

Thank you Chairman Bingaman, Ranking Member Murkowski, Senator Hoeven and members of the Committee. I am greatly honored to be before you today as a nominee for the FERC. I would like to thank President Obama for nominating me and I'd like to thank Senator McConnell for his support, as well. I am especially pleased to acknowledge my own two Senators from North Dakota. Senator Hoeven, thank you for your kind words, and Senator Conrad's support means a great deal to me.

Last, but most importantly, I want to acknowledge my family, who has been so supportive of my career in public service. To my wife, Amy and our three boys Thomas, Alex and Michael, and to my parents; they've always been there for me. As I indicated, the distance between North Dakota and Washington prevents them from being able to be here in person today, but I did want them to know how much they mean to me.

FERC does extremely important work on behalf of the American people. Its work plays a critical role in protecting our energy consumers and the infrastructure that provides them with some of the necessities of life in the modern world. If confirmed by the Senate, I would look forward to putting to good use the experiences I have gained over the last approximately 18 years. I have had the tremendous honor of serving the people in North Dakota since I was in my early 20's; first as a state legislator, then as a state employee, the head of a cabinet-level agency, and for the last 12 years as a member of the public service commission, the state's top utility regulatory body.

Perhaps the best way to introduce my experience to the committee is to tell the story of North Dakota over the last decade. Since January 2001, I have served as a Public Service Commissioner for the state and I am currently the senior member and Chairman of the NDPSC. When I first joined the commission, our state had a regionally important energy sector, comprised of several base load lignite-fired power plants and one large Western Area Power Administration hydro dam. In the year 2000 North Dakota was effectively 50th in wind energy production, with no commercial wind energy. And as recently as 2006 North Dakota was the nation's 9th largest oil producing state.

What a difference a few years have made in the life of my home state. Today, North Dakota is amongst the top 10 wind energy producing states, with approximately 1,400 MW of commercial capacity. We have sited, or are in the process of siting, hundreds of miles of new electric transmission lines. North Dakota is a leader in clean coal and innovative carbon capture and sequestration projects. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in oil and gas pipelines and processing infrastructure. And it was just announced that North Dakota is now the nation's third-largest oil producing state, and is expected to be second only to Texas within as little as a year. North Dakota has truly become an example of an "all-of-the-above" energy state.

Much like the FERC at the federal level, the NDPSC is the lead regulatory agency at the state level for jurisdictional matters related to investor owned utilities, pipelines and the siting of energy development projects. In my tenure in office, I have participated in proceedings that have authorized approximately \$6 billion in energy infrastructure projects. Having hands-on experience in helping to regulate and shape energy policy during this period of rapid change has given me insights into both the opportunities and the challenges associated with energy development. It is this unique experience that I hope to bring to the Commission should I be confirmed.

Another experience that I have had – and Sen. Hoeven indicated some if it – was my tenure as President of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). Within NARUC I worked hard to ensure that all voices were heard, successfully working across

regional lines, philosophical lines and party lines for consensus-oriented solutions that I hope benefitted our nation's consumers. This experience, perhaps more than any other that one could have, deepened my respect for, and my understanding of, the regional diversity that exists across the country.

If I am confirmed, I hope to take this broad understanding of how energy regulation works at both the state and federal level with me to the FERC. It is probably safe to say that there is not a single state across the country with which I have not had some interaction. And should I be confirmed, I will be a much better Commissioner for that experience.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the FERC has big issues ahead of it. Developing infrastructure in the right way, facilitating Americans' access to affordable, reliable, environmentally responsible forms of energy, protecting our nation's critical assets; these are all top-of-mind issues for me, as I know they are for you. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with you on these important issues, and would be happy to provide whatever expertise I may have in the furtherance of your important work.

Mr. Chairman that concludes my testimony, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.