Statement of Peter S. Silva
Hearing on Nominations
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
May 12, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Please allow me to express my gratitude to you, Madame Chair and Ranking Member Inhofe for holding this hearing and to all the Committee members for the environmental leadership you provide.

I would like to introduce my wife of 32 years, Ana Silva, and our son, Diego. They both have come out from San Diego to be here today. My mom really wanted to be here today but she is now 90 and travelling is very hard for her.

I am humbled that President Obama has nominated me for the position of Assistant Administrator for Water at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. I am also honored that EPA Administrator Jackson has expressed her confidence in my ability to work as part of her team.

I have worked all my professional career of nearly 32 years in the water and wastewater fields. Since graduating from Cal-Poly Pomona with a degree in Civil Engineering, I have held a number of positions in the public sector related to both provision of drinking water and management of wastewater. I have served for agencies at the local, city, state, federal and

international levels. In serving for those agencies, I have been both a regulator and someone who has been regulated. I believe this experience gives me a unique perspective on what it takes to bring divergent views on an issue together to try to find the common ground.

Within my career, I have seen how effective the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and other laws have been in protecting and enhancing the water resources of this nation. We have made great progress in addressing point source pollution and in establishing key regulations to make our drinking water safe and reliable. A key component of that success has been the federal funding made available to states and communities to build needed water and wastewater infrastructure.

However, despite the considerable progress we have made in the last three decades, we now see additional challenges have arisen in the areas of non-point source pollution and in new emerging pollutants of concern. Some of our great water bodies are threatened and the health risks of these new pollutants need to be better understood and addressed.

The challenges that we face now are similar in scope to those we confronted in the late 60's and early 70's. We need to confront them with a similar national leadership. We will need new models of collaboration, especially since some of the major challenges impact multiple states, tribes, and jurisdictions. Additionally, we must analyze when and how regulatory frameworks can be used to accomplish the most efficient results. Finally, we need to carefully

consider how to ensure that our water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure can be financed and managed sustainably.

As we move forward to address these pressing challenges to our nation's waterways, I believe we also have a unique opportunity to work with stakeholders at all levels of government as well as non-governmental organizations in crafting new solutions for this new generation of issues.

I am excited about the opportunity to serve EPA and our country at this time in our history. I pledge to work with this Committee, Congress and the administration in protecting America's waters so that they can be used and enjoyed by all citizens.

Again, thank you all for this opportunity.