

**Chairman Joe Manchin's Opening Statement
Nominations Hearing
Tuesday, June 8, 2021**

- The Committee will come to order.
- We meet today to consider four pending nominations.
- The four nominees are:
 - Ms. Tracy Stone-Manning to be the Director of the Bureau of Land Management;
 - Ms. Shalanda Baker to be the Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact at the Department of Energy;
 - Mr. Samuel Walsh to be the General Counsel of the Department of Energy; and
 - Dr. Alexander Light to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for International Affairs.
- Welcome to all four nominees. Thank you for being here this morning and for your willingness to serve in these important positions. And welcome to each of your family members. Thank you, too, for being here today.
- In addition, we are fortunate to have Senator Tester join us this morning to introduce one of our nominees, Ms. Stone-

Manning. Welcome, Senator Tester, and thank you for coming.

- Before hearing from Senator Tester and our nominees, I will make a few remarks about each of the nominees and then turn to Senator Barrasso for his opening remarks.

Ms. Stone-Manning

- The job for which our first nominee, Ms. Stone-Manning, has been nominated is older than the Interior Department itself.
- Although the Bureau of Land Management as we now know it was created by President Truman in 1946, the Bureau traces its roots to the General Land Office, which Congress created over 200 years ago to manage our public lands.
- It is also a big job. The Bureau manages 245 million surface acres and another 700 million acres of subsurface.
- It manages hardrock minerals, coal, oil, and natural gas development on federal onshore lands.
- It grants rights-of-way for electric transmission lines and oil and gas pipelines across federal lands, permits grazing on public lands, and manages timber on federal forest lands in the Northwest.

- It is responsible for 28 national monuments, 23 national conservation areas, and 260 wilderness areas.
- Nearly 50 years ago, Congress established the policy that our public lands must be managed in a manner that will both meet the nation's needs for their natural resources and preserve their special environmental values.
- That is not an easy task. It requires the Director to balance competing and often conflicting demands.
- Ms. Stone-Manning has served in Senator Tester's office, as head of Montana's Department of Environmental Quality, as Governor Bullock's chief of staff, and at the National Wildlife Federation.

Ms. Baker

- Our next nominee is Shalanda Baker, who has been nominated to be the Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact.
- The office was established by Congress and named the Office Minority Economic Impact in 1978.
- The office's purpose is twofold. It advises the Secretary of Energy on the impact of energy policies on minority communities, and it ensures that minorities and minority businesses are afforded the opportunity to participate fully

in energy programs.

- Ms. Baker has devoted her professional life to studying and addressing the health, environmental, economic, and climate impacts on disadvantaged communities.

Mr. Walsh

- Our next nominee, Sam Walsh, has been nominated to be the Department of Energy's General Counsel.
- The General Counsel provides legal advice and counsel to the Secretary and, indeed, the entire Department.
- It is the General Counsel's job to give sound answers to the countless questions of law that the Department faces across the breadth of its missions.
- Mr. Walsh is no stranger to the General Counsel's Office.
- He served as a Senior Legal Advisor to the General Counsel for two years, as Associate General Counsel for two years, and as Deputy General Counsel for Energy Policy for two years.
- He has spent the past four and a half years practicing energy law.

Dr. Light

- Our fourth nominee is Andrew Light, who has been nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of Energy for

International Affairs.

- Energy markets have long been world markets.
- Congress recognized this when it created the Department of Energy nearly 45 years ago and gave the Department technical and policymaking roles in helping shape the nation's foreign policy on energy matters.
- Here again, these functions hold special importance today as we confront the global reality of climate change.
- We cannot, nor should we try, to solve the climate crisis on our own. It is not a national problem or a regional one, but a global crisis, and we must work with other nations to solve it.
- Dr. Light brings to the job valuable diplomatic experience as a senior advisor and counselor to our Special Envoy on Climate Change during the Obama Administration and as consultant on climate change at the World Resources Institute.
- At this point, I will recognize Senator Barrasso for his opening statement, before hearing from the nominees.