

Opening Statement
Paul Dabbar
Nominee to be Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy
Nomination Hearing
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
July 20, 2017

Thank you Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to be here today, and thank you for the productive meetings with you and your staff as we prepared for this hearing. I appreciate the insights you have given me on the important topics in the energy sector for your states and the nation.

I would also like to thank the President and Secretary Perry for their trust and confidence in me with this nomination to be Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy (DOE). If I have the honor of being confirmed by this body, I look forward to working with all of you on the important items that the nation should focus on to address our energy needs.

I would like to introduce the most important individuals in my life, and that is my family members, who are here today. Behind me are my wonderful wife of seventeen years, Andrea, and my children Katie and Will. I greatly appreciate them being here today, and allowing me the opportunity to potentially serve again. Also here are my brother and his wife; his guidance throughout my life has been very important to me. Also here are friends of mine from my hometown in Oklahoma, and classmates from the Naval Academy.

If my nomination is confirmed by this body, this will be the third time I will have sworn to support and defend the Constitution. The first time, I was seventeen years old, when it was Induction Day at the US Naval Academy. I felt a strong desire to serve, based on the experience of my parents. My mother who joined the Foreign Service from a small town in North Dakota right after WWII, and my father who came to this country to escape political oppression. The second time was when I was commissioned a Navy ensign. I joined the nuclear submarine force and had the honor to serve in many interesting and sensitive operations, including a deployment to the Arctic, where I helped lead teams supporting the Arctic Laboratory as they deployed solar powered environmental monitoring stations.

Since my time in the Navy, I have worked at J.P.Morgan's investment bank for the last twenty-one years, where I had the opportunity to lead energy sector investments and transactions in all 50 states and around the world. These involved all major areas: renewables, oil and gas production, mining, efficiency, and the electric grid, as well as significant volumes of global nuclear work. As a result, I have gained significant experience in energy technologies, supporting both research and development, many of which started in various research laboratories before being deployed.

As a result of my technical and investment experience, I was appointed by then Secretary Bodman, and re-appointed by the subsequent administration's Secretaries, to the DOE Environmental Management Advisory Board. Accordingly, I have travelled to much of the DOE complex, and visited both Science and Energy program sites as well as Environmental Management sites. Through this, I have developed a keen understanding of the breadth, opportunities, challenges, and the great skill sets of the people who work across the DOE complex.

This is a very exciting time in the energy sector. Over the past decade, technological developments have accelerated significantly. Some of those amazing developments in the applied area include significant improvements in wind turbine efficiency, solar PV installed costs, battery storage, carbon capture, and micro-grids. In the area of fundamental science, opportunities exist for significant leaps in machine learning and artificial intelligence, as well as Exascale computing and quantum information science. The opportunities are significant, and the Department is in a unique position, with the world's leading researchers and physical plant capabilities, to help drive additional progress for the nation. This will ensure our continued leadership in knowledge and technology, and help spur economic well-being for our nation and our fellow citizens.

I have approximately twenty years of private industry energy experience, and twenty years of service in the Department of Defense and DOE. I believe I will bring a strong mix of public and private sector experience required for this position because of my energy industry engineering expertise, and management depth and skills. I hope with your kind consideration of this nomination that I can assist the Department of Energy and the nation to move forward the bounds of what we can accomplish together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here, and I look forward to your questions.