

David Turk Nomination Hearing
Thursday, March 4, 2021

Chairman Manchin's Opening Statement

- We meet today to consider the nomination of David M. Turk to be the Deputy Secretary of Energy.
- Welcome to the Committee, Mr. Turk. Thank you for being here this morning and for your willingness to serve in this important position.
- Energy is essential to all of us. We depend on it every minute of every day, to heat our homes and offices, to power our factories, to light the darkness, cook our food, fuel our cars, power our cellphones and computers.
- It is the indispensable fabric of our civilization.
- It is the Department of Energy's job to see that the people of this country have "an adequate and reliable supply of energy at the lowest reasonable cost."
- The Department has many other responsibilities—maintaining our nuclear deterrence, cleaning up Hanford and the Cold War nuclear weapons sites, maintaining our scientific and technological prowess through the national laboratories.

- But its primary mission, its reason for being, is to “promote the general welfare by assuring coordinated and effective administration of Federal energy policy and programs.”
- Next to the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary bears the principal responsibility for this task.
- The Deputy Secretary is the second-highest ranking officer in the Department and the Department’s chief operating officer.
- The Deputy must be prepared to act for the Secretary and perform all of the Secretary’s functions and duties in the Secretary’s absence and to manage the Department’s wide-ranging mission and budget of over \$35 billion.
- I am convinced that Mr. Turk is up to the job.
- He knows energy issues. He has spent the last 4 years in senior positions at the International Energy Agency—and the past 14 months as the Agency’s Deputy Executive Director.
- The Executive Director of the IEA is Dr. Fatih Birol, who is well known to this Committee and highly regarded by Members on both sides of the aisle. Mr. Turk has been Dr. Birol’s deputy.

- He knows the Department of Energy. Before joining the IEA, he spent two years as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Climate and Technology at the Department of Energy.
- Before that he was a Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Department of State and a Special Assistant to the President at the National Security Council.
- And he knows Congress. He got his start working for Senator Conrad, who we will hear from in a moment, then served as counsel to then-Senator Biden on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and later as staff director for the House Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs.
- He has spent the past 20 years serving in important jobs that have given him the technical knowledge and the practical experience in energy, national security, and management that he will need to help Secretary Granholm lead the Department of Energy.
- I think he is supremely well qualified and I heartily support his nomination.