Statement of Joseph Goffman

Nominee for the Position of Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation in the United States Environmental Protection Agency

Before the

Committee on Environment and Public Works

United States Senate

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Thank you, Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Capito, and Members of the Committee. It is a privilege to appear before you this morning.

I am humbled to be nominated by President Biden and considered by the Committee for the position of Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation at the United States Environmental Protection Agency. I am also grateful for the honor and opportunity to continue my public service, having previously worked for the Members of this Committee in four different positions between 1989 and 2017. Being here before you today is truly an honor.

Joining me here today is my amazing wife, Antonia, and watching from their homes in San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles, are my three children – Gabriel, Genevieve, and Olivia. As I said to them a year ago, I want them to know how very much I love them and admire them for leading lives that reflect the values their grandparents gave to me – values that I have carried with me and relied upon all my life.

Like too many Americans, I grew up in a household that struggled financially. There were months-long periods when my father, who lost two businesses, was unemployed, and my family could barely afford even the basics. As a child, I felt the pressures of my parents' money worries acutely. For me, protecting businesses and jobs and keeping money in the pockets of hardworking Americans is still very personal.

College was out of the question unless I worked hard enough in school to gain scholarships and financial aid, and hard enough after school and over summers, to earn the rest. That meant working as a stock boy and janitor's assistant in a department store during high school and in a union job as a line worker in a corrugated box factory during college. Besides giving me a strong work ethic, my parents insisted that I put the highest value in doing good – and with the civil rights movement of the 1960s gripping their and my own young admiring attention, the lesson I took away was that every person, including me, was responsible for making our society more just.

Working for the Committee in 1989 and 1990 gave me the chance to do just that, in drafting the acid rain provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, which succeeded in achieving substantial power plant pollution reductions at the lowest possible cost to businesses and consumers while ensuring cleaner, healthier air for our children to breathe.

The legislation worked because it was grounded in science and crafted with the input and participation of utilities themselves. Since then, I made it my business as a Senate staffer and as an EPA appointee to prioritize engagement with all stakeholders, from frontline communities to workers to businesses, and to listen proactively, learn from others' experiences, and reflect their concerns. My goal has been, and continues to be, crafting smart, durable policy that protects the environment and people's health, while enabling our economy to thrive and American innovation to flourish.

This range of perspectives was critical to three other pieces of legislation that this Committee helped enact – the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the Inflation Reduction Act. We are meeting the deadlines this Committee set in the AIM Act to phase down hydrofluorocarbons and enable American industry to lead the world in innovation. We are putting infrastructure dollars to work in communities across the country, awarding nearly $1 billion in Clean School Bus rebates to over 400 school districts spanning all 50 states, Washington, DC, and several Tribes and U.S. territories. Under the Inflation Reduction Act, we are working quickly to tackle the climate crisis and secure environmental and economic benefits for all people.

Laws like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act show that when we work together, strive to reach common ground, and bring all stakeholders to the table, we can deliver strong, impactful results for the American people – results that will provide untold benefits for our health, economy, job creation, and the environment. If confirmed, I will approach all our decision-making through the same lens and with the integrity, transparency, and accountability that Administrator Regan insists on.

Members of the Committee, like you, I, hold the belief that all Americans – no matter where they live or what they do for a living – deserve clean air to breathe and clean water to drink, a secure job and healthy, safe communities in which to raise a family. It would be a distinct privilege to work alongside and support EPA's brilliant and selfless civil servants in this shared mission.

Thank you for the privilege of speaking to you today. I look forward to hearing your concerns and answering your questions.