



**Opening Statement
Senator Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.)
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Hearing on DOE Nominees
June 16, 2015**

“Thank you, Chairman Murkowski, for calling this hearing and for having these qualified nominees before us today.

“Dr. Regalbuto has been nominated to lead the department’s Office of Environmental Management. The office is responsible for cleaning up the environmental contamination that resulted from five decades of nuclear weapons production. This is an extremely critical assignment, not only for the importance of cleaning up these sites, but for the complexity of the undertaking, and the sheer scale of the problem. The Office of Environmental Management accounts for about one-fifth of the department’s nearly \$30 billion annual budget. The program is especially important to the state of Washington, which is home to the Hanford site, which is the largest, most complex and most expensive of all of the department’s cleanup sites.

“Dr. Regalbuto is extremely qualified for this position. She holds a doctorate in chemical engineering. And for the past 15 years, she has held increasingly senior positions at the Argonne National Laboratory and within the Department of Energy’s Office of Nuclear Energy and Office of Environmental Management. For the past year, she has been the Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. So, I will have some very important questions for you today about both tank vapors and our process moving forward and the 324 building on the site. And I look forward to hearing your responses on that.

“I also want to welcome Mr. Elkind, who has been nominated to lead the department’s Office of International Affairs. This, too, is an extremely important position. It is responsible for managing the department’s international energy policy and international cooperation in energy, science and technology. So I look forward to asking him questions as well.

“So thank you, Madam Chair, for these important nomination hearings.”

###