

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF INÉS R. TRIAY
NOMINEE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
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Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Senator Murkowski, members of the Committee.

It is a great honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the United States Department of Energy. I thank Secretary Chu and President Obama for their support and confidence in recommending and nominating me. I also thank the Committee for considering my nomination. I would like to introduce my husband of 24 years, Dr. John Hall, and his parents Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Hall, who are with me here today.

In 1961, when my parents fled Cuba's Communist regime and went into exile with a three-year-old daughter and nothing but their dreams for a better life and their love for freedom, it would have been impossible to believe that their daughter would ever be nominated by the President of the United States to serve this great country. My parents and I are proud to be naturalized citizens of the United States of America and are humbled by the honor of my being here today. The pride that we feel has only served to deepen the great love that we have for this country and the admiration and respect that we have for the American people.

That a girl born in Cuba was welcomed in Puerto Rico; encouraged to study math and science; received a Ph.D. in Chemistry at the University of Miami in Florida; was recruited by Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and mentored by giants in the field of nuclear science; was asked to direct the beginning of the operational phase of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico, the only nuclear waste repository of its kind in the world; was promoted to the top career position in the Department of Energy's Environmental Management program, the most complex nuclear cleanup in the world; and is now being recommended by a Nobel laureate, Secretary Chu, and nominated by President Obama to direct that cleanup is something that only happens in the United States of America.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed to this position, I will work closely with you and with all of Congress to address the many local, state, regional and national issues that we face within the Environmental Management program.

As I address you today, I want to affirm my commitment to safety – the safety of our workers, the safety of the public, the safety of our site communities and our stakeholders and the safety of our environment. Safe operations and cleanup is our ever present and ultimate goal.

I come before you today with a unique understanding of the complexity and magnitude of the task that we face in the Environmental Management program. I have first-hand experience in every aspect of environmental management and I have dedicated my life to the successful cleanup of the environmental legacy of the Cold War.

While we have made significant progress in the Environmental Management program, I recognize the enormity of the remaining effort and the technical challenges that we face. I am eager to use science and technology, robust project management, and our intergovernmental partnerships to reduce the cost and schedule of the remaining program.

As the Committee is aware, the Environmental Management program has come under considerable criticism over the years in the execution of its projects. We must strengthen our project management capability and improve the skill set of our project management teams. Under my leadership as Acting Assistant Secretary, aggressive efforts are underway to transform the Environmental Management program into a “best-in-class” project management organization. We are implementing processes and procedures for quality assurance and for identifying and managing project risks. I commit to you that if I am confirmed, I will work tirelessly to make these efforts successful and to continue to improve the Environmental Management program.

I would like to thank Congress for including \$6 billion in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the Environmental Management program. This funding will save and create jobs quickly for shovel-ready work that is essential to our strategic objective to reduce the footprint of the legacy cleanup complex. Footprint reduction can be accomplished by focusing cleanup activities on decontamination and demolition of excess contaminated facilities, soil and groundwater remediation, and solid waste disposition, all of which have proven technologies and an established regulatory framework. In addition to creating jobs, the Recovery Act funding will accelerate protection of human health and the environment at these sites. I recognize that disciplined management and oversight of these funds will be critical to our success. I pledge to work with other offices in the Energy Department and the Congress to ensure that we meet this challenge.

I would like to end my testimony by reaffirming my commitment to the safety of our staff and contractors, to the safety of the communities and stakeholders at our sites and to the protection of our environment. I commit to informing and consulting with Congress, the tribal nations, the States, our regulators, our stakeholders and individual concerned citizens.

I have a long history of demanding excellence from my team. Nothing less than performance that results in delivering our projects on time and within cost will be acceptable from the Environmental Management federal team and our contractors. Should I be confirmed, I will use every available tool to ensure the successful performance of the Environmental Management mission, relentless focus on performance, utilization of science and technology, hard work, staff professionalism and competency, transparency, and accountability. These would be the cornerstones of my tenure if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I would be honored to serve this country that I so deeply love. As a Latina executive and scientist, I embrace the responsibility of excelling, and, if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to meet your highest expectations. It is an honor to testify before you today. I would be pleased to answer your questions.