

Statement of Brian E. Noland
Nominee to the Tennessee Valley Authority Board of Directors
U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety
May 19, 2020

Chairman Braun, Ranking Member Whitehouse, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to have been nominated by President Trump to serve on the Tennessee Valley Authority Board of Directors. I would like to thank Senator Alexander from my home state of Tennessee who brought my name to the attention of the President, Senator Blackburn for her support, and all of you for taking time to consider my nomination.

In 2012, I had the privilege of moving my family to east Tennessee, back to an area where our family has deep roots, to serve East Tennessee State University as its ninth president. Having spent my entire professional career in higher education, I was honored to be given the opportunity to be back on a university campus serving in the roll of the Chief Executive Officer providing strategic visioning for the institution.

Not only was I drawn to ETSU because of our connection to the region, but also because of the school's founding mission in 1911 to improve the quality of life for the people of the Appalachian Highlands – a segment of TVA's service area. In 1933 when TVA was formed, it also had a similar mission to improve the quality of life for the people of the Tennessee Valley. Watching this mission play out daily across my region gives me promise for the opportunities on the horizon for TVA to continue fulfilling its same mission to improve the lives of the more than 10 million individuals in its service area. This shared mission and the understanding of how this

mission can be implemented has provided me with integral insight into setting the strategic vision for the Tennessee Valley Authority given the opportunity to serve as a member of the Board of Directors.

As I look across my region of east Tennessee, it is evident that TVA has been committed to its mission from its inception and, in TVA's near century of being, has honed in on how that mission takes shape. With longstanding ties to the region in which I live, I have witnessed first-hand the impact TVA has on its citizenry not only from the provision of energy resources, but also through river and land management, recreational activities, and economic development opportunities. Having also lived and worked in West Virginia and with largely rural communities that do not have the benefit of being served by the Tennessee Valley Authority, I have seen the tangible bearing TVA has on rural communities and the challenges that can come without such an entity.

For TVA, economic development comes inherent with a mission of service to the Tennessee Valley. In higher education, economic development also remains a key driver as we seek to educate and train our future workforce. I was called into a career in higher education because I believe deeply in the value education can provide our society for the betterment of all. This passion goes beyond simply providing education, but also ensuring that students are afforded the opportunity to practice their newly-developed skills in a fulfilling and rewarding career. This happens only through the work of economic development. TVA's investment of more than \$11 billion and the creation of over 65,000 jobs in 2019 alone is a testament to that continued work.

Another privilege of serving in higher education has been to gain a deeper appreciation for the impact research and innovation can have on our society. Research and innovation drive our businesses, industries, healthcare facilities, production companies, and energy providers. Research is innate in the work of higher education helping to advance our society and continue to improve the lives of our citizens. This work is no different in the energy sector as we continually seek ways to improve energy production, develop new energy sources, and enhance the use of energy. TVA is instrumental in energy enterprise research and technology innovation for the Tennessee Valley.

Serving as the President of a major public university and being connected to eight additional public universities, two special purpose institutes, thirteen community colleges, twenty-seven colleges of applied technology, and numerous private institutions have given me great insight into the needs across the state of Tennessee – which encompasses TVA’s largest single service area by state. Along with my connections across the state with other higher education institutions, I was honored to be invited to participate in a state-wide initiative called Leadership Tennessee, which provided an in-depth examination of the state as well as issues facing our citizens. This deeper understanding of the Tennessee Valley area has shown the numerous benefits that can come to this region and beyond through the work of TVA.

I believe my background and experience have prepared me for the challenge and responsibility of joining the TVA board. Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I welcome this opportunity to be considered to serve on the TVA Board of Directors and to help TVA continue to fulfill its mission of service to the people of the Tennessee Valley. I appreciate your consideration of my nomination and thank you, once again, for the opportunity to be here today.