

**Statement of Douglas H. Benevento
Nominated to be Deputy Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency**

Good morning.

First, I want to thank Senators Gardner and Daines for their kind introductions, I appreciate and am honored to have their support in this process. I've known Cory for about 20 years, and we share a common background as former staffers for Senator Wayne Allard, whose seat Cory now occupies. I am also pleased that Senator Daines agreed to introduce me, I have spent a lot of time across Montana over the past three years at EPA and I am grateful for the guidance he has provided during that time.

Both senators have been strong advocates for their communities, whether that be in prioritizing a Superfund cleanup in Pueblo, Colorado or asking me to sit down with communities in places like Butte and Anaconda, Montana that have been waiting for years for clean up to be completed.

Before I go further, I want to thank members of my family for being here. My mother Nancy Paul and my stepfather Dave Paul who flew out here from Colorado, it is wonderful to have them here to support me.

Also here today is my wife Gwen and our two daughters, Anna and Kate. Anna just started high school and Kate just started middle school. They are active in theatre, are excellent students, and, most importantly, are good and kind people. When taking a job in public service it is truly a family decision and it was that way for us. With me being gone for long stretches of time, Gwen has taken on additional burdens. She not only drops the kids off at school and picks them up, but she is also engaged with them in all their extracurricular activities. When she is not doing that, she is practicing law, having been named one of Denver's top lawyers last year. She is the glue that holds us together.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the Committee, for taking the time to consider my nomination. It is a great honor to have been nominated by President Trump to be the Deputy at the premier environmental organization in the world, the Environmental Protection Agency. It is also humbling to be sitting here in front of all of you today, when over twenty years ago I used to sit in the chairs behind you as a staffer.

If confirmed for this position I will focus my efforts on five priorities:

1. Supporting the Administrator in carrying out the mission of the Agency to protect human health and the environment.
2. Continuing the Agency's regulatory agenda of modernizing regulations to ensure they protect human health and the environment and also allow for economic growth.
3. Working with the regions and states on the implementation of environmental laws.
4. Continuing to work with Gulf Coast states and other federal agencies on Gulf Coast restoration efforts.

5. Working with career staff on workforce development. We have a trust responsibility to do our part to ensure that the Agency has a workforce prepared to tackle future challenges.

I have spent my career in environmental protection in one form or another. Early on, I worked for Congressman and then-Senator Allard who taught me that listening to communities is perhaps the most important part of serving the public.

At the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, I learned the important role that states play in environmental protection. The states are at the forefront of protecting human health and the environment, and it is our job at EPA to partner with them to ensure that they faithfully implement federal laws. Together, EPA and the states form a partnership that protects the American public.

Following those experiences, I practiced environmental law at Greenberg Traurig and then worked at Xcel Energy, a large western and midwestern vertically integrated gas and electric utility known for its all-of-the-above energy strategy. The knowledge I gained from working at both places taught me the practical impact of EPA's decisions.

Most recently, I was a Regional Administrator at EPA in the west. I valued the experience of working with fellow westerners to solve difficult issues. We did that by cooperating and listening to each other, which is what we do out west. If confirmed, I look forward to bringing this perspective to the position.

It is the cumulative lessons learned from these experiences that I bring to this position and that, if confirmed, I believe can help promote EPA's mission of protecting human health and the environment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member and Committee Members. I look forward to answering your questions.