

Testimony of Tristan Abbey
Nominee for the Position of Administrator of the Energy Information Administration
at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 30, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of this Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today. I am grateful to President Trump for the nomination to serve as Administrator of the Energy Information Administration and to Energy Secretary Chris Wright for his confidence in me to serve in this position.

My wife Jenn is in attendance. It was during my first tour here on the Committee's staff that I met her, and during the second that we were married. Our two children are a bit young for this event, but in due time, I hope they watch the video. These three ladies—Jenn, Evelyn, and Josephine—bring more joyful light into my life than I ever could have imagined.

When I was a kid, my parents led my brother Ian and me on a couple great adventures to the Middle East. Abqaiq leaves a lasting impression on a kindergartener and a teenager doesn't forget the Suez Canal. I can never thank my dad and my mom enough for showing us the world in all its richness. Times weren't always easy, but I hope they don't regret it—because I never will.

I could never have predicted the path of my career, one possible only here in the United States. After a brief stint in finance, I arrived here on Committee staff in 2012. Eager to learn, I worked on the economics of basically all things energy, even dabbling in the lands portfolio, the complexity of which makes the electric grid look like a game of tic-tac-toe. In many ways I grew up here on the Committee staff.

In 2017, I was honored to join the first Trump administration, initially on the “beach head” team at the Department of Energy and later the National Security Council and National Economic Council staff. Following my time at the White House Complex, I returned here to the Committee staff, where I worked on Washington's response to the COVID-19 pandemic—when the oil price fell below zero.

Serving the American people in various roles within the federal government has been the honor of my life. Each of these public sector opportunities was a blessing. None of this work could have been accomplished without frequent and persistent engagement with the EIA.

Some will say that the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration should not have this deep level of exposure to the policy-making world. On the contrary: leadership that

understands the demands of policymaking and the needs of policymakers is exactly what the EIA requires at this critical time.

If confirmed as Administrator, I would have three priorities. First, as a member of the President's team, I would fulfill my statutory role of providing objective energy data and analysis to the American people and to policymakers. Having served inside the government, at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, and outside, as a think-tanker and private sector consultant, I have seen EIA from a wide variety of perspectives. The reputation that the agency has built is one I pledge to steward carefully, if I am confirmed.

Second, EIA is in urgent need of revitalization. It is still the world's premier energy data agency, but this did not happen overnight. Our Nation invested billions of dollars and nearly fifty years to make it so. If confirmed, I would ensure that this investment continues to pay off. In my view, EIA must clear the decks of unfinished projects, recruit and retain the best talent, develop the most powerful analytical capabilities, and modernize its information systems.

Finally, I believe that existing Congressional mandates for EIA should be executed upon. Two stand out in particular. One is the expansion of global energy data collection and analysis. The other is the establishment of a critical minerals outlook. I know that this Committee is particularly interested in both issues and I believe achieving these two goals alone would go a long way to placing the EIA on sound footing for a generation.

Thank you for your time—and thanks once again to President Trump and Secretary Wright for their confidence. I look forward to your questions.