

Statement of Jeff Baran
Committee on Environment and Public Works
September 20, 2017

Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to have been nominated to continue my service on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for another term.

When I was confirmed as a Commissioner almost three years ago, I committed to bring an open-minded and collegial approach to the issues that come before the Commission. And I have worked very hard to meet that commitment. My focus has been on crafting thoughtful, balanced, and timely votes after hearing from a broad range of stakeholders. I value the relationships I have formed with my Commission colleagues, the NRC staff, licensees, unions, states, and public interest organizations, and have benefitted greatly from their ideas and input. My frequent visits to nuclear plants and other NRC-regulated facilities not only give me an opportunity to view equipment and technologies firsthand; they also give me the chance to hear directly from NRC's resident inspectors, as well as the workers and managers at the sites, about their priorities and concerns.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to serve with Chairman Svinicki and Commissioner Burns. We work very well together. We don't always agree on policy, but we always have constructive and collegial discussions. And I think that is how a commission is supposed to work. Bring together people with different backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, and have them grapple with tough policy issues together. Ultimately, we make sure that important regulatory decisions are carefully and thoroughly considered. If they are confirmed, I look forward to working closely with my fellow nominees, Annie Caputo and David Wright.

Several important initiatives are underway at NRC, and I am eager to see them through to their conclusion. If I am confirmed for another term, I will continue to focus on these efforts, including the power reactor decommissioning rulemaking, implementation of post-Fukushima safety enhancements, development of an effective and efficient licensing framework for advanced reactors, and the pending small modular reactor design review. Managing the Project Aim reductions while fulfilling NRC's vital mission of protecting public health and safety and the environment is one of the agency's most significant challenges in the coming years. Ensuring that the agency has the resources, talent, and leadership to succeed is another top priority for me. I am happy to discuss these or any other issues of interest to members of the Committee in greater detail today or in the future.

Prior to my service on the Commission, I had the privilege of working for Congress for more than a decade. I have a deep respect for the importance and value of Congressional oversight. If confirmed, I will continue to do everything I can to ensure that the Committee has the information it needs to meet its oversight responsibilities.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.