

**Testimony of Jonathan Brightbill**  
**Nominee for General Counsel**  
**at the U.S. Department of Energy**  
**Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**May 14, 2025**

Good morning, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of the Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Energy. I am deeply grateful to President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright for this nomination, recognizing that, under our Constitution, your advice and consent are essential for me to assume this position of trust. I look forward to today's hearing and any further discussions that may be needed. I hope to earn your support.

I want to thank my family who have supported me and tolerated the long hours and frequent absences that my work has required over the years. Thank you foremost to my wife, Nicole, who manages to balance everything in our family, in addition to her own demanding professional obligations. I want to recognize my children, Tamsin (finishing her junior year of high school), Chip, a freshman, and Davis, our 5th grader. Every day, these three blessings from God remind me of the greatness and the promise of America and inspire me to do what I do.

One of the most unexpectedly difficult questions I received during this process was to identify the state from which I hail. Having lived in Virginia for almost 20 years now, and with my three children born and raised there, I responded with the Commonwealth of Virginia. I somewhat regret having done so, because I was born and raised in Lebanon County, PA and really consider myself — like Senator McCormick — a proud son of that other great Commonwealth. With me today is the Honorable David Chip Brightbill, my father, and my stepmother, the Honorable Donna Long Brightbill, whose own dedication to public service in Pennsylvania inspired me to that same call here today. With one Senator and one Judge already in the family, that left the only option open for me to maintain the Constitution's separation of powers was to pursue service in the executive branch. I also want to thank my mother, Carol, back home in Pennsylvania, though she could not be here today, as well as my brother Christian for coming down from Pittsburgh.

I ask for this Committee's support because I believe can help advance the Department of Energy's mission for the American people at this moment when there is a bipartisan consensus that the United States needs more energy to meet our challenges in the world.

My training to help address these challenges began at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, where I concentrated on public policy and management. My first public service was an Executive Policy Specialist for Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge at his Department of Environmental Protection. There, I traveled the state and learned so much about the energy industry so critical to the economy of that state and first cut my teeth on many public policy issues still impacting energy development in this country.

After graduating magna cum laude from Georgetown University Law Center, I clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit for the Hon. D. Brooks Smith. For my first 15 years, I practiced law here in D.C. at Kirkland & Ellis, before joining the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2017.

At the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD), I first had the privilege of working with Bill Cooper, Ted Garrish, and many fine members of the Energy Department's Office of General Counsel, effectively as outside counsel for the Department of Energy across a range of matters. DOJ was also my first opportunity to serve as a senior manager in government, where I helped lead ENRD's 425 lawyers and 600 employees, managing 6,500 active matters and a budget of \$150 million.

Over the last four years, I have been privileged to be a partner at Winston & Strawn, where my practice has continued to include many energy industry clients and matters.

If confirmed as General Counsel, it would be my privilege to assist President Trump and Secretary Wright in achieving their vision of American energy dominance. I would also look forward to working with this Committee and Congress, and other stakeholders, to undertake sound energy policy reforms to our laws, regulations, and programs, to advance the interests of the American people first, but ultimately through American greatness and leadership, to better all human lives.

Thank you all again for the honor to appear before you here today, and I look forward to your questions.