

Prepared Testimony of

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Commissioner Nominee  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Before the

Pennsylvania Senate  
Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee

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Good morning.

Chairman Tomlinson, Chairman Boscola, members of the Committee, I sit before you today to respectfully request your consideration of my nomination to the Public Utility Commission.

I know that this position should be filled by someone who possesses a fundamental understanding of the function and oversight responsibilities of the PUC, while at the same time providing thoughtful consideration of the needs of consumers and ratepayers. I believe I am that person.

By way of background, I spent 24 years of my career as a staff member here in the State Senate, the last several years of which I served as Democratic Executive Director of this Committee. During that time, I worked on several substantive energy-related legislative proposals, including enactment of the distribution system improvement charge (DSIC), reauthorization of Chapter 14 of the Public Utility Code and legalization of transportation network company (TNC) service in the Commonwealth. That position provided me the opportunity to understand how utility distribution systems work, the challenges those systems face in an ever-changing energy landscape, and policies that help ease pressure on those systems with the increased usage of distributed generation opportunities.

Following my tenure in the Senate, I pursued an opportunity as a government relations professional at Buchanan Ingersoll and Rooney, where I am currently employed. I have represented clients in all facets of energy production and management. This position has given me the chance to understand the inner workings of our distribution systems and the means of keeping those systems safe and reliable.

While my time in the Senate gave me an understanding of utility regulation from a policy standpoint, my subsequent private sector experience has given me an understanding of energy delivery from a practical standpoint. Coupled together, these jobs have given me the unique opportunity of contributing to the passage of every major energy-related piece of legislation for the past decade.

As a lifelong resident of the Commonwealth, I know both the needs of our consumers and the challenges our distribution systems face. We are a state with aging utility infrastructure. While we not only have to rebuild our distribution systems, we also have to do it in a way that meets the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy and at the same time protects utility customers. I believe my understanding of these systems makes me a well and uniquely qualified nominee as a Commissioner on the Public Utility Commission.

While at Buchanan, I have had the opportunity of being active in national utility-related organizations such as the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners. As a result, I have built and maintained positive working relationships with utility regulators and stakeholders within our Commonwealth and throughout the nation. I believe established relationships such as those are beneficial to any Commissioner and will allow me to be prepared for the job on Day One.

If this Committee and the Senate sees fit to confirm me, I intend to initially focus on a couple of areas of utility regulation, including the PUC's core function of ensuring the delivery of safe and reliable utility service to our ratepayers. A recent PUC report highlighted the large number of customer outages over the past year. As extreme weather events continue to increase, we must work to ensure our utility systems are prepared to meet those challenges.

I also intend to focus on the ever-increasing cyber threats that exist to our distribution systems and ensuring our utilities are prepared to meet those challenges. Cyber threats are only going to increase in quantity and sophistication. We must be prepared to meet those challenges.

I will be happy to work with the members of this Committee and all members of the General Assembly in my role as a Commissioner if I am confirmed. I also understand, from my time assigned to this Committee, the important roles of the General Assembly to set policy and the PUC to implement that policy.

In closing, I want to thank the many individuals who are responsible for me being before you today. First, the leadership of this Committee, Senator Tomlinson and especially my former boss, Senator Boscola, along with my Republican counterpart, all of whom gave me the opportunity to learn a new subject matter and served as incredible resources for me. These Chairs have more than 40 years of experience leading this Committee collectively, all while doing it in a bipartisan manner. That experience has proven invaluable to me as I begin this next chapter of my career.

I also want to thank Governor Wolf for his support of my nomination. I appreciate the Governor's trust and confidence that I have the skillset to be successful in this position.

I want to thank my colleagues at Buchanan for teaching me a different side of this business. As I stated earlier in my comments, my time at Buchanan has afforded me the opportunity to look at utility-related issues from a practical standpoint. I was able to see first-hand how policy and regulations impact the operation of these systems.

And last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my family, my wife Colleen and daughters Brynn and Paige. Their support of me and my career endeavors has always been unwavering. They are also a big part of the reason I am before you today.

I thank the Committee for its consideration of my nomination and am happy to answer any questions members may have.