

# NOMINATIONS HEARING

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

## Chairman Manchin's Opening Statement

- The Committee will come to order.
- We meet today to consider three pending nominations.
- The three nominees are:
  - Ms. Laura Daniel-Davis to be the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management;
  - Ms. Maria Robinson to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy overseeing the Office of Electricity; and
  - Dr. Joseph DeCarolis to be the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration.
- All three of the nominees were nominated for these same positions last year, but the Senate did not take final action on them before the end of the session.
- Thus, all three of their nominations were returned to the President at the end of the first session under the Standing Rules of the Senate.
- All three were renominated by the President and are now back before us.

- Ms. Daniel-Davis has been here before.
- The Committee held a hearing on her nomination last September.
- Although the Committee usually foregoes a second hearing in cases like this, we have held second hearings before when Members request them.
- We very much appreciate your willingness to return, Ms. Daniel-Davis, and to answer any additional questions Members may have.
- Unfortunately, the Committee was unable to schedule a hearing on Ms. Robinson and Dr. DeCarolus's nominations last fall, so this is their first hearing.
- We welcome all three nominees and thank each of them for being here this morning and their willingness to serve in these important positions.
- Welcome, too, to each of your family members. Thank you all for being here as well.

***Ms. Laura Daniel-Davis***

- As I said, Ms. Daniel-Davis has been through this before.
- It is no reflection on her personally that she has been called back for a second hearing.

- It is, I believe, I reflection on the importance of the office to which she has been nominated, the breadth of her portfolio, and the interest Members of this Committee have in the policies that her office oversees.
- The Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management oversees four of the great bureau and offices of the Department of the Interior:
  - The Bureau of Land Management; ○ The Office of Surface Mining;
  - The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; and
  - The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.
- Members of the Committee may disagree with each other and with the Administration over the land and minerals management policies pursued by this Administration—as we have with prior Administrations.
- But no one should doubt Ms. Daniel-Davis’s knowledge and experience or her commitment to public service.
- She served as the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of the Interior during the Clinton Administration, and as Chief

of Staff to Secretary Salazar and Secretary Jewell during the Obama Administration.

- She has been serving as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management for the past year.
- She had my support last year and she still has it.

***Ms. Maria Robinson***

- Our next nominee is Maria Robinson, who has been nominated to head the Department of Energy's Office of Electricity.
- The Office of Electricity was established in 2005 to help modernize the electric grid, enhance the grid's security and reliability, and to facilitate recovery from grid disruptions.
- The Assistant Secretary for Electricity is responsible for overseeing the Department's research and development activities aimed at modernizing and strengthening the electric grid, and for overseeing the four power marketing administrations.
- Ms. Robinson is currently a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, where she has been a leader on clean energy issues.

- Before being elected to the Massachusetts Legislature, Ms. Robinson spent ten years working on wholesale electricity market regulatory issues and energy efficiency and renewable energy issues in the private sector.
- I look forward to hearing about the views, experience, and perspective she would bring to the Office of Electricity.

### *Dr. DeCarolis*

- Our final nominee is Dr. Joseph DeCarolis, who has been nominated to be the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration.
- EIA collects, analyzes, and publishes the energy data that the Department of Energy, other federal agencies, and Congress depend on to shape the nation's energy policy.
- The Administrator is responsible for collecting and analyzing energy information and forecasting future trends, but also preserving EIA's political independence and its professional integrity.
- Dr. DeCarolis has been a professor at North Carolina State University for the past 14 years, where he has focused on developing and applying energy system models.
- I want to thank all three for being with us this morning and for their willingness to accept these important positions.

- At this point, I will recognize Senator Murkowski, who is filling in for Senator Barrasso, for her opening statement.
- Senator Murkowski.