

**Statement of Joe H. Ritch**  
**Nominee to the Tennessee Valley Board of Directors**  
**Before the**  
**U.S Senate Environment and Public Works Committee**  
**Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate and Nuclear Safety**  
**September 7, 2022**

Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Capito, Subcommittee Chairman Markey, Ranking Member Inhofe and Distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Joe Ritch, and I am honored to have been nominated by President Biden to the Tennessee Valley Authority Board of Directors.

The Tennessee Valley has been my home for almost 70 years. Since 1976, I have practiced law in Huntsville, specializing in tax and corporate law, mergers and acquisitions, and private equity transactions. I have also served on the boards of companies and organizations engaged in research and development for hybrid electric engines, power management, and cybersecurity.

My father, a young engineer, moved our family to Huntsville, Alabama to join the budding missile and space programs located at Redstone Arsenal, near Huntsville. As a child, I spent hundreds of hours on the nearby Tennessee River boating, fishing and swimming. I am certain that I did not fully understand or appreciate the comprehensive role that TVA played in the lives of the citizens of the Valley until much later.

I was privileged to previously serve on the Board of Directors of TVA from 2013 until 2017, and as Chair of the Board from May of 2014 until my term ended in early 2017. I also served as Chair of the TVA Board's Nuclear Oversight Committee during the course of my tenure. Not a week went by that I didn't learn of some new role TVA played in the lives of those of us living in the Tennessee Valley.

TVA is an exceptional organization with vital strategic goals and tremendous capability. When TVA was formed in 1933, it was charged by Congress to improve the quality of life of residents of the Tennessee Valley. While TVA was taming the Tennessee River, it created a robust power grid and diverse generation fleet that set the stage for our nation to address some of its greatest challenges. Overcoming those challenges created opportunities for Americans, too – including, as I mentioned earlier, my own family. The same reasons that the nation chose to locate the rocket and missile programs at Redstone Arsenal are the same reasons so many other companies continue to locate in the Tennessee Valley: 1. Reliable and affordable electricity; 2. TVA's river management operations that enable transportation of goods and water supply; and 3. Plenty of open and beautiful scenery.

In 1994, I was asked to chair the Redstone Regional Alliance (also known as the Tennessee Valley BRAC Committee). The Alliance is a coalition of 13 communities in north Alabama and south-central Tennessee that promote the growth of the defense and aerospace industry in our area. Although it began with just a few communities and chambers of commerce in north Alabama, cities from all over north Alabama and south-central Tennessee reached out and asked to participate in the efforts. The Alliance has given me the opportunity to frequently interact with agencies and commands at Redstone

Arsenal and the nearby communities that are impacted by that growth and learn of the opportunities that growth creates.

In recent years, I have seen firsthand how the area's military and federal organization leadership partner and work together with TVA to address energy resiliency and reliability, smart city concepts, Utility Energy Service Contracts and implementation of innovative solutions to energy challenges on these facilities.

During my term on the TVA Board, in support of the established missions of TVA, some specific priorities were addressed. These priorities included reducing the carbon footprint of TVA, right-sizing the generation fleet and workforce, addressing the challenges related to the nuclear fleet, significant debt reduction and resolving some long-term issues related to the pension plan. Much has changed since my time on the Board, but I believe the prior experience will be of value if I am confirmed.

The TVA Act directs TVA is to provide low-cost, sustainable and reliable energy, protect and promote environmental stewardship and facilitate economic development. TVA's continued commitments to facilitate broadband infrastructure, advanced nuclear projects, solar and energy efficiency will play a key role in the continued success of TVA, and if confirmed, I will fully support these efforts

Clean and renewable energy in the Tennessee Valley is not only good for the environment but also for the role it plays in economic development. Many of the companies looking for economic development sites demand that an increasing portion of their energy usage be from renewable and clean energy sources. Time and time again, companies select the Valley because they know that TVA will honor its commitments to potential industrial development projects.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with my fellow board members, management and employees to achieve these vital objectives of TVA.

Thank you for allowing me to come before this Committee and I look forward to addressing any questions that you may have.