

# HEARING ON TOMMY BEAUDREAU'S NOMINATION TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Thursday, April 29, 2021

## *Chairman Senator Joe Manchin's Opening Statement*

- Welcome to the Committee, Mr. Beaudreau. Thank you for being here this morning and for your willingness to serve in this important position. And thank you to your family for joining you here today.
- The Department of the Interior has a bipolar mission in a highly polarized political environment.
- On the one hand, the Department is charged with preserving and protecting our national parks and public lands.
- It is the guardian of our iconic landscapes and our most sacred historical sites.
- It is the steward of our natural resources and must take into account not only our present needs, but the needs of generations to come.
- On the other hand, the Department of the Interior is called upon to provide a large part of the energy and mineral

resources that we need to power the nation.

- The lands and waters managed by the Department produce nearly 20 percent of the nation's energy, including—
  - 43 percent of our coal;
  - 24 percent of our oil;
  - 2 percent of our natural gas;
  - half of our geothermal energy; and
  - much of our wind, solar, and hydropower.
- The lands and waters managed by the Department—
  - generate \$12 billion a year for the Federal Treasury;
  - support 1.8 million jobs, and
  - contribute an estimated \$315 billion to our economy.
- The Department does not have the luxury to choose one mission over the other; it must fulfill both, and find the right balance between the two.
- As the Secretary's top lieutenant, the Deputy Secretary of the Interior plays a major role in striking that balance and keeping the Department on course.
- I am not telling Mr. Beaudreau anything he does not already know.
- He learned the importance of responsible resource development at an early age from his father, who worked in

the Prudhoe Bay oil fields on the North Slope of Alaska.

- At the same time, he learned the value of the Great American Outdoors and the importance of preserving and protecting the environment growing up hunting, fishing, hiking, and skiing in the Alaskan wilderness.
- He brought those experiences and values with him to the Department of the Interior in 2010, when our former colleague, Ken Salazar called on him to help reform the offshore drilling program after the tragic Deepwater Horizon accident in the Gulf of Mexico.
- As the first Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, he learned firsthand the importance of not only of developing energy resources, but developing them wisely, safely, and with careful regard for the environment.
- He saw what happened when the Department cut corners, and he played a major role in reforming the Department's regulatory program so energy production could resume in the Gulf more safely than before.
- Perhaps one measure of the outstanding job Mr. Beaudreau did as head of the offshore oil program is the fact that Secretary Salazar soon put him in charge of onshore leasing as well as Acting Assistant Secretary of Land and Minerals

Management, and Secretary Jewell ultimately made him her chief of staff, with oversight over the Department's broad portfolio.

- On that note, without objection, I will enter into the record former Secretary Jewell's letter to the Committee endorsing Mr. Beaudreau for "his intellect, capacity to listen to multiple points of view, deep understanding of the law, respect for elected officials and constitutional processes, and pragmatic knowledge of how to get things done."
- Like former Secretary Jewell, I am very pleased that the President has nominated Mr. Beaudreau to be the Deputy Secretary of the Interior.
- I think he is extremely well qualified for this important position, and I strongly support his nomination.