

DOFFERMYRE, JEREZA,  
AND HAUSTVEIT NOMINATIONS

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

TO

CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF WILLIAM DOFFERMYRE TO BE SOLICITOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, CATHERINE JEREZA TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (ELECTRICITY), AND KYLE HAUSTVEIT TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (FOSSIL ENERGY)

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MAY 8, 2025

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## **DOFFERMYRE, JEREZA, AND HAUSTVEIT NOMINATIONS**

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**THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025**

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

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 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. Today, we will receive testimony from three of our fellow citizens nominated by President Trump for senior offices within our Committee's jurisdiction—one with the Department of the Interior and two with the Department of Energy. I thank President Trump for putting their names forward. After these opening statements, and assuming we are not interrupted by a vote, I will recognize Senator Justice to introduce Ms. Jereza and then Senator Hoeven will introduce Mr. Haustveit.

Today, we are considering three nominees for these positions at Energy and at Interior, officers of the United States responsible for legal affairs, conducting research to modernize and protect the power grid, and researching and developing projects to increase domestic production of oil, gas, coal, and elements necessary for energy. First, we will hear from Mr. William Doffermyre, to be Solicitor at the Department of the Interior; second, we will hear from Ms. Catherine Jereza, to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Electricity; and third, we will hear from Mr. Kyle Haustveit, to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Fossil Energy.

Mr. Doffermyre is the nominee to be the Solicitor for the Department of the Interior. The Solicitor is the chief legal officer of the Department, providing legal counsel and advice to the Secretary and other offices within the Department, as well as all of its bureaus and offices, ensuring the Department's components carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the law. Attorneys from the Solicitor's Office represent the Department in administrative proceedings and work collaboratively with attorneys in the Department of Justice to represent the Department of the Interior at judicial proceedings. The Solicitor's term also assists in drafting and reviewing legislation, regulations, and contracts, as well as upholding the Department's ethical obligations.

Mr. Doffermyre currently serves as Senior Advisor to the National Energy Dominance Council at the White House. Prior to

that, he served as a general counsel in corporate America and was a partner at the law firm of Williams and Connolly. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia, both as an undergraduate, where he got his bachelor's degree, and also where he went to law school, and at Virginia's law school, he served as an editor on the Virginia Law Review.

Second, Ms. Catherine Jereza, nominated as Assistant Secretary of Energy for Electricity, will lead the Department of Energy's research and development to modernize and harden America's electric grid infrastructure. That task requires modernizing grid hardware components, engineering end-to-end systems for communications, modeling, measurements and controls, operations and planning, and conducting research and development into power storage reliability and safety. Ms. Jereza currently serves as Senior Advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary, and in the first Trump administration, served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transmission, Permitting, and Technical Assistance. She holds a B.S. in chemical engineering from Virginia Tech and an M.B.A. from Loyola University, Maryland.

And finally today, Mr. Kyle Haustveit, nominated as Assistant Secretary of Energy for Fossil Energy, will lead the Office of Fossil Energy. This division of the Department focuses on investing in research, development, and implementation of fossil-fuel-derived projects, as well as strengthening American energy and critical mineral security. The Office's core functions include increasing domestic production and processing of critical minerals and materials, reducing methane emissions, reviewing applications for LNG imports and exports, and issuing licenses accordingly. The Office also manages the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), which is the lead field center for research and program development. It is also expected that the President will restore to this office its longstanding duty of managing America's strategic petroleum reserve.

Mr. Haustveit is currently the Geoscience Manager at Devon Energy, where he directs multi-disciplinary teams responsible for completions design diagnostic programs, field-development planning in unconventional reservoirs, and he also manages that company's affiliate that invests in digital, low-carbon, and next-generation drilling technologies. Mr. Haustveit holds a B.S. in petroleum engineering from Montana Technological University and an M.B.A. from the University of Oklahoma.

All nominees here today are well qualified for the offices for which the President has nominated them and they represent exactly the type of bold leadership that America needs and deserves now.

Now, the United States truly is in a battle for our future, and we won't win it—we won't win the artificial intelligence race, we won't win in advanced manufacturing, we won't win the battle for western civilization—unless we win the energy war. Under the Biden administration, residential electricity rates skyrocketed a staggering 23 percent, and our energy independence was significantly compromised. This was the foreseeable future of an administration defined by burdensome regulations, reckless climate mandates, and a deliberate war on reliable American resources like oil,

gas, coal, and critical materials and minerals. These policies weakened our grid. They inflated our prices and left America vulnerable to adversaries, adversaries who don't share our interests or our values. Republicans' agenda for energy dominance is an overdue departure from this approach. It places American interests first, prioritizing the responsible development of our abundant natural resources. The Trump administration recognizes that a strong America requires a reliable, affordable energy supply that does not depend on foreign nations, especially adversaries like China, Russia, or regimes in the Middle East.

Once confirmed, each of today's nominees will have critical responsibilities to help achieve this.

All right, we have a quorum. I am going to pause there, much as I am sure you were all just riveted by that lovely statement.

[Laughter.]

[Recess to business meeting.]

The CHAIRMAN. We will now proceed directly back into the hearing.

I will, in the interest of time, unless there is objection, submit the rest of my opening statement in written form for the record.

[The remainder of the Chairman's opening statement follows in written form:]



**May 8, 2025**

The United States is in a battle for our future.

We won't win the artificial intelligence race.

We won't lead in advanced manufacturing.

We won't win the battle for Western civilization.

UNLESS we win the ENERGY war.

Under the Biden Administration, residential electricity rates skyrocketed by 23 percent, and our energy independence was significantly compromised.

This was the foreseeable future of an administration defined by burdensome regulations, reckless climate mandates, and a deliberate war on reliable American resources like oil, gas, coal, and critical minerals.

These policies weakened our grid, inflated prices, and left America vulnerable to adversaries who do not share our interests or values.

Republicans' agenda for energy dominance is an overdue departure from this approach. It places American interests first, prioritizing the responsible development of our abundant natural resources.

The administration recognizes that a strong America requires a reliable, affordable energy supply that does not depend on foreign nations—especially adversaries like China, Russia, or regimes in the Middle East.



Once confirmed, each of today's nominees will have critical responsibilities to help achieve this agenda that the American people overwhelmingly voted for last November.

This will, undoubtedly, require bold leadership in the face of entrenched bureaucracy and political resistance.

President Trump's nominees have already demonstrated distinguished careers in their respective fields. I expect they will articulate clear ideas for leveraging their expertise to advance a policy agenda that begins to rectify the damage done under the previous administration. I look forward to hearing how each nominee plans to counteract the regulatory overreach of the Biden administration, restore an energy policy that puts America first, and utilize the resources we have right here at home.

America's energy future is under threat—from cyberattacks targeting our electric grid to foreign adversaries controlling critical mineral supply chains, and from litigious environmental groups using the courts to strangle responsible resource development.

This is a fight we cannot afford to lose.

This committee takes seriously its responsibility to confirm nominees who will uphold the trust placed in them by the American people. I expect today's hearing will shed light on the qualifications of our nominees and their willingness to embrace a vision of energy dominance—one that strengthens America and ensures the safety and prosperity of our citizens.

Republicans' energy dominance agenda is a promise to American workers, families, and future generations.

It means affordable power for our homes, secure supply chains for our industries, and a nation that stands strong and independent on the world stage.

We will secure America's future by unleashing the full potential of our energy resources—by cutting red tape, supporting innovation, and prioritizing American workers over foreign interests.

We will lead, not follow. And we will win.

The CHAIRMAN. I will turn to Senator Heinrich now for his opening statement.

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

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Chairman.

Welcome to Mr. Doffermeyre, Ms. Jereza, and Mr. Haustveit. Each of these nominees has been nominated for an important office with broad responsibilities under this Committee's jurisdiction.

The Office of Solicitor of the Department of the Interior is one of the most important legal offices in our government. As broad as these authorities are, they are, however, not unlimited. The Solicitor does not make law, but only interprets and enforces the laws enacted by Congress. For these reasons, I am deeply troubled by a senior advisor to Secretary Burgum using the Solicitor's authority to suspend all of the legal opinions of the prior Solicitor. We all recognize that departmental policies will change from one administration to the next. Our laws, however, do not. I am even more troubled that this same advisor reinstated an earlier Solicitor's opinion that had been vacated by a federal district court. The Department needs to follow the law as interpreted by the district court, not try to change it on its own. And I will be very interested to hear your thoughts on these matters, Mr. Doffermeyre.

The Assistant Secretary of Energy for Electricity is another office with crucial responsibilities. More than 340 million Americans depend on the electric grid for the power we need for our daily lives. Americans, today, are facing an energy affordability crisis as electricity prices are on track to be the highest they have been since the 1990s. Programs like the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Home Electric Appliances Rebate Program are saving American families money. The proposed cuts to these programs in the President's skinny budget take money away from families, just as inflation and tariffs are raising the prices of everyday goods.

As we all know, the EIA expects that electricity demand will grow. And as this happens, electricity costs will continue to rise. We simply won't be able to meet our energy needs without substantially more transmission and generation. Expanding transmission planning across regions could lead to billions of dollars in energy cost savings. And in fact, scientists at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory estimate that by 2050 transmission expansion could lead from \$270 billion to as much as \$490 billion in savings. We will be looking to you, Ms. Jereza, if confirmed, to help ensure that the grid is reliable, resilient, and to see that it has adequate capacity to add the new generation of resources that we need to meet our growing demand.

Finally, the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Fossil Energy is responsible for natural gas export permitting, but also has important responsibilities for fossil energy research and development, critical minerals production, carbon capture and sequestration, hydrogen production, and methane emissions reduction. The job is bigger than just issuing export permits, and I will be interested in hearing your thoughts on these other matters within the Office's portfolio, Mr. Haustveit.

Thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks, Senator Heinrich.

The rules of the Committee require that all nominees be sworn in connection with their testimonies. So if you would each please stand and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give before the Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

[Witness panel sworn.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And then, before we have you begin with your opening statements, I will ask the witnesses three standard questions that are posed to nominees appearing before this Committee.

First, will you be available to appear before the Committee and other congressional committees to represent departmental positions and respond to issues of concern to Congress?

[All witnesses respond, "yes."]

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

[All witnesses respond, "no."]

The CHAIRMAN. And third, are you involved in or do you have assets in a blind trust?

[All witnesses respond, "no."]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, we are going to go to Senator Justice first, who will introduce Ms. Jereza, and then we will go to Senator Hoeven to introduce Mr. Haustveit.

#### **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT OF HON. JIM JUSTICE, U.S. SENATOR FROM WEST VIRGINIA**

Senator JUSTICE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, I really appreciate the opportunity to introduce and speak very, very highly of this young lady right here. That's all there is to it. Katie Jereza and I attended the same high school in Beckley, West Virginia. That's hard—I'm sorry?

Senator HOEVEN. Around the same time—or not?

Senator JUSTICE. Well, actually, I was there a few years earlier.  
[Laughter.]

Senator JUSTICE. And, in fact, I was amazed that it was still a high school when I was there. No, I can just tell you just this, that we are both Flying Eagles from Woodrow Wilson High School in a little town of Beckley, West Virginia. And when I grew up—and I am sure when Katie grew up, in all fairness—I rode my bicycle all the way across town, some four or five miles, to the little league to go to practice there. It was the perfect "Hometown America" and absolutely, I know we are really proud of that.

But, this goes way deeper for me because, absolutely, I know Katie. I know absolutely all of the great things that she has done. Just listen, just to a couple of these. Now, just think about this. She served in the prior Trump administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transmission, Permitting, and Technical Assistance. Then she served as Vice President of Corporate Affairs at Electric Power Research Institute. She was the Director of Infra-

structure Resilience at Edison Electric Institute. Absolutely, she is so qualified, it is off the chart. And I absolutely would tell us all that all these nominees, I am very confident you are going to be confirmed. That's all there is to it.

But listen to me just this—you have a task that's in front of you that is astronomically important. I have said it over and over, and people were getting sick of listening to me say this and everything, but energy is everything, guys. It's everything. Right now, it is totally everything. It resolves everything, whether it be inflation, national security, on and on and on. We all know that every country in the world—every single country in the world—the more energy they have, the longer their people live and the healthier their people are. We have got to stop this war—this war on energy—in every way. We have to stop it. It was brought up by our Chairman—how do we win? How do we win the war? Well, you stop the war. I mean, that's what we have got to do. We have to stop the war and realize just one thing, we are going to awaken to a crisis like you can't imagine in this country and we better get ourselves ready and get ourselves ready right now. We are going to lose on a bunch of fronts if we are not ready.

This lady is extremely, extremely qualified. And I, absolutely, am right in her camp, wholeheartedly. So Mr. Chairman, I will defer the rest of the time, and thank you, Katie, thank you for being here.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Justice. It's fantastic. I am sure you both have statues and plaques commemorating your public service at your shared high school.

We have also got a statement from Senator McCormick that, without objection, will be admitted into the record in support of Ms. Jereza.

[The prepared statement of support for Ms. Jereza from Senator McCormick follows:]

DAVID McCORMICK  
PENNSYLVANIA  
McCORMICK.SENATE.GOV

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
BANKING, HOUSING,  
AND URBAN AFFAIRS  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING  
JOINT ECONOMIC

May 8, 2025

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and fellow Committee Members:

I want to take a moment to express my support for the nomination of Ms. Catherine Jereza to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy, Office of Electricity at the Department of Energy (DOE).

Ms. Jereza has over thirty years of experience leading large, multi-stakeholder teams, facilitating conversations around complex issues, and implementing productive change throughout her career. She not only is well-versed in the issues required for this position but also has experience with government programs and personnel management, such as, Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) administration, Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) assessment, and others.

Prior to her nomination, Ms. Jereza worked as the Corporate Vice President for Corporate Affairs at the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). EPRI is a research and development organization focused on advancing energy technologies. It conducts research and development in areas related to electricity, energy efficiency, climate change, and others while working with industry stakeholders to advance reliable and affordable energy. There Ms. Jereza launched EPRI's strategy to bolster its work in the energy sector, provided strategic leadership for engagement with government and external partners, and helped manage thousands of employees.

Before joining EPRI, Ms. Jereza served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transmission Permitting & Technical Assistance (TPTA) in the DOE's Office of Electricity. In that role, she was responsible for leading the Department's efforts to facilitate the development of reliable and affordable electricity infrastructure. Prior to joining DOE, Ms. Jereza served as the Director for Infrastructure Resilience at the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). She was a management consultant with the McLeod Group, LLC and Energetics Incorporated and worked for the Maryland Department of the Environment, GE Water and Process Technologies, and the Lincoln Electric Company.

Ms. Jereza received her BS in Chemical Engineering from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and went on to obtain her MBA from the Loyola University Maryland.

Ms. Jereza has my strongest support, and I urge my fellow Committee Members to support her nomination for this critical role.

Sincerely yours,

David H. McCormick  
U.S. Senator

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The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hoeven, you are recognized.

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

Senator HOEVEN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it very much, and Senator Justice, I was just wondering, like you said, if you attended that school at about the same time, or maybe you were a year or two ahead of her. Maybe you were a senior when she was like a sophomore. Well, anyway, that's pretty cool.

Great to have all of you here. Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Heinrich, thanks for holding this very important hearing, and it is a pleasure to introduce, this morning, Kyle Haustveit to the Committee. Kyle is a fellow North Dakotan, which you can kind of tell because he has that sharp, capable look about him, and is the nominee for the Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the Department of Energy. I also would like to welcome your wife—Brea, where are you? Okay, good. You got his back, good girl—and four children. Now, I want to make sure I get these right, so Kyle, you correct me if I am wrong. Is it Navaeh? Navaeh. There you are. All right. Good to have you here. Also, Harper, I am pretty sure I got that one right. Hi, Harper, how are you? Noah. Oh yeah, I understand that feeling. And Hudson, where is Hudson? Okay, all right. Boy, they look awesome. And so cool to have them here.

Born in Fargo and then raised in Tioga, which is out in the heart of oil country. He has roots in both energy and agriculture, our two biggest industries. He is a third-generation energy worker. A petroleum engineer by training and a real leader in terms of innovation. He co-invented and patented a hydraulic fracturing technique—music to every North Dakotan's ears, right? Hydraulic fracturing, we love that. And that is used across other shale basins as well. He understands that energy is foundational, as Senator Justice said so eloquently, to really, everything—our economic security, our national security, and many other things as well—our standard of living, just every way you can think of, just like Senator Justice says. He brings a tremendous amount of experience, skilled to our nation's mission, which is energy dominance, right? Not just energy secure, we want to be energy dominant, and we are going to do it and ensure that Americans have access to low-cost, dependable energy.

Kyle, thanks for being here. Thanks for your willingness to serve. We appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hoeven. I am impressed that you can tell by looking at someone that they are from your state, which you have that sharp North Dakota—

Senator HOEVEN. Look at him. When I look in the mirror every morning, that's what I see.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Fantastic. It's the cold, brisk air. What is the coldest it got up there this winter?

Senator HOEVEN. I think about—

The CHAIRMAN. Thirty below, yeah, that is rather significant.

Senator HOEVEN. Thirty above is nice.

The CHAIRMAN. Two degrees Kelvin.

All right, now, as I turn to each witness, what we are going to do is, we will have opening statements first from Mr. Doffermyre, and then Ms. Jereza, and then Mr. Haustveit. Feel free to introduce any family you have with you, and you may begin.

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM DOFFERMYRE, NOMINATED TO BE  
SOLICITOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of this Committee, it is an honor and privilege to appear here today as President Trump's nominee to serve as the Solicitor of the United States Department of the Interior.

Before I begin, I would like to recognize and introduce the most important people in my life—my family. Here with me today is my oldest son William, my daughter Perry, my daughter Wynne, and my youngest son Hodges, who is celebrating his birthday tomorrow. They are my best friends and biggest supporters. I would also like to recognize my beautiful and wonderful wife, Bessie Liedtke Doffermyre, the love of my life and the greatest wife and mother imaginable. My sweet and always-supportive sister Julia Green is here, along with the woman who brought me into this world and raised me to be the person that I have become—my mom, Mary Doffermyre. I love you, Mom. Finally, I would like to recognize my late father, Everette “Bubba” Doffermyre, who I loved so very much, and who I trust is with us in spirit here today.

Thanks again to the members of this Committee for your warm welcome to my family, and thanks to all of you for your service and dedication to this country. My inspiration to serve my country dates back many years ago when, completely out of the blue, I was asked to serve in one of the single most important positions at the White House. Thanks to my sweet wife, Bessie, who was my girlfriend at the time and was working in the visitors' office in the Bush administration, I was appointed to serve as the Easter Bunny at the 2006 White House Easter Egg Roll. And as you can imagine, it was really hard to see out of that six-foot-tall bunny suit, and it was hot and uncomfortable underneath all that fur, but I can assure you, that was a small price to pay for literally being the most important figure at the White House, even if it was just for an afternoon, and I didn't even have to go through Senate confirmation. But in all seriousness, I am truly honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve as the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior, if I am confirmed. Serving at the Department of the Interior would be a dream job for me in many ways.

My very first job out of college was as a whitewater rafting guide in Teton National Park. I lived in a two-room log cabin on the edge of the park, heated by nothing more than a woodburning stove, with a majestic view of the Grand Teton out my loft window, a view that I shared with a moose living in my backyard. When I wasn't guiding on the river, I spent my free time backpacking, fishing, and skiing on some of America's most treasured public lands. If fortunate enough to be confirmed, please know that this former Snake River rafting guide will consider it an honor and privilege of a lifetime to serve as a faithful steward for “America's Best Idea,” our National Park system. It would also be an honor and



privilege of a lifetime to work with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service at the Department of the Interior. I love to hunt, I am an avid fly fisherman, I love to hike, I love nature, I love to explore, and I especially love sharing these life-long passions with my four children. I couldn't agree more with the great Teddy Roosevelt, when he observed that very few responsibilities of the Federal Government "compare in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us."

Yet, above all else, the Department of the Interior's responsibility for managing our nation's vast energy resources is what landed me in this seat here today. For the past five years, I have had the privilege of working in Texas at one of America's great energy companies, Energy Transfer. After spending over a decade as a D.C. attorney at Williams and Connolly, and then as General Counsel of an overseas development agency in the first Trump administration, I decided to move to Texas to work in the energy business, to work alongside the patriotic Americans who actually design, build, and operate the critical infrastructure that fuels our economy and enables our way of life. I learned a tremendous amount working in the energy business over the past five years. One lesson I learned all too well is that the energy emergency our nation currently faces is not due to a shortage of natural resources. From my perspective, working in the private sector, the primary contributor to this energy emergency is our country's byzantine state and federal regulatory framework that makes it far too easy to kill infrastructure projects with endless litigation, and far too hard to actually get shovels in the ground.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to fix our broken permitting system, to help ensure that our country has a transparent, predictable, and efficient regulatory regime that not only permits but actually promotes the responsible buildout of our nation's critical energy infrastructure.

I would like to conclude by giving all thanks and praise to God, the Father, and his Son, my Savior, Jesus Christ, who taught us all that "to whom much is given, much is required." I feel so incredibly blessed to have been born a citizen of the greatest country in the history of the world. This country has given me and my family so much that we feel that it is incumbent upon us to give back to our country in any way that we can. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to do just that.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you here today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Doffermeyer follows:]

**Statement of William Lassiter Doffermyre**  
**Nominee for the Position of Solicitor of the United States Department of the Interior**  
**Before the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**May 8, 2025**

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

It is an honor and privilege to appear here today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Solicitor of the United States Department of the Interior.

Before I begin, I would like to recognize and introduce the most important people in my life—my family. Here with me today is my oldest son William, daughter Perry, daughter Wynne, and my youngest son Hodges. They are my best friends and biggest supporters. I would also like to recognize my beautiful and wonderful wife, Bessie Liedtke Doffermyre—the love of my life and the greatest wife and mother imaginable. My sweet and always-supportive sister Julia Green is here, along with the woman who brought me into this world and raised me to be the person that I have become, my mom, Mary Doffermyre. I love you, Mom. Finally, I would like to recognize my late father, Everette “Bubba” Doffermyre, who I loved so very much, and who I trust is with us in spirit here today.

Thanks again to the members of this Committee for your warm welcome to my family, and thanks to all of you for your service and dedication to our great country. My inspiration to serve my country dates back many years ago when—completely out of the blue—I was asked to serve in one of the single most important positions at the White House. Thanks to my sweet wife Bessie, who was my girlfriend and working in the Bush 43 White House at the time, I was appointed to serve as the Easter Bunny at the 2006 White House Easter Egg Roll. As you can imagine, it was very hard to see out of the Bunny suit, and was hot and sweaty under all that fur. But, I assure you, that was a small price to pay for literally serving as the most important figure at the White House, even if just for an afternoon.

In all seriousness, I am truly honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve as Solicitor of the Department of the Interior if I am confirmed. Serving at the Department of the Interior would be a dream job for me in many ways. My very first job out of college was a whitewater rafting guide on the Snake River in and around Teton National Park. I lived in a two-room log cabin on the edge of the park, heated by nothing more than a woodburning stove, with a majestic view of the Grand Teton out of my loft window—a view I shared with a moose living in my backyard. When I wasn't guiding on the river, I spent my free time backpacking, fishing and skiing on some of America's most treasured public lands. If fortunate enough to be confirmed, please know that this former Snake River rafting guide will consider it the honor and privilege of a lifetime to serve as a faithful steward of “America's Best Idea,” our National Park system.

It would also be an honor and privilege of a lifetime to work with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service at the Department of the Interior. I love to hunt. I am an avid fly-fisherman. I love to hike. I love nature. I love to explore. And I especially love sharing all of these life-long

passions with my four children. I could not agree more with the great Teddy Roosevelt, when he observed that very few responsibilities of the federal government “compare in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.”

Yet, above all else, the Department of the Interior’s responsibility for managing our nation’s vast energy resources is what landed me in this seat here today. For the past five years, I have had the privilege of working in Texas at one of America’s great energy companies, Energy Transfer. After spending over a decade as a D.C. attorney at Williams & Connolly, and then as General Counsel of an overseas development agency in the first Trump Administration, I decided to move down to Texas to work in the energy business—to work alongside the patriotic Americans who actually design, build and operate the critical infrastructure that fuels our economy and enables our way of life.

I learned a tremendous amount working in the energy business over the past five years. One lesson I learned all too well is that the energy emergency our nation currently faces is not due to a shortage of natural resources. From my perspective working in the private sector, the primary contributor to this energy emergency is our country’s byzantine state and federal regulatory framework that makes it far too easy to kill infrastructure projects with endless litigation, and far too hard to actually get shovels in the ground. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to fix our broken permitting system—to help ensure that our country has a transparent, predictable and efficient regulatory regime that not only *permits* but actually *promotes* the responsible buildout of our nation’s critical energy infrastructure.

I would like to conclude by giving all thanks and praise to God the Father and his Son, my Savior, Jesus Christ, who taught us all that “to whom much is given, much is required.” I feel so incredibly blessed to have been born a citizen of the greatest nation in the history of the world. This country has given me and my family so much that we feel it is incumbent upon us to give back to our great country in any way that we can. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to do just that.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee—thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Doffermeyre.

Before we turn to Ms. Jereza, I just want to note, first of all, the thought of the Easter Bunny. I am just imagining this is how you won Bessie over.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. High stakes gambit. One the one hand, it could have ended in disaster, but if you pull it off, you would have won her affection, which apparently happened.

Number two, had I known about this, I would have insisted that you wear the Easter Bunny costume to your hearing.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. It would have been fun.

Ms. Jereza.

**STATEMENT OF CATHERINE JEREZA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (ELECTRICITY)**

Ms. JEREZA. Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of this Committee. It is a true honor to be here, and I want to thank President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright for the trust they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Electricity at the U.S. Department of Energy. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I look forward to working with all the members of this Committee.

I would like to take a moment to recognize those who are very dear to me, especially those who have traveled to be here and continue to support me during one of the most important opportunities of my life. My husband Ken and stepdaughter Chloe from Maryland, my sister Betty and her daughter Ella from Virginia, my sister Tina and her son Brandon from West Virginia, and many extended friends and colleagues. My parents wish they could be here in person, but since my mom is recovering from surgery, they are watching from their home in Beckley, West Virginia. I also want to thank my very large and extended family, who are watching from all over the country. More importantly, I want to thank my parents and the leaders who have come before me. My dad instilled the importance of academics, religion, music, and sports, also known as ARMS, which has armed me for how to live my life. My mother is a lot like President Trump—a fighter. When times get tough, their never-give-up attitude inspires me to keep going.

I will never forget growing up under their guidance in a place called “Almost Heaven,” West Virginia. When I was a baby, my dad moved our family to Beckley to work as an internal medicine doctor for the United Mine Workers of America. Unbeknownst to me, my passion for math and science would eventually lead me to get back to my roots to unleash baseload power, including fossil fuels, advanced nuclear, geothermal, and hydropower, that is so vital to the affordability, reliability, and security of our nation’s electricity system. My whole life, I have honed my skills in multi-stakeholder collaboration. Imagine growing up with seven siblings and trying to get to an agreement on anything. Negotiating and persuading such strong and divergent personalities to line up and move forward is never easy. Now imagine doing that in today’s political environment. I believe collaboration is one of my most important leadership skills that I can bring to the U.S. Department of Energy and

the many stakeholders that make our North American electricity system work. Engineers help make things work. That is why I chose to become an engineer—an engineer who likes to pick the most difficult things to figure out. I picked the French Horn because it is the most difficult instrument to play. I picked chemical engineering because it is the most difficult undergraduate degree to earn. And now, if confirmed, I will tackle one of the most challenging problems our nation has ever faced, helping add the baseload power America needs to meet its energy demands today and in the future.

President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright have made their agenda clear, and if confirmed, I will work every day to advance U.S. leadership in innovation, reduce costs for American families, and strengthen grid reliability and security. I have a mindset for innovation. Starting with my first job out of college, I implemented programs that increased production and product quality. For 20 years, I have worked with national laboratories and other premier research institutions to drive innovation from concept to commercialization and foster ingenuity to optimize technology throughout its lifecycle. I am a systems thinker who understands the promise and trade-offs of all energy technologies under real-world conditions. If confirmed, I will strive to bring common-sense, cost-effective solutions that benefit all Americans.

In President Trump's first term, I had the opportunity to work in the Office of Electricity as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transmission Permitting and Technical Assistance. In that role, I developed and still have extensive relationships and understanding of the complex and often divergent perspectives at the international, regional, state, and local levels. The North American power grid is the biggest machine in the world and has the biggest bureaucracy in the world to make it work. If confirmed, I will work relentlessly to deliver on President Trump's promise to cut red tape and expedite the development of reliable energy infrastructure. I enjoyed meeting with many members of the Committee, and I appreciate the perspective, priorities, and insight that you have shared. If confirmed, I will need your continued partnership to strengthen our grid. I look forward to answering your questions and, if confirmed, implementing the President's and Secretary's bold energy agenda to unleash energy security and prosperity.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jereza follows:]

**Testimony of Catherine Jereza  
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Electricity  
at the U.S. Department of Energy  
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
May 8, 2025**

Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of the committee.

It is a true honor to be here, and I want to thank President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright for the trust they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Electricity at the U.S. Department of Energy. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I look forward to working with all the members of this committee.

I would like to take a moment to recognize those who are very dear to me, especially those who have traveled to be here and continue to support me during one of the most important opportunities of my life. My husband Ken and stepdaughter Chloe from Maryland, my sister Betty and her daughter Ella from Virginia, my sister Tina and her son Brandon from West Virginia, and many extended friends and colleagues. My parents wish they could be here in person, but since my mom is recovering from surgery, they are watching from their home in Beckley, West Virginia. I also want to thank my very large and extended family who are watching from all over the country.

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Unbeknownst to me, my passion for math and science would eventually lead me to get back to my roots to unleash baseload power, including fossil fuels, advanced nuclear, geothermal, and hydropower, that is so vital to the affordability, reliability, and security of our nation's electricity system.

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undergraduate degree to earn. And now, if confirmed, I will tackle one of the most challenging problems our nation has ever faced – helping add the baseload power America needs to meet its energy demands today and in the future. President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright have made their agenda clear, and if confirmed, I will work every day to advance U.S. leadership in innovation, reduce costs for American families, and strengthen grid reliability and security.

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Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I had a few friends in college who were chemical engineering majors, and I can vouch for the fact that nobody worked harder. I was science too, just political science. Apparently, it's not the same.

Senator KING. There is no science in politics, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. No science, exactly.

We will hear now from Mr. Haustveit.

**STATEMENT OF KYLE HAUSTVEIT, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (FOSSIL ENERGY)**

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply honored to be considered for the role of Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. I want to express my sincere gratitude to President Trump for his nomination and to Energy Secretary Wright for his support.

I would also like to take a moment to thank my family and friends here with me today and those watching online. Here with me are my high school sweetheart and wife, Brea, our four children, Nevaeh, Harper—Noah is sleeping there—and Hudson is also sitting down next to my two parents, Tom and Donna. I have also been joined by several close friends. Thank you all for your support.

I was born and raised in North Dakota, just a few miles from the historic Williston Basin discovery well. My family's roots run deep in both energy and agriculture. One grandfather managed drilling operations, while the other farmed our family homestead, where he and my grandma still live today. Growing up, I developed a profound appreciation for both industries and the critical role energy plays in modern agriculture, from fueling tractors to providing the fertilizers that nourish our crops. I am proud to say that I am a third-generation energy worker. My family's connection to energy spans decades, and their hard work instilled in me a deep respect for the industry and its importance to our nation. With a small nudge from my late grandfather, I pursued a degree in petroleum engineering from Montana Tech, followed by an M.B.A. in energy from the University of Oklahoma. This combination of engineering and economic study has been instrumental in shaping my career and preparing me to address the challenges and opportunities in the energy sector.

Early in my career, I was fortunate to lead a team that invented and commercialized a diagnostic technique, now used globally, to optimize hydraulic fracturing and resource development. This experience sparked a growing passion for energy and technology, which led me to lead an Energy Ventures team. In this role, our team had the privilege of investing in early-stage startups rooted in fundamental science, including a leading next-generation geothermal company with operations in Nevada and a 500-megawatt development underway in Utah. Our team also conducted technical evaluations for innovative projects, such as a direct lithium extraction from brine in Arkansas and California, carbon capture utilization and sequestration in Wyoming, and produced water treatment and beneficial use in New Mexico. These experiences have given me a



front-row seat to the incredible innovation happening in the energy industry across our resource-rich nation.

I have been blessed to build my career during one of the most transformative periods in energy history—the shale revolution—a revolution brought about by industry and enabled in part by fundamental research from our tremendous National Laboratories. This technological breakthrough moved the U.S. from the world’s largest importer of liquefied natural gas to the largest exporter, positioning us as a global leader in oil and natural gas production, transforming us from energy dependent to energy dominant. The energy industry has not only powered our nation, but it has also fueled economic growth, strengthened national security, and improved the quality of life for millions of Americans and our allies around the world. U.S. natural gas has delivered affordable, reliable, and secure energy, while at the same time, reducing the emissions from electricity generation by more than 40 percent.

It has been a privilege to contribute to this progress, and I am passionately aligned with President Trump’s common-sense energy agenda—an agenda that will ensure future generations have access to affordable, reliable, secure, and abundant energy made in America. If confirmed, I will honor the fundamentals of science and economics to serve our country. I am committed to advancing policies that unleash U.S. energy dominance, foster innovation, and ensure that America remains a global leader in energy production and technology. If confirmed, I will work to leverage the incredible talents within our DOE and our national labs to drive forward cutting-edge research and development. Simply put, energy is the backbone of our national security, our economy, and our way of life.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Haustveit follows:]

**Testimony of Kyle Haustveit**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Fossil Energy**  
**at the U.S. Department of Energy**  
**Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**May 8, 2025**

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I would also like to take a moment to thank my family and friends here with me today and those watching online. Here with me are my high school sweetheart and wife, Brea, our four children – Nevaeh, Harper, Noah, and Hudson – along with my parents, Tom and Donna, and several close friends – thank you all for your support.

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Simply put, energy is the backbone of our national security, our economy, and our way of life.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks so much, Mr. Haustveit.

Okay, we are going to proceed now to five-minute rounds of questions. Each Senator on the Committee here will have a turn. We will go between Republicans and Democrats, alternating in order of Committee seniority, as modified by the earlybird rule, and I will begin that now.

Mr. Doffermyre, why don't we start with you? As a lawyer, you are aware of the fact that NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, is a procedural statute. It doesn't require a specific, fore-ordained, or substantive outcome. It rather requires that agencies take a hard look at environmental impacts. Recognizing that, and given the urgency that we face in the energy space, the Department of the Interior recently invoked some procedures to speed up the process. There are a lot of countries that have emulated our NEPA law, and it has worked well for them. A lot of them have been very good, at this point, at making sure that process doesn't take longer than necessary. And so, the plan, as I understand it, at the Department of the Interior, would be to complete environmental assessments within 14 days and environmental impact statements within 28 days for energy projects.

Now, do you believe these expedited timelines are consistent with NEPA's requirements, and how do you plan to help the Department meet those goals?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Thank you, Chairman Lee.

As we discussed in your office, and I very much enjoyed my time with you and your staff, I very much agree with President Trump that our country does face an energy crisis. With generative AI and data centers and advanced manufacturing, our demand curve is going up exponentially, and meanwhile, we have a permitting system that takes far too long to actually meet the increase in demand that we are facing. When President Trump first took office, on his first day, he signed a number of executive orders relating to energy, and the "Unleashing American Energy" executive order instructs all the agencies to exercise all legal authorities they have to expedite this permitting process.

I am not at the Department of the Interior, and I have not been involved with devising the emergency procedures, but, as you said, I am familiar with NEPA, and it is a procedural statute, and it does require a hard look. And I am looking forward to working with the Department of the Interior to make sure that we satisfy all the legal requirements during the time period allotted in order to get energy projects moving and not stuck in endless litigation.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Haustveit, I will go to you next. The U.S. Trade Representative recently released a notice of potential action in response to an investigation about Chinese maritime shipping dominance. The action laid out in the fourth annex to that document is likely, if implemented, to have a detrimental effect on LNG exports. The action would require, as I understand it, one percent of LNG export vessels to be U.S.-flagged and U.S.-built by 2029, and then that percentage shifts up gradually over time until it gets to 15 percent by 2047. But the action would also allow USTR to suspend LNG export licenses until the terms of the action are met. Now, this, in my mind, raises considerable concerns and bears a striking, stun-

ning resemblance to the so-called Jones Act. Now, the Jones Act, of course, applies with regard to shipments between U.S. ports—one U.S. port to another one without an intervening stop in another country requires them to be U.S.-built, crewed, flagged, and so forth.

In your opinion, does USTR have the authority and the jurisdiction to suspend Department of Energy LNG export licenses through a rulemaking procedure?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question.

This is not an area of expertise, but I can say that LNG has been a force of good for the world. It has been a boon for the U.S. economy. It has delivered affordable, reliable energy to our allies across the globe. So any type of rulemaking that restricts our ability to deliver that incredible fuel to our friends and allies across the globe is a negative for America, a negative for allies, and we need to do everything we can to avoid putting further restrictions on LNG exports.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I appreciate that. And if you are confirmed, will you agree to work with me and my staff to clarify and figure out this jurisdictional ambiguity between whenever you are confirmed and prior to finalization of this proposed, possible rulemaking?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Absolutely, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, thank you. I appreciate that.

Okay, my time is up. We are going to turn next to Senator Heinrich, who will be asking questions. I have got to run to the Foreign Relations Committee for a moment to cast a few votes. Senator Hoeven has graciously agreed to take the gavel while I am out, and I will be back in a few minutes.

Senator Heinrich.

Senator HEINRICH. Thanks, Chairman.

Mr. Doffermeyer, the Office of the Solicitor is responsible for making sure that the Department follows the law. However, right now, the Department continues to violate court orders with respect to frozen funds. And at some point, the excuse that these funds are “under review” begins to not hold water. If confirmed, will you ensure that appropriated funds are obligated and disbursed in a timely manner, in accordance with the law, and in accordance with the Impoundment Control Act?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

I have not started working at the Department of the Interior yet, so I am not familiar with what appropriated funds have or have not been spent, but as the Solicitor, my job will be to review the facts and review the law and provide my clear advice on what the law requires. And the Impoundment Control Act and other legal requirements say that Congress controls the purse strings. And I will analyze them and give the advice that if the law requires that the funds be obligated and spent, then the funds will be obligated and spent.

Senator HEINRICH. Last month, a senior advisor to the Secretary exercising the power of the Solicitor, outside of the Vacancies Reform Act, reinstated a legal opinion that had been vacated by a federal district court. The district court vacated the prior Solicitor’s opinion because the Solicitor had misinterpreted the Migratory

Bird Treaty Act. Notably, the Justice Department did not press an appeal to that court's decision, yet the senior advisor's opinion purports to reinstate the vacated opinion in 93 of the nation's 94 judicial districts.

So I am curious, do you believe that a solicitor, or even an advisor exercising the solicitor's authority, can overrule the decision of a federal district judge?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

The short answer is no. I do not believe that the solicitor can overrule a federal district judge. M-Opinions, what you are referring to, is something that's unique to the Department of the Interior, something that I have learned a little about, and I look forward to learning a lot more about, but they are the highest-level legal interpretation by the Solicitor and they are binding—those opinions are binding on the Department of the Interior. My past, as you heard, in addition to the Easter Bunny and a raft guide and other things, I was a litigator for 12 years. I have since gone on to the private sector, but when I first learned about the M-Opinions, and turned through a few of them, I thought, wow, this is really going to hearken back to my litigation days. They are very long, reasoned opinions. They look a lot like court opinions, and I look forward to exercising some of those skills that I learned in order to analyze the law and the facts and provide opinions that are sound and durable and will stand up in court.

Senator HEINRICH. I want to go back for just a minute to something that the Chairman asked you about, which is complying with NEPA with both environmental impact statements and environmental assessments in these 14- and 28-day timelines. And if you can do that, and meet all the requirements of the law, I am all for it. I think what you have seen in this Committee has been a bipartisan commitment to permitting reform, to getting to yes or no faster for projects. However, if you get to the end of 28 days and you haven't been able to meet all the legal requirements for an EIS, if at that point you publish an EIS that does not meet those requirements, it creates litigation risk. That's the opposite of shovels in the ground.

So talk to me about how you are going to balance that. If you can get to a high-quality legal product that does not create litigation risk for the proponents in 28 days, I am all for that, but if you haven't checked all those boxes at the end of 28 days, are you going to continue forward and make sure that those products actually will withstand legal challenge?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yes, thank you, that's a great question, and I do want to first say thank you very much to you and the members of this Committee for the work that you have done on permitting reform. The Fiscal Responsibility Act, with the time limits for NEPA, as well as the work for the permitting reform bill that didn't quite pass last year, were both very, very welcome news to the industry. When it comes to—

Senator HEINRICH. We can still pass that law. I would just mention to all my colleagues, I think that would be a good idea.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. But the short answer to your question is, well, I don't know if there is a short answer. What I will say is, it would do no good and would be counterproductive to publish a final EIS

in a record of decision that did not entail the necessary hard look in what is required by the statute. You can get a permit in 28 days, but if two years' worth of litigation results in a remand, that's going to require six months of new analysis. That's not doing anyone any good, that's not getting shovels in the ground. So we are completely aligned on that, Senator Heinrich. Thank you.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Senator Hoeven.

Senator HOEVEN [presiding]. Thank you, Ranking Member Heinrich.

Senator Justice.

Senator JUSTICE. Well, before I get started, and I am going to be really short and sweet, I have to tell you a little story, and this is—this centers around Senator Hoeven. But the story is just this: a long time ago, my dad was sitting at a pool bar in the pool with Lawson Hamilton, and Dad had been working really, really hard on trying to come up with the keys to Emerald City in regard to how a highwall miner worked. And he was trying to basically go in to the high wall with a round hole and come back with a square hole. And he looked in the bottom of the pool, and there was this circle with this square around it. And he said, “there it is, Lawson, right there. Right there it is, Lawson.” And Mr. Hamilton was telling me this story, and he kept looking back at me and saying, I didn't know what to say to your dad. I thought, you know possibly, your dad had lost his mind because he kept saying, “there it is, Lawson, right there, right there it is.”

Well, I was struggling with this striking resemblance between Mr. Haustveit and our Senator Hoeven.

[Laughter.]

Senator JUSTICE. But I got it now. I got it and I get it and everything. The resemblance is, without question, there, and everything, and the youth, the passion, the wisdom, absolutely, I have got it. And so, it took me a little while to see the circle in the square, but I have got it now.

Listen—

Senator HOEVEN. Senator, that's why everybody likes you. I am telling you right now.

Senator JUSTICE. But I would tell you just this—I can ask you questions, and they may sound important. We are really blessed—really, really blessed to have three nominees like these. I mean, that's all there is to it. And so, I congratulate you in every way. I have looked at the questions and thought about it and everything, and thought I am absolutely just going to waste your time and maybe mine too. I congratulate you, and we have got to have these nominees. That's all there is to it. You will do amazing work, I know you will.

I can feel it in my heart, and I really listen to my heart, maybe more than my mind a lot of times. But I think you will be fantastic beyond belief. The only other thing I can say is just this—I go back and I just think just a second about my dad and really how hard that he tried, and we started with nothing, and I mean nothing. And how proud he would be of all of you all. You are young, and go to work and make us proud.

That's all I've got. God bless you. I am deferring the rest of my time. Thank you.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Justice.

Senator Hickenlooper.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to all of you for all the work you have done and for being willing to put yourselves out and commit yourselves to public service for who knows how long.

I have a question for Ms. Jereza. The mission of the Office of Electricity is to lead research and development to strengthen and modernize the nation's power grid, which, lord knows, needs a lot of help right now. And yet, DOE has lost more than 4,000 staff members this year so far, including over 70 percent of the people in the Grid Deployment Office, national laboratories working to advance research in grid modernization, and they've begun layoffs. NREL in Colorado recently laid off 114 people. It seems to put our energy goals at risk. I just wanted to ask—as we try to upgrade our grid to prevent blackouts, to meet this rising energy demand, and oftentimes, we are going to need energy in places where we didn't need it before, especially as AI really takes off, we are losing the expert staff at DOE and at our national labs—how are we going to respond to that? You are going to come into a situation where you are probably not going to have—when you say all hands on deck, there's not going to be a crowd.

Ms. JEREZA. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I really appreciate it, and one of the reasons that I love working at the Department of Energy is the opportunity to work with some of the brightest minds, who have such a commitment and dedication to their mission, and they work tirelessly for that. If confirmed, my mission space will be with the Office of Electricity, and the Grid Deployment Office is currently a separate area, but I would, when I think about the resources, if confirmed, I will make every effort to work with you and assess the situation to ensure that we have the staffing and the resources that we need to ensure that we are able to continue to meet our very, very important mission.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great, and I noticed that when Chris Wright came in, his first secretarial order was an imperative, as we consider current and anticipated low growth on our nation's electric utilities. And I think that's what—you are going to be very busy.

Ms. JEREZA. No doubt.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Mr. Haustveit, I saw you spent—is it your whole professional career with Devon?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Yes, Senator.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. It's either a curse or very fortunate. I know Devon somewhat—

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. I think it's the latter.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Yes, I know. I wouldn't argue there.

Colorado has a proud history. We were the first government entity of any kind to regulate methane—to recognize the negative effects of it and to recognize that you can, by regulating it, you can actually allow it to be captured and used as a form of energy instead of having it working against us, against the climate. A number of Colorado companies and universities have continued to try



to focus on how do we make that next step in methane, and be able to measure more clearly, and other aspects of methane emissions for the benefit both of industry and climate.

If you are confirmed, are you willing to really push and continue that methane reduction research that has been taking place at a variety of places within the Fossil Energy Office?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question.

METEC, one of your state's most well-known labs in this area of study, is a lab that we work with at my current employer. As you know, methane is a very difficult gas to measure. We are actively working to develop technologies, including low earth orbit satellites, drones, continuous monitoring. Our company has a test site in Oklahoma that we invite people to visit freely, where we can test these different methane monitoring systems so we can find the best solution. Not only is it the right thing to do for the environment, it's the right thing to do for our economics. We spend millions of dollars to drill and complete these wells in order to produce the valuable products—oil and natural gas. We want to do our best to capture it and put it to good use to supply the energy that America needs. I will absolutely commit to continue to work to find ways to take care of our nation's natural resources.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Right, and I think that it's important to continue to recognize that we can have a strong economy and address climate change at the same time. There is an alignment of self-interest there for all of us.

I am just about out of time. Ms. Jereza, I did want to—we talked a little bit about the power grid and how we are going to need to get energy from places where we don't generate it to places where we now are going to need it, but part of that—we lost some of the research around that, and we were looking at ways, before, to strengthen and modernize our grid. Past research has shown that increasing the flows of electricity across multiple regions can make our grid more reliable, electricity more affordable, but some of those research findings have been suppressed in various ways. I am sure you are aware of some of that.

Obviously, you are committed to scientific inquiry and the integrity of science. I respect that. Will you make sure that we get the research published in a timely manner, no matter which direction it points us?

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, I very much appreciate what you are saying. Starting with my college years, I got very rigorous review, and I have learned from that and I offer that to others when I look at their reports so that they will resonate and that they will be useful. And so, it is important that, at the pace that we need to go, that yes, I will—if confirmed—I will work to help to expedite the analysis so that it gets into the hands of those who need it.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. I am out of time, but appreciate all of your time being here and I will have other questions I will pepper you with in written form in the future.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Senator Hickenlooper.

Mr. Haustveit, you are very familiar with the Bakken, and so, do you know that even before it was commercially viable to produce the Bakken, it was technologically viable? And so, the challenge we had—I was Governor back at that time—and starting in 2000, is

we were drilling the vertical wells, which you are very familiar with, but the economics were such that all the companies were leaving. There were other places where they could go, and frankly, do better. We started to work on the shale play, and eventually, of course, cracked the code and went from just being technologically viable to commercially viable.

So talk to me in terms of carbon capture, because the same thing applies. Now, you are very familiar with the Energy and Environmental Research Center at the University of North Dakota. My first question is, are you committed to continuing the PCOR partnership that they have with the Department of Fossil Energy at DOE?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question. Thank you for the time earlier this week. I am very familiar with the EERC. It's a team of very talented scientists, geologists. I don't know the details of the agreement that's currently in hand at DOE. If confirmed, I do commit to reviewing that contract, understanding the benefits to the DOE and to the nation.

Senator HOEVEN. Okay, but that's part of the work that is going to—and EERC is a great example of the type of entity that you need to work with, along with private enterprise, to crack the code here. You need to crack the code in terms of getting carbon capture commercially viable. How are you going to do it?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question.

Working with the brightest minds in the country is one way. We need to drive the cost down, just like we did with the shale revolution. In order to make anything compete for capital, it needs to generate a return that attracts investment. We need to find ways, not only to capture CO<sub>2</sub>, we need to use the CO<sub>2</sub>. Most of our unconventional revolution resources are maturing, and we are leaving 90 percent of the oil in the ground. We have 90 percent of the oil that we need to go get, and CO<sub>2</sub> is an incredible resource to do that. It has the right physical properties that it will be easy to inject. It will mix with the oil at lower pressures and will allow us to go recover the remaining resource below our feet, below wells that have already been drilled, on locations that have already been built, with infrastructure already in place.

So we need to be thinking about how to use this resource to go recover more affordable, reliable energy.

Senator HOEVEN. Right, it's a huge two-fer, right? You not only pull the CO<sub>2</sub> off the coal plants, so now you have longevity with baseload, but now you also have that CO<sub>2</sub> for carbon floods, which doubles the life of these oil fields, right? That's energy and more energy, right? And better environmental stewardship.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, we need to get more oil out of the ground, and CO<sub>2</sub> is a fantastic resource to do that.

Senator HOEVEN. Right. And we have this time now to do it with an administration that understands how to produce all of our energy resources. So we need to get this done for our future so we have this resource for future generations. Would you agree?

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. We need this resource for many generations. Hydrocarbons make up more than 80 percent of our primary energy, and we need more of it for many, many decades.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you.

And so, then, I am going to turn to Ms. Jereza. Going down the same line, we have—we need more electricity. All these smart guys want it for AI and all these different uses, right? They always want more and more and more electricity, yet at the same time, we face all these pressures that actually constrain our ability to produce that baseload electricity. And so, coal-fired electricity is incredibly important for the stability of the grid and having that baseload. How are you going to work with your colleague next to you there and make sure that we have these coal plants around for a long, long time—future generations—so that they can provide you that baseload you need for a reliable electric grid?

Ms. JEREZA. Thank you, Senator, for that—

Senator HOEVEN. I am counting on you two to get this done now, so.

Ms. JEREZA. Well, it's a daunting task, but we work for President Trump, and I think that he would only trust folks who are movers and shakers and want to get things done. And so, I will, if confirmed, it also will involve not just the two of us working together, but working with our federal families and also, the grid, in itself, has many, many stakeholders working with the states and the local people to get it done. And so, the collaboration that I talked about before, we will have early conversations and ongoing engagement to ensure that what we are doing is in the best interest of our taxpayers and can benefit all Americans with affordable, secure, reliable energy.

Senator HOEVEN. Do you agree we need that baseload?

Ms. JEREZA. Oh, absolutely. In fact, that is—we are in a situation today—thank you for reminding me about that. Baseload is so important for stabilizing our grid. It allows more buffer in the system to accommodate the different shapes that are happening. You were talking about the AI and data centers. We know that they are not only going to have huge demand, but they are also going to have interesting shapes that the grid is going to have to respond to, and baseload will certainly help to support that.

Senator HOEVEN. So, Mr. Doffermyre, and then you have got the key role to play, in that, you know, delays defeat. You started out talking about your job in terms of guiding whitewater rafting and hunting and fishing. I mean, I about cried it sounded so good. I mean, I love to hunt, love to fish, love the outdoors, and I could just see the serene look on your face while you were talking about it. That's really awesome stuff. So we love the environment and we want to always protect it and all that, but at the same time, we have to develop this energy. And so, we have to have a permitting process that works, that's certain, that we get the investment made. We do it right and well, but we get it done, right?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Amen.

Senator HOEVEN. Talk about that. How are you going to work with these two next to you to make sure we have energy from these sources, that we can't get to energy dominance without the things we are talking about. How do you see us moving forward to get that done?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Thank you so much, Senator Hoeven, for the question, and thank you for all of the work that you have done, or that I witness. I was not involved with the Dakota Access Pipeline,

but I was familiar with it, and I know that you were very helpful, and that's a perfect example.

Senator HOEVEN. Well, the whole country was familiar with it.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yeah, it's a perfect example of a broken regulatory system—

Senator HOEVEN. Exactly.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. One President says you got the permit—

Senator HOEVEN. It has been operating for almost, I don't know, well over five years now, 500,000-plus barrels a day, and it still doesn't have the final regulatory approval.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Right.

Senator HOEVEN. Think about that.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yeah, and it's granted the right-of-way, and then it's revoked, and then it's granted again and it's revoked. If we continue along that line, if we continue to have a permitting system that operates like that, the capital will dry up, the investment in these types of infrastructure projects will not be there, and we will not be able to meet the growing demand, and ultimately, heaven forbid, we will lose the AI arms race to China. So I think permitting is absolutely critical to our energy security, and I think we all agree that our energy security is critical to our national security.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you to all three of you. I appreciate it.

Senator Cortez Masto.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. Congratulations, and welcome to all of your family members who are here as well. I appreciate your willingness to serve.

Let me start with Mr. Doffermyre. I don't really have questions for you, but I will do it on the record, but I have to say, I am just—I appreciate your candor and your respect for the law and the rule of law and what it means. That is very rare in this day with individuals coming before us. So I thank you. I thank you for your comments on that.

Let me start with Ms. Jereza as well as Mr. Haustveit. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is helping Nevada become a national leader for battery manufacturing and recycling. We also hold the capacity to support the entire supply chain in my home state. For example, Nevada has enough lithium to supply the world for 85 years. I know you are aware of that. However, it is unfortunate that President Trump's FY26 budget calls for the cancellation of over \$15 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and he specifically, in that fiscal year budget, targets battery manufacturers, and calls these funds handouts. Now, as lithium-ion batteries and related technologies continue to be used by our military and clean energy applications, I believe we should be making them here to cut our reliance on Communist China and not dismantle enacted DOE programs that strengthen our global competitiveness, quite honestly.

So, if confirmed, let me ask you what your positions would be on the dismantling of those programs that support the research into and the support for battery manufacturing. And Ms. Jereza, let me start with you.

Ms. JEREZA. Sure, thank you for the question, Senator.

It is, in this race, very important that we continue to have the innovation that is so necessary to deploy the new technologies that we need. And just for clarification, the Office of Electricity has energy storage research in its budget, and it is not IIJA-related, and so, I expect that, if confirmed, that that research will continue. And what is really interesting, even though I haven't been directly involved in that research, there is a cluster effort at the Pacific Northwest National Lab where it looks at working with the Office of Science and basically going from atoms to systems to make sure that concept-to-commercialization is happening. And so, I am excited to see, when we are competing with China, that we come up with non-lithium solutions, and America is poised to be able to take advantage of that. And if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and with the others around me to ensure that we do that.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Mr. Haustveit.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question. Your State of Nevada is blessed with great resource, both hardrock, clay, and brine, and it has been incredible to watch the rapid technological development of new techniques, including direct lithium extraction. I am not yet in the office, so I don't know exactly what is being dismantled and what is being proposed, but I am fully aligned that we need to take out of the hands of Communist China 90-plus percent of the manufacturing of battery technology and onshore and bring manufacturing back to the U.S. We have the resource. We have the talent.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. I agree, and let me just say, and I appreciate some of your written testimony earlier and even your comments about the importance of lithium extraction and mining and its role in the future of technology and that this country should be leading, believing in public-private partnership. Why would we be doing that extraction if we are not bringing the manufacturing back here that utilizes that technology, particularly around battery and battery storage as well. So I appreciate those comments.

Let me jump back to something that has come to my attention, and Ms. Jereza, if you would, if you can comment on this. In 2022, Congress appropriated \$1 billion to the Department of Energy for resilient energy infrastructure in Puerto Rico. And this past December, the Department announced \$365 million in awards for energy supply projects at community health care centers. In March, the Department wrote a letter specifying requirements to advance these projects, but their future now appears to be at risk.

So my question to you is, can I count on you to implement these projects that will provide life-sustaining electricity to medically vulnerable Puerto Rican Americans?

Ms. JEREZA. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

The Puerto Rico efforts are led by the Grid Deployment Office, and so, I think that they are the ones who are leading the efforts and the review efforts as well. And if confirmed, what I will do is, I will assess those projects and look at how does this impact not just those that are in need, but also the entire grid. Secretary Wright and President Trump have made it clear that we need to look at what we can do to improve the security—

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. So let me just ask you this, because this was appropriated by Congress. This goes back to the rule of law. This was appropriated by Congress for a specific reason. So how does the administration have the authority now to redirect those funds when that really wasn't within their jurisdiction? That is my concern. And I am hoping that you are going to be, when you get in this position, following the rule of law and respecting the role of Congress and our appropriation authority and where we direct these funds.

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, I very much appreciate the rule of law, and if confirmed, I will comply with the law and we will work—I look forward to looking into this to assess the situation.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HOEVEN. Senator King.

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Doffermyre, I was fascinated by your exchanges with Senator Hoeven at the end of his questioning about the restricting and changing permits in midstream. How do you feel about the fact that two weeks ago the Department of the Interior canceled the permits for Empire Wind, which took seven years, cost \$2.5 billion. They had fully completed permits, including a lease from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from 2017? How do you feel about that?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Thank you, Senator King.

Senator KING. Is it okay to pull that permit, but not a permit for a pipeline?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. No, and I will address your question directly. I did want to just say, because you were not here at the introduction, my wife and I, during our first year of marriage, lived in Maine, and I believe you were the Governor at the time, and we absolutely loved it.

Senator KING. Referred to as the Golden Age.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. It was the Golden Age.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. It was a honeymoon—a year-long honeymoon. It couldn't have been any better.

I am not familiar with the wind project, permit, or licensing issue that you are describing. I will say, from my standpoint, especially in the private sector, I think the reliance interest of business, the predictability of these permits is something that's very important. I don't know what would have caused this administration to review a permit the way that you described.

Senator KING. It was fully—it was completed, issued, final record of decision, everything was done. They were ready to—I think they were actually beginning construction.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Okay.

Senator KING. In construction, that was stopped, so, I wish you would look into that. As a person who has been in the development business, this is the worst nightmare.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yes.

Senator KING. To go through the process and spend, in my case, millions of dollars, in this case, several billion dollars on permitting

and have a permit pulled after it's issued. That's not a good signal to industry, as I think you will agree.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yes, I do agree. As the solicitor, I won't be as much of a policymaker as I will be an advisor, but to the extent that, where the lines blur, you are going to have a strong voice in the room in favor of reliability and predictability and durability of these permits, and that the private sector needs to be able to rely on this in order to attract the capital to build the infrastructure that we need.

Senator KING. Completely agree. And I hope that strong voice will be heard.

Fourteen days, 28 days for an environmental impact statement, that's impossible. That is the "lawyers' and accountants' relief act of 2025," because that decision will inevitably, as you point out yourself, be appealed, go into litigation, which will take a year or two, come back to the agency. I am completely committed. I joined the Chair (Senator Manchin) and Senator Barrasso on permitting reform and time limits, absolutely, but setting time limits that are so unrealistic as to guarantee litigation, it seems to me, is not a productive use of the rulemaking power.

You have been in this business. Twenty-eight days for an environmental impact statement? That's not serious.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Well, I share Senator Heinrich's view that if we are able to comply with the statute within 28 days, then I will applaud the entire—

Senator KING. And if I can walk across the Potomac River, that will be good, too.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Well, it doesn't seem—

Senator KING. Although, the press would say, "King unable to swim" if I did that.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Right, right.

I am not sure I would agree that it's impossible, it doesn't defy the laws of physics. My view is that it's a very ambitious timeline. I have not been involved in developing that timeline, but I am very much committed to expediting these permitting timelines as much as we possibly can.

Senator KING. We all committed to that. I just don't want unrealistic goals that end up lengthening the timeline.

Ms. Jereza, are you aware what the cheapest electricity produced in America today is?

Ms. JEREZA. The cheapest?

Senator KING. The cheapest source of electricity in America today?

Ms. JEREZA. So when it comes to the cost—

Senator KING. The fact that I am asking it as a question should give you a hint.

Ms. JEREZA. Would it be Maine?

Senator KING. It's solar and wind, the cheapest form of electricity today.

And would you also agree that renewables plus storage equals baseload?

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, thank you for asking about the costs of electricity. It's a complicated question, and there are many drivers—

Senator KING. No, it isn't complicated. It's how much—what the busbar cost is of various forms of electricity. There are reports. I get a report every week on what the cost of electricity is from various sources. Wind and solar are consistently the lowest.

Ms. JEREZA. So, at the Office of Electricity, we look at systems, and so, as an engineer, that's what we look at. We look at integrated systems planning, not just resource planning. And so, every resource has a certain value that they can provide to the grid, and sometimes there are system costs and there are different values that compared from firm baseload to solar and wind that you need to make some accommodation for the intermittency that you have.

Senator KING. And I agree with that. I totally agree with that, and right now, battery storage is more expensive, and therefore makes the net cost higher. I understand that. On the other hand, I think the important thing is, there have been gigantic steps in battery technology just in the last five years. And the point is, wind and solar are intermittent, but when you have storage, whether it's battery or pumped storage, or whatever else, that's the same as baseload because the intermittency problem goes away. Correct?

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, when we think about the cost of electricity, it's going to depend on the geography, like where you are located and how does that resource behave there, and it's also going to depend on the load and how that behaves with that. And so, it's really going to depend on where you are in the system. And what we are finding is—

Senator KING. Of course, windy places have more wind power and it's a higher capacity factor, I get that. But still, I will share the data with you. It's pretty clear. Natural gas combined cycle is a little bit higher. Wind and solar are the cheapest. Nuclear is more expensive. Coal is very expensive. So, and I understand, you have got to talk about storage, too. But the point I want to make is, all of the above means all of the above. And it worries me that we are talking strictly about fossil fuel development and not the technologies that will enable us to have a cleaner energy future. Storage is part of it. Solar and wind have already—the price has already dropped so dramatically.

One other point, and I am way over time, is about grid-enhancing technologies when you are talking about transmission. I hope that's something you will look seriously at so that we are not just over-building, and we should take advantage of technologies like reconductoring and the so called GETs. Do you agree that that's something that should be seriously looked at as we are talking about transmission enhancements?

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, the GETs are very important because if we are going to get much more energy out of the system, we need to not just have energy addition, but we can also get more out of the system, and so, GETs would offer that.

Senator KING. Which will save us huge costs in transmission development, and that, I think, is something that should be looked at first before we talk about new rights-of-way, poles, et cetera.



Ms. JEREZA. Senator, I think that we have to look at everything—all the options that are available because the demand is increasing by so much that we are going to have to look at every option that's on the table and what is commercially ready, what is most viable over the long term. And so, if confirmed, the Office of Electricity will be looking at—I will be working in that research area for advancing conductors, power electronics, microgrids, and various areas to advance the state of the technology.

Senator KING. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the indulgence.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I apologize that I have missed most of your testimony. My commitment to you is, I am going back to read it all. Some very quick questions today as we are running between different committees.

First, to Mr. Haustveit—carbon capture. We have some key projects that we are anticipating as we are looking to process North Slope natural gas. This is central to the viability of our Alaska LNG project. DOE has already been awarded funding for two CCS initiatives. One is ASRC's CarbonSAFE Hub, and then a direct air capture feasibility study. Both of these are in limbo right now. We are concerned that they may be on a DOE list of cuts going to the White House. It is something, again, that we have been working on with industry in a very collaborative way, working with the agencies, and we look at this piece as, really, very strategic for the energy initiative that we have up there.

I know you are not in yet, but I am just asking for your commitment to look critically at this, to have the ability to defend these Alaska-based projects, given their strategic energy importance.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Senator, thank you for the question. As you stated, I am not in, so I don't know the details, but I do commit to looking at projects that are part of the Department. Carbon capture, especially for use for extracting additional hydrocarbons, is something that I am passionate about. Prudhoe Bay benefited greatly because you didn't have a place to put the gas for a long time, and you reinjected it.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Still doing that.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Resulted in higher recovery.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Yes.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. My home state of the Bakken is recovering somewhere between 10 and 15 percent of the oil in place, and CO<sub>2</sub> is a potential solution to inject into the reservoir to recover more oil. We have got tremendous resource in our country. Alaska is blessed greatly with resources across the entire state. And CO<sub>2</sub>, if available at affordable levels, can be a great injectant, can be a great solution to recover more of that resource.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, we look forward to sharing more of the details about these projects and the opportunity to show you firsthand.

Mr. HAUSTVEIT. Thank you, Senator.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Let me turn to you, Ms. Jereza. As you know, the map shows we are not connected by geography to the Lower 48, and our grid is not part of a continental grid. And so,

we have some unique reliability and affordability challenges. Our grid is what we call the “Railbelt.” So it goes up as far as the railroad, and then it kind of comes back down the other way. But we have aging infrastructure—aging transmission infrastructure that we are dealing with. We have limited redundancy. We have high costs to our ratepayers.

So I need you, and again, same point that I just made previously, I understand you are not there, but we have a grid modernization effort that is underway—significant grant funding that came a couple of years ago to help us with this integration of this transmission grid to boost it up to allow it to take us at least forward for the next decade or so. So I just need your commitment to look critically at what our needs are in Alaska, again, when we are not part of anybody else’s interrelated grid.

Ms. JEREZA. Senator, it would be my pleasure to do that. I actually was fortunate enough to go to Cordova and see the great innovations that are happening at Cordova Electric.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Super-cool stuff.

Ms. JEREZA. So I can’t wait to go back.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Yeah, good.

Ms. JEREZA. If confirmed.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, you will have that invitation.

And finally, Mr. Doffermyre, I know you have got a little bit of a connection to Alaska through some of your law school buddies who are very focused on Alaska—Kaleb Froehlich, who is around here. He speaks highly of you, by the way. We saw, in the last administration, just a torrent of decisions and regulations from Interior that were absolutely contrary to what we passed into law here in Congress. It was pretty tough. And this was on our petroleum reserve. It was on the non-wilderness portion of the coastal plain. It was on the Ambler Access Project. Our public land orders, we have a whole list of them.

I just need your commitment—and I hope that this is the easiest question that you will ever get—your commitment to ensure that Interior returns to following the law—the law as it is written, if you are confirmed as Solicitor.

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Yes, ma’am.

Senator MURKOWSKI. See how easy that was?

Mr. DOFFERMYRE. Easy enough.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I appreciate that because we feel like we are pretty clear here in our policies, and then, when it’s not followed through on the other end, great frustration. So I look forward to seeing you keep that commitment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate the opportunity to blast in at the very end. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I want to thank our witnesses for their testimony today and all the Senators for their cooperation. I want to thank Senator Hoeven and his team for filling in when I had to step down to another committee.

Questions for the record for the hearing will be 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 15, one week from today.

Thanks again to the members of the Committee. On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to extend congratulations to all three of these nominees and look forward to working with each one as we progress to the floor, and should you be confirmed, thereafter.

I also look forward to working with all the Senators on the Committee as we continue to consider each of the President's nominees within the jurisdiction of this Committee in a timely manner.

And I hope everybody on the Committee will keep working with me to help persuade leadership on both sides of the aisle to bring these nominees to the floor and have them considered on the floor as soon as possible.

The hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

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

## **APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED**

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**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
May 8, 2025 Hearing: The Doffermyre, Jereza, and Haustveit Nominations  
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. William Doffermyre**

**Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich**

**Question 1:** In March, Secretary Burgum violated the Vacancies Act by handing Tyler Hassen the duties of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget in an acting capacity at DOI. Last month, the Secretary further empowered Mr. Hassen by giving him extensive authority over departmental functions. Mr. Hassen first joined the Department as a representative of DOGE.

If confirmed, will you commit to providing all legal analysis performed by the Office of the Solicitor in connection with Mr. Hassen's appointment and the Department's compliance with the Vacancies Reform Act?

**Response:** I am not at the Department and am not familiar with the issue that you are raising. I cannot make a commitment on this situation without knowing all of the facts or analyzing the law. I can commit that, if confirmed, I will follow the law and will always advise Department leaders to follow the law.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. William Doffermyre**

**Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines**

**Question 1:** Mr. Doffermyre, if confirmed to serve as Solicitor of the United States Department of the Interior, do you commit to ensuring the Office of the Solicitor provides impartial legal counsel and advice to the Department while upholding the highest standards of ethics and integrity?

**Response:** Yes.

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**Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden**

**Question 1:** Mr. Doffermyre, during your confirmation hearing you spoke about the importance of eliminating uncertainty in the permitting process. Would you agree that the need for this certainty extends beyond permit to other policies that alter the regulatory or financial environment and that the Department of Interior should consult closely with Congress and stakeholders before making any changes to policy that would significantly alter outside decision making?

**Response:** I believe that engagement with stakeholders and Congress, whether required by statute or not, enhances the durability of decision making.

**Question 2:** During World War II, Japanese Americans and Alaska Natives were wrongfully incarcerated at the Minidoka War Relocation Center in Idaho. Today, the Minidoka National Historic Site is managed by the National Park Service to tell stories of Japanese American courage and military service. If confirmed, can you commit to ensuring that the Department of Interior upholds its obligations to appropriately manage Minidoka and other important units of the National Park System from incompatible development and encourage close coordination between decision makers and stakeholders before any actions are taken that may impact these sites and the surrounding areas?

**Response:** As I stated at my hearing, I have a tremendous respect for our National Parks and created some of my most fond memories at parks across the country. I believe that coordination with stakeholders and Congress enhances the durability of decision making; and, if confirmed, I commit to following the law and to advising the Secretary and other Department officials to follow the law.

**Question 3:** Wildfires have ravaged entire communities back home in Oregon. Last year, a record number of acres burned in the state. Will you ensure that the Trump administration does not take any further actions that impact the capacity of Department of Interior or its partners to mitigate, manage or recovery from wildfire disasters? Will you also commit to ensuring that any funding or authorities provided for wildfire risk mitigation and forest health improvement are used for projects that are primarily designed to achieve these outcomes rather than projects where that is only a byproduct of another management goal?

**Response:** The impacts of wildland fires have been devastating, and the Secretary has committed to using all tools available to reduce fuel loads and address wildfire risk. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and other decision makers and provide sound legal advice as the Department works to address this important issue.

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**Questions for the Record from Senator John Hickenlooper**

**Question 1:** This administration has made its central goal to sharply reduce the number of federal workers under the guise of efficiency. The layoffs have been chaotic, haphazard, and have been ruled illegal in the courts.

The administration has also frozen many funding programs, including at the Department of the Interior, despite congressional approval.

If nominated, you will serve as the legal counsel for the Department of the Interior. What is your opinion on the legality of agencies freezing funds that have been approved by Congress?

**Response:** I am not at the Department and am not familiar with what appropriated funds have or have not been obligated. As I stated at my hearing, if confirmed, I will review the facts and the law and provide sound legal advice to the Secretary and other decision makers.



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**Questions for the Record from Senator Alex Padilla**

**Question 1:** When Kate MacGregor testified before the ENR Committee, she said she was unaware of any mining activity within the boundaries of a national park. Six days after her hearing, the BLM attempted to authorize mining within a national park in California. In your written testimony, you mentioned you would be a faithful steward of America's Best Idea, our National Park System. Do you believe industrial mining should be allowed within a National Park?

**Response:** As I mentioned during the hearing, I have a tremendous respect for our National Parks and created some of my most fond memories at parks across the country. I am also unaware of any mining activity within the boundaries of a national park. If confirmed, I commit to following the law and to advising the Secretary and other Department officials to follow the law with respect to authorized activities within our national parks.

**Question 2:** The Bureau of Land Management recently authorized mining within the Mojave National Preserve — a national park unit known for its sweeping desert landscapes and deep significance to Native American Tribes. BLM's decision raises serious legal concerns. If confirmed, I expect you to uphold the law and ensure that any mining in park units is either prohibited or subject to full environmental review and Tribal consultation. Are you committed to following the Mining in the Parks Act and its requirement for a National Park Service-approved plan of operations?

**Response:** As I am not currently at the Department, I am not versed in the implementation of the Mining in the Parks Act. However, if confirmed, I commit to following the law and to advising the Secretary and other Department officials to follow the law.

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**Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich**

**Question 1:** The concept of baseload is evolving as more storage and demand response technologies come online. Grid-scale storage technologies can keep the lights on during power outages, prevent waste when there's too much electricity, ease traffic on crowded power lines, and help keep the grid running smoothly and safely by providing frequency and voltage support.

The Office of Electricity plays a key role in advancing U.S. expertise in grid-scale storage technologies, such as long-duration storage. As Assistant Secretary, how would you ensure this critical work continues to support grid reliability?

Response: Innovation in grid-scale storage is essential to ensuring a reliable, flexible and modern electricity grid – especially as we integrate more variable resources. If confirmed, I will work closely with National Laboratories, industry leaders and states to ensure advanced energy storage solutions are deployed where they provide the greatest value for reliability, resilience and cost-effectiveness.

**Question 2:** Currently, the Office of Electricity does not have primary jurisdiction over federal permitting authorities, which is held today by the Grid Deployment Office (GDO) and FERC, however, if GDO were folded into Office of Electricity, the Assistant Secretary would likely inherit permitting-related responsibilities.

How would you approach managing those responsibilities, and what role should DOE play in helping streamline the permitting process for high-priority transmission projects?

Response: While the permitting process today is led by other entities, I recognize how critical it is to the timely buildout of transmission infrastructure. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Office of Electricity helps identify and address grid needs, reduce bottlenecks and coordinate with permitting agencies to support timely, high-impact transmission development.

**Question 3:** The Office of Electricity's research and development mission to improve grid reliability, resilience, security, and affordability is dependent on public-private partnership research collaborations. I have a two-part question:

- Given your experience at the Edison Electric Institute, which has collaborated with the Office of Electricity, can you discuss the importance of public-private sector collaborations?
- And do you think the private sector's willingness to work the federal government may be affected by this administration's pull back of previously obligated funds?

Response: Public-private collaboration is vital to advancing the Office of Electricity's mission. The private sector brings operational insight and deployment experience, while DOE contributes research expertise and long-term planning. Partnerships between the public and private sector can accelerate innovation and improve outcomes for grid reliability and security. If confirmed, I

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will work to ensure that the Office engages with partners and administers its programs responsibility in accordance with the law.

**Question 4:** The Office of Electricity has worked with industry to address the distribution transformer supply chain shortage, as well as address shortages with large power transformers and other grid components.

These supply chain issues highlight that regardless of source, if we don't have a modernized grid, we will be unable to get power from point A to point B. And the market is now in particular disarray due to the threat of tariffs.

In light of these tariffs, what is your strategy for shoring up our grid technology energy supply chains, and what specific actions will you take if confirmed for the position?

Response: A secure and modern electric grid depends on a reliable supply of key components like transformers and advanced conductors. If confirmed, I will prioritize efforts to strengthen domestic supply chains by supporting research into alternative materials, expanding manufacturing capacity, and working closely with industry to identify vulnerabilities. The Office of Electricity can also play a role in sharing data and technical standards that help guide private-sector investment. Ensuring we can move power reliably across the country is fundamental to grid resiliency and national security.

**Question 5:** We all know that energy demand is increasing, and with that our generation and transmission capacity have to continue to increase.

One promising technology that I am excited about is reconductoring, since we can add extra capacity to our existing power lines without having to build out new transmission.

Can you discuss how you see reconductoring playing a role in grid modernization and the energy transition? And how do you see the Office of Electricity moving this technology forward?

Response: Reconductoring can be a practical, cost-effective way to boost transmission capacity using existing infrastructure – a smart solution as energy demand grows. If confirmed, I will support work with industry and national labs to develop advanced conductors, assess where they can provide the greatest grid benefits, and help utilities deploy these technologies safely and efficiently as part of broader grid modernization efforts.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines**

**Question 1:** Ms. Jereza, if confirmed to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for the Office of Electricity, how will you work with Congress to advance and expand our energy production to strengthen the grid with reliable, affordable and resilient baseload power?

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Response: Expanding the production of reliable, affordable, and resilient power and securing its delivery is essential to meeting the needs of our growing economy and national security risks. Baseload power plays an important role in ensuring grid reliability. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure the Office of Electricity supports technologies and infrastructure that strengthen the grid and maintain consistent baseload power.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell**

**Question 1:** Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Our National Laboratories play an indispensable role in America's innovation-driven economy. Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is a national leader in grid modernization, chemistry, and materials science and it plays a critical role in energy and national security.

The Grid Storage Launch Pad (GSL) at PNNL is specifically designed to engage industry to help verify and validate the new storage technologies which will be key contributors to the operational flexibility and reliability of the grid.

- If confirmed, how do you plan for the Department to maximize the value of national laboratory facilities in order to ensure reliability and security of the grid?
- How will you ensure that GSL is utilized to its full potential?

Response: I fully agree that the national labs, including PNNL, are essential to advancing innovation and ensuring grid reliability and security. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that DOE maximizes the impact of lab facilities by aligning research with real-world grid needs and strengthening collaboration with industry. The Grid Storage Launch Pad represents an important capacity for advancing energy storage technologies from materials to systems solutions, and I recognize its potential to contribute to grid modernization efforts and America's competitiveness.

Achieving energy security and affordability at a time of unprecedented electricity demand growth will require solutions that are developed at the regional scale. Platforms such as those housed at PNNL's Electricity Infrastructure Operations Center (EIOC) are specifically designed to leverage secure data and best-in-class tools to take on emerging challenges in grid reliability at the regional scale.

- If confirmed, how do you plan to support these efforts, and to foster solutions at the regional scale?

Response: Regional solutions are essential to addressing the evolving challenges of grid reliability and demand growth. If confirmed, I will support efforts to collaborate with labs, states, and utilities to ensure regional needs are reflected in DOE's grid strategies and that we continue to strengthen our technical capabilities at the regional level.

Supplying the large new electrical loads the grid is seeing will require new generation coupled with an increase in transmission capacity in already constrained corridors. There is work going on at National Laboratories on new materials that can improve the conductivity of metals for key

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grid components that can expand capacity on existing transmission infrastructure. It's also very important that we secure key parts of this supply chain here in the U.S.

- If confirmed, how do you view the Office of Electricity's role in helping fill some of these key gaps in the supply chain, and supporting new manufacturing methods for key grid components?

Response: The Office of Electricity has an important role to play in advancing material research and helping translate those innovations into real-world manufacturing solutions. Supporting new methods to improve conductivity and expand grid capacity – especially using existing infrastructure – is a smart, strategic approach. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Office continues to partner with the national labs and industry to identify supply chain gaps and strengthen domestic manufacturing of critical grid components.

**Question 2:** Smart Grid Grants

Recognizing the need to make long overdue investments in our nation's electricity grid, this Committee authored provisions in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to make the U.S. power grid more resilient, adaptive, and efficient. All with the intent of preventing blackouts, lowering prices, and allowing more needed generation to be built.

So far, DOE has invested more than \$14 billion of the dollars Congress provided to boost the U.S. power grid. Funding that has been matched many times over by the private sector in all 50 states. Many states have received support through important programs like the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (or GRIP program) that I originally authored back in 2007.

These investments will have tangible benefits and cost savings of nearly \$100 million for electricity ratepayers in my State.

- If confirmed, will you commit to seeing these important investments through to completion?
- And ensure that all remaining funding in these important grid-enhancing programs from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are deployed by the Department of Energy?

Response: The investments made through programs like GRIP are intended to improve the reliability, adaptability and efficiency of our grid. They reflect a strong partnership between the DOE, states and the private sector. If confirmed, I will support the continued role in administering these programs effectively, with the focus on transparency, performance and delivering lasting value to ratepayers and the grid.

**Question 3:** Transmission

Congress created DOE's Transmission Facilitation Program (TFP) in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help build-out new interregional transmission lines across the country. The TFP is a revolving fund program to provide Federal support to overcome the financial hurdles in the development of large-scale new transmission lines and upgrading existing transmission.

- Do you think the bipartisan Transmission Facilitation Program has been a success?
- Will you commit to supporting it as a tool to facilitate investment in new transmission lines across the U.S. at no additional cost to taxpayers?

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Response: I am aware that the Grid Deployment Office administers the TFP. I am not familiar with the status of specific programs at GDO in this issue area, but if confirmed, I will request a briefing so I can evaluate current and future investment opportunities and how best to work with you and the Committee on shared goals to overcome the financial hurdles in the development of large-scale new transmission lines and upgrading existing transmission.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto**

**Question 1:** Do you believe in an all-of-the-above resource approach to tackle growing energy demand? Why or why not?

Response: I believe the best way to meet growing energy demand is by supporting an affordable, reliable, secure mix of energy resources. Every region has different operating environments, and our grid must be flexible enough to integrate a range of technologies that address the specific needs of the region. The goal is a system that delivers consistent service while adapting to evolving needs and keeping costs manageable for consumers.

**Question 2:** If confirmed – how would you work to convene and coordinate with energy utilities on today’s grid challenges, such as growing energy demand, cybersecurity, and supply chain or transmission needs?

Response: The Office of Electricity serves as a convening force – sharing data, supporting technical collaboration and aligning federal tools with utility needs. Whether it’s addressing demand growth, enhancing cybersecurity, or resolving supply chain bottlenecks, strong public-private coordination is essential to ensuring a resilient and responsive grid.

**Question 3:** Would you be willing to provide technical support to help state, local, and Tribal governments analyze the potential impacts of growing energy demand and the potential impacts it poses on people and communities?

Response: I would support the Office of Electricity’s continued role in providing technical assistance to state, local and tribal governments who have an important stake in the planning and implementation of energy solutions. The Department can offer data, modeling and expertise to help these stakeholders make informed decisions that protect residents and support sustainable growth.

**Question 4:** From your perspective, are there ways that the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Office of Electricity (OE) can better leverage existing assets, such as its 17 national labs and partnerships with external organizations, to tackle today’s grid challenges?

Response: Yes, I believe there are continued opportunities to better leverage the expertise of the national labs and external partners. The labs offer cutting-edge capabilities in grid modeling, energy storage, cybersecurity and advanced materials. If confirmed, I will support efforts to

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strengthen coordination between the Office of Electricity, the labs and external stakeholders so that we are delivering solutions that improve grid reliability and resilience.

**Question 5:** From your perspective, are there ways that the U.S. can better incorporate inter-regional planning and power transfer capabilities – in order to prevent against threats to the grid – such as cyber attacks and extreme weather?

Response: Better coordination across regions can help prevent cascading outages and ensure flexible responses to disruptions. If confirmed, I will support efforts to enhance regional modeling, improve situational awareness, and advance technologies to increase the grid's ability to adapt and recover quickly from both physical and cyber threats.

**Questions for the Record from Senator John Hickenlooper**

**Question 1:** As Assistant Secretary, what actions would you take to accelerate the buildout of new transmission, especially interstate and interregional transmission? How will you utilize the tools DOE already has via the Grid Deployment Office, Transmission Facilitation Program, and Loan Program Office to accelerate transmission growth?

Response: If confirmed, I would focus on using the Office of Electricity's core strengths in grid analysis, technical support and stakeholder engagement to inform transmission planning and deployment. While other DOE offices administer specific transmission programs, I believe there is value in close coordination to help ensure that investments are guided by sound data, regional needs and long-term grid reliability goals.

**Question 2:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law allocated \$22B in funding to the Grid Deployment Office at DOE. Much of this funding is already allocated to modernize our grid through eight grant and loan programs, including \$7B in Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships funding for projects in all 50 states.

As Assistant Secretary, will you ensure commitments of congressionally appropriated funds through grants and loans intended to advance grid reliability are administered and delivered to their intended recipients?

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure that all activities within the Office of Electricity are carried out in full compliance with law.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Alex Padilla**

**Question 1:** Extreme weather events have increased in both frequency and intensity, making power outages more and more common. Whether it be extreme heat in the summer or freezing temperatures in the winter, our nation's electric grid is frequently tested, and in many cases, it has not been able to weather the storm. Building a resilient and reliable grid is a bipartisan issue

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that I have worked on with Senator Cornyn, but there is much work that needs to be done to keep the lights on for all Americans. Will you commit to prioritizing grid hardening and continuing the funding for grid hardening through the Grid Deployment Office?

Response: Grid resilience is essential to protecting communities from the impacts of extreme weather. If confirmed, I will prioritize efforts within the Office of Electricity that support grid reliability and hardening through data, technical assistance and coordination with other DOE offices. I am committed to ensuring that all actions are focused on strengthening the grid to meet today's challenges.

**Question 2:** How do you plan to use your position to support programs that will help harden the grid, like the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) Program?

Response: If confirmed, I will use the Office of Electricity's expertise in grid modeling, reliability analysis and stakeholder engagement to support programs that strengthen grid resilience. While other DOE offices administer programs like GRIP, I see a key role for the Office in providing the data and technical insight needed to help inform and guide those efforts.

**Question 3:** Do you commit to working with Congress to ensure that Americans can keep their lights on in light of ongoing weather events that are getting harsher, more frequent, and more devastating?

Response: I commit to working with Congress to help ensure Americans have access to affordable, reliable and secure energy. If confirmed, I will focus using the Office of Electricity's capabilities to strengthen grid reliability and support efforts that protect communities from power disruptions.

**Question 4:** One of the issues all of us agree on is that our nation is going to need significantly more electricity in the coming years, and we are going to need more transmission capacity to transport those electrons to where we need them. To meet the projected demand, our grid will need solutions that can be implemented quickly, like reconductoring. Rewiring our existing transmission lines with state-of-the-art carbon fiber or aluminum alloy materials has the potential to deliver twice the amount of energy as conventional steel and aluminum transmission cables. And that's all without having to build brand new lines. How will you work to ensure DOE uses every tool in its tool box, including grid-enhancing technologies like reconductoring, to meet growing demand, and if confirmed will you commit to working with me on this issue?

Response: Technologies like reconductoring can be smart, efficient ways to increase grid capacity without the challenge of building new transmission lines. If confirmed, I will ensure the Office of Electricity continues to support the analysis, research and coordination needed to help utilities assess and deploy grid-enhancing solutions for maximum benefit. I welcome the opportunity to work with you on this issue and I share your goal of making the grid stronger and response to rising demand.



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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Kyle Haustveit**

**Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich**

**Question 1:** Republicans have proposed cutting energy tax cuts as part of their reconciliation package, including cuts to provisions such as 45Q (for CCS), 45V (for hydrogen) and the renewable tax credits or tech neutral credits in sections 45Y and 48E.

How would these cuts affect the level of interest in research and development for subsurface/fossil technologies in the future?

Response: If confirmed, my focus will be on advancing American energy solutions that are affordable, reliable and secure – especially those that leverage our existing abundant energy resources here at home. While tax policy decisions ultimately rest with Congress, I believe innovation will continue where there is strong market demand, a clear regulatory framework and a commitment to leveraging America’s vast subsurface expertise.

**Question 2:** Enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) can potentially employ some of the technologies, equipment, tools, and infrastructure that the fossil fuel industry has already developed or is developing, such as down-well sensors and well stimulation technologies, while also potentially leveraging the knowledgeable and experienced workforce from the legacy fossil energy sectors.

How do you think we can effectively leverage the skills and experience of the oil and gas sector to additional and new resources such as geothermal in the coming energy transition?

And how will you approach this critical task in your new role if confirmed?

Response: Enhanced geothermal systems can benefit greatly from the technologies and talent developed in the oil and gas sector. The drilling expertise, downhole tools and subsurface knowledge are directly applicable. As we look to expand geothermal as a reliable energy source, it’s important to create opportunities that allow this skilled workforce and proven infrastructure to support new resource development in a cost-effective and strategic way.

**Question 3:** How can we effectively leverage the skills and experience of the oil and gas sector to additional and new resources such as geothermal in the coming energy transition? How will you approach this critical task in your new role if confirmed?

Response: Geothermal – especially enhanced geothermal – has strong potential as an additional energy source. The oil and gas sector’s experience with subsurface technologies makes it well-positioned to help unlock this resource’s potential. Tapping into existing expertise allows us to add reliable, domestically produced energy to the grid, while making efficient use of existing skills and infrastructure. It’s a practical approach to strengthening our energy mix and national energy security.

**Question 4:** Some may see your immediate background with a top natural gas producer with an interest in LNG projects as a conflict of interest.

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How will you seek to reassure members with this concern?

Response: My background gives me a clear understanding of how energy projects work in practice – technically, financially, and operationally. That perspective is valuable to ensuring DOE policies are grounded in reality and deliver results for the American people. If confirmed, I will fully comply with all ethics rules and recusal requirements and I will approach this role with integrity and transparency.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines**

**Question 1:** Mr. Haustveit, as a graduate of Montana Tech with a strong foundation in science and engineering, you understand the importance of using research-driven approaches to bolster our electric grid. In Montana, roughly half of our electricity generation comes from coal, with the remainder generated by hydropower and other renewables. We're actively building new natural gas capacity while also investing in wind and solar infrastructure to ensure a balanced and reliable portfolio. If confirmed to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, will you commit to working with Congress to expand electricity generation through an all-of-the-above energy strategy?

Response: I believe our energy policy should be anchored in reliability, affordability and security. Montana's diverse energy mix – including coal, hydropower, natural gas and growing renewable resources – demonstrates the importance of leveraging what works for each region. If confirmed, I will support efforts that ensure our electricity generation is grounded in sound science, practical engineering, and long-term grid resilience, while respecting the strengths of America's traditional and emerging sources.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell**

**Question 1:** The carbon management industry has shown growth in the U.S. In just the last few years, new technologies have been introduced that reduce wildfire risk, increase the value of farmers' and foresters' biomass residues, and turn waste into new industrial products, including critical minerals like graphite. Companies using these technologies are creating jobs and improving the communities they work in.

- If confirmed, will you support these technologies through research and development, demonstration, and commercialization programs?
- Will you pledge that, if confirmed, the Office of Fossil Energy will create technology neutral programs that use data to decide which projects to support?

Response: I support continued research, demonstration and responsible commercialization of technologies that strengthen our energy and industrial base – especially when they reduce waste, create jobs and add value to domestic resources. If confirmed, I will advocate for a data-driven

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approach that focuses on measurable results and ensures taxpayer investments deliver real benefits to communities and our energy economy.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto**

**Question 1:** While DOE's Office of Fossil Energy primarily focuses on fossil fuels, there are some cross-over opportunities to bolster geothermal research and development (R&D). In fact, drilling into the ground for clean heat requires many of the same technologies and capacities required to exploit oil and gas resources. So, from your perspective, do you see further opportunities for collaboration across DOE Offices and other Federal Departments to advance geothermal technologies? If so, are there any Office initiatives or policies that you'd seek to implement on geothermal?

Response: I believe there will be clear opportunities for collaboration across DOE office to advance geothermal technologies, especially where they intersect with subsurface expertise from the fossil sector. Many of the tools used for oil and gas – like directional drilling and reservoir modeling – apply directly to geothermal. While geothermal is not the core focus of the office of Fossil Energy, I support efforts to share knowledge and capabilities where it can accelerate innovation and improve the cost-effectiveness of clean heat solutions.

**Question 2:** Your written testimony referenced some of your experiences with early-stage startups and innovation projects. In recent years, DOE's Office of Fossil Energy has implemented programs and funds to support exploration, resource identification, production, and processing of critical minerals. If confirmed, how would you approach critical mineral investments and initiatives through your Office?

Response: My experience with early-stage innovation has shown how targeted investments can unlock new supply chains and strengthen domestic industries. If confirmed, I will support efforts within the Office of Fossil Energy that advance responsible extraction and processing of critical minerals – especially where they align with existing fossil infrastructure and workforce capabilities.

**Questions for the Record from Senator John Hickenlooper**

**Question 1:** Do you commit to the lawful disbursement of funds appropriated by Congress under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act in compliance with the Impoundment Control Act?

Response: If confirmed, I will comply with all applicable laws and statutes.

**Question 2:** The office of Fossil Energy includes the Division of Minerals Sustainability, which supports research, development, and demonstration projects to increase the domestic production and processing of critical minerals.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Kyle Haustveit**

What do you see as the Fossil Energy Office's role for securing critical minerals, and if confirmed, will you ensure the Division of Minerals Sustainability continues to support critical minerals research?

Response: If confirmed, I will support continued focus on research that strengthens U.S. resource security, reduces reliance of foreign supply chains and aligns with our broader energy and economic goals.