

Below is the opening statement of Chairman Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) as delivered.

"Today, we will receive testimony from Ho Nieh, who is nominated to serve on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2029, and Douglas Troutman, the nominee to lead the EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. I welcome both well-qualified nominees and I support their swift confirmation.

"First, we will hear from Ho Nieh. Strong, unified leadership at the NRC will help provide the necessary confidence in the industry and the public that we need, so we can build more nuclear safely and quickly, and to meet our energy needs. A slate full of five Commissioners who are all aligned with ambitiously implementing the bipartisan ADVANCE Act and Executive Order 14300 will provide that confidence.

"The Commission and the NRC staff working on these efforts must carry out their reform initiatives without losing sight of the agency's core licensing responsibility and safety mission, and deliver updated regulations that are durable and thoughtful. Mr. Nieh's diverse and unique background provides him with the necessary experience to strike that balance on the Commission.

"He worked in many different roles at the NRC, including as a resident inspector, a division director, a Chief of Staff for a Commissioner, and ultimately as the Office Director for the most consequential NRC office, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. In addition, he had two stints at international nuclear organizations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency.

"Mr. Nieh has also led a large nuclear utility's regulatory affairs program. Most recently, he was detailed to the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, the nuclear industry's own safety watchdog.

"Today, we will consider the nomination of Doug Troutman to serve as Assistant Administrator for the EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. This office is central to how our country regulates chemicals, protects public health, and sustains American competitiveness in critical industries.

"If confirmed, he will inherit an office with well-documented problems and high stakes for the country in successfully addressing them. Mr. Troutman brings eighteen years of progressively more senior leadership at the American Cleaning Institute, having concurrently led both their legal and government affairs teams for more than a decade, also serving as the Interim Co-CEO during the final nine months of his tenure.

"I am confident that Mr. Troutman's legal and regulatory experience has prepared him for this role. The current chemical safety system buries new, often safer, innovations under years of scrutiny and restrictions. That is the opposite of what Congress intended in the bipartisan 2016 TSCA amendments.

"Instead of a balanced, science-based approach, the system today assumes the worst of every product while leaving legacy chemicals largely untouched. As we work to improve TSCA, the Committee has received feedback on what works and what needs to be fixed.

"We have repeatedly heard that customers now prefer older chemicals over newer ones saddled with restrictions. Greener or safer alternative chemicals are abandoned due to excessive regulatory burdens. This doesn't make sense to me. We have heard that EPA imposed restrictions create major business impacts such as shelving products, delaying investments, and moving production overseas.

"The economic impacts of the status quo are clear, and the environmental costs are especially troubling. For one large company, even when its customers tried to purchase safer chemistries, restrictions could be so unworkable that compliance was infeasible.

"For example, the EPA set a discharge limit for one chemical so low that the only way to comply was to incinerate wastewater. We are literally forcing companies to burn water to bring safer chemicals to market – an absurd, backwards outcome. The GAO and the EPA Inspector General both concluded that the EPA's dysfunctional implementation of TSCA is not really a resource problem, it is the combined issues of leadership, management, and culture.

"I look forward to hearing from both nominees on how we can efficiently support innovation and improvements to environmental safety."

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