

**Testimony of Conner Prochaska**  
**Nominee for Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy**  
**at the U.S. Department of Energy**  
**Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**May 14, 2025**

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of the Committee: It is an honor and privilege to appear here today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) at the U.S. Department of Energy. I would like to thank President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright for the confidence and trust they have placed in me with this nomination.

Before I begin, I would like to recognize and introduce the most important people in my life: my family. Here with me today is my 4-year-old son Crawford and almost 2-year-old daughter Henley. They are the light of my life and our world spins around them, whether we like it or not. Also here today is the love of my life, my wife Kate, who is the most amazing wife, mother, and true-life partner I could ever imagine. Kate, I am in awe of your ability to balance a successful career and provide a loving home for our family, I love you and thank you. I would also like to thank and recognize my parents who have protected, provided and guided me throughout my life. Mom and Dad, I love you and the words "thank you" can never express the gratitude I have for the sacrifices you both made to raise myself and my three brothers, Frankie, Tate and Joey.

As an Eagle Scout from a patriotic family, I was instilled with a sense of service at a young age. That sense of service was further ingrained during my time at Texas A&M where the core values of Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Respect and Selfless Service are paramount – which I continue to strive for each day. My love of our country led me to be commissioned in the United States Navy where I saw first-hand portions of the world who do not have the type of reliable energy we have in the United States. Also, in the Navy I was first acquainted with the DOE's Nuclear Weapons program as a Counter-Weapons of Mass Destruction Intelligence Officer.

Following law school, I was honored to serve in President Trump's first term as ARPA-E's Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor ushering in many of the programs and projects that exist today, including the first nuclear technology projects. After my time at ARPA-E, I was privileged to be selected as DOE's first Chief Commercialization Officer and the Director of the Office of Technology Transitions. In this role, I worked closely with this Committee and staff as I focused on ushering DOE technology out of labs and into the daily lives of Americans – maximizing their impact from Augusta to Albuquerque to Anchorage. Following my time at DOE, I continued my career in emerging technologies as I helped co-found a quantum technology start-up which was spun out of CalTech.

If confirmed, it will be a true honor to lead the talented, innovative, and dedicated team at ARPA-E. When I left ARPA-E to become the Department's Chief Commercialization Officer, I told the staff that the fact that my name was associated with theirs and the organization was one of the proudest accomplishments of my professional career and I feel the same today.

As members of this Committee and staff are well aware, energy and critical technologies are at an inflection point. Quantum, Artificial Intelligence, fusion, small modular reactors, geothermal, and the list goes on, but these technologies will fundamentally change how this country and the world produce and consume energy.

The Department of Energy's role in advancing these technologies through work with our National Labs, industry partners and the university ecosystem has never been more critical. ARPA-E is uniquely positioned to take the lead on high-risk, high reward research leading to technological developments that will better human lives throughout the U.S. and across the globe. The Trump Administration's forward-leaning approach to innovation and technology will require an interagency effort to ensure the United States continues to spearhead energy, and critical and emerging technologies. ARPA-E's unique authorities and structure allow for flexibility and nimble action to address these challenges in a timely and effective manner.

If confirmed, I intend to work closely with this Committee and Congress to effectively and efficiently lead ARPA-E and its talented and dedicated staff, who I consider the elite of the energy research community, to help drive innovation, to maintain American leadership in critical technology areas, and unleash American energy dominance.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to your questions.