

**Statement of Craig E. Hooks
Hearing on Nominations
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate**

July 8, 2009

I would first like to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to Chairman Boxer and Ranking Member Inhofe for holding this hearing. If I may, I would like to introduce my family and friends. I am pleased to be joined today by: my wife of 22 years, Austria Hooks; my three teenaged daughters, Zoraya, Brianna and Kyla; my father, a lifelong public servant, Perry Hooks, and his wife Dorthea Hooks; my cousin, Bridgette Hooks; and, my best friend, Luis Castro.

I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Obama to serve as Assistant Administrator for the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM) at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is a privilege to work with Administrator Jackson, and if confirmed, I look forward to becoming a member of her team, as well as working closely with this Committee and Congress to continue to improve management and performance at EPA.

OARM's role within EPA is to provide national leadership, policy, and management of many essential support functions for the Agency, including:

human resources management, acquisition activities, grants management, and, management and protection of our facilities and other critical assets nationwide.

In over two decades of experience in public service, I have held a variety of both programmatic and administrative positions in the federal government. After beginning my career at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), I joined EPA in 1988. Most recently, as EPA's Acting Assistant Administrator for OARM, I have served as the Agency's Senior Accountable Official on Recovery Act activities. In this role, I have focused my efforts on awarding funds in a prompt, fair, and reasonable manner, while also ensuring transparency and accountability in an effort to achieve both economic and environmental results. At this time, over 62 percent of EPA's Recovery Act funds have been awarded.

Prior to my current position of Acting Assistant Administrator for OARM, I served as the director of EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds (OWOW). OWOW promotes a watershed approach to manage, protect, and restore the water resources and aquatic ecosystems of the nation's marine and fresh waters. I have also served as the Director of the Federal Facilities Enforcement Office, which ensures that federal agencies meet multi-billion dollar cleanup commitments and

comply with environmental law. As Associate Director of the Administration and Resources Management Support Staff in the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA), I was responsible for guiding annual resource requests, managing mission contracts, and supporting information technology, personnel, and facilities activities.

President Obama and Administrator Jackson have made clear the three core values they expect EPA to uphold: scientific integrity, the rule of law, and transparency in our actions. If confirmed, I am committed to keeping these values at the center of everything I do.

I welcome the opportunity to focus on workplace issues emphasized by Administrator Jackson -- labor-management relations, workforce planning, workforce development, diversity, and work-life amenities. I believe that by creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, we can work with our unions to identify and solve workplace issues. I would proactively focus on our future workforce needs, as EPA faces the retirement of one-third of our employees over the next 10 years. I would continue the Agency's efforts to create a workforce that is representative of America by providing opportunities to all employees. And, I would continue EPA's focus on work-life balance in order to maintain a motivated

and engaged workforce. As the next generation of environmental professionals enters the workforce, we will continue to create a workplace that attracts the best talent and fosters their development to ensure that EPA continues to fulfill its mission in the future.

In terms of facilities management, my priorities would be to ensure employee health and safety, as well as managing EPA's environmental footprint. To ensure that EPA's buildings and practices reflect our mission, the Agency implements a range of strategies to reduce the environmental impact of its facilities and operations, from building new, environmentally sustainable structures to improving the energy efficiency of our older buildings.

If confirmed, I pledge to ensure that EPA's contracts and grants management processes are run according to the laws and regulations governing federal procurement, to ensure that federal funds are used responsibly to deliver meaningful environmental results.

In conclusion, if confirmed, I pledge to uphold the laws by which EPA is directed, to implement the priorities of the President and Administrator Jackson, to conduct

Agency business in a transparent manner, to be responsive to the inquiries of this Committee and Congress, and to uphold the mission of the EPA.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.