STATEMENT OF KEN KOPOCIS
NOMINEE FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE
OFFICE OF WATER
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BEFORE THE
SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
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Good Morning Chairman Boxer, Ranking Member Inhofe, and other members of the Committee.

I am honored and humbled to appear before you today. I have many memories of being in this room as either a Senate or House committee staff member over my 26 years on Capitol Hill – engaging in debates that were often lively, robust, and which resulted in advancing National policies. While I have sat at this table scores of times, this is a distinct perspective.

To date, the greatest rewards in my career have been in assisting both Senators and Representatives in developing bicameral, bipartisan legislation to address the Nation's critical water resources and water quality needs.

However, despite all those memories, it is my greatest privilege to appear before you as the President's nominee as Assistant Administrator for the EPA Office of Water. I only hope that if I am confirmed I can fulfill the President's and Administrator Jackson's confidence in me.

I have spent the majority of my professional life working to address some of the Nation's most critical water resources needs. This includes eight Water Resources Development Acts; the Water Quality Act of 1987, which strengthened the Nation's commitment to clean water; protecting and restoring the Everglades and the Florida Keys; ending the practice of using our oceans as dumping grounds for sludge and garbage; oil pollution prevention, preparedness and response following the *Exxon Valdez* spill in 1989; and developing targeted programs for

California's Bay-Delta, Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes, Long Island Sound, Lake Pontchartrain and the Gulf of Mexico, the Tijuana River Valley and San Diego's beaches, and the U.S.—Mexico border region.

I am proud to have had a role in protecting the Nation's beaches and restoring our economically vital estuaries; addressing the impacts of invasive, nonindigenous species; cleaning up hazardous waste, and returning areas affected by the Nation's industrial legacy to productive use through the Superfund and Brownfields program, all while protecting public health and the environment, and advancing economic opportunity.

While the Nation has made great strides in protecting public health and the environment, we have yet to achieve the objective established in 1972 of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters. If approved by this Committee and confirmed by the Senate, it is my intent to work with all of you toward achieving that objective for this and future generations.

In my work on the committees, I have counseled Members of Congress on how to develop and achieve strategies for legislation in a manner that assures cooperation and collaboration among all interested and necessary parties. I have always attempted to approach issues with an open mind, interacting with members of the public, State and local officials, and interest groups on legislative and program development and implementation. I have sought to analyze facts, the law, and consequences in developing solutions to national and local problems.

I have had the privilege of working on legislation that, while not always noncontroversial, always enjoyed bipartisan support – regardless of the majority party in Congress or the White House.

Chairman Boxer and Ranking Member Inhofe, your work on the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 was a tangible demonstration of how working together can achieve a common goal.

One of the lessons I have learned from my work on Capitol Hill is that the allies on your side of an issue do not always have the correct answer, and the advocates on the other side of the issue are not always wrong. It can be possible to address issues in a manner that achieves one's stated goals, and respects the legitimate perspective of others in the debate. I have observed that too often people hear, but do not listen. If approved and confirmed, you can count on me to listen to all perspectives in the debate.

I believe that we all share a common goal of clean and healthy waters; we demand the confidence that when we turn the tap anywhere in the United States, there will be an abundant and safe supply of drinking water; we can restore and protect our precious resources such as the California-Bay Delta, the Everglades, Chesapeake Bay, Lake Pontchartrain and the Gulf Coast, Narragansett Bay, and Long Island Sound; we should be able to swim at our beaches without fear of infection or illness; we can have productive and economically vital fisheries and eat the fish that we catch; and we can create opportunities for the next generation that exceed those that were available for us.

Thank you and I welcome any questions you may have.