

**TESTIMONY OF MELISSA F. BURNISON, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY,  
CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell and members of the committee, and to the professional staff of the committee and staff in your individual offices, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Assistant Secretary of Energy for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs. I also want to thank Secretary Perry for the trust he has placed in me by recommending me to the President. I am humbled and excited for this opportunity to serve.

For those of you whom I have had the opportunity to meet with prior to this hearing, thank you for providing your counsel and expectations of this role and of the Department. I look forward to continuing those conversations with everyone on the committee and working closely with you and your staff throughout my tenure should I be confirmed.

I also want to thank my husband, Scott, for his support and understanding. He is indeed my rock. He is here today with our family. Scott and I are blessed with three very active little girls who fill every moment of our lives and they would certainly not be happy if I did not recognize them as well – Madam Chairman with your approval, I'd like to introduce Catherine, Gudrun and Elizabeth as well as Scott to the committee.

Chairman Murkowski and members of the committee, as I seek your approval for appointment to this office, I would like to share a few thoughts about my experiences that I believe qualify me for this position.

I have spent more than 15 years working in policy positions that involved the Department of Energy (DOE) in some capacity. Most of that experience came from Capitol Hill as a congressional staff person working in the energy policy arena, and thanks to that experience, I have the utmost respect for the work, traditions and individuals who make up this body. I have also spent two years working inside the Department of Energy. That service enabled me to witness how dedicated the men and women are who support the Department's critical missions as public servants. Should I be confirmed, I will draw upon my previous experience on the Hill, in the Department and in the private sector to ensure interactions with the Department's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs are guided by respect, integrity and clear communication.

While on the Hill, I spent seven years working for Congressman Zach Wamp from Tennessee who passionately represented Oak Ridge National Lab, the Y-12 National Security Complex, DOE's Environmental Management cleanup projects, the Tennessee Valley Authority and numerous other DOE activities. Tennessee is unique in that it plays a role in most of DOE's missions and was home to the Manhattan Project, Clinton Engineer Works which was established even before the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission – today's DOE. It was in working with the people and this site at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains that I gained an immense appreciation for the accomplishments of the

greatest generation. It was those men and women whose determination and sacrifices built the DOE complex that exists today and continues to make our country great. Having learned the history of the DOE communities and then seeing first-hand the incredible developments in science, nuclear technology and supercomputing at the sites makes me proud to have an opportunity once again to serve, should I be confirmed.

With regard to the functions of the office I seek, I commit to being a responsive, timely and open communicator. We will be as prompt as possible in keeping you apprised of Departmental activities and be attentive to your priorities. I also understand the importance of considering the impact of Federal actions upon labs, sites and surrounding communities. I appreciate that each local government, State and tribe has a unique relationship with its site. Communicating frequently with and listening to the concerns and recommendations of local leaders and governments to build trusting relationships not only serves the Department but you as well. I pledge to do my best to live up to the standards expected of those who hold public office.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to your questions.