

Statement of Neil Chatterjee
Nominee to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Before the
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
May 25, 2017

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, Members of the Committee: thank you for this opportunity. It's my distinct privilege to come before you today as a nominee to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. If confirmed, I will serve to the best of my ability, always seeking what is right for our country and for the American people.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to President Trump for presenting me the opportunity to serve my nation in this manner, and to Chairman Murkowski for her support, her encouragement, and her efforts in scheduling this hearing without delay.

I'd also like to thank Leader McConnell for being here with us and introducing me today. Words cannot convey how grateful and humbled I am by this opportunity. Serving as the Leader's energy policy advisor has truly been the honor of a lifetime, and, put simply, I would not be where I am today without him entrusting me with this great responsibility all these years.

Growing up in Lexington, Kentucky, I remember seeing the work Senator McConnell did on behalf of the Commonwealth and I dreamed of eventually serving under him in the Senate. Of course back then, I couldn't have known that I'd actually achieve that goal, much less that I'd be sitting before this distinguished Committee as a nominee for Commissioner, with the Leader speaking on my behalf.

The experience I've gained while working for Leader McConnell these past eight years extends well beyond the ins-and-outs of energy policy — though of course that's a significant part of why I'm here today. But of equal importance, are the many principles — about one's temperament, about discipline, about judgment and about patience — that the Leader has taught me by example. Each of these lessons has had a profound impact on who I am, and on who I will continue striving to be if confirmed to this new role serving our country.

There are several others I'd like to recognize, without whom none of this would even be possible. I am joined today by my amazing wife Rebecca, my son Bo, my son Anderson, and my daughter Lane. Rebecca and I have been together since high school, and I have no doubt that it's because of her love and support — at every step of the way — that I am sitting before you now. I am also proud to be joined by my parents, Drs. Sunil and Malaya Chatterjee, as well as my sister Sumana. My family has sacrificed a great deal to pave the way for me to reach this moment, and I know I will never be able to thank them enough for their strength, for their wisdom, and for their dedication. But today, I'd like to try.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is an independent agency responsible for ensuring just and reasonable wholesale rates while maintaining reliability. Its broad jurisdiction covers a wide array of energy matters, and it plays an increasingly critical role in the development and maintenance of our nation's energy infrastructure. As the Members of this Committee know well, this is a crucial time for the Commission and for America's energy future.

Having had a front row seat to the legislative process over the last eight years, I've had the distinct privilege of working to address many matters that impact the entire country, from the Chairman's home state of Alaska to the

Commonwealth of Kentucky and just about everywhere in between. I've also had the opportunity to work with, I believe, nearly every Senator on this Committee at some point in time. Because of my experience developing sound policy with Members of different backgrounds and ideologies, I believe I can bring a much-needed perspective to the Commission should I be granted the opportunity.

As my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle can attest, I have always endeavored to be pragmatic, fair, and transparent in my interactions. In an effort to gain majority support on key legislative priorities, I have proven my commitment to hearing all sides of an issue and looking for common ground. It is only then, I believe, that we can forge lasting and meaningful solutions to the critical challenges facing our nation. To cite some examples from my time in the Senate: I have worked with Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell on major bipartisan energy legislation, with Senators Portman and Shaheen on energy efficiency solutions, with Senator Stabenow on farm bills and on critical resources for the crisis in Flint, and with Senators Barrasso, Daines and Gardner on energy production issues, just to name a few.

I hope to be able to bring the same equitable, level-headed approach that I've taken here in the Senate with me to the Commission so that we can move our country forward on the numerous big issues before us.

Former Commission Chairman Joe Kelliher often reminded us that FERC speaks loudest when it speaks with one voice. I couldn't agree more. If confirmed, I feel confident that my straightforward approach and reputation as a consensus builder can help foster that environment in the years to come.

With that, I'd like to once again thank the Members of the distinguished Committee for allowing me the opportunity to be here today. At this time, I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

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