability for cost share. And at the same time, just trying to see, too, what partnerships might be, as we look at those local communities.

Senator JUSTICE. Thank you.

I have got to say one other thing, and I don't have a whole lot of time, but Senator Hoeven is a really sharp guy and he is a friend and he made a statement just a second ago—he is dead on the money, splitting the bullseye like you can't imagine. He said delay can be defeat. Well, I have never heard it put that way, but it is absolutely splitting the bullseye. You have got to move. You have got to have a real passion. You have got to move, and you have got to know the world. The world depends on you. Every single country in this world, the more energy they have, the longer their people live, the healthier their people are. We need to quit being afraid of energy. You have got a lot of good people out there that know how to extract and make energy for all of us. We need to let them go, we need to turn them loose, and we need to quit being afraid. Absolutely—it can scare us to death. We don't need to worry about Godzilla and the claws unless we don't act. And if we don't act, Godzilla will act, I promise you.

That's all I have got. Thank you so much.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Justice. Thanks for your comments and your strong message, appreciate it very much.

Senator King.

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Beyer, a couple of things. I just want to follow up on Senator Hoeven's question. The problem with the effective revocation of a permit that had already been granted is the chilling effect that has on developers, generally, whether it's wind power or oil and gas or anything else. That was an extraordinary action, and having been an energy developer myself, you spend millions of dollars, and months and years to get your permits. And to have a permit effectively canceled after you had gone through that entire process, the concern has to be, not necessarily about this particular project, but what this says to developers, generally, about the reliability and certainty of the permitting process. And I joined with Senator Barasso and others, Senator Manchin, on permitting reform. I am very strongly in favor of permitting reform, but a step which with-

draws an already issued permit, I hope that you will agree, is a dangerous message to the development community, generally.

Ms. BEYER. Senator, I agree with that completely. The community that is developing, that is producing, that is building transmission, the midstream companies that will move our energy across the country, they absolutely need certainty in our permitting system so that they can make financial investment decisions.

Senator KING. I appreciate that.

Let me go on to a different question.

Ms. BEYER. Of course.

Senator KING. Thank you for that answer.

You answered Senator Heinrich about conveyance of public lands—you said only Congress can do that. Can I press you a little bit further and say that you will not support the conveyance or transfer of public lands without Congressional approval?

Ms. BEYER. Sir, if I am confirmed, I will follow the law, as directed by Congress. I know that—

Senator KING. But let me talk just in general policy. Do you think there is any justification for the conveyance of public lands in a more general sense, and I don't mean little inholdings and that kind of thing where we do those things all the time that make total sense, but I am talking about a more broad program of conveyance of public lands to states or private interest. As a matter of policy, do you support that or do you oppose it?

Ms. BEYER. I believe that not every acre of public land holds the exact same value and that states know best how they want to use their public lands. And so—

Senator KING. So you are saying that you are okay with conveying federal public lands to states? Is that what you just said?

Ms. BEYER. I hope to be a collaborative partner with Congress on that.

Senator KING. Well, I hope you will take that very seriously because I have grave concerns about conveyance of public lands. It belongs to the public, and the public should have a response, and the public's voice is right here. So in your initial statement—only Congress can do this—I hope that you will live up to that in your position.

Mr. Garrish, I have been in a number of meetings recently about SMRs and development of future nuclear power. It strikes me that it's not going to happen on its own in the private sector because it's simply too expensive, that there needs to be a kind of CHIPS and Science Act, if you will, for new nuclear technology with federal support for the first five, or some number, because the expense is so great of developing a brand new, highly complex piece of technology. What are your thoughts on that?

Mr. GARRISH. I agree with that completely. The private sector cannot—

Senator KING. Let the record show that he said he agreed with me completely. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GARRISH. My position on this is that we need to develop a series of mechanisms for financing of reactors. The private sector can do some of this. The loan office can help. That was very helpful in the Vogtle plants, as you know, and it has been helpful in other

plants that we have. In addition to that, we have to look for other sources of financing and even grants, in some cases, and we do have some grant programs currently—

Senator KING. Particularly for the early prototypes.

Mr. GARRISH. Getting prototypes to work and to be tested and to demonstrate the materials that you need for licensing, that is a program that we currently have underway, and we are going to implement at the Idaho National Laboratory, and that is an extremely important part of the process. We have to get these plants past the first-of-a-kind. We have to build five of them or ten of them to be able to demonstrate that these can be built in factories and we can move forward.

So I agree with you, this is a complex matter as to how we go through the process, but we have to look for financing tools and financing interest and people that are interested in doing this, including the government.

Senator KING. Mr. Garrish, I really appreciate your willingness to continue to serve and to demonstrate that those of us who remember President Reagan still have something to offer.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GARRISH. Thank you.

Senator KING. Thank you.

Mr. Abbey, just very briefly, we need objective data to make good policy. It's as simple as that. And I hope in your position, and I think you have the background to do so, you used the term, "objective data." That's what is needed—straight-up, honest data without political bias that will then help us to make good policy. Are you committed to objective data?

Mr. ABBEY. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator KING. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Senator Murkowski, you are up next.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am just smiling because I was given a statement from Senator Murkowski, who was on this Committee on July 15, 1986, and apparently at that time, my father introduced you, Mr. Garrish, to the Committee as you were being nominated to become the Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. So as my colleague has said, there are a few from the Reagan days that not only understand things, but understand things so well that they are back yet again. So, a little bit of Committee history here. So just want to acknowledge that.

Ms. Beyer, I want to speak to you—a couple questions here, and I love your connections to Alaska. It takes tough individuals to run the Mayor's Marathon, and I just love the fact that you like to spend family time up there. So you are familiar with Alaska. The last time we had a Senate-confirmed ASLM position was an Alaskan, Joe Balash. He obviously got a lot of these issues that are before Interior, before BLM. And you are going to be asked to pick up a lot in this space, as you well know. I know that you are familiar with the "no more wilderness" clause that is contained in ANILCA. I just need your commitment to me and to the Committee that you will ensure that BLM and other agencies under your purview abide by this "no more" clause. And even going a little bit be-

yond that, whether or not you would be willing to work with the delegation to evaluate what has happened in Alaska since passage of ANILCA as a result of BLM's oftentimes unilateral decisions to withdraw more and more land from public access. So just a willingness to work with the delegation on this.

Ms. BEYER. Absolutely, ma'am. Given my personal affinity for the state, it's one of the things that I am most looking forward to working on, if I am confirmed. I will look forward to spending time there and working with you on all those issues.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. We will invite you back often.

Speaking of Alaska land conveyances, as you know, we are dealing with the lifting of outdated public land orders—long, long overdue land conveyances that are owed under our Alaska Statehood Act, as well as the Native Claims Settlement Act. We have to resolve submerged lands issues. These are matters that require a great deal of detail, time, and resources. But we have been a state now for long enough, and I think some of these promises that were made at statehood need to be completed. We need your help to do that, and I would just like your commitment to that.

Ms. BEYER. Absolutely, ma'am, if I am lucky enough to be confirmed, I look forward to working on that.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good, good, good.

And last question to you—I know you aren't in the building yet, but the Department has just recently announced a new five-year program for offshore development as well as what they are calling a new High Arctic Planning Area. And I get where the Administration is coming from. It's basically put everything on the table, and then figure out how we might want to winnow some of these back, actually where we want leasing to occur. As you well know, in Alaska, there are places that we seek to develop aggressively, responsibly, and then there are areas that we don't. So I would just ask your commitment, again, that you would work with the Alaska delegation. We have Alaskans that are here in the room as part of Alaska Day today, but especially our North Slope leaders to determine where leasing is appropriate, and perhaps not appropriate within the Alaska OCS.

Ms. BEYER. Absolutely. I look forward to being briefed on the details of that and I will take a very close look at it.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Very good, appreciate that.

Mr. Abbey, I am going to give you an opportunity to share a little bit of your vision here. You don't have much time, but you have spent a lot of time thinking about many of these things. You mentioned the vision that you have for the critical minerals and the specific outlook, but is what we were able to accomplish when it came to lifting the oil export ban, and again, the strategy, the implementation, can we do this with critical minerals? Can we do this with LNG exports? Is this something that, in your new role, you think you can bring to the table looking at the objective, analytical data that EIA brings to bear, but can we develop, can we work towards developing better strategic approaches to these very important issues?

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

In my view, objectivity is a discipline. It is something that you can practice, and in various capacities I have been an objective

steward of data. In other capacities, I have had more of a policy role. If confirmed as Administrator, I would no longer be in a policymaking role, but I do believe that the crude oil export debate illustrates the importance of EIA. There were a lot of think tanks and consulting firms that were writing reports about crude oil exports, but all of them were using EIA data. EIA data, to borrow Ranking Member Heinrich's term, once again, this common set of facts. And I think the EIA can absolutely play a critical role in helping anybody who is trying to develop any kind of energy policy to equip them with the information that they need.

Senator MURKOWSKI. That's a good answer.

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ABBEY. I learned from the best.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Murkowski.

Ms. Beyer, I would like to start with you, if that's okay.

I'm sorry—I forgot. Senator Cortez Masto, that was very bad. You are up to bat. Thank you.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Well, as Chairman, I respect your position, so thank you.

First of all, congratulations. Congratulations on your nominations. Welcome to the family members that are here. It's an exciting time. Thank you so much.

Let me start with you, Mr. Garrish. I am sure you are not surprised—I am from Nevada, and this is a question I ask everyone from Department of Energy, starting with Secretary Chris Wright, who provided the following QFR response during his nomination process. He said, "The people of Nevada are not in favor of Yucca Mountain and thus President Trump and I do not support Yucca Mountain as a waste repository."

My question to you is, do you agree with this statement?

Mr. GARRISH. Yes.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

If confirmed, will you maintain efforts to establish a consent-based repository site selection process?

Mr. GARRISH. I would like to speak to that, if I may.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Please.

Mr. GARRISH. I have been concerned over the word consent-based. I would prefer something that sounds more like collaborative. In other words, I would like to collaborate with states, not—the idea of consent suggests that you are doing something to the states that they may not want. I would prefer to work collaboratively with the states and determine what states might be interested in this potential opportunity and whether there are things that could be added to it, benefits, and that is a process that we could enter over a period of time.

And so, I would propose initially to go with a system that would be more collaborative than consent-based.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Can I ask, then, if there is a consent-based legislation, and the consent is really taking into consideration whether the states—including Nevada—and the stakeholders agree to any nuclear waste being sited in their state, you would

take that into consideration and would not force it upon them if they did not agree to it?

Mr. GARRISH. Generally, I guess my belief is that if the state is not interested, then the collaborative process would probably terminate.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Okay.

And so, that law in legislation, when we talk about consent-based and every state being treated equally, that should include the State of Nevada?

Mr. GARRISH. Well, the legislation that I think that you are referring to, there is no administrative position on it at this time. So I am not in a position to say one way or the other.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thus, the superseding legislation to allow all states to be treated equally, including the State of Nevada. You would support that if there was superseding legislation?

Mr. GARRISH. Well, I am not in a position today to tell you, legislatively, to give you a position on behalf of the Administration.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. So let me just say, previously the Secretary has said he would support it. So I am a little confused why you wouldn't, but we can have further conversation about this. I am concerned about your position, however, but I need to get on to some other questions here, but let's have further conversation.

Mr. GARRISH. I understand that we are scheduling a meeting, hopefully, where we can talk about this and the collaborative approach and generally your suggestions. I am very interested.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Mr. GARRISH. And I think in terms of entering this position, if confirmed, I would really like to get your views as one of the first people I talk to on this.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Good. I look forward to the conversation.

Dr. Travnicek, you talked about the Colorado River. Thank you very much. This is a priority for all of the Basin States along the Colorado River. We know that we have deadlines coming up. The guidelines for future water allocations expire in 2027. There are negotiations going on right now. The hope is that the Basin States will come together and agree to the guidelines and how they are going to manage the Colorado River. My question to you is, if confirmed, how will you prioritize this process to ensure that the Basin can reach that necessary consensus and avoid litigation before time runs out?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

Yes, as discussed earlier, the Colorado River is going to be front and center. If confirmed, it will be one of my top priorities to hit the ground running on right away. We know that we have to work with the seven Basin States. It needs to be consensus-driven, state led. We don't want this to be decided by a judge. So it's going to be my top priority.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. And I look forward to working with you. I know all the Basin States—we do, as well.

One final question, let me ask you, because this came to my attention just recently talking with my electric co-ops, who are concerned about hydropower from the dam, Hoover Dam, as well as Glen Canyon Dam. But let me just talk a little bit about Hoover Dam. In Congress, we previously made significant investments

through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act to improve water infrastructure and to mitigate drought conditions along the river. And you talked a little bit about that. Unfortunately, many of those funds are currently halted. Additionally, Colorado River contract customers have been working with the Bureau of Reclamation to receive some of those Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds to install wide-head turbines that can operate at low levels and continue to generate the hydropower that my companies and Nevadans need.

If these turbines are not installed and production generation drops due to the low water level that has been set by the Bureau of Reclamation, customers in Nevada will be forced to replace these hydropower resources with more expensive power, impacting power prices for rural communities in Nevada. And so, my question to you is, can you commit to me to work to release those funds that were allocated by Congress in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act that addresses those needs—specifically those projects that we need along the Colorado River? Would you commit to working with me to release those funds?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, thank you for the question.

So as it relates to hydropower, right, we know that Reclamation is the second largest producer of hydropower. It is extremely important. It is extremely important to have those low costs related to the energy production as well. So as we look at those different funds, I appreciate the overview related to what those funds have been sitting and supposed to go toward, so if confirmed, I will be committed to looking into that just to understand more of what it is and how that could help.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cortez Masto.

Ms. Beyer, let's start with you. We have about 700 miles of our southern border that consists of federal land, and on a number of occasions, over and over and over again, over many years, federal land managers have blocked access or delayed access to customs and border protection to that land. They want to keep them out of that land in the name of environmental protection, but meanwhile, illegal border crossings have themselves caused massive environmental degradation, including leaving trash piles, damaged ecosystems, wildfires, and other problems. If confirmed, how will you prioritize preventing environmental damage that may be caused by illegal immigration?

Mr. BEYER. I believe that the local stakeholders know best what is going on on those public lands, and I would instruct the BLM to work collaboratively with people on the ground to ensure that we are using/making the best use of the land.

The CHAIRMAN. It's certainly not an environmentally neutral thing to allow the border to be open. And so, that certainly has to be taken into account.

Dr. Travnicek, a federal decision last year requires the bypass of hydropower generation at Glen Canyon Dam to control the smallmouth bass, a species that, itself, threatens the ESA-listed humpback chub. Now, restricting hydropower generation does a lot of things, including forcing customers to purchase more expensive

replacement power. This is also depleting the Basin Fund, which supports critical infrastructure along the Colorado River that the Colorado River Basin States need and rely on. If confirmed, how will you balance ESA compliance on the one hand with the need to protect affordable hydropower and to benefit American families and otherwise address the needs of the Colorado River Basin States?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator Lee, and I really appreciate the conversation yesterday as well.

We know, as we are looking at the Colorado River, and we are looking at how those dams are operated, and the energy that goes with it, that we are going to have to have some of that balance. There was that decision that was completed last year, right, that does lean in a little bit more on looking at reducing and impacting the hydropower energy. So if confirmed, I am committed to looking into it and trying to figure out how we can still rely on that lower cost of energy.

The CHAIRMAN. Much appreciated, thank you.

Mr. Abbey, in 2021, Congress directed EIA to produce a critical minerals outlook and to deepen its capabilities in international analysis. It's now 2025, and we haven't seen the report. If confirmed, how do you view the international critical materials landscape, and what would you do as the Administrator of EIA to ensure that we have the best information available to strengthen our supply chains?

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you very much, Chairman Lee, for that question.

There are two great Americans in the audience, who I didn't mention in my opening statement—my mother-in-law and my father-in-law, Pat and Rick Bruno, who can attest to the fact that, although I am extremely interested in the critical minerals issue, I am not presently employed at DOE. I am blissfully living a life in Tampa at the moment. I think the issue that you raise is absolutely—

The CHAIRMAN. Washington is a lot like Tampa. You won't notice a difference.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ABBEY. I think the issue that you raise, Senator, is absolutely important. One of the first things I would do, if confirmed, is meet with the team to understand what steps, if any, have been taken to adhere to the statutory guidance from Congress to establish that outlook. As you mentioned, it was directed in 2021 and does not exist today. If confirmed, it would exist.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Garrish, I loved seeing the reference earlier to the other Senator Murkowski, talking to the—well, not the other Theodore Garrish, but the same one, just in a different era. Our country is facing a looming energy crisis due to the growth of energy-intensive industries, and in many cases, the retirement of dispatchable and firm generation resources. In response, many states, including my own State of Utah, are taking steps to significantly increase their production. The State of Utah, through Operation Gigawatt, is working to double its energy capacity over the next 10 years, an ambitious, but I believe, achievable ambition. It's leading the way

in making it easier to build new nuclear energy as part of that same effort.

As energy demand continues to grow, we need to increase our supply with reliable, affordable, clean baseload generation, like nuclear. If confirmed, what will you do in your role as Assistant Secretary over the Office of Nuclear Energy to make sure that we get continued operation of the existing nuclear fleet and make sure that we get new nuclear plants up, running, and online as soon as possible?

Mr. GARRISH. Senator, nuclear definitely has a role in the future and will play an important part. And what I believe that we have to do initially is get a plant licensed and operating here as soon as possible. There are a number of programs that the Department currently has underway—the Advanced Nuclear Reactor program—that will really facilitate first movers to get the advanced reactors into the marketplace. Similarly, there are programs right now at Idaho National Laboratory where we can begin the testing of prototypes, full-size prototypes, to begin to have new reactors available into the market. The key is, we need to build one, we need to license one, and we need to do it in an economic way. And that process is going to take a little time, but we need to get started with it immediately, and that's an important aspect of my plans, if confirmed, that I would really intend to begin with.

The CHAIRMAN. I realize the office you have been nominated to fill plays a different role, but are there benefits that could be derived from a collaboration between your office and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to accelerate the process?

Mr. GARRISH. Absolutely, and I think one of the very interesting ideas that has been suggested is a very close collaboration with our office as they begin to test the new reactors and work with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on ways in which licensing could be enhanced and we could do research that is directly related to the information needed to accelerate the license process.

The CHAIRMAN. Excellent, thank you very much.

Senator Padilla, you are up next.

Senator PADILLA. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and a thank you to all the witnesses that are here today.

I want to begin with an idea, an opportunity, I think, that's not just near and dear to me and important for the State of California, but can be critical, pun intended, for the country. Just last year, the Department of Energy announced the results of the most comprehensive analysis to date quantifying the domestic lithium resources in California's Salton Sea region. The announcement confirmed what we have known in California for a long time now, that the Salton Sea region has significant potential as a domestic source of critical minerals to reduce our reliance on minerals from foreign countries, particularly China. So it's a matter of both economic opportunity and national security.

My question is for Ms. Beyer. What is your plan to develop domestic sources of lithium and assure that we are not reliant on foreign sources?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, thank you for the question. I agree with you 100 percent. We have to be very focused as a country on developing our own critical minerals to secure our supply chain and make us

less dependent on other countries for those minerals. If I am confirmed and oversee that mining process at the office at OSMRE, while that's primarily around coal, I will do everything within the power of the SLM to ensure that we can mine effectively and get America ahead on that process. We know that we are behind, and it is incredibly dangerous, specifically with regard to China.

Senator PADILLA. Well, I think your chances of getting confirmed are pretty darn good. So let me jump into some specifics into the weeds here. If confirmed, would you commit that brining, as a means of extraction, would be included in any administrative action to incentivize the domestic supply of critical minerals?

Ms. BEYER. Sir, since I have not been in the building and I have not been fully briefed on that, I can't say specifically what I would support, but I look forward to learning more about it. I hope to get in the building soon and to be able to get into the weeds of that.

Senator PADILLA. Okay, well, I look forward to being part of that education coming up to speed and would certainly ask that you work with California leaders to advance brining and other opportunities in the Lithium Valley region of California.

My next questions are directed at Dr. Travnicsek. First of all, congratulations again on your nomination. Before we begin, I just wanted to confirm one thing. You are currently working as a Senior Advisor at the Department, correct?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, that's correct.

Senator PADILLA. Okay. So if you have watched any of the confirmation hearings for your colleagues that have come through this Committee, I am sure you have heard me talk about our work in recent years to establish and to expand national monuments in California in recent years. And as I have talked about here in Committee, and as I have raised with the Secretary directly, repeatedly, in person and on the phone and during his confirmation, the landscapes I am referring to have little or no energy or mineral potential. We were very—you know, we worked to establish the boundaries very precisely with a mind to that. By the way, these monuments enjoy tremendous, I mean, literally overwhelming support in California across the board.

Now, I raise that because I would hate to see—I don't believe these monuments, new and expanded, fit really into this right-sizing effort that I am hearing about the Administration discussing when it comes to national monuments. So I would like to know, have you been part of the discussions at the Department to date in terms of the right-sizing of national monuments or the review process for protected landscapes for energy or mineral potential?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. So Senator, as the Senior Advisor, I have been working on different executive orders and secretarial orders that have come before the Department. As relates to this one, I have not been specifically involved.

Senator PADILLA. Okay, well, if and when you do become involved, engagement with stakeholders is critical for this and in all processes. And as far as we can tell, we are hearing about a review. We are hearing these monuments may be on the list, may not be on the list, maybe they are on the list, but the folks on the ground, the very leaders that advocated for the establishment and the expansion of these monuments have not been consulted. So I would

ask that you commit to, again, if and when you become involved with this, to commit to true engagement with local leaders, both sides of the aisle—Democrats and Republicans—tribal leaders, conservationists, and others as part of any so-called review. And I would further ask that you commit, just as the first Trump Administration did, if there is going to be a suggested reconfiguration of the boundaries, that it be made public and a public comment period or an opportunity for public input be allowed before any final actions are taken.

Can you commit to that as a good faith process with the public?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. So Senator, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you and others that might have feedback related to that. As discussed, there are executive orders and secretarial orders, and it will be different bureaus that will be working on that versus the ones that I will be involved with, but I would bring any of those concerns and commitment to working with those colleagues that might be working on that initiative.

Senator PADILLA. Okay, thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Daines.

Senator DAINES. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Beyer, the BLM's core principle is multiple use. That's Congressionally mandated in the Federal Land Management and Policy Act. However, under the Biden Administration, the Bureau of Land Management implemented the so-called Conservation and Landscape Health Rule that subverted the agency's multiple-use management of public lands. At that time, I heard a lot from my ranchers. I expressed deep concerns with this rule, especially as it pertained to the impacts on livestock grazing on public lands. Livestock operations are part of our Montana way of life, and cattle and sheep grazing on public lands provides benefits by mitigating the risk of wildfire, suppressing invasive grasses, and improving wildlife habitat, while economically supporting our rural communities who are struggling across our state.

Will you commit to reconsidering this overreaching rule that harms multiple use and destroys transparency and public input around land use decisions?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, thank you for the question.

I know that has been an extraordinary issue in your state, and I have followed that. And if I am confirmed, I absolutely will follow the law, the multiple-use mandate, and the contours of FLPMA that provide that.

Senator DAINES. Thank you.

Earlier this month, we were very pleased that President Trump announced a number of executive orders to support coal in Montana. My generational roots go back five in Montana. I know many watch shows like Yellowstone or they see Brad Pitt with a fly rod in his hand, you think it's only about fly fishing, and as a lifelong fly fisherman, I couldn't agree more, but we also have more recoverable coal than any state in the United States. It's one of the understated facts and something that many don't know.

So these EOs to support us in Montana with coal include rolling back the Miles City Resource Management Plan amendment prohibiting new coal development in eastern Montana. I am grateful that Secretary Burgum, likewise, took steps to support energy de-

velopment on our federal lands. I truly believe that BLM can balance coal, oil, gas, and renewable energy development while also supporting conservation, recreation, and grazing resources. That really is the mandate from Congress.

My question is, do you support the actions by the President and the Secretary to roll back these anti-energy rules, like the Miles City RMP and the unreachable bonding rates and return the BLM to its true multiple-use mandate?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, thank you.

I think President Trump and Secretary Burgum have laid out a very bold vision for developing more American energy resources, and coal has a very important role in that. I believe in American innovation around reducing emissions and how effectively we can produce energy around coal. And so, absolutely, sir, I commit to working with you on that and to following the direction of the President and the Secretary.

Senator DAINES. You know, it ought to be a warning shot, what we saw happening in Spain and Portugal this past week about what happens when ideology and nonsense drives energy policy and where we get energy in terms of the balance between intermittent sources of energy and baseload power. And I am grateful that in this Administration baseload power is cool again, thank God.

Dr. Travnicek, the Bureau of Reclamation is currently working quickly to address the catastrophic failure of two siphons from the St. Mary River that are a critical part of the Milk River Project that provides water to irrigators on Montana's Hi-Line. I don't expect you to be an expert on this, but I want to raise your awareness here because you will be confirmed and you will be serving. I am grateful for that. Additionally, I am working to finish Montana's last tribal water compact. I have been working on tribal water compacts for much of my time back here in Congress. These are sometimes over a century—back to, certainly, treaties—and getting these resolved on behalf of the irrigators and the tribes is one of my highest priorities. We are down to one left in Montana, and that's for the Fort Belknap Indian community. We are making great progress on that. We are very close. This will improve infrastructure and economic development for both our tribal and our non-tribal water users.

My question is, will you work with me to ensure the continued success of these federal water projects so that farmers, ranchers, tribes and municipal users will have certainty over their water rights and their usage?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, thank you for the overview of both of those important concerns that you have in trying to move those projects forward. I am committed to working with you on those.

Senator DAINES. Thank you.

And that St. Marys project, by the way, when you see beautiful movies and pictures of Montana, you see a lot of water, that's true—we actually are a semi-arid climate in Montana. It's pretty dry, and particularly where St. Marys is at, it's a very arid part of our state, and literally, it's an artery, a lifeline of water that has been tragically interrupted because of an infrastructure failure. And time is of the essence to get this completed so we can support irrigators this year.

I am out of time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hickenlooper.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Beyer, obviously, Coloradans support conservation protection for our public lands, like most states. These lands boost the \$17 billion recreation economy, not to mention all the wildlife and watershed benefits that accrue. You are nominated for a role that would oversee the Bureau of Land Management, which manages lands for multiple processes or uses. You are certainly experienced in the oil and gas side of things, but you are also going to have to transition to a broader lens now and look at making sure that we ensure healthy lands, diversity of landscapes, reliable access to outdoor recreation. Will you work with us to make sure that we maintain these approaches to conservation and protection of our public lands?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, I appreciate you pointing that out, and absolutely, I agree with you and commit to working with you on that.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great, thank you.

And Mr. Garrish, nuclear energy could play a huge role in our national security, and I share the frustration of many organizations—Nuclear Energy Institute, the Colorado Nuclear Alliance, Nuclear Innovation Alliance—that DOE has let go more than half its staff at the Loan Programs Office. The Loan Programs Office—LPO—one of the most effective federal offices supporting new nuclear projects in the United States. How does the Administration, from your perspective, plan to expand domestic nuclear energy while simultaneously dramatically reducing the staff that would be most critical for that expansion?

Mr. GARRISH. Well, I am hopeful that as applications come into LPO for additional nuclear projects that there is sufficient staff to handle them, and I see no reason of that currently. And I am not totally familiar with the staff situation at LPO, but I anticipate that we will have the staff to handle that.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. So if you find there is insufficient staff, you will raise your voice and say, we need more staff?

Mr. GARRISH. Indeed.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Good. Good to hear that.

Dr. Travnicek, the Department of the Interior recently announced some of the emergency permitting procedures to accelerate the development of domestic resources of critical minerals. As has been noted, this initiative seeks to reduce multi-year review processes to, well, as much as possible—in some cases, as quickly as 28 days. I am an outspoken, I guess I would say, supporter of bipartisan permitting reform. I emphasize bipartisan permitting reform. But I am concerned about some of these drastic actions. What are the litigation risks of taking such dramatic steps to accelerate timelines without an act of Congress? In other words, are we creating far more obstacles or problems in the future as we seek to circumvent the existing structure? And then, how do you justify operating under a national energy emergency while excluding key technological technologies like solar, wind, and energy storage from these new procedures?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Senator, thank you for the question.

Yes, we have been directed to the presidential order in regards to the energy emergency that we see here in this country. I know that this Committee has been active, as it relates to finding ways to streamline the permitting processes. The team at Interior has been working very hard to try to see if there are any ways to streamline them even further. And that's where you did see this last week where there was a new permitting process that was rolled out to try to expedite that to make sure that we can develop the resources, and also get the infrastructure needed to make sure that we are getting that clear energy dominance.

At the same time, it also is looking at just ESA, NHPA. I know there was a question earlier related to tribes. So the Department is going to work really hard to implement that.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great, thank you.

And I will ask you each, just, there have been some, I think, some serious discussions about large-scale sales of public lands for the generation of revenue for the Federal Government. I just wanted to ask each of you to give your authentic opinion as to whether that's a worthy outcome. And I am a great believer in budgets and frugality, but I think a wide-scale sale of public lands just for the generation of revenue seems very ill-advised. I just want to hear each of your opinions on that.

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

We know, as it relates to federal lands, there are a lot of multi-use efforts that are associated with them. So—

Senator HICKENLOOPER. I am just talking about the sale. So I understand putting multi-use, and I understand that, and in some mountain towns you can sell an acre or two from the BLM that they can use for affordable housing or workforce housing, I get that. I am not against that. I am talking about larger-scale sale of public lands to generate revenue, solely to generate revenue for the Federal Government.

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Yes, and at the Department of the Interior right now, we do have a directive through an executive order to review all of those public lands, seeing if there are any opportunities. So it would be working with the states, looking for opportunities to see if there is any opportunity.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. So you are okay with that, all right.

Ms. BEYER. Senator, Congress has the authority to dispose of public lands, and I agree with my colleague from the Interior perspective. We would look to the states, any state looking to do a lands transfer.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. So you said Congress has the authority, but then you are going to look to the states. So look to the states to advise Congress? That's the question. I just want to—I am not trying to be trouble, I am just trying to make sure we get—

Ms. BEYER. No, I understand, sir. I meant that in the context of—I am sure there is a role for the Department of the Interior. I do not currently work in the building, but my understanding of the constitution is that it gives that authority to Congress.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Right, we agree.

Mr. Garrish.

Mr. GARRISH. Senator, I am not familiar enough with the subject to be able to provide much of an opinion. However, it would seem to me that, as I understand it, that this is a matter for Congress.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you.

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I appreciate the issue that you raise. As the nominee for the EIA Administrator position, which is policy neutral, I, unfortunately, am not able to respond.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. All right, thank you. I am out of time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hickenlooper.

Senator Gallego.

Senator GALLEGO. Thank you, Chairman and Ranking Member.

My first question is for Dr. Travnicek. One of the most pressing issues from my state is drought funding, and we continue to see challenges with funding freezes at the Bureau of Reclamation. If you are confirmed, these funds will be your responsibility. Reclamation has halted critical funding that has been a bridge to keep the Colorado River Basin system functioning. I am concerned that these funds are being held, and I have heard reports that the Department plans to hold funding until a seven-state agreement is reached. Do you commit to releasing all previously appropriated funding and do you recognize the urgency of drought funding in the West?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. Thank you, Senator, for the question. And as I have discussed before, we do know that drought is an extremely important issue that we are seeing here in the West and that we are all going to have to work really hard and use all the different tools in the toolbox. As it relates to the funding that might be put on pause right now, I committed to, if confirmed, looking into it further just to understand what is on pause.

Senator GALLEGO. Okay, just because for us it looks—it seems like it's not exactly the smartest move because there are some states that would be absolutely happy to let this go to litigation, keep fighting it out, and then you are punishing some of the Lower Basin States that need this investment now, which will end up actually helping all of the Basin in terms of their—how many acre-feet of water we need behind the dams. So I just want to make sure you keep that in perspective.

I would like to also ask about the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act. This would be the largest Indian water rights settlement ever enacted in the history of this country and provide the southern tribes—the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe, and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe—with desperately needed water and infrastructure funding and water to actually even, you know, spur their economy. Without a settlement, other water users in the Colorado River Basin face uncertainty regarding the tribes' Colorado River water rights. So essentially, we don't know how much we have left if we haven't allocated what these tribes justly deserve. So it's particularly important because the Navajo Nation has one of the largest single outstanding claims in the whole Colorado River. Approximately one-third of Navajo homes still do not have running water even to this date. So this settlement will bring certainty to the Basin and ensure tribes can thrive on their homeland.

So will you commit to working with me and the Arizona delegation—bipartisan delegation—to finish this settlement?

Dr. TRAVNICEK. So Senator, I understand the importance of the Indian Water Rights Settlements. When I was here during the first Trump Administration, I had an opportunity to work with several of those tribal nations. So I am committed to working with you on those.

Senator GALLEGRO. Great, thank you.

Questions for Mr. Garrish. You know, I appreciate our time yesterday talking about, you know, creative solutions for energy and fast deployment of nuclear energy. As you know, I am very interested in SMRs, and they have a great potential to meet Arizona's rising energy demand. And I have heard from communities that actually are very excited about the deployment of this technology, and so, I was hoping that you and I could talk further about potential creative ways to actually have faster deployment.

So will you commit to visiting Arizona and working together on fast deployment of SMRs, including the potential for their use on military bases in the state?

Mr. GARRISH. Senator, thank you for your time that we took to discuss this important topic. Arizona has a tremendous opportunity for nuclear development, and you are currently home of one of the most successful and largest nuclear plants, and I think that there are many opportunities going forward, and I look forward to working with you, including military bases, for nuclear potential.

Senator GALLEGRO. Thank you.

Ms. Beyer, Arizona is home—and thank you again for also speaking to me yesterday—is home to 12.1 million acres of BLM land, a department that you are going to oversee. Within these are national monuments that highlight the natural and cultural beauty of my state. One example is the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. The Grand Canyon is not only a natural wonder of the world and a sacred site for many tribes, it's an enormous economic driver for Northern Arizona, as the second most visited national park in the country. Loving the Grand Canyon isn't controversial—80 percent of all Arizonans support the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon, and the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon isn't unique in being protected by presidential declaration. Grand Canyon National Park itself started out that way.

In recent weeks, reports have circulated that the Administration is planning to shrink the boundaries of a number of monuments, including the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. Do you plan to support the rollback of monument protections for the Grand Canyon?

Ms. BEYER. Senator, thank you for the question, and thank you for the time yesterday. I enjoyed speaking with you about this and a number of your other areas of focus.

The Grand Canyon is an amazing place. My parents, here, and my son, have spent a lot of time there. And you know, while I am not at the Department, I am not aware of any of those discussions, but the importance and the majesty of the Grand Canyon is not lost on me.

Senator GALLEGRO. Thank you, and I yield back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Gallego.

I want to thank the witnesses and everyone for their participation today. It has been a little chaotic with multiple markups and multiple committees happening, but a lot of cooperation from members of the Committee has helped.

Questions for the record for this hearing are due by 6:00 p.m. this evening. The record of the hearing will remain open for statements until 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 8.

Again, I thank members of the Committee. On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to extend congratulations to all these nominees and look forward to working closely with each one. I also look forward to working with all of the Senators on the Committee as we continue to consider each of the President's remaining nominees within the jurisdiction of this Committee in such a productive manner.

I hope every Senator of the Committee will continue to work with me to persuade leadership on both sides of the aisle to bring up these nominations for a vote on the floor as soon as possible.

And again, I thank all the Senators for their cooperation this morning.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record Submitted to Dr. Andrea Travnicek

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: The DOGE’s termination of over 30 USGS site leases—mainly affecting the Water Resources Mission Area—threatens real-time monitoring of floods, droughts, and water quality. This directly impacts public safety and water managers’ ability to make informed decisions.

- How will you ensure that decisions like this one do not compromise the quality and credibility of USGS science?
- Given these disruptions to mission-critical work, what is your plan to provide USGS scientists with the necessary facilities to continue their science and research without interruption?

Response: As mentioned in my testimony, I understand the importance of real time monitoring. If confirmed, I look forward to listening and to working with you as decisions are made to implement the President’s and the Secretary’s priorities to increase accountability and responsiveness in the effective delivery of the core missions of USGS.

Question 2: The Government Accountability Office plays a vital role in making sure agencies are implementing the law as passed by Congress and ensuring American’s taxpayer dollars are being used the way Congress said they should.

In order for GAO to do its job, it needs cooperation from agencies in responding to their oversight work in a timely manner.

If confirmed, will you commit to be responsive to GAO’s outreach and requests for information without delay?

Response: I recognize GAO has a role in improving government performance and accountability. If confirmed, I commit to being responsive to GAO’s requests.

Question 3: The new NEPA guidance for energy projects that Secretary Burgum announced last week cites emergency authorities as justification for bypassing standard NEPA procedures. However, these authorities specifically say that emergency action can only be taken when it is “necessary to control the immediate impacts of the emergency that are urgently needed to mitigate harm to life, property, or important natural, cultural, or historic resources...”

How will you ensure the approval of a mining plan of operation or an oil and gas permit will meet these thresholds?

Response: If confirmed to be Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, I would oversee the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Reclamation within the Department and would not have a role in the approval of mining plans of operations or permitting oil and gas development activities.

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Question 4: How would you approach water allocation decisions on the Rio Grande in a way that ensures compliance with federal environmental laws, honors the water rights of Pueblos and tribes, and addresses needs of cities, farmers and fish?

Response: Engagement with states, tribes and local communities is critical to achieving appropriate balance among water users in the Rio Grande Basin and responsible water management across the West. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues and to learning more about the legal frameworks governing, and tools available to address, these issues.

Question 5: If confirmed, will you commit to working with all the affected stakeholders, including the tribes and pueblos in New Mexico, when making water management decisions on the Rio Grande?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Tribal Nations and believe tribal input is incredibly important.

Question 6: If confirmed, will you commit to preserving the scientific integrity of the Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey's work, to preserve its independence from political interference, and to deliver unbiased scientific findings to the Administration, Congress, and the public?

Response: As a published author, I am committed to scientific integrity. I value science and, as I stated during the hearing, I look forward to leading and working with the dedicated teams of engineers, hydrologists, and scientists at the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Geological Survey to implement the bureaus' core missions.

Question 7: What specific steps will you take to ensure that scientific integrity is protected across the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all applicable laws governing scientific work are followed.

Question 8: The United States has consistently failed to meet its Trust responsibility of providing clean, reliable water for Tribal communities by not recognizing and defending senior Tribal water rights. The Department of the Interior plays a vital role in the negotiation and implementation of water settlements between Tribal governments, states, the United States, and neighboring water users. If confirmed, will you commit to continuing the Department's work to resolve these legal claims, and will you support the implementation and funding of existing water settlements?

Response: As I stated during my hearing, I understand the importance of Indian water rights settlements. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

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Question 9: What steps are you going to take to move forward in advancing projects that have been announced as awarded funds by the Bureau of Reclamation for projects in the Colorado River Basin from the Inflation Reduction Act?

Question 10: Why is the Department withholding funding from projects in the Colorado River Basin until a seven states solution or framework is reached related to post-2026 operations in the Colorado River Basin?

Response to Questions 9 and 10: **I recognize the importance of the Colorado River to over 40 million Americans across the seven basin states. I am not familiar with the specific projects that you are referencing, but if I am confirmed, working on issues related to the Colorado River Basin, including review of project funding, will be one of my top priorities.**

Question 11: Starting under Secretary Bernhardt, the United States Geological Survey assembled a Migratory Mapping Team, led by the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, to map migration corridors for ungulate populations. Since 2020, this team – comprised of staff from the Department of the Interior, State wildlife management agencies, and Tribal wildlife management agencies – have been producing detailed reports on ungulate migrations across the Western United States and impediments to those migrations. These reports provide valuable insights into the seasonal migrations of several ungulate species and their habitats through which they migrate. Ungulates face many risks along their migratory routes.

If confirmed, do you commit to continuing to publish the Ungulate Migrations of the Western United States and the associated mapping data and resources?

Response: **I have not been briefed on the status of this effort, but if confirmed, I will look into the issue to ensure the critical mission of the USGS is implemented to advance the administration's priorities and would look forward to further engagement with you on this topic.**

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Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Western Water

Western water policy is going to be one of the most important and challenging issues you will face. In the State of Washington, we have unique water challenges in experiencing extreme flooding in the western half of the state and managing annual droughts that exacerbate water supply for our farmers in the eastern portion of the state. We also generate 60% of our energy from hydropower. Right now, communities in are already experiencing drought that is expected to persist through the summer.

How we manage water is critical and a key to success is working collaboratively with the Bureau of Reclamation and developing consensus from the ground up with communities and water users.

- If confirmed, will you support ground-up, consensus-driven solutions to water management?
- Will you support the development and implementation of technology, like Water A.I., that can better manage water supply, storage and use?

Response: As I stated in my hearing, I commit to collaborative approaches to meet objectives for waters users and implementing innovation. I agree with the Secretary that technological innovation can be important to ensuring water supply certainty.

The Yakima Basin Integrated Plan is a 30-year basin-wide water project that focuses on balancing and fulfilling the needs of a robust agricultural sector, flood risk management, and salmon recovery. It's vital the Bureau of Reclamation continues to fund these projects.

- If confirmed, will you work to promote the need for water projects, like the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan and other irrigation and water conservation projects?
- Will you commit to continuing to lead the Federal Leadership Team to coordinate programs and projects across the federal government to support the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan?
- Will you commit to including funding for the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan in the Department of Interior's proposed budget?

Response: I understand Reclamation operates major reservoirs and plays a significant water management role in the Yakima River Basin. If confirmed, I commit to taking a collaborative approach and to work with you, your colleagues and stakeholders in Yakima Basin to ensure Reclamation appropriately balances water management to meet the needs of basin communities.

The Yakima Tieton Irrigation District (YTID) in Washington State operates and maintains a Bureau of Reclamation owned canal that is 12-miles-long and serves roughly 28,000 acres of orchards west of Yakima. The YTID currently faces a growing, evolving emergency resulting from wildfire damage and post-fire risks that directly threaten the stability of this canal. The risks are high for a major landslide or other environmental catastrophe in proximity to the canal at any time. YTID has begun a very expensive rebuilding of the canal to prevent a catastrophic failure

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of the fire damaged canal. I joined others in the Washington State congressional delegation in writing a letter to Secretary Burgum requesting the canal be considered for emergency extraordinary maintenance (EXM) funding and financing from the Aging Infrastructure Account (AIA) under Sec. 9603(c) of P.L. 111-11.

- Will you commit to working with me to address this important issue in my state? We have yet to receive a response to our letter to the Secretary.
- Will you commit to working with this Irrigation District as they attempt to rebuild and give their emergency maintenance request full and fair consideration?

Response: While I have not been briefed on the details of this issue, I am aware of the significant damage to the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation Canal and the ongoing efforts to repair and replace it. I understand this issue is important to you and your state and that Reclamation has a role to play with the District to minimize water delivery impacts. If confirmed, I commit to working with you, the Irrigation District and other affected stakeholders to better understand the full scope of the issue and an appropriate path forward.

The Columbia Basin Project irrigates nearly 700,000 acres of agricultural lands in Washington state and helps generate over \$4 billion annually. After 70 years, this project is not complete and over 300,000 acres still await reliable irrigation water.

- If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Columbia Basin community as they pursue continued development of the project?

Response: I understand the Columbia Basin Project is one of Reclamation's largest irrigation projects in the country. If confirmed, I commit to listening to and working with states, local governments, Tribes, other federal agencies, and affected communities, including regarding the Columbia River Project.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie K. Hirono

Question 1: Earlier this month, the White House Office of Management and Budget ordered the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to design a plan that would slow and then cease all activities in the Ecosystems Mission Area for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26). This mission area supports roughly 1,200 employees nationwide, including at labs and cooperative research units, and funds many critical research efforts that are necessary for our country to respond to increasing drought and wildfires, adapt to sea level rise, conserve our forests, and manage our natural resources.

The consequences of eliminating all funding for the Ecosystems Mission Area would be devastating, not just for Hawaii but the entire United States. Eliminating this mission area would harm our ability to respond to severe drought and natural disasters, threaten the economic viability of our nation's fisheries, and drastically increase the cost of public land management for state, local and tribal governments.

Do you believe that the Ecosystem Mission Area should be eliminated?

Response: I am not in a position to speak to the President's FY2026 Budget Request for the Department of the Interior as it is still in development.

Question 2: If confirmed, will you commit to following the law and dispersing 100% of the funding appropriated by Congress for the USGS and Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: As I have throughout my career, I commit to following the law.

Question 3: Last week, an email was sent by the USGS to its employees stating that the department is planning for reductions-in-force, while exempting positions that are considered high-priority and public safety critical from being cut.

What percentage of jobs within the USGS are high priority and public safety critical? Do these jobs include employees who serve rural and remote communities in Hawaii and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands? If so, will you commit to keeping these jobs from being cut? If not, how will you ensure that the critical services currently provided by USGS will continue for these rural and remote communities?

Response: President Trump directed agencies to reform the federal workforce to maximize efficiency and productivity. The Department is working to implement this directive, consistent with applicable law, to achieve government effectiveness, responsiveness, accountability, and cost savings for the American taxpayer.

Question 4: The current policy at the Department is that Secretary Burgum must provide additional review of all awards above \$100,000. Three USGS CASC 5-year rebid proposals, including the Pacific Islands program, were submitted in February, have been reviewed by USGS, and are sitting on the Secretary's desk. Additionally, FY25 funding for all CASCs is

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currently being withheld by the Department. In the absence of timely funding, faculty, staff, and supported students will have to be furloughed beginning this summer.

If confirmed, will you see that these proposals are quickly reviewed by the Secretary and that the FY25 funds are released?

Response: I am not familiar with these specific proposals, but I appreciate your perspective and commit to looking into this question to understand more and to evaluating an appropriate course of action.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: As we discussed during the hearing, the Bureau of Reclamation has told Hoover Dam hydropower customers there's a significant chance in the coming years it could become unable to deliver power due if the water levels in Lake Mead decrease below 1,035 ft.

What would the Department do to support these customers and how do you otherwise continue to provide for operations and maintenance funding if customers have to find alternative power sources elsewhere and are no longer paying for that electricity that gets turned around to pay operations and maintenance for the Dam?

Response: The Bureau of Reclamation is the second largest producer of hydropower, an extremely important source of low-cost energy for hydropower customers. I appreciate the challenges for customers that you have mentioned. If confirmed, I commit to looking at the issues related to hydropower at Hoover Dam to understand the underlying issues and appropriate paths forward.

Question 2: In light of recent hiring freezes and terminations of probationary employees, what assurances can you give customers on the Bureau of Reclamation's ability to perform at operational adequacy? What is your plan to retain and foster an experienced and talented workforce to meet the critical mission at a location such as Hoover Dam?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to learning more about staffing needs and opportunities within the Bureau of Reclamation. I look forward to working closely with the dedicated teams of engineers, hydrologists and scientists and will ensure they have the resources they need to implement the mission of the bureau more efficiently and effectively, including at the Hoover Dam.

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Questions for the Record from Senator John W. Hickenlooper

Question 1: The Colorado River Basin is in its worst drought in the 1,200-year paleo record, and below-average snow this past winter has only made the situation worse. The seven Basin States are negotiating a plan for managing the Colorado River into the future, which will have massive implications for the health of the river itself and the communities, farmers, and economies that rely on it.

As Assistant Secretary, will you commit to working with Colorado and its fellow Basin States in ensuring that DOI invests the resources, staff time, technical support, and partnership that the states need to help them successfully reach an agreement?

Response: The Colorado River is a critical resource that travels over 1,400 miles and impacts over 40 million Americans across the seven basin states. I support a consensus-driven, state-led, durable agreement. As I stated at my hearing, if I am confirmed, working on this issue will be one of my top priorities.

Question 2: Congress provided \$4 billion to mitigate the impacts of drought in the Colorado River Basin through the Inflation Reduction Act. Projects that were awarded “Bucket 2 Environmental” funding in Colorado and across the Upper Basin would help the Colorado River better to withstand the depths of the long-term aridification we are experiencing basin-wide. That funding has been frozen for the past several months. These projects would help preserve historical Colorado River flows, help manage drought impacts on Upper Basin ecosystems, and improve water supply resiliency basinwide.

Will you help us move the funding for these projects forward, so we can better support drought resilience for the benefit of the Basin as a whole?

Response: I am not familiar with the specific projects that you are referencing. However, if I am confirmed, I commit to working on issues related to the Colorado River Basin, including review of project funding.

Question 3: The Department of the Interior recently announced emergency permitting procedures to accelerate the development of domestic energy resources and critical minerals. As noted, this initiative seeks to reduce multi-year review processes to as few as 14 or 28 days. We have heard from energy developers that such timelines leave them open to legal challenge and fail to leave reasonable time to identify environmental, cultural, or historic impacts and plan to avoid or mitigate them. Such a short timeframe also fails to leave sufficient time for communities and Tribes to learn about proposed projects and comment on them.

What do you see as the litigation risks of taking such dramatic steps to accelerate permitting timelines without an act of Congress?

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How do you justify operating under a national energy emergency while excluding key technologies like solar, wind, and energy storage from the new permitting procedures?

Response: I recognize the committee's work and interest on this issue. President Trump declared a National Energy Emergency to ensure a reliable and affordable supply of energy to meet our Nation's needs. The President and Secretary Burgum have both addressed concerns related to intermittent energy supply. To accelerate the development of domestic energy resources and critical minerals, the Department announced emergency permitting procedures that will facilitate permitting of these projects. I am not an attorney, so cannot speak to litigation strategy, but understand that these procedures are in accordance with law and regulation.

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Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Recently, the president has taken actions to prioritize oil, gas, and mining on public land – even going as far to sign an executive order to overturn the multiple-use, sustained-yield principle of land management to favor mining.

As the assistant secretary overseeing the Bureau of Land Management, how will you ensure our public lands are managed for all uses and will you oppose efforts to make any one use a higher priority than others?

Response: I support the President’s and Secretary’s objectives to increase energy production on federal lands in line with FLPMA’s multiple-use mandate, which I commit to upholding, if confirmed.

Question 2: The Government Accountability Office plays a vital role in making sure agencies are implementing the law as passed by Congress and ensuring American’s taxpayer dollars are being used the way Congress said they should.

In order for GAO to do its job, it needs cooperation from agencies in responding to their oversight work in a timely manner.

If confirmed, will you commit to be responsive to GAO’s outreach and requests for information without delay?

Response: I believe improving government performance and accountability are important objectives. I commit to being responsive to requests from the GAO, if confirmed.

Question 3: In your written testimony, you state that “we have seen extraordinary feats of innovation in energy development that took our country from being a net energy importer to the world’s largest energy exporter, all while leading the world in reducing emissions.”

Do you believe that a country that is the world’s largest exporter and has record production on public lands is in an emergency, and therefore needs to suspend the requirements under National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act and National Historic Preservation when permitting energy and mining projects?

Response: I agree with the President and believe we are in a national energy emergency driven by a significant increase in energy demand. If confirmed, I will support the President’s and Secretary’s agenda to remove or reduce regulatory red tape to accelerate development of reliable domestic energy resources and critical minerals in accordance with the law to strengthen the nation’s energy grid.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Minidoka National Historical Site

During World War II, Japanese Americans throughout the State of Washington were forcibly removed from their homes and unjustly detained. I worked with my colleagues from Idaho to establish the Minidoka National Historic Site which includes the former Minidoka camp in Idaho and the Bainbridge Island Japanese Exclusion Memorial in the state of Washington. These sites, and the organizations that support them, honor the strength and sacrifice of internment survivors and help Americans heal and reflect on this terrible chapter in our country's history.

- If confirmed, will you commit to engaging with the Japanese American community and others on the proposed Lava Ridge Wind project?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure the President's directive regarding the Lava Ridge Wind Project in Idaho is implemented in an efficient and durable manner.

Question 2: Protecting Public Lands in Alaska

I have worked to maintain unique and irreplaceable federal lands in Alaska like the Tongass, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and Bristol Bay, home to the world's largest sockeye salmon run. There have always been development pressures, but what we proved is the relatively small short-term economic returns are not worth hurting places that are like nowhere else in the world, and in the case of Bristol Bay, support a multitude of good fishing jobs.

I bring this up because I know you will be pressed on issues impacting Alaska. I hope you will consider in each case whether short-term and limited economic gains from a resource extraction project outweighs the long-term impacts to developing these areas.

For example, the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act mandated two lease sales in the Arctic Refuge. The Congressional Budget Office projected the oil and gas leasing program would yield \$2.2 billion. However, both lease sales produced little to no bidding interest and thus revenue. In the first lease sale held during the first Trump Administration, no major oil companies showed up to bid. And the sale generated a mere \$12 million — less than 1% of the total revenue that was projected. The second lease sale held last week was also a complete dud; not a single company bid — big or small. It appears that the private sector realizes that the economics don't support drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

- Given the last two auctions, do you think new lease sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would result in meaningful private sector interest or substantial revenues?
- If so, why do you believe an additional lease sale would be different than the past two sales?
- Are you aware of the different positions within the Alaska Native community regarding oil and gas development on the Arctic Refuge?
- How can the Department force private sector interest in a lease sale if none exists?
- Will you commit to meeting with all Tribal stakeholders before taking any actions in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

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Response: Alaska is a majestic state, boasting a wealth of natural resources. Industry has proven the production of hydrocarbons can be done responsibly in Alaska. The President has also signed an executive order on unleashing Alaska’s resource potential. However, the current regulatory regime has prohibited efficient production and transmission projects to the detriment of local communities and tribes. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with Alaska stakeholders including tribes, state and local officials, and the Alaska Congressional delegation to ensure Interior’s Alaska policies align with Alaska’s distinct legal framework.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is home to one of the most threatened populations of polar bears in the world: the Southern Beaufort Sea population. The Department of the Interior announced that it plans to open up the entire Coastal Plain for oil and gas exploration. Polar bear experts, including those within the department, have said that oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development on the Coastal Plain would irreversibly and significantly harm the Coastal Plain’s polar bear population. The impacts from seismic exploration alone can cause death and serious injury to denning bears and cubs.

- Are you aware that experts say there is a potential that polar bear deaths caused by oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain could have population-level impacts to the Southern Beaufort Sea population?
- If confirmed, how will you ensure that the Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the Arctic Refuge and threatened polar bears, can fulfill their mission to “to conserve, protect, and enhance... wildlife ... and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people” within the context of the Department’s drive to open up all critical polar bear denning habitat to oil and gas development?

Response: I understand and greatly respect the uniqueness of Alaska. As I mentioned during the hearing, I have spent a significant amount of time in the state and created very fond memories there. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with Alaska stakeholders including tribes, state and local officials, and the Alaska Congressional delegation to ensure Interior’s Alaska policies align with Alaska’s distinct legal framework.

The statutory purposes of the Arctic Refuge are to conserve animals and plants in their natural diversity, ensure a place for subsistence hunting and gathering activities, protect water quality and quantity, and fulfill international wildlife treaty obligations.

- Will you commit to considering all of these purposes - as required by statute - when making any decisions regarding the refuge?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to following the law.

Question 3: National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska

The Western Arctic region in Alaska is also a vast one-of-a-kind place with immense oil and gas development pressure. The Western Arctic is a critical carbon sink, premiere tourist destination, contains unparalleled wildlife habitat, and has been home to Indigenous traditions for countless generations. The Department of the Interior recently released a report and guidance that conclude that there cannot be development in the Western Arctic without harm to caribou and other key

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species, and it names subsistence as a “significant resource value” for the reserve that any development would jeopardize.

- Do you support Tribal subsistence uses of the Western Arctic, including the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A)?
- Are you aware of the different positions within the Alaska Native community regarding oil and gas development on the NPR-A?
- Do you commit to ensuring that Tribal subsistence uses of NPR-A, including caribou are not jeopardized?

Response: I agree with Secretary Burgum that energy production is and will continue to be compatible with Alaska Native subsistence uses. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with Alaska stakeholders including tribes, state and local officials, and the Alaska Congressional delegation to ensure Interior’s Alaska policies align with Alaska’s distinct legal framework.

Question 4: Unused Oil & Gas Leases

According to the latest Interior Department data there are over 10 million acres of existing onshore oil and gas leases that have been stockpiled, but are not producing, and there are almost 7,000 approved and available but unused permits to drill on those federal onshore leases.

- Why do you think these leases are not being used to apply for permits to drill, even after extended periods of time?
- Why do you think these APD permits are not being actually used to drill for more oil and gas?
- Do you think the relatively cheap cost of federal leases and rental rates as compared to many states’ regimes may allow companies to stockpile leases without much downside?
- The size of these unused lands are about the same as Rhode Island, Delaware, Connecticut, and Hawaii combined, do you think it’s reasonable for these public lands to be off limits and unused for years at a time?
- How can you help ensure that the surface estate can be made available for other multiple uses, like hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation?
- Do you believe the Department of Interior should take a hard look this vast amount of public land being locked-up in unused federal oil and gas leases and consider supporting policies that would relinquish those unused leases if they are impeding other public uses of our federal lands and waters such as hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation?

Response: I agree with President Trump that developing America’s abundant energy and natural resources will provide affordable and reliable energy to the American people and enhance our national security. If confirmed, I will implement the President’s agenda to meet our growing energy needs in a manner that leverages our resources responsibly in accordance with the law.

Question 5: Offshore Energy

I am concerned that the Administration’s pursuit of oil and gas development could hurt the outdoor recreation industry. Protecting our shorelines is vitally important to a coastal state like mine. An oil spill off our beloved coastline could not only cause terrible environmental damage,

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but it would also threaten Washington's maritime industry that supports over 174,000 jobs and more than \$45 billion in annual revenue.

- Do you support offshore oil and gas drilling in federal waters off the coast of Washington state or the Western United States?

Response: I understand that the Department has announced the first step in the development of a new schedule for offshore oil and gas lease sales on the Outer Continental Shelf. If I am confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on this process and commit to ensuring the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management engages in a public engagement process, including opportunities for public review and comment, as required by law. I look forward to working with you in this process and learning more about the resources and needs of your state.

Question 6: OPEC

I believe we need to face the reality and be honest that there's no way we can drill our way to full petroleum energy independence or dominance. Not as long as the OPEC+ cartel can manipulate world supply and hold great sway over our pump prices. Even though we are the world's largest oil producer, we do not control the vast reserves that other OPEC+ nations do, nor the globally-set price of crude. But we do now at least have alternative fuels. The driver filling up their car with electricity pays just a fraction of what they would pay at a gas station. An Energy Department study found that Washington state EV drivers would save around \$11,000 in fuel costs. Only by finally ending our dependence on fossil fuel can we permanently secure America's national security, maintain affordable energy prices, and tackle the climate crisis.

- Do you agree that OPEC+ has proven and technically recoverable reserves that greatly outnumber U.S.-controlled reserves?
- Do you agree that the price of crude oil is set on international markets like ICE that respond to the global supply and production of crude oil?
- Do you agree that the above two factors ultimately limits the ability of the U.S. to influence prices when OPEC+ can ramp up and down production as the dominant market supplier?
- Do you agree that the interests of OPEC+ countries like Russia and Iran do not align with our national interest?
- What level of increase in U.S. oil production do you think would meaningfully impact the price of oil and reduce U.S. petroleum prices? Do you believe this will this reduction result in meeting President Trump's campaign promise to reduce gasoline pump prices to \$2 per gallon?
- Do you support the trend of domestic oil producers to hold back on additional development and not overextend their assets and balance sheets in order to keep the price of oil at a stable and elevated price?
- In that context, do you think a meaningful increase in domestic production will occur in the next couple of years?
- If confirmed, how will you help the Interior Department bring affordable fossil fuel alternatives to market?

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Response: I believe that energy is produced most efficiently and with the least emissions in the United States, contributing significantly to our economy and the reduction of global emissions. I agree with Secretary Burgum that producing less oil and gas in the U.S. does not reduce global energy demand, it simply pushes production to other parts of the world. Achieving American energy independence and dominance will rely on secure, reliable, and affordable forms of energy from domestic resources. While all forms of energy may contribute, there is a premium on baseload, dispatchable sources. If confirmed, I will work with you and this Committee to ensure our energy grid is safe, reliable and secure.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: There is significant interest from mining companies to develop claims inside national parks as well as on land near and adjacent to national parks. Mining activity could have significant impacts on the natural resources that these parks were established to protect.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the National Park Service is consulted on any mining activity, either inside or outside of national park boundaries, that impacts park natural resources?

Follow-up: If the results of a consultation showed negative impacts on National Park resources, would you condition or deny the mining approval?

Response: I have visited and appreciate the resources of many of America's national parks. As I am not at the Department, I am not familiar with issues or legal requirements related to mining within national parks, but if I am confirmed, I will learn more about these issues and comply with the law.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: If confirmed, will you commit to working with the next BLM Director and BLM's State Office in Nevada to create a statewide RMP?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about your perspective on a statewide resource management plan and commit to working closely with the BLM and stakeholders in Nevada and across the states to understand their views. I will work to ensure resource management plans achieve appropriate balance to advance American prosperity and national security in accordance with the law.

Question 2: Would you agree that some lands should be prioritized for other uses, such as hunting, fishing, or habitat preservation, over other uses like oil and gas leasing?

For what reasons would officials that oversee the country's oil and gas leasing program want to have lands like the Ruby Mountains, which are cherished as one of Nevada's great natural wonders, made available for oil and gas leasing?

Would you agree that speculative lease holders are a drain on agency resources and this is a wasteful management of land that could be managed for other purposes?

Will you commit to helping me protect the Ruby Mountains from oil and gas leasing?

Response: As I stated in my hearing, I do not believe all parcels of federal land have equal value, and I commit to upholding the multiple-use mandate on public lands in accordance with law, which provides for public input, if I am confirmed. I understand the importance of the Ruby Mountains and I commit to working with you on ways to balance multiple-use activities on public lands managed by the Department of the Interior.

Question 3: Do you support selling off our public lands to pay down the debt or other cost-cutting efforts?

Will you support community-driven legislation – like my Southern Nevada lands bill – that facilitates a very specific disposal of land identified by local officials for housing and economic development needs?

Can communities in Nevada count on you to be a partner in the decision-making process when it comes to the disposal of public lands so as not to harm our rural communities and existing access to our public lands? And can you ensure that the Nevada Delegation and other Nevada stakeholders have a seat at the table?

Response: As I stated in my hearing, I do not believe all parcels of federal land have equal value. Certain public lands, like Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, have recreation and conservation values while other parcels in urban areas like Las Vegas may

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not have the same values and may be suitable for disposal to help address housing needs. I support Secretary Burgum's effort with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make underutilized federal land available to increase affordable housing supply and if confirmed, I commit to working with you and local communities to achieve this goal.

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Questions for the Record from Senator John W. Hickenlooper

Question 1: China has significant control over rare earth element supply chains – which are crucial for energy and military applications. Earlier this month, China imposed export controls on seven rare earth elements. The Biden Administration took critical steps via Department of Defense investments, manufacturing tax credits, and Department of Energy programs to build a domestic supply chain for rare earth elements.

What are the key steps, including but not limited to permitting reforms, that you will support within the Department of Interior to contribute to securing a reliable supply chain for rare earth elements?

Given financing challenges like price volatility and the lack of long-term buyers, what role should federal investment tools—like loans, tax credits, offtake agreements, or contracts for differences—play in supporting new U.S. rare earth projects?

Response: I agree with the President’s actions to make the United States the leading producer and processor of non-fuel minerals, including rare earth minerals. If confirmed, I look forward to working to ensure the Department prioritizes mineral production activities and streamlines permitting to enhance national security.

Question 2: The BLM has made great strides in implementing its multi-use mandate by enabling renewable energy development. The BLM has now permitted 36 gigawatts of renewable energy infrastructure on the land it manages.

Will you prioritize renewable energy on public lands and provide the staffing and resources required to support the successful development of these projects?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to working to increase our domestic supply of secure, reliable, and affordable energy in accordance with the law and the President’s and Secretary’s directives.

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Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: The Department of Energy’s Loan Program Office has been an integral component of our nuclear energy supply. Most recently, LPO has provided a loan to Vogtle to support the first deployment in the U.S. of the AP1000 Generation III+ reactor and has also provided up to \$1.52 billion to Holtec to restart the Palisades Nuclear Plant.

Do you think the Loan Programs Office is essential to the success of the U.S. nuclear industry?

Response: Yes. LPO has been very important in previous nuclear financing such as the Vogtle plant financing and will be equally helpful for future nuclear plants going forward.

Question 2: The Government Accountability Office plays a vital role in making sure agencies are implementing the law as passed by Congress and ensuring American’s taxpayer dollars are being used the way Congress said they should.

In order for GAO to do its job, it needs cooperation from agencies in responding to their oversight work in a timely manner.

If confirmed, will you commit to be responsive to GAO’s outreach and requests for information without delay?

Response: I commit to be responsive to GAO in a timely manner.

Question 3: High-Assay, Low-Enriched Uranium (HALEU) is essential for many defense and advanced civilian reactors. I’m glad the Department is finally acting—but I worry we’re moving too slowly to meet the moment. Despite five laws and \$3.4 billion in funding to jumpstart a domestic supply, Russia remains the only commercial source.

- If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to prioritize expeditiously standing up our domestic HALEU supply?
- Would you consider disbursing the funding for the nuclear fuel availability program as cost-share awards in lieu of the federal government acting as a nuclear fuel bank for both HALEU and low-enriched uranium?

Response: Domestic enrichment of both HALEU and LEU will be one of my top priorities. I will immediately evaluate the current system for contract awards of domestic enrichment and determine whether additional actions are required. This could involve several different actions, and I would be pleased to consider the idea described above and ask for more information regarding the proposal. If confirmed, I will reach out to your staff to learn more about the idea to give it proper consideration.

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Question 4: The Office of Nuclear Energy has not been exempted from the Department-wide hiring freeze or workforce reduction efforts by the so-called Department of Government Efficiency.

If confirmed, will you commit to maintaining the workforce necessary to effectively carry out the mission of the Office of Nuclear Energy?

Response: If confirmed I will work to ensure we meet the demand of the Office of Nuclear Energy.

Question 5: The federal government is responsible for the final disposition of nuclear waste, a responsibility which we all know has gone unfulfilled for decades. Recent efforts of the Office of Nuclear Energy have been focused on consolidated interim storage. Without a permanent repository, these “interim” facilities would fill that role by default over time.

Will you commit to maintaining a federal capability at the National Laboratories in long-term repository science to ensure the government upholds its legal responsibility to permanently dispose of nuclear waste?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, it will be important to have the R&D capability to fully understand the technical requirements necessary for the government to ultimately dispose of the waste from both the existing fleet of commercial reactors and advanced reactors.

Question 6: Federal funding for building a future nuclear workforce is incredibly important. This funding is provided primarily through DOE’s Nuclear Energy University Program. There have been reports that this funding has been delayed several weeks with no notice of award or decision, which has greatly impacted the students and faculty who contribute to the workforce.

Will you commit to ensuring funding for Fiscal Year 2024 and the following years is not delayed?

Response: If confirmed, I will look into this issue.

Question 7: Last year, every member of Congress voted to pass a ban on imports of Russian uranium in efforts to stop funding Putin’s unlawful war against Ukraine. Unfortunately, we may be seeing the Chinese and Russian governments attempting to circumvent this ban by routing Russian uranium through China to the United States.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to address this issue?

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure that we closely monitor and restrict the imports of enriched uranium from Russia as well as potential circumvention through China and continue to fully implement the provisions of the *Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports Act* as passed by Congress. Most importantly, I will work to significantly accelerate the domestic production of uranium enrichment in the United States.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Theodore Garrish

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Mr. Garrish, will you commit to working with states and state public service commissioners to advance and build innovative nuclear power solutions like small modular reactors, microreactors, and fuel recycling?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Nuclear Energy Office works proactively with state officials, energy offices and public utility commissioners as we develop new and innovative reactors and new approaches to recycling. As a part of this effort, I will ensure that the nuclear energy office is an active participant in NARUC activities for both new innovative approaches and existing technologies in the nuclear energy field.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: As we discussed during the hearing, Energy Secretary Chris Wright provided the following QFR response during his nomination process in January 2025: “The people of Nevada are not in favor of Yucca Mountain, and thus President Trump and I do not support Yucca Mountain as a waste repository.”

Should you be confirmed, can you please reaffirm that you’ll uphold this position and oppose the Yucca Mountain project?

Response: I will support the position of President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright as expressed in the QFR.

Question 2: In your written testimony, you stated that “we need to begin to resolve the nuclear waste dilemma and work with Congress, communities and States on solutions,” and in response to my question during the hearing, you highlighted the need for a more collaborative process for the management of nuclear waste.

Can you please expand on your verbal response and explain in greater detail what a collaborative approach for a repository site-selection process means and what mechanisms you would put in place to ensure a repository could not be sited or constructed in a state that did not want it or consent to it? Can you please confirm that you would not proceed with the repository siting process if a state is opposed to the project?

Response: A collaborative approach would involve meetings and discussions with states that would consider siting the repository, and proposing benefits to the state that would include an array of facilities such as manufacturing plants for reactors with related supply chains, enrichment plants and fuel fabrication plants, research reactors, university and training facilities along with a discussion of robust financial benefits that could be made available for siting the repository and storage.

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The collaborative approach would only be taken with states and communities that were interested.

Question 3: If confirmed, will you commit to working with me, my office, and the State of Nevada on all nuclear matters, but especially those related to nuclear waste management?

Response: Yes.

Question 4: From your perspective, what are the waste implications of new advanced reactors? And how will these new waste streams affect the search for a solution to U.S. waste disposal?

Response: All of the new waste streams need to be researched and evaluated for appropriate methods of final disposition. For instance, several of the new advanced reactors burn their own waste reducing the volume and toxicity of the remaining waste product which may call for different less stringent methods of disposal.

Question 5: How would you assess the current status of U.S. workforce when it comes to research and development (R&D)? And if confirmed, how would you work to bolster R&D via programs like DOE's Training and Workforce Development Programs – even if it runs counter to Trump Administration firings and reduction in force (or RIF) plans?

Response: The status of the U.S. workforce for nuclear R&D is sufficient through the efforts of the Nuclear Energy University Program and DOE's research at the national laboratories. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we meet the demand as advancements in nuclear energy continue.

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Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports make important data on energy supply, demand and prices broadly available to both the public and private sector. The reports are essential for understanding market trends.

Given the recent release of the Executive Order 14215, “Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies”, how will you seek to maintain the independence of the EIA in its role as an independent statistical and analytical analysis so that EIA can remain a trusted, unbiased and transparent source for energy data now and in the future?

Response: The EIA plays a unique and vital role in providing objective energy data and analysis to policymakers, businesses and the public. That role is especially critical at a time of dynamic market challenges in global and domestic energy markets. If confirmed, I would work to uphold and strengthen EIA’s core principles of methodological rigor, nonpartisan analysis and open access to information. Independence does not mean isolation, it means maintaining clear boundaries between data production and policy formulation and ensuring our work remains transparent, timely and responsive to evolving energy trends.

Question 2: Last week, EIA released the 2025 Annual Energy Outlook, the first to include measures enacted under the Biden Administration, including the IRA and IIJA. The EIA’s credibility rests on its transparent and unbiased work products and consistency in sticking strictly to current law and policy in its forecasts.

If confirmed, will you commit to basing projections only on current policy and fairly representing a balance of energy sources and scenarios?

Response: Yes. The Annual Energy Outlook and other reports must reflect a balanced representation of energy sources and market drivers. That includes clearly communicating underlying assumptions so that policymakers, industry leaders and the public can draw informed conclusions based on unbiased data. One exception to basing projections only on current policy is cases in which projections (other than the so-called Reference Case) are intended to consider hypotheticals, such as varying supply or economic assumptions. In such cases, as is current and long-standing practice, any hypotheticals will be clearly identified for the reader.

Question 3: The Government Accountability Office plays a vital role in making sure agencies are implementing the law as passed by Congress and ensuring American’s taxpayer dollars are being used the way Congress said they should.

In order for GAO to do its job, it needs cooperation from agencies in responding to their oversight work in a timely manner.

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Tristan Abbey

If confirmed, will you commit to be responsive to GAO's outreach and requests for information without delay?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to working with GAO and other federal agencies.

Question 4: Regarding load growth from data centers and cryptomining:

- How well do you think EIA measures demand from data centers and cryptomining facilities?
- What work should EIA do with the national labs to better characterize current and future demand?
- Are there ways for EIA to obtain the information it needs while respecting industry needs to keep certain intellectual property secret?

Response: If confirmed, I would support efforts to improve EIA's data collection and modeling capabilities in this area. My understanding is that the EIA has published some limited analysis. Among my priorities would be to better understand these pre-existing efforts and to consider what else can be done. That includes collaborating with DOE's national laboratories and other technical experts to better understand the operation profiles, technology trends and load characteristics of these facilities. EIA can also continue to refine its modeling tools to capture a more granular picture of how digital infrastructure is shaping electricity demand. At the same time, I recognize the need to strike a careful balance of obtaining the information necessary for accurate reports while respecting proprietary business information, data privacy and the undesirability of reporting requirements that place undue burdens on respondents. I believe there are constructive ways to engage with industry to enhance data transparency without compromising intellectual property or competitiveness.

Question 5: Recent press reports note that EIA has lost more than 35 percent of its staff. Given the federal hiring freeze in place, the next EIA Administrator will have to make critical decisions about how to distribute EIA's remaining resources to achieve its mission.

- How will you go about doing this?
- What do you see as the top priorities for EIA, and how will you provide leadership at this time in order to make sure DOE fulfills Congressional mandates, including those in the IJA?

Response: If confirmed, my first step would be to conduct a clear-eyed assessment of EIA's current staffing, workloads, and programming needs, with a focus on aligning resources with the areas of highest impact and statutory responsibility. In terms of priorities, I believe EIA must deliver timely, objective data and analysis across the full range of energy sources, including electricity, fuels and emerging technologies. Leadership in this environment means setting clear priorities and focusing on core analytical competencies. I would work closely with DOE

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stakeholders and Congress to identify any flexibility and partnerships that could help fill critical gaps.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Mr. Abbey, if confirmed will you commit to ensuring that the Energy Information Administration remains a non-partisan, impartial and transparent agency for the dissemination of energy information?

Response: If confirmed, I will be fully committed to preserving and strengthening EIA's role as a transparent source of energy data and analysis.

Question 2: Mr. Abbey, EIA publishes outlooks and projections on a wide range of energy topics. These outlooks are used for policy making as well as market decisions. If confirmed, what actions will you take to provide transparency and accountability for EIA published outlooks?

Response: EIA's outlooks and projections play an important role in informing public policy and private-sector decisions. If confirmed, I would make it a top priority to ensure that all EIA outlooks are developed with the highest standards of transparency and analytical rigor. At a minimum, one way to strengthen accountability is by meeting statutory requirements and adhering to a consistent publication schedule for the Annual Energy Outlook.

Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Petroleum Markets

I have seen repeatedly that transparency and comprehensive data, like the products that EIA provides, are necessary elements to ensuring that our oil and gas markets are operating fairly and prices are being set based on the fundamentals of supply and demand. That is why I would like to explore whether EIA is collecting sufficient data from the oil and gas supply chain to ensure consumers are being protected from market manipulation and fraud. My understanding is that the general 1977 law providing EIA with the authority to collect data from the oil and gas industry supply chain provides EIA with considerable discretion on what data it can request.

- Do you believe that collecting more oil and gas supply chain data from industry could increase our understanding of supply and demand and pricing trends in the physical and derivatives oil and gas markets?
- How could collecting more oil and gas supply chain data from industry provide market analysts within non-government organizations, academia, and regulatory agencies with the tools needed to review, track, and analyze these markets?
- Do you support collecting further disaggregated data by week (rather than by month) for additional downstream segments below the refinery level including terminals, wholesalers, and retail levels of the supply chain?

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Tristan Abbey

Response: EIA data is widely used by the federal government, academia, analysts and state regulators. Expanding access to relevant supply chain data, when feasible, could strengthen market oversight and analysis, especially in light of increasing complexity in physical and financial energy markets. If confirmed, I would also want to ensure that any expansion of data collection continues to protect confidential business information, does not impose an undue burden on respondents, and upholds EIA's statutory role as a trusted data provider. If confirmed, I would be happy to engage with you and your staff on collecting disaggregated weekly data.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Mr. Abbey, you stated the following in your written testimony: "In my view, EIA must clear the decks of unfinished projects, recruit and retain the best talent, develop the most powerful analytical capabilities, and modernize its information systems."

Are you aware of recent reports – which have found that over 100 EIA employees have resigned or been fired by the Trump Administration? What is your response to that? And if confirmed, how would you counter these firings to deliver on the ambitions outlined in your written testimony?

Response: If confirmed, I would prioritize an assessment of EIA's current capabilities and resource needs. This would involve identifying critical gaps in expertise and determining how best to allocate existing resources to maintain the quality and reliability of EIA's work. I would also explore opportunities to collaborate with other federal agencies to supplement EIA's analytical capabilities.

Question 2: If confirmed, would you commit to publishing objective, honest energy data? And specifically, how would you work to uphold EIA's purpose to serve as an independent source of energy information?

Response: If confirmed, I will fully commit to publishing energy data that is objective, transparent and accurate energy data. The strength of EIA lies in its independence and its adherence to fact-based analysis.

Question 3: As you noted in your written testimony, establishing a critical mineral outlook could be extremely beneficial for our country. If confirmed, can you please expand on specific action items you'd take to ensure that a critical minerals report is produced and published in a timely manner?

Response: Given the challenging geopolitical and strategic environment, it is my view that we do not have time to reinvent the wheel. If confirmed, I would begin by working with EIA career staff and interagency partners to assess the current data landscape and identify what information is already available, where gaps exist and what partnerships could help close those gaps. I would want to ensure that the outlook is developed with the same hallmarks that define all of EIA's work to that can serve a wide range of users from government to industry to academia. My goal

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Tristan Abbey

would be to ensure this report becomes a regular and trusted product that evolves as market conditions and technologies change.

Questions for the Record from Senator John W. Hickenlooper

Question 1: Do you commit to protecting the Energy Information Administration's status as a semi-independent agency and preventing alteration of EIA data, analysis, and forecasts or any requirement of approval or sign off from officers or employees of the U.S. government or elected officials outside the EIA?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I would follow the law and reinforce a culture that prioritizes transparency, methodological rigor and nonpartisan reporting.

Question 2: Do you commit to retaining current staffing levels at EIA to ensure continued, trusted research and analysis and consistent publication quality and timelines?

Response: If confirmed, I would prioritize an assessment of EIA's current capabilities and resource needs. This would involve identifying critical gaps in expertise and determining how best to allocate existing resources to maintain the quality and reliability of EIA's work. I would also explore opportunities to collaborate with other federal agencies to supplement EIA's analytical capabilities.



FloodCoalition.org

April 30, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee, Chairman
The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee:

As Executive Director of the American Flood Coalition, I am pleased to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Andrea Travnicek of North Dakota to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science. Dr. Travnicek's impressive expertise spanning natural resource management, intergovernmental collaboration, and proactive flood solutions make her exceptionally well-suited for this role.

As Director of the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, Dr. Travnicek has been at the forefront of developing and implementing comprehensive flood resilience strategies across the state. Her valuable insights from this work have enriched the American Flood Coalition's efforts to advance proactive, state-led flood solutions nationwide. Beyond North Dakota, Dr. Travnicek is recognized as a leader and expert by peers holding similar senior water and resilience roles in other states.

Under Dr. Travnicek's leadership, North Dakota has made significant advances in planning for and responding to extreme weather events, including her work to effectively deploy state and federal resources to strengthen critical infrastructure and protect North Dakotans from natural hazards.

Dr. Travnicek understands that water-related issues, especially flooding, require coordinated solutions that span local, tribal, state, and federal jurisdictions. Her experience advancing watershed-scale strategic planning is exactly the kind of forward-thinking expertise needed at the federal level.

In addition to her leadership on state-led flood resilience, Dr. Travnicek brings valuable experience from her prior service in several U.S. Department of the Interior senior positions. Her ability to navigate complex policy issues with clarity and balance is a hallmark of her public service.

I respectfully urge the Committee to advance Dr. Travnicek's nomination. Her qualifications and leadership, especially in water management and flood resilience, will serve the Department of the Interior and the nation well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Roberts".

Melissa Roberts
Executive Director

CC:
U.S. Senator John Hoeven
U.S. Senator Kevin Cramer

April 28, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee, Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington DC, 20510

RE: Support for Dr. Andrea Travnicek as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

On behalf of the millions of hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and natural resource management professionals we collectively represent, we write to express our strong support for Dr. Andrea Travnicek as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. Dr. Travnicek has demonstrated an exceptional ability to bring together diverse stakeholders in addressing critical water and science issues, making her an outstanding leader in this space.

The Office of Water and Science at the Department of the Interior plays a crucial role in the conservation and management of water resources, which directly impacts fish and wildlife habitats essential to hunters and anglers. By overseeing the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Bureau of Reclamation, the office ensures the health of aquatic ecosystems, supports habitat restoration, and advances scientific research that benefits both recreational and subsistence hunting and fishing. Policies and initiatives driven by this office safeguard wetlands, rivers, and watersheds, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy the great outdoors.

Throughout her career, Dr. Travnicek has been a driving force in fostering collaboration among federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and state governments. Her ability to bridge these sectors has led to innovative solutions that balance conservation, scientific integrity, and the needs of communities that depend on sound water and resource management. Her leadership has exemplified a commitment to inclusion, ensuring that all voices are heard and that policies reflect the broad interests of stakeholders.

Dr. Travnicek is not only an effective and fair manager but also a respected leader who builds strong, high-performing teams. Her expertise in science-based decision-making ensures that policies are grounded in facts and best practices, leading to durable, long-term conservation and resource management strategies.

Our organizations are committed to the stewardship of our natural resources in the most practical and effective manner, we recognize that the health of our ecosystems is directly linked to the availability and quality of habitat for fish and wildlife, which in turn sustains hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities nationwide. From freshwater and marine fisheries to upland and big game habitats, maintaining and restoring these landscapes is essential for biodiversity,

ecosystem resilience, and the outdoor traditions cherished by millions of Americans. Sound water and science policies ensure that habitat connectivity, sustainable resource use, and conservation investments support the long-term viability of fish and wildlife populations across the country.

We are confident that Dr. Travnicsek's leadership will continue to advance responsible water and science policy, benefiting both natural resources and the communities that rely on them. We urge you to support her continued leadership in this role.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Archery Trade Association
California Waterfowl Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Houston Safari Club
Mule Deer Foundation
National Wild Turkey Federation
Pheasants Forever
Quail Forever
Safari Club International
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Wildlife Mississippi



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Campus Box 3490, McColl Building, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599-3490

***S.V. Arbogast, Director
Professor of the Practice of Finance***

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to write in support of Leslie Beyer's nomination as Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

Leslie has been a member of the Kenan-Flagler Energy Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill for over three years. Prior to that time, I had the opportunity to observe her leadership of the Petroleum Equipment Suppliers Association (PESA) which later became the Energy Workforce and Technology Council.

She is an extraordinary leader, thoughtful, balanced, organized and effective. I have seen her navigate contentious disagreements, finding grounds for consensus and for moving forward on implementation. She listens carefully and arrives at judgments with discernment. In a role where she would be responsible for the Bureau of Land Management, she has the ability to drive the administration's policies forward at the same time as she considers the potential for associated issues which could derail progress. You could not put the BLM into better hands.

Two past experiences made strong impressions on me in these regards. Some years ago, she appeared at Kenan-Flagler on a panel entitled 'Women in Energy.' This was a time when no one at a major eastern school had anything positive to say about oil & gas. With considerable adroitness, Leslie made the case that such fuels were indispensable for the economy, would remain so for a considerable period, and that the industry would be a constructive contributor to the development of a lower carbon economy. It was interesting to watch the faces of the audience as this confident leader told them, in hard to refute and lucid terms, what they didn't come to hear.

More recently, Leslie took the reins of our Houston Council and proceeded to explain to companies in this energy capital why a school in North Carolina had the best MBA program for studying the Business of Energy in all its forms.

In Leslie Beyer, the Trump Administration will be gaining both a proven organizational leader and a most persuasive public advocate for its policies. I could not recommend her more highly.

With best regards,



Bringing
Water
Together

April 29, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich,

I write today on behalf of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) in strong support of the nomination of Dr. Andrea Travnicek to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science. Dr. Travnicek is well qualified to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. She has an impressive technical and policy background as well as a deep understanding of the importance of water to communities, the economy, and the environment.

ACWA is the largest statewide coalition of public water agencies in the country. ACWA's 470 member agencies are responsible for delivering about 90 percent of the water to communities, farms, and businesses in California. ACWA represents water management entities in every sector of water supply including municipal and agricultural water, water recycling, water reuse, wastewater management, and stormwater management. For more than a century, ACWA and its members have been working to provide high quality, reliable water supplies in an environmentally sustainable and fiscally responsible manner.

The position of Assistant Secretary for Water and Science is particularly important to ACWA and our members as we partner with the Department of the Interior to help supply water and hydroelectric power to tens of millions of Californians. Addressing the dual challenges of growing demands for water and climate variability requires leaders that are thoughtful, dedicated, and collaborative. Dr. Travnicek possesses all of these traits and has a proven history of working collaboratively to address water and natural resource challenges.

We respectfully request that the Committee approve Dr. Travnicek's nomination.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Lyle", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ian Lyle
Director of Federal Relations
Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Rebecca L. Noah Casper | Mayor
Office (208) 612-8235
Fax (208) 612-8560



29 April 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Idaho Fall's support for confirmation of Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish, Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

The City of Idaho Falls respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy ("Office of Nuclear Energy"). Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish's caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research. As you undoubtedly know, the research, development and promotion of nuclear energy is a significant interest for the City of Idaho Falls and much of eastern Idaho. We view it as being extremely important to have robust and highly informed leadership at DOE.

Idaho Falls has had the opportunity to work with Mr. Garrish over the 30 years that he has held various key roles at DOE. Throughout his private and public career, our country, our community, and many other communities have benefited from his deep knowledge of the commercial and public research in the nuclear sector in the United States and internationally. In short, his experience and institutional memory is incredibly valuable.

Idaho Falls recommends that Mr. Garrish be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy for the following reasons:

- (1) *Significant work experience with energy markets, research, policy, and in particular, nuclear energy issues* – Mr. Garrish understands all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle and has developed a wealth of technical expertise and executive experience in a career spanning over three decades. This includes positions he has held within the private sector as well as federal government and DOE. In addition to being a previous Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, his past leadership roles include service as DOE Assistant Secretary for the Office of International Affairs, DOE General Counsel, DOE Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs, and Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. Mr. Garrish has assisted emerging nuclear nations to develop frameworks necessary to launch and grow their nuclear energy capabilities and programs and positioned American commercial interests for export success;

P.O. Box 50220 | 308 Constitution Way | Idaho Falls, Idaho 83405-0220

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Rebecca L. Noah Casper | Mayor
Office (208) 612-8235
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- (2) *He has a proven track record of working with local communities like ours*— Mr. Garrish not only has the technical expertise and executive experience necessary for this role, but he also has demonstrated skill at cooperating and communicating with businesses, states, tribes, and state governments. Communities like ours are the current and future hosts of the country's nuclear facilities. Communication and partnership with local governments and communities is critical to the success of the Office of Nuclear Energy's mission;
- (3) *Mr. Garrish will provide a continuity of leadership at this critical time for the DOE and nuclear development* — During a time of staff and program transition at DOE, Mr. Garrish would be an invaluable bedrock of institutional knowledge for DOE and the Office of Nuclear Energy. President Donald Trump's ambitious Executive Orders recommend increased roles for nuclear energy in our country and in our communities. This requires an equally ambitious and experienced leader to implement fully and successfully. Further, he can ensure that we progress with the development of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste disposal facilities; and
- (4) *Furthermore, the growth of baseload energy demand, driven by the development of AI technology, has resulted in hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and others to drive massive investment into nuclear energy facilities.* Mr. Garrish's legal credentials and diverse commercial experience prepare him to fully exploit this critical opportunity for nuclear energy development in our nation. While a Vice President at CH2M Hill, he specialized in export control, regulatory and governance structures for the global energy sector. Idaho Falls would welcome the ingenuity and common-sense mindset he would bring to this important role.

The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation's energy security, as well as to the economic growth and development of Idaho Falls. Indeed, for all ECA communities and many others, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents significant economic development opportunity while contributing to that mission. Idaho Falls, independently, and as a member of Energy Communities Alliance, offers a full-throated recommendation for Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,



Rebecca L. Noah Casper, Ph.D.
Mayor, City of Idaho Falls

cc: Senator James E. Risch
Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy
Seth Kirshenber, ECA Executive Director



COLORADO CONSERVATION ALLIANCE
 13976 W. BOWLES AVENUE #200
 LITTLETON, CO 80127

April 23, 2025

Senator Mike Lee, Chairman
 Senator Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
 U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington, DC 20510

RE: Dr. Andrea Travnickek, for Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior

Honorable Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I write in strong support of Dr. Andrea Travnickek's nomination as the Assistant Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) and in appreciation for her willingness to serve in this capacity. This letter of support is offered from my role as Chairman of Colorado Conservation Alliance, which supports outdoor enthusiasts, and personally, as a Colorado native from a family in its fifth generation with decades of experience in hunting, ranching, and energy operations. Professionally and personally, I endorse Dr. Travnickek's nomination based on her wide range of knowledge and her reputation of responsiveness to the concerns of hard-working Americans.

Dr. Travnickek's experience across the public, private, and non-profit sectors will be a tremendous asset in improving the DOI's efficiency and helping the agency achieve President Trump's goal of streamlining government programs. Her private sector credentials and science-minded understanding make her an ideal candidate for this assignment, which requires good stewardship of natural resources and maximizing revenue potential from those same resources. Her added knowledge of the inner workings of Congress and the Executive Branch will also allow her to be effective from day one, and we need this kind of capacity from all nominees at this time, given the many vacancies needing to be filled. Not approving such a critical position and skilled nominee would be unthinkable.

Finally, I must emphasize how personable, caring, and intentional Dr. Travnickek is in dealing with your constituents. Since all on this committee are elected officials representing a broad base of constituents, you should also know that Dr. Travnickek is genuinely willing and able to provide answers and seek solutions that will be understandable to, responsive to, and accountable to the people you serve. Having Dr. Travnickek as a co-servant in the DOI will be a benefit to your Districts and will benefit the people whose business operations, like ranching and energy, intersect with the public lands managed under the DOI. On behalf of the Colorado Conservation Alliance and the Clark White River Ranch family, I respectfully endorse and request your approval of Dr. Andrea Travnickek's nomination as Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Clark
 Chairman, Colorado Conservation Alliance
 CEO, Petrox Resources, Inc.



February 12, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich-

On behalf of the Colorado Water Congress (CWC), I want to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Andrea Travnicek to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI).

CWC is a bi-partisan membership organization consisting of over 400 organizational members, serving as the principal voice of Colorado's water community. CWC's membership reflects all sectors and aspects of Colorado water users.

Dr. Travnicek will bring extensive experience and proven leadership in water resource management at both state and federal levels to this position. Appointed in August 2021 by Governor Burgum, she previously led the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, where she successfully managed water development, regulatory responsibilities, planning, education, and safety initiatives that are vital to the sustainable management of the state's water resources.

Prior to this role, she served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for both Water and Science and Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the DOI, overseeing agencies such as the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management. This experience has given her a unique perspective on the many challenges and opportunities facing our nation's natural resources.

Dr. Travnicek has developed a wide network of stakeholders across the spectrum of water users, particularly in the West, where collaboration between water users and the DOI is critical to balancing water supply needs. She has worked extensively with agricultural, municipal, tribal, conservation, and industrial water interests, demonstrating her ability to navigate complex policy landscapes and foster partnerships that drive effective water management.

Her commitment to science, innovation, and effective resource management aligns with DOI's priorities. Her ability to bridge policy and practice, along with her dedication to public service, makes her well-suited to lead initiatives that help both our natural resources and the communities that depend on them.

The CWC confidently endorses Dr. Andrea Travnicek for Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. She will provide visionary leadership, strategic insight, and a collaborative spirit to advance the Department's mission.

Thank you for considering our views on this important nomination. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or require more information.

Sincerely,

Chané Polo

Chané Polo
Executive Director
Colorado Water Congress



EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE APSÁALOOKE NATION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
P.O. BOX 159, 43 HERITAGE RD.
CROW AGENCY, MONTANA 59022
406-679-4048

Frank White Clay, Chairman
Lawrence DeCrane, Vice Chairman
Levi Black Eagle, Secretary
Channis Whiteman, Vice Secretary

Senator Mike Lee
Chairman, Energy and Natural Resource Committee
363 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, Energy and Natural Resource Committee
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for the nominee of Assistant Secretary; US Department of the Interior

Dear Chairman Senator Mike Lee and Senator Heinrich,

As the Executive Branch Chairman of the Crow Nation, I am writing to express our strong support for Dr. Andrea Travnick to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior. Throughout her tenure as Director of Water Resources for the State of North Dakota, Dr. Travnick has exhibited an unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration between the state and tribal nations, including our own.

Her efforts to advocate for the inclusion of tribes in the state's water resource management initiatives have been pivotal in establishing a more equitable framework for all stakeholders involved. Dr. Travnick's dedication to recognizing the vital role that tribal nations play in water resource decisions has cultivated a partnership that we highly value.

We believe that Dr. Travnick's extensive experience and her inclusive leadership style will greatly benefit not only the Crow Nation but also other tribal nations across the country. Her proven ability to listen and engage with diverse voices will ensure fair management of our natural resources.

We respectfully urge you to support Dr. Travnick's nomination. Her leadership and collaborative spirit will undoubtedly be an asset to the Department of the Interior. We look forward to her prompt confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Whiteclay".

Frank Whiteclay
Chairman, Crow Tribe



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www.energyca.org

April 28, 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: *Energy Communities Alliance Support for Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish,
Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of
Nuclear Energy***

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

The Energy Communities Alliance (“ECA”) respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy (“DOE”) Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy (“Office of Nuclear Energy”). Our organization represents local governments and communities that host nuclear energy, manufacturing and defense facilities who are eager to drive nuclear energy development forward. Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish’s caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research.

ECA has worked with Mr. Garrish for over 30 years. Throughout his private and public career, our country and our local government members have benefited from his deep knowledge of the commercial and public research in the nuclear sector in the United States and internationally.

ECA believes that he should be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy for the following reasons:

- (1) *Significant work experience in the arena of energy issues, in particular nuclear energy issues* – Mr. Garrish understands all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle and has developed a wealth of technical expertise and executive experience in a career spanning over three decades, including positions within the private sector as well as federal government and DOE. In addition to being a previous Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, his past leadership roles include service as DOE Assistant Secretary for the Office of International Affairs, DOE General Counsel, DOE Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs,

and Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. Mr. Garrish has assisted emerging nuclear nations to develop frameworks necessary to launch and grow their nuclear energy capabilities and programs and positioned American commercial interests for export success;

- (2) *He has a proven track record of working with businesses, states, tribes, and local governments* – Mr. Garrish not only has the technical expertise and executive experience necessary for this role, but also has a proven track record of cooperating and communicating with businesses, states, tribes, and local governments who are the current and future hosts of our nation’s nuclear facilities. Communication and partnership with these entities is critical to the success of the Office of Nuclear Energy mission, and Mr. Garrish has a wealth of relationships with communities and industry to enable the advancement of that mission;
- (3) *Mr. Garrish will provide a continuity of leadership at this critical time for the DOE and nuclear development* – During a time of staff and program transition at DOE, Mr. Garrish would be an invaluable bedrock of institutional knowledge for DOE and the Office of Nuclear Energy. President Donald Trump’s ambitious Executive Orders proscribe increased roles for nuclear energy in our country, and they will require an equally ambitious and experienced leader to implement fully and successfully. Further, he can ensure that we progress with the development of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste disposal facilities; and
- (4) *Furthermore, the growing and baseload energy needs of AI have pushed hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and other to drive massive investment into nuclear energy facilities.* Mr. Garrish’s legal credentials and diverse commercial experience prepare him to fully exploit this critical opportunity for nuclear energy development in our nation. While a Vice President at CH2M Hill, he specialized in export control, regulatory and governance structures for the global energy sector. We welcome the ingenuity and common-sense mindset he would bring to this important role.

The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation’s energy security. For ECA communities, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents the pursuit of economic development while contributing to that mission. As such, ECA recommends Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brent Gerry".

Hon. Brent Gerry, ECA Chair
Mayor, City of West Richland, WA

cc: Seth Kirshenberg, ECA Executive Director
ECA Board of Directors
Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy



February 18, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee, Chairman
The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

SEND VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

On behalf of the Family Farm Alliance (Alliance), we appreciate the opportunity to strongly endorse Dr. Andrea Travnicek to serve as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science of the Department of the Interior.

The Alliance advocates for family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts, and allied industries in seventeen Western states. Our organization is focused on one mission - To ensure the availability of reliable, affordable irrigation water supplies to Western farmers and ranchers. We support the preservation and protection of Western irrigated agriculture for our nation's year-round availability of fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and beef.

The Assistant Secretary for Water and Science is critically important, since, among other duties, this position oversees the Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Of all federal agencies, our membership likely works closest with the Bureau of Reclamation, whose core mission is to provide for the delivery of water and power from its Western U.S. facilities in a manner that meets applicable requirements of state and federal law. USGS is the sole earth science agency for the Department of the Interior and the federal government, and its programs like the National Streamflow Information Program and the Cooperative Water Program are critical to managing Western water resources.

P.O. Box 216
Klamath Falls, OR 97601
dan@familyfarmalliance.org

We believe Dr. Andrea Travnicek is the ideal candidate for this important position.

Dr. Travnicek was appointed by Governor Burgum in August 2021 to lead the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, where she manages the state's water resources through development, regulation, planning, education, and safety. Previously, she oversaw the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and held leadership roles at the Department of the Interior serving in several roles as a deputy assistant secretary managing agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service. She has served as a Senior Policy Advisor for two North Dakota governors and worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. With over 15 years of experience, Dr. Travnicek will bring her tremendous expertise in natural resources, energy, agriculture, national security, disaster response, and public policy back to the Department of the Interior.

We continue to face dire drought conditions in the West, and many farmers and ranchers that make up our Western membership will again be hit hard by drought and water shortages. Notably, the Colorado River Basin, the waters of which serves millions of Americans and millions of acres of farmland continues to experience drought conditions.

In this critical year, we need someone at Interior who has Western water policy experience in her portfolio, as well as other seasoned qualities that will provide a steady hand at the helm in this important leadership position at the Department of the Interior. Dr. Travnicek is well-known and respected in the Western water community, and we know she will be accessible, forthright and an effective leader at Interior.

The Family Farm Alliance respectfully requests your support of Dr. Andrea Travnicek as the next Assistant Secretary for Water and Science of the Department of the Interior. We know she will serve the West and our Nation well in this important position.

If you have any questions about the Family Farm Alliance position on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Orme at 602-568-3899 or Dan Keppen at 541-892-6244.

Sincerely,



Paul Orme
President



Dan Keppen
Executive Director

HANFORD COMMUNITIES

Richland · Kennewick · Pasco · West Richland · Franklin County · Benton County · Port of Benton

April 28, 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: *Support for Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish, Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy*

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

Hanford Communities respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy ("Office of Nuclear Energy"). Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish's caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research.

Our community has worked with Mr. Garrish for over 30 years in various roles at DOE. Throughout his private and public career, our country, our community, and many other communities have benefited from his deep knowledge of the commercial and public research in the nuclear sector in the United States and internationally.

Hanford Communities recommends that Mr. Garrish should be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy for the following reasons:

- (1) *Significant work experience in the arena of energy issues, in particular nuclear energy issues* – Mr. Garrish understands all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle and has developed a wealth of technical expertise and executive experience in a career spanning over three decades, including positions within the private sector as well as federal government and DOE. In addition to being a previous Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, his past leadership roles include service as DOE Assistant Secretary for the Office of International Affairs, DOE General Counsel, DOE Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs, and Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. Mr. Garrish has assisted emerging nuclear nations to develop frameworks necessary to launch and grow their nuclear energy capabilities and programs and positioned American commercial interests for export success;

~ A Local Voice in Hanford's Cleanup ~

- (2) *He has a proven track record of working with communities like our own*— Mr. Garrish not only has the technical expertise and executive experience necessary for this role, but also has a proven track record of cooperating and communicating with businesses, states, tribes, and local governments. Communities like our own are the current and future hosts of the country's nuclear facilities, and communication and partnership with local governments and communities is critical to the success of the Office of Nuclear Energy's mission. Thanks to his experience and communication-focused mindset, Mr. Garrish has a wealth of relationships with communities like [Insert Community/Organization Here] to enable the advancement of that mission;
- (3) *Mr. Garrish will provide a continuity of leadership at this critical time for the DOE and nuclear development* — During a time of staff and program transition at DOE, Mr. Garrish would be an invaluable bedrock of institutional knowledge for DOE and the Office of Nuclear Energy. President Donald Trump's ambitious Executive Orders proscribe increased roles for nuclear energy in our country and in our communities, and they will require an equally ambitious and experienced leader to implement fully and successfully. Further, he can ensure that we progress with the development of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste disposal facilities; and
- (4) *Furthermore, the growing and baseload energy needs of AI have pushed hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and other to drive massive investment into nuclear energy facilities.* Mr. Garrish's legal credentials and diverse commercial experience prepare him to fully exploit this critical opportunity for nuclear energy development in our nation. While a Vice President at CH2M Hill, he specialized in export control, regulatory and governance structures for the global energy sector. Our community would welcome the ingenuity and common-sense mindset he would bring to this important role.

The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation's energy security, as well as to the economic growth and development of our community. For all ECA communities, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents the pursuit of economic development while contributing to that mission. As such, Hanford Communities, in its own judgement and as a member of Energy Communities Alliance, recommends Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,



Chuck Torelli
Board Chairman

cc: Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy
Seth Kirshenberg, ECA Executive Director

~ A Local Voice in Hanford's Cleanup ~



Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

April 28, 2025

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: *Idaho Advanced Energy Consortium Support for Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish, Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy*

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

The Idaho Advanced Energy Consortium (IAEC) respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy ("Office of Nuclear Energy"). Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish's caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research. **IAEC recommends that Mr. Garrish should be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy.**

The Idaho Advanced Energy Consortium (IAEC) convenes industry stakeholders to identify, plan, and act to address needs across the advanced energy sector. These include the evolving and shared supply chain, workforce development, community, infrastructure, and security needs. These needs center around advancements in nuclear energy and related projects. IAEC supports the regional efforts of Intermountain States to initiate and deploy nuclear energy projects across the fuel cycle, as well as small modular, micro, and advanced reactors. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is a critical stakeholder in these efforts. We are currently working with the Idaho National Laboratory (INL), Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), and have partnerships in Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado.



IAEC believes that Mr. Garrish has the experience, expertise, and long track record of community engagement that will encourage energy security and innovation across the DOE complex. Mr. Garrish has a history of working with community groups such as the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) and regional groups such as IAEC to solve long-standing issues such as energy generation, weapons complex management, and legacy management.

Many regions of the country, including the Intermountain West, are facing growing demand from electrification, computing infrastructure, as well as aging power generation assets. The near-term actions of the DOE will play a critical role in ensuring energy security across our region and across the country.

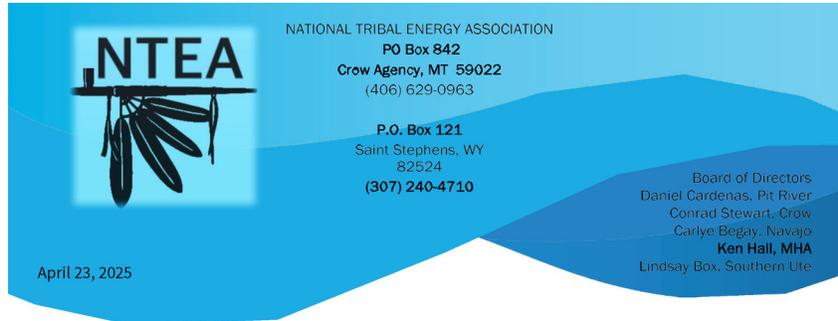
The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation's energy security, as well as to the economic growth and development of our community. For all ECA communities, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents the pursuit of economic development while contributing to that mission. As such, the Idaho Advanced Energy Consortium, in its own judgement and as a member of the Energy Communities Alliance, recommends Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,

Kirt Marlow

Kirt Marlow, Executive Director IAEC

cc: Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy
Seth Kirshenber, ECA Executive Director



Senator Mike Lee
 Chairman
 United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 363 Russell Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Martin Heinrich
 Ranking Member
 United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 709 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for the Nomination of Dr. Andrea Travnicek to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich;

On behalf of the National Tribal Energy Association (NTEA), I am writing to express our full and unwavering support for Dr. Andrea Travnicek of North Dakota to serve our Nation as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science. By overseeing and managing the North Dakota Department of Water Resources and the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department she provided leadership and demonstrated exceptional dedication and commitment to fostering collaborations with the Tribes of North Dakota. Her previous service in the Department of Interior from 2017-2020 gives her the experience and leadership needed to manage the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey.

As you know, the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey play important roles in the management and development of our Nations water, energy, and mineral wealth and are extremely critical to our Nations Tribes. Tribes hold a significant share of the water rights west of the Mississippi and a majority of the top four critical mineral reserves and resources. Dr. Travnicek is extremely qualified and well suited to work hand in hand with our Tribes as we partner to Make America Great Again!

The mission of the National Tribal Energy Association (NTEA) is to support the safe, efficient, practical, sustainable, and environmentally sound management and monetization of our Tribal Nation's energy and mineral wealth. We support Tribal goals of stewardship of this wealth by balancing social, environmental, and commercial considerations. We utilize the tools of social, environmental, and commercial responsibility in the realm of policy and regulations that match the unique aspects of Tribal governments, our people, and sovereignty.

We respectfully urge you to consider and swiftly confirm Dr. Travnicsek as our next Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science. Her proven track record of effective leadership will be an invaluable asset to the Department of the Interior and to the Secretary of the Interior and to his team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Cardenas', written in a cursive style.

Mr. Daniel Cardenas
Chairman and Co-Founder
National Tribal Energy Association



April 29, 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Roane County's Support for Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish, Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

Roane County respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy ("Office of Nuclear Energy"). Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish's caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research.

My community has worked with Mr. Garrish for over 30 years in various roles at DOE. Throughout his private and public career, our country, our community, and many other communities have benefited from his deep knowledge of the commercial and public research in the nuclear sector in the United States and internationally.

Roane County recommends that Mr. Garrish should be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy for the following reasons:

- (1) Significant work experience in the arena of energy issues, in particular nuclear energy issues - Mr. Garrish understands all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle and has developed a wealth of technical expertise and executive experience in a career spanning over three decades, including positions within the private sector as well as federal government and DOE. In addition to being a previous Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, his past leadership roles include service as DOE Assistant Secretary for the Office of International Affairs, DOE General Counsel, DOE Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs, and Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. Mr. Garrish has assisted emerging nuclear nations to develop frameworks necessary to launch and grow their nuclear energy capabilities and programs and positioned American commercial interests for export success;
- (2) He has a proven track record of working with communities like our own - Mr. Garrish not only has the technical expertise and executive experience necessary for this role but also has a proven track record of cooperating and communicating with businesses, states, tribes, and local governments. Communities like our own are the current and future hosts of the country's nuclear

Office of the County Executive

☎ 865.376.5578
✉ info@roanecountytn.gov
🌐 www.roanecountytn.gov
📍 PO Box 643 Kingston, TN 37763

facilities, and communication and partnership with local governments and communities is critical to the success of the Office of Nuclear Energy's mission. Thanks to his experience and communication-focused mindset, Mr. Garrish has a wealth of relationships with communities like Roane County to enable the advancement of that mission;

(3) Mr. Garrish will provide a continuity of leadership at this critical time for the DOE and nuclear development – During a time of staff and program transition at DOE, Mr. Garrish would be an invaluable bedrock of institutional knowledge for DOE and the Office of Nuclear Energy. President Donald Trump's ambitious Executive Orders proscribe increased roles for nuclear energy in our country and in our communities, and they will require an equally ambitious and experienced leader to implement fully and successfully. Further, he can ensure that we progress with the development of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste disposal facilities; and

(4) Furthermore, the growing and baseload energy needs of AI have pushed hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and others to drive massive investment into nuclear energy facilities. Mr. Garrish's legal credentials and diverse commercial experience prepare him to fully exploit this critical opportunity for nuclear energy development in our nation. While a Vice President at CH2M Hill, he specialized in export control, regulatory and governance structures for the global energy sector. Our community would welcome the ingenuity and common-sense mindset he would bring to this important role.

The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation's energy security, as well as to the economic growth and development of our community. For all ECA communities, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents the pursuit of economic development while contributing to that mission. As such, Roane County, in its own judgement and as a member of the Energy Communities Alliance, recommends Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wade Creswell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wade" being more prominent than the last name "Creswell".

Wade Creswell
Roane County Executive

cc: Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy
Seth Kirshenber, ECA Executive Director

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is a national conservation organization working to guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. We collaborate with 63 partner organizations, numerous corporate partners, and 135,000 members to advance conservation, habitat, and access priorities. We write to express our strong support for the confirmation of Dr. Andrea Travnicsek as the next Assistant Secretary of Water and Science at the Department of the Interior.

Dr. Travnicsek has an extensive background in resource conservation and water resource management, equipping her to address some of the nation's most pressing natural resource challenges. We have valued our work with Dr. Travnicsek in her roles as Director of the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, Director of the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, and in her previous leadership positions at the Department of the Interior. Throughout her career, she has been accessible and receptive to the input of the hunting and fishing community.

The Assistant Secretary of Water and Science plays a crucial role in shaping natural resource policies and supporting key initiatives at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). USGS leads critical research on issues impacting hunting and fishing, such as the movements and migrations of important big game species and the impact of Chronic Wasting Disease on deer, elk, moose, and other valued species. Additionally, USGS is the nation's premier water resource research institution, overseeing programs like the Next Generation Water Observing System (NGWOS), which provides real-time data on water quantity and quality, and the National Streamgaging Network, which is vital for water management and watershed restoration.

Dr. Travnicsek's nomination comes at a pivotal time for the Department of the Interior, which plays a key role in managing western water and energy development. The federal government has a critical responsibility in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River Basin, Rio Grande, Great Salt Lake, and other western watersheds. These regions face complex challenges, including prolonged drought, wildfire risks, and extreme weather events. The Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation have an opportunity to provide the federal leadership needed to foster innovative drought solutions and strengthen water security across the western United States.

TRCP believes Dr. Travnicsek has the expertise and leadership to address these challenges and develop solutions that support the innovative and flexible management of water resources. Her leadership can help sustain federal investments in drought mitigation, balance competing water demands, and meet the needs of agriculture, communities, businesses, and fish and wildlife.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our strong support for Dr. Travnick's nomination and look forward to working with you and your staff in the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,



Joel Pedersen
President and CEO
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
529 14th St. NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20045



7130 W. Grandridge Blvd., Ste. A | (509) 735-1000
 Kennewick, WA 99336-7725 | TryTri-Cities.org

April 28, 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
 Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington, DC 20510

RE: ***Support for Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish, Nominee for Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy***

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) respectfully requests that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources confirm Mr. Theodore (Ted) Garrish to be the new U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy ("Office of Nuclear Energy"). Filling this important role with a leader of Mr. Garrish's caliber and leadership experience will ensure that we accelerate nuclear energy development and cutting-edge research.

Our community has worked with Mr. Garrish for over 30 years in various roles at DOE. Throughout his private and public career, our country, our community, and many other communities have benefited from his deep knowledge of the commercial and public research in the nuclear sector in the United States and internationally.

TRIDEC recommends that Mr. Garrish should be confirmed as the next Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy for the following reasons:

- (1) *Significant work experience in the arena of energy issues, in particular nuclear energy issues* – Mr. Garrish understands all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle and has developed a wealth of technical expertise and executive experience in a career spanning over three decades, including positions within the private sector as well as federal government and DOE. In addition to being a previous Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, his past leadership roles include service as DOE Assistant Secretary for the Office of International Affairs, DOE General Counsel, DOE Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs, and Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. Mr. Garrish has assisted emerging nuclear nations to develop frameworks necessary to launch and grow their nuclear energy capabilities and programs and positioned American commercial interests for export success;



- (2) *He has a proven track record of working with communities like our own*– Mr. Garrish not only has the technical expertise and executive experience necessary for this role, but also has a proven track record of cooperating and communicating with businesses, states, tribes, and local governments. Communities like our own are the current and future hosts of the country's nuclear facilities, and communication and partnership with local governments and communities is critical to the success of the Office of Nuclear Energy's mission. Thanks to his experience and communication-focused mindset, Mr. Garrish has a wealth of relationships with communities like [Insert Community/Organization Here] to enable the advancement of that mission;
- (3) *Mr. Garrish will provide a continuity of leadership at this critical time for the DOE and nuclear development* – During a time of staff and program transition at DOE, Mr. Garrish would be an invaluable bedrock of institutional knowledge for DOE and the Office of Nuclear Energy. President Donald Trump's ambitious Executive Orders proscribe increased roles for nuclear energy in our country and in our communities, and they will require an equally ambitious and experienced leader to implement fully and successfully. Further, he can ensure that we progress with the development of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste disposal facilities; and
- (4) *Furthermore, the growing and baseload energy needs of AI have pushed hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and other to drive massive investment into nuclear energy facilities.* Mr. Garrish's legal credentials and diverse commercial experience prepare him to fully exploit this critical opportunity for nuclear energy development in our nation. While a Vice President at CH2M Hill, he specialized in export control, regulatory and governance structures for the global energy sector. Our community would welcome the ingenuity and common-sense mindset he would bring to this important role.

The mission of the DOE-NE program is extremely important to the future of our nation's energy security, as well as to the economic growth and development of our community. For all ECA communities, the growth of the American nuclear agenda represents the pursuit of economic development while contributing to that mission. As such, TRIDEC, in its own judgement and as a member of Energy Communities Alliance, recommends Mr. Garrish to be confirmed as the new DOE Assistant Secretary of Energy.

Sincerely,



Karl Dye
President & CEO

cc: Hon. Christopher Wright, Secretary of Energy
Seth Kirshenberg, ECA Executive Director





THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301
(970) 247-1302

February 19, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Energy and
Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and
Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD), I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. Andrea Travnické to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI).

SWCD was created in 1941 by the Colorado General Assembly (C.R.S. § 37-47-101 et seq.). SWCD is comprised of all or part of nine counties in southwestern Colorado. SWCD's statutory authority is to protect, conserve, use, and develop the water resources of the San Juan and Dolores River Basins for the welfare of the SWCD, and safeguard for Colorado all waters to which the state is entitled. Following this mandate, SWCD has assumed a broad strategic role on behalf of its diverse constituents for more than 80 years.

Dr. Travnické will bring extensive experience and proven leadership in water resource management at both state and federal levels to this position. She has led the North Dakota Department of Water Resources since 2021, where she successfully managed water development, regulatory responsibilities, planning, education, and safety initiatives that are vital to the sustainable management of the state's water resources.

Prior to this role, she served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for both Water and Science, and Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the DOI, overseeing agencies such as the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management. This experience has given her a unique perspective

Page 2
Letter of Support – Travnicek

on the many challenges and opportunities facing our nation's natural resources, including the issues being faced in the Colorado River basin, which is critical to SWCD.

Dr. Travnicek has developed a wide network of stakeholders across the spectrum of water users, particularly in the West, where collaboration between water users and the DOI is critical to balancing water supply needs. She has worked extensively with agricultural, municipal, Tribal, conservation, and industrial water interests, demonstrating her ability to navigate complex policy landscapes and foster partnerships that drive effective water management.

Her commitment to science, innovation, and effective resource management is critical in this role. Her ability to bridge policy and practice and her dedication to public service make her well-suited to lead initiatives that help our water resources and the communities that depend on them. SWCD confidently endorses Dr. Andrea Travnicek for Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. She will provide visionary leadership, strategic insight, and a collaborative spirit to advance the Department's mission.

Thank you for considering our views on this important nomination. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven Wolff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a stylized "W" at the end.

Steve Wolff,
General Manager