

STATEMENT OF JOE GARCIA, NOMINEE FOR DIRECTOR OF
THE OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC IMPACT

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the Committee.

My name is Joe Garcia. It is a privilege to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee for the position of Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact at the Department of Energy.

It is an honor to be asked by President Obama to serve, particularly at this transformational time in our country's history -- a time when we need to call on all Americans, and all communities, to help our economy not only recover, but prosper. The American innovative spirit, coupled with the opportunity to succeed through hard work, is the very essence of the American dream that brought my parents to America from communist Cuba years ago. This same spirit will help small businesses and disadvantaged communities create the jobs of tomorrow.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with Secretary Chu to carry out the statutory duties of the Office of Minority Economic Impact and to collaborate with his team to advance the energy priorities that the President has outlined for our nation.

The Office of Minority Economic Impact was created to advise the Secretary of Energy on the impact of the Department's policies, regulations, legislation, and related activities on minority communities, businesses and educational institutions. This Office has the important responsibility of ensuring that minorities participate fully and actively in the programs of the Department of Energy.

I commit to you today that, if I am confirmed, I will work aggressively to carry out these responsibilities. By doing so, I believe I will advance the Department's goals across its many missions, because success will require fully tapping the talents of all of our people. That is why I am committed to the idea of making the Department of Energy as the model agency for addressing issues of diversity and for providing support and assistance to small and disadvantaged businesses and minority educational institutions. I believe that the United States cannot afford to continue to underutilize small and disadvantaged businesses, or continue the under-representation of minorities in the technical and scientific workforce and industries.

President Obama has charged the Department of Energy with the important task of implementing significant programs under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. I will make it a priority to ensure that small and disadvantaged businesses,

including those owned by women, minorities, and veterans, as well as minority educational institutions are included in these important programs.

Small businesses must play a critical role in creating new energy technologies. Their ability to innovate remains unsurpassed, yet they need the support of the Administration to remain in the global forefront of effective energy development strategies. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses represent 99 percent of all employers in the country. If I am confirmed for this position, I will ensure that DOE becomes a leader in utilizing small businesses to create the competitive jobs of tomorrow.

My experiences as a public servant and consumer advocate in the utility industry have formed my belief that hard work is paramount to personal success. I will apply this same level of commitment to service and advocacy towards small businesses and disadvantaged communities. I will dedicate myself to be the Department's voice in support of those with innovative ideas and those willing to work hard to ensure that they all can participate in advanced energy opportunities.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my sincere gratitude to President Obama for nominating me to this position. I want to assure this Committee that I will work with the Secretary of Energy, with this Committee and the Congress to carry out the duties as Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact at the Department of Energy.

Thank you, and I will be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.