



**Opening Statement
Nominations Hearing for Dan Brouillette
Chairman Lisa Murkowski
November 14, 2019**

Good morning, everyone. The Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider the nomination of Dan Brouillette to be the Secretary of Energy. He currently is serving as the Deputy Secretary of Energy and I am certainly one who believes that you have done an excellent job as second-in-command to Secretary Perry.

So we welcome you back to the committee. It's good to have discussion with you last week. I want to thank you really want to thank you for all that you have done at the Department, for your willingness to serve to this point and for your willingness to step up in this new and higher capacity.

We've got our colleagues here this morning to introduce the Deputy Secretary – both Texas and Louisiana are well-represented. Mr. Deputy Secretary, you should feel very welcome by having these gentlemen next to you. So we will start with Senator Cassidy, up here at the dais followed by Senators Cruz and Kennedy to introduce the Deputy Secretary this morning. So Senator Cassidy, if you would like to proceed and we do have a full complement here this morning and a full house behind you. So hopefully, the introductions do not consume our full morning, but we certainly welcome all the good comments.

* * *

Thank you, Senator Kennedy. Mr. Deputy Secretary, I think it's fine to have two different states vying for your love and your attention. You clearly have left impressions. I was going to include that as part of my remarks. We won't claim him, but we will certainly adopt him. So gentlemen, both of you, thank you. We know that you have tight schedules here this morning, but thank you for joining us as part of the Committee and your welcoming introductions. I'm going to make some brief remarks turn to Senator Manchin, and then we will move to swearing you in Mr. Brouillette, and we will then hear your testimony, which will hopefully include more formal introductions of your family. We certainly welcome all of them. It truly is a testament to you and your wife to have them with you this morning is a real treat.

I, for one, am very glad that you are here before us as the President's nominee to be the Secretary of Energy. I think we've seen during your time as Deputy Secretary. You've really helped to create a solid agenda for the Department that's been focused on the science and the technology, you've brought us into the world of quantum and artificial intelligence. I think you've been very responsive to the committee you've been available to speak with members when you have been asked to do so. My sense is that you've made a good impression on just about everyone. So when it was indicated that Secretary Perry

was going to be stepping down you to me, were the obvious choice to replace Secretary Perry in what he refers to as the “coolest job” he’s ever had, and I think you share that enthusiasm for this important space.

I do appreciate your willingness to come to not only places like Alaska but to travel around to many of the states. Certainly, to see the opportunities that a state like Alaska has and see them first hand. The first trip that you took following your confirmation as Deputy Secretary was to join me up in Alaska we took him out to the Chena Renewable Energy Fair where he was able to see much of what you saw Senator Manchin, learn about the potential for low-temperature geothermal. No, no, no, we didn’t do that’s not called the blue lagoon. The geothermal hot springs there at Chena, but also great things like the lettuce grow tower which is further evidence that we can do more when it comes to food security. The Deputy Secretary and I share lettuce grow towers. I in my office and I understand you in your garage, so it all comes together, but you came back.

You came back this past August. We visited Kwigillingok and Kongiginak, small, very remote villages in Southwestern Alaska. You were in Anchorage at CITC’s Fab Lab. We got to get up on a pretty high looking out to the volcano that we were observing. So you have been on some pretty important, and I think impressive field trips in my state. So know that I am going to invite you back because there is an awful lot more to be seen.

So broadening my focus a little bit, and recognizing your role here should we confirm you as it expect we will to be at the helm of the Department of Energy. This an exciting time. This country is a leading energy producer as Senator Cruz has mentioned and really a disruptor of world markets. We are now sending oil and LNG around the world, we’re providing our friends and allies with energy while creating jobs and prosperity here at home. We are on the cutting edge of a number of exciting technologies like advanced nuclear energy, carbon capture, and energy storage.

And through the Department’s work, we have the opportunity to really push out the boundaries of scientific discovery and build on our status as a global leader in the field of energy. We look to all the promise that our national labs, our 17 National Labs provide, and the committed professionals that are there who really work in pursuit of these new discoveries really one of our nation’s biggest assets these national labs are. Our research capabilities continue to be the envy of the world, and our challenge now is to ensure that remains so.

It is no secret that the President’s budget request for the Department of Energy has fallen short of the expectations that we have articulated here on this Committee. Congress has rejected the administration’s funding levels each year, instead providing steady increases for widely supported programs like ARPA-E. So anticipating that you will be confirmed, I will ask that you continue to fight for sufficient funding for programs that pursue these technologies to make energy cleaner, more reliable, more efficient and certainly more affordable – because that’s what I think it’s going to take to sustain this energy dominance over the long-term.

So I’m going to turn now to my colleague Senator Manchin for his comments. We will have an opportunity to ask questions throughout the morning, and if members have additional questions after this first round, we will ask that they be submitted by the close of business today.

So, Senator Manchin, I turn to you.

###