Remarks by Bishop William H. Graves
Tennessee Valley Authority
To the Environment and Public Works Committee
September 13, 2006 — Washington, D.C.

Good morning. I am honored to be here today as one of President Bush's nominees to the Board of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

I am very grateful to Tennessee's Senators, Majority Leader Bill Frist and Lamar Alexander, and to my Congressman, Harold Ford, Jr., for their support.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

I was born in Brownsville, Tennessee, the eighth of nine children, in the depths of the Great Depression. My family moved to Detroit, Michigan, when I was young, but I frequently return, visiting relatives and friends. After completion of high school, I returned for my college years at Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee.

I understand what TVA has meant to the people of the Tennessee Valley from the years of economic struggle to the present day. As a resident of the Tennessee Valley, I would consider it a great honor and a humbling challenge, to serve on their Board.

My background as a pastor and as Bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church gives me a profound appreciation for TVA's mission of service to the 8.6 million people of the Tennessee Valley.

It is a mission based on making life better, improving our communities, and supporting our families as they live and work in concert with God's natural world.

It is a worthy mission indeed, and I will use all my faculties, my strength, and the power that is in me to consider the challenges facing TVA and make sound and careful determinations.

Based on my work, my life's experiences, and my knowledge of TVA, I believe I can make a valuable contribution to the Board of the Tennessee Valley Authority if you choose to confirm me.

Throughout my professional life, I have worked with people from all walks of life. As a Board Member of Memphis Light, Gas & Water, TVA's largest single customer, I learned much about the challenges facing TVA as a power provider keeping pace with the exuberant growth of our region's economy.

Thank you again for this opportunity, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have for me.