

Statement of Senator Christopher J. Dodd
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Hearing on the Nomination of Regina McCarthy to be Assistant Administrator,
Office of Air and Radiation, of the Environmental Protection Agency
Thursday, April 2, 2009

Chairman Boxer, Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing. It is with great pleasure that I introduce Gina McCarthy, who has been nominated to the important post of Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation at the Environmental Protection Agency. I would also like to welcome her husband, Kenneth McCarey, and her children, David, Maggie, and Julie.

I congratulate President Obama on nominating such a remarkably qualified, energetic, and passionate individual to serve as Assistant Administrator. Commissioner McCarthy has twenty-five years of experience working at all levels of local and state government and has a depth and breadth of knowledge on environmental issues that few can rival. She has also served under both Democratic and Republican governors, in Massachusetts as well as my home state of Connecticut, all of whom recognized Gina as a uniquely talented environmental advocate.

As Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection since 2004, Gina has amassed an impressive record of

accomplishments. She spearheaded the “No Child Left Inside” Initiative in Connecticut and nationwide, which combines environmental education with numerous outdoor programs to promote physical activity while teaching kids to become good stewards of the environment.

She has advised Governor Jodi Rell on how to stimulate sustainable economic development in our state, has worked tirelessly to reinvigorate our state park system, and has been a terrific advocate for open space and conservation initiatives.

Perhaps most prominently, Commissioner McCarthy was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation’s first mandatory cap and trade program, which was adopted by 10 states in the northeast to address the grave threat of climate change. The Commissioner’s work on the issue of climate change has been recognized and lauded nationally, and her experience will be invaluable when she is confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation.

President Obama has made it clear that addressing climate change is a top priority for his Administration, and as Assistant Administrator, Gina will

play a vital role in developing and implementing policies to control greenhouse gas emissions.

In my view, this incredible list of accomplishments does not do justice to the qualities Gina will bring to her new position once she is confirmed. Across my state she has a well-deserved reputation for her boundless energy, incredible passion and determination, and willingness to speak frankly in order to address challenges head on.

Indeed, she has made such an enormous impact that on March 14th, the Hartford Courant ran an editorial entitled “DEP Chief Gina McCarthy a Hard Act to Follow,” which praised both her passion for the issues and her pragmatic approach. The Courant specifically noted her ability to revitalize a department which had lost the public’s trust and engage people across the state in preserving Connecticut’s landscape and Long Island Sound.

Once again, I congratulate Gina McCarthy on her nomination and thank the Committee for holding this hearing. Gina, while we are sad to see you leave Connecticut, I know you will continue to be the outstanding advocate for the environment and the public health you always have been, and I look forward to working with you in your new position at the EPA.