

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES F. REILLY, II, PHD  
NOMINEE FOR  
DIRECTOR, U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BEFORE THE SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
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Thank you Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and the distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you, also, Senator Gardner for your gracious introduction and your service to our great home State of Colorado and the Nation.

It is certainly a privilege and my honor to be here before you this morning as President Trump's nominee to serve as the 17<sup>th</sup> Director of the U.S. Geological Survey. Further, I wouldn't be here today without Secretary Zinke's faith in my capabilities and support for my nomination. I owe them both a great deal of thanks.

I'm fortunate to have with me today my beautiful wife, Allison, a teacher by profession, my three oldest children, Trey who is an employee of NASA at Kennedy Space Center working on projects to take us back to the Moon and on to Mars, Jason and his wife Rebekah both of whom work as first responders for cities in Central Texas, and Mary Caitlin who is a resident of DC and works as a contractor in support of programs in the Department of Homeland Security. As you can see, public service has become somewhat of a family tradition and I am immensely proud of them. Also joining us today is JoAnn Reilly, mother of Trey, Jason, and Caitlin who works for the Department of Defense here in DC. Close friends Dave Waldrup, who I've known for almost 50 years, Alvin Drew, an astronaut colleague and close friend of many years, and Janet Edwards, wife of Joe Edwards, another astronaut colleague, classmate, and close friends. Not present today are my two youngest children, Jacob Luke and Anna Mary Rose, ages 4 and 2.

As you know, the U.S. Geological Survey was created by the Organic Act of 1879, which provided for the "classification of the public lands and examination of the geological structure, mineral resources, and products of the national domain." Since its founding, the USGS has maintained a proud tradition as the premier earth science agency delivering unbiased, independent scientific data and findings on critical questions before the Nation to the decision makers in the civil, government, and national defense sectors. As such, the reputation enjoyed by the USGS is matched only by NASA as being highly regarded by the citizens of our great country. Just like NASA, USGS attracts our nation's best and brightest students who will be among the future decision-makers in our society.

My history with the USGS began in the early 1970s when I started my educational path to becoming a geologist. I was, and remain, a consumer of the maps generated by the Bureau but

also at a scientific conference in 1976 came upon a display of USGS literature which contained a publication on the first results of the Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS), which ultimately became the LANDSAT Program. I was fascinated in seeing imagery of the geology and ecology of our planet at scales that were impossible to achieve previously. I was so enamored with the capabilities of the ERTS mission that I camped out at the table at the end of the conference to lay claim to that volume. I still have it to this day and it serves as a reminder of how revolutionary the ability to see things in new ways can be in science. The LANDSAT Program is now looking to launch LANDSAT 9 and considering the concepts of what the LANDSAT 10 mission architecture might look like. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the teams on that development.

Today the USGS core mission areas are focused within Energy and Minerals Resources and Environmental Health Programs, Ecosystems Programs, Land Resources, Natural Hazards, Water Resources, and Core Science Systems. In my career I have been fortunate to have worked or lived in regions where most of these mission areas are critical. As Senator Gardner and many other Senators on this panel will attest, western water in our home states is of great regulatory interest as a critical resource. My dissertation built on the understanding and protection of unique marine ecosystems and how they interrelate with the geology of the continental slope. I have explored for and produced critical minerals required to build the technologies to drive our economic future, experienced natural cataclysmic effects where information from LANDSAT and 3DEP, as examples, could mitigate impacts, and have spent almost three decades working in systems engineering for space systems applications. I've also been lucky enough to be counted with Alvin, Joe, Neal, Buzz, and all the other explorers who have gone to the frontiers of our knowledge and even pushed it just a little further.

Managing an organization as large and diverse as the USGS I expect can be a challenge. I have found, however, in my management roles in the private, academic, government and military sectors, that highly competent, motivated people require little direct supervision from the top, and I expect that would be the case at the USGS. I've found a simple concept utilized by Col. Terry Wilcutt, the commander of my first mission, works very well both in smaller organizations with small teams and in larger organizations where the teams might consist of tens to hundreds of people. After our flight I looked at how he managed the team required to meet our mission objectives and, while he never referred to it in this way, he used Three Question Management. In short, he defined roles and expectations then asked the following three questions to track progress: do you have a plan, is it working, and are you ahead or behind? He depended on our integrity to get the job done, trusted us to communicate problems or issues, and provided a clear communications and planning pathway, both vertically between the teams and management, and across organizations required to meet our mission plans. I see the primary roles of the Director as being very similar to Terry's with the added responsibility of planning and executing the budget. If confirmed for this position, I would strive to follow these principles.

Finally, it has been my experience that good science is absolutely critical to the development of good policy. USGS is known for the quality and integrity of the scientific work carried out by the

approximately 8000 personnel supporting the Bureau. If confirmed this will be one of my utmost priorities in supporting the efforts of our people to deliver the critical science to our Nation.

I thank you sincerely for the opportunity. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with each of you and your offices to help serve the American people. I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.