

Statement of John L. Ryder
Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority
before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety
Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Good morning, Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse. I am honored to have been nominated by President Trump to serve on the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

My office is located in a building that sits at the intersection of Union Avenue and November 6th, 1934 Street in Memphis, Tennessee. November 6th St. is named after the date the people of Memphis voted for a bond issue that enabled the city to buy the local utility and establish Memphis Light, Gas and Water, which today is TVA's largest customer.

As a resident of Memphis since 1963, I am well aware of the value and importance of public utilities including TVA. TVA's impact on Memphis is enormous, and the impact of Memphis on the TVA is equally significant.

After many years of community involvement, in civic, political and community affairs, I have a keen appreciation of the Memphis community and its needs and interests. At the same time, I have travelled the Tennessee Valley region and understand that, as a Board Member, I would be representing the interests of the 9 million people

who live in the Tennessee Valley region and the 7 states, and the 80,000 square mile service territory of TVA. While Memphis Light, Gas and Water is TVA's largest customer, there are over 150 other municipal and cooperative consumers in the Valley, and there are major challenges ahead in the industry with declining demand in electricity, environmental concerns, and the growing importance of the appropriate mix of generation and fuel.

I am also aware of the key role played by TVA in economic development, through its support of local development efforts. There are increasing economic development opportunities for the region and a real chance to make a difference by bringing good paying jobs to a part of the country that is often in need of such jobs.

Finally, TVA has a strong role in environmental stewardship. Both as a custodian of public lands and as a major industry in its own right, it has an obligation to protect the natural environment for the benefit of future generations.

As a lawyer for over forty years, I have represented corporations, large and small, and appreciate that the appropriate role of a Board member is setting the strategic direction for the corporation while allowing the Officers to run the organization on a daily basis. My understanding of these differing roles was reinforced by my service with not-for-profit organizations. This includes serving as President of the Board of Opera Memphis as well as General Counsel to the Republican National Committee and as Chairman of the Republican National Lawyers Association.

Those experiences also inform my understanding of the need to separate the political from the governmental. I fully appreciate that the role of a member of the Board of TVA is outside of politics. At the same time, my political experience gives me a greater appreciation for the wants, needs and aspirations of those served by TVA.

In addition, my law practice has largely been in the area of bankruptcy, workouts and restructuring. This has given me experience in evaluating businesses and their viability. No one doubts the viability of TVA, but it is always a useful exercise to examine closely the value of the different activities and services of an organization. Where changes are needed, changes should be made. I will be ready to take a look at the operations of TVA and participate in the discussions over its present condition and future direction.

If confirmed, I will be honored to have the opportunity to serve my community, my region and our country in this position.