Testimony of Jessica L. Kramer
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
March 26, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Capito, Ranking Member Whitehouse, and Distinguished Members of the Committee. My name is Jessica Kramer and I am honored to have the opportunity to appear before you today.

It is my privilege to come before this Committee as President Trump's nominee for the Assistant Administrator in the Office of Water at the Environmental Protection Agency. I want to thank President Trump for the confidence instilled in me through this nomination and Administrator Zeldin for his support in this nomination as well. If confirmed, it will be the highest honor of my career to work every day with dedicated career staff in the Office of Water to protect human health and the environment, and to support Administrator Zeldin as he does the same.

I want to thank my family – my husband Tony Frye who is here with me today, my parents Deb and Dennis Kramer, my 2 year-old daughter Daphne, and the little boy my husband and I will welcome this summer for providing unwavering support through this process, every step of the way. Anyone who has ever had a toddler will understand that my husband and I made a strategic decision to not have our daughter come support me in person today, however she has heard this statement multiple times at this point and I can confidently say, she is in full support.

EPA's mission has a deep-rooted place in my heart. I was raised on 80 acres of land in central Wisconsin, where my family grew and sold Christmas trees. My parents worked to balance the agricultural use of that property with supporting the robust wildlife that roamed the land as well as with ensuring we had safe drinking water from the private well our home utilized. Growing up, I learned the importance of stewardship and that is what drove me to become a natural resource major in my undergraduate studies, and ultimately to focus on environmental law in earning my legal degree.

Coming out of law school I was privileged to join the first of three state agencies I would have the pleasure of serving through my career so far – the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. I started my career as an environmental enforcement specialist and the case that sticks with me the most was working with a community that had a lead action level exceedance and tripped the regulatory requirement – at that time – to begin replacing 7% of their lead service lines per year. I worked closely with that community to ensure they were providing safe drinking water while also utilizing a pathway for compliance that did not regulate the system out of business. Four years ago, during my time in EPA's office of water under the first Trump Administration, my career felt like it had come full circle. I was in a home in Newark, New Jersey, taking water samples as we worked through the challenge that was unfolding related to elevated levels of lead in drinking water. Through our cooperative work with both the state and the community, we were able to avoid a crisis situation and utilize the ultimate cooperative federalism framework to ensure the public health of the community was protected.

In addition to those positions, I have served as an environmental prosecutor and defense attorney for the Wisconsin Department of Justice, a government affairs specialist for drinking water and wastewater associations advocating for a true polluter-pays model as it relates to PFAS contamination, and the Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

In saving the best for last, I also supported this very Committee as Water Counsel for then Ranking Member Capito, where I lead negotiations for the minority on the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021, which was passed off the Senate floor 93-7.

Each of these positions has further refined my true passion for securing access for clean and safe water services for everyone in this country. Each of these positions has also instilled in me the vital role cooperative federalism plays in this Country's construct of environmental protection.

Through these roles, I have also seen firsthand the importance of a thoughtful, legally and scientifically sound regulatory framework. A regulated community has no hope for compliance if it does not have a definitive and clear framework to work from.

Additionally, each of these positions has shaped my perspective on the importance of common-sense in regulation. For example, regulating water systems across the country out of business through siloed rulemakings without providing an achievable path for compliance is simply not good government, nor is it good public health policy.

If I am confirmed, I will work every day to weave each of these principles into sound, durable, and understandable policy and regulation as I work to support Administrator Zeldin. Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to hearing about your priorities and answering any questions you may have.