

**OPENING STATEMENT
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**NOMINATION HEARING
UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, Members of the Committee, and staff: thank for the opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response at the Department of Energy (CESER).

It is an honor to be before this Committee and I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Perry for displaying their confidence in me by nominating me to this important position. If I have the distinct honor of being confirmed by this Committee and the United States Senate, I look forward to working with each of you and your respective staffs to address the threats on our energy infrastructure both natural and man-made and implementing the responsibilities associated with my role at the Department in this new office. The energy and communications sectors are commonly recognized as the lifelines for all other critical infrastructure. It is only with the appropriate degree of preparedness and timely response to threats to our energy systems that we will reduce risks and provide needed resiliency of the electric grid for the safety and the well-being of the American people.

I would like to introduce my family to the Committee. With me today are my husband of thirty-five years, Randy, and my two older sisters, Kathleen Schoonover and Karla Peard, who have supported me through all aspects of my life. I like to recognize my two children, Jacob and Samantha, who could not be here but have helped me focus on what are the important things in life and my parents who are no longer with us but, if not for their love and support through my life, I would not be here today especially my father who too dedicated his career to public service and who proudly served in our armed forces and achieved rank of Captain.

In 1978 while in college, I began my career as a GS-2 with the National Park Service and achieved the rank of Senior Executive Service as the Chief Information Officer at the Department of Energy where I was responsible for the management and successful operation of the Information Technology (IT) program. During my time as the CIO for the Department of Energy, I also served as the Vice-Chairperson of the Federal Chief Information Council. In that inter-agency post, I coordinated the Council's efforts in developing Federal IT programs and improving agency information resource practices.

In 2003, I was Presidential appointed to the Administrator for E-Government and IT at the Office of Management and Budget, now commonly referred to as the Chief Information Officer for the Federal Government. In that role, I was responsible for overseeing the implementation of IT programs, including cybersecurity programs, throughout the Federal government including advising the Director of OMB on the performance of IT investments, overseeing the development of enterprise architectures within and across the federal agencies and overseeing the usage of E-Government Funds to support partnerships and innovation.

As part of my career, I held positions at multiple departments and agencies including the Department of Justice where I led my team to successfully navigate a major hacking incident by bringing to bear

managerial, technical and policy tools from across the Department to address the threat in a timely manner. The lessons I learned from that experience influenced my approach and appreciation for the significance and of providing redundancy and resiliency for service delivery.

Upon my first retirement from Federal service, I focused most intensely upon cybersecurity and the related workforce issues; given the critical need that exists for all sectors of our nation, both public and private. Fulfilling those desires to continue contributing to the betterment of our society, I developed and lead the US Cyber Challenge (USCC), which is a nationwide talent search and skills development program within the Center for Internet Security. During my time at the USCC, the program has held an annual on-line qualifying competition for the four summer camps we have conducted in partnership with universities, community colleges and high schools and has been instrumental in identifying over 7,000 individuals with the goal of assisting 10,000 of America's best and brightest to fill the ranks of cyber security professionals and serve our nation.

In conjunction with my efforts at the US Cyber Challenge, I also co-chaired a two-year effort on behalf of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)'s cyber policy taskforce to provide cybersecurity recommendations for the Administration that sought to foster a secure and stable digital environment that supported our economic growth while ensuring our personal freedoms and national security.

With increasing cyber threats to our nation's critical infrastructure, the newly formed office (CESER) appropriately elevates the Department's focus on energy infrastructure protection and supports the expanded national security responsibilities assigned to the Department. It is the intention that this office will enable a more coordinated preparedness and response to cyber and physical threats and natural disasters. The dedicated and focused attention on these responsibilities will provide greater visibility, accountability and flexibility to protect our Nation's critical energy infrastructure and support our private industry partners. If confirmed, I will lead the Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response by leveraging my cybersecurity and national security experience to reduce risk to our nation's energy infrastructure by ensuring redundancy and resiliency to our energy systems.

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell and Members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee as an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Energy. I look forward to answering your questions as you consider my nomination.