

STATEMENT OF PHYLLIS L. BAYER NOMINEE FOR THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS, AND ENVIRONMENT

Thank you, Chairman McCain, Senator Reed, and distinguished members of this Committee. It is a privilege to appear before you today as the nominee for the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment.

I am deeply honored to be nominated by the President of the United States, and I am especially grateful to Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary Richard Spencer, for their support and confidence in me to become a part of their team. I would like to also recognize my husband, Michael who is with me today. Michael is my hero and without his loving care and unending support, I could not be here today.

My career began as a civil servant in 1986, when my college advisor, Dr. David Patrick, encouraged me to join the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at the Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg, Mississippi where I worked as a field geologist. Opportunities soon took me from the field to the Pentagon as a program manager where I have worked in many policy areas in the Office of the Secretary of Defense including environmental compliance, installations management, and recently, personnel and readiness.

If confirmed, it would be my greatest honor to serve in the Department of the Navy and I commit to you that I will focus my full attention on enhancing the combat capabilities of Sailors and Marines by providing them reliable and secure infrastructure and safe working conditions, and by being good stewards of the environment.

As I reflect over my various jobs, I believe they have collectively prepared me to perform the duties of the position for which I appear before you today. For example, I spent several years working environmental cleanup programs and spent many hours in dialogue with our partners in the federal and state regulatory communities to develop cleanup goals that were protective of human health and the environment, and that would also support economic redevelopment. While working on policies for the Department's premiere test and training infrastructure, I learned first-hand that fiscal discipline is necessary to sustain these large capital assets, without which we could not properly test weapons systems or train Service members to perform their duties. While at the Defense Business Board, I saw how the Department, as a huge public entity, can become more efficient by adopting private sector best practices, and at the National War College, I learned how relationships, particularly within the Interagency, make us stronger. And while working to redefine the Major DoD Headquarters Activity, I saw why we must make tough choices, like reducing overhead, to find savings for higher priority needs.

I am keenly aware of today's national security challenges and the seriousness of the Department's eroding readiness and I have experienced the senseless expense from budget uncertainty and unpredictable continuing resolutions.

If confirmed, I will harness these lessons learned and hold myself and team accountable to implement the priorities of Secretary Mattis and Secretary Spencer, namely; to strengthen the Navy and Marine Corps' readiness, modernize processes to find efficiencies for readiness, and use partnerships to leverage every dollar entrusted to the Department of the Navy.

In closing, I want to tell you that my parents, Thomas and Loretta Breland, (who are watching today via the internet from Picayune, MS); they engrained in me the value of hard work and the value of every dollar. If confirmed, I commit to you that I will work hard, with a sense of urgency, and, as Secretary Spencer committed to you to even perspire when necessary, to stretch every dollar to enable the Nation's Sailors and Marines to better perform their duties and become a more ready and lethal force.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your questions.