



FROM: Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid

DATE: Wednesday, May 7th, 2025

RE: Senate Energy and Natural Resources Full Committee Hearing to Consider Three Nominations

Topline Summary

- Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee convened for a hearing to consider the nominations of William L. Doffermyre, of Texas, to be Solicitor of the Department of the Interior, and Catherine Jereza, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (Electricity), and Kyle Haustveit, of Oklahoma, to be an Assistant Secretary (Fossil Energy), both of the Department of Energy.
- Republicans expressed skepticism with restrictive regulations, showed strong support for fossil energy infrastructure, and emphasized the importance of technological solutions like carbon capture.
- Democrats expressed support of clean energy, onshoring of battery manufacturing in the U.S., and expressed concerns about policy uncertainty hurting renewable development.

Members Attending: Chairman Mike Lee (R-UT), Ranking Member Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND), Sen. Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV), Sen. Angus King (I-ME), Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)

[Live Hearing Link](#)

Meeting called to order by Chairman Fleischmann

Opening Statements

Chairman Mike Lee (R-UT):

Today, we're considering three nominees for these positions at energy and an interior officers of the United States responsible for Legal Affairs, conducting research to modernize and protect the power grid and researching and developing projects to increase domestic production of oil, gas, coal and elements necessary for energy. First, we'll hear from Mr. William Doffermyre to be Solicitor at the Department of the Interior. Second, we'll hear



from Ms. Catherine Jereza to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for electricity and third, we'll hear from Mr. Kyle Haustveit to be the assistant Secretary of Energy for fossil energy.

Mr. Doffermyre is the nominee to be the solicitor for the Department of the Interior. So let's hear is the chief legal officer of the Department providing legal counsel and advice to the Secretary and other offices within the Department, as well as all of its bureaus and offices, ensuring the department's components carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the law. Attorneys from the Solicitor's Office represent the Department in administrative proceedings and work collaboratively with attorneys in the Department of Justice to represent the Department of the Interior at judicial proceedings. The solicitors term also assists in drafting and reviewing legislation, regulations and contracts as well as upholding the department's ethical obligations.

Mr. Doffermyre currently serves as Senior Advisor to the National Energy dominance Council at the White House. Prior to that he served as general counsel in corporate America and was a partner at the law firm of Williams and Connolly. He's a graduate of the University of Virginia both as an undergraduate and Wied got his bachelor's degree and also where he went to law school. And Virginia's law school, he served as an editor on the Virginia Law Review.

Second, Ms. Catherine Jereza nominated as Assistant Secretary of Energy for electricity will lead the Department of Energy's research and development to modernize and harden America's electric grid infrastructure. That task requires modernizing grid hardware components, engineering end to end systems for communications, modeling, measurements and controls, and operations and planning and conducting research and development into power storage, reliability and safety. Miss Jereza currently serves as Senior Advisor in the office of the undersecretary and the first Trump Administration served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for transmission permitting, and technical assistance. She holds a BS in chemical engineering from Virginia Tech and an MBA from Loyola University, Maryland.

And finally, today, Mr. Kyle Haustveit nominated as Assistant Secretary of Energy for fossil energy will lead the office of fossil energy. This division of the Department focuses on investing in research, development and implementation of fossil fuel derived projects, as well as strengthening American energy and critical mineral security. The office's core functions include increasing domestic production, and processing of critical minerals, and materials, reducing methane emissions, reviewing applications for LNG imports and exports and issuing licenses accordingly. The Office also manages the National Energy Technology Laboratory or any TL, which is the lead field center for research and program development.

It's also expected that the President were restored at this office its long standing duty of managing America's strategic petroleum reserve. Mr. Haustveit is currently the geoscience manager at divine energy, where he directs multidisciplinary teams responsible for



completions, does completions, design, diagnostic programs, and field development planning and unconventional reservoirs also manages that companies affiliate that invests in digital low carbon and next generation drilling technologies Mr. Haustveit holds a BS in petroleum engineering from Montana technical Montana Technological University and an MBA from the University of Oklahoma, all nominees here today are well qualified for the offices for which the Presidents nominated them. And they represent exactly the type of bold leadership that America needs and deserves. Now now, and the United States truly is in a battle for our future, and we won't win it.

We won't win the artificial intelligence race, we won't win at Advanced Manufacturing, we won't win the battle for Western civilization unless we win the energy war. Under the Biden Administration, residential electricity rates skyrocketed, staggering 23% and our energy independence was significantly compromised. This was the foreseeable future of an administration defined by burdensome regulations, reckless climate mandates and a deliberate war on reliable American resources like oil, gas, coal, and critical materials, and minerals. These policies weakened our grid, they inflated our prices and left America vulnerable to adversaries, and adversaries who don't share our interests or our values.

Republicans agenda for energy dominance is an overdue departure from this approach. It places American interests first prioritizing the responsible development of our abundant natural resources. The Trump Administration recognizes that a strong America requires a reliable, affordable energy supply that does not depend on foreign nations, especially adversaries like China or Russia, or regimes in the Middle East. Once confirmed, each of today's nominees will have critical responsibilities to help achieve this.

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich (D-NM):

I want to welcome Mr. Doffermyre, Ms. Jereza and Mr. Haustveit. Each of these nominees has been nominated for an important office with broad responsibilities under this committees jurisdiction.

The office of the solicitor of the Department of Interior is one of the most important legal offices in our government. As broad as these authorities are, they are however not unlimited. The solicitor does not make law, only interpret and enforce the laws enacted by Congress. For these reasons I am deeply troubled by a senior adviser to Secretary Burgum using the solicitor's authority to suspend all of the legal opinions of the prior solicitor. We all recognize that departmental policies will change from one administration to the next. Our laws however do not. I'm even more troubled that this same advisor reinstated an earlier solicitor's opinion that had been vacated by a federal District Court. The department needs to follow the law as interpreted by the District Court, not try to change it on its own. And, I will be very interested to hear your thoughts on these matters, Mr. Doffermyre.

The Assistant Secretary of Energy for electricity is another office with crucial responsibilities. More than 340 million Americans depend on the electric grid for the power we need for our daily lives. Americans today are facing an energy affordability crisis



as electricity prices are on track to be the highest they have been since the 1990s. Programs like the weatherization assistance program and the home metric appliances rebate programs are saving American families money. The proposed cuts to these programs and the President's skinny budget take money away from families just as inflation and tariffs are raising the prices of everyday goods.

As we all know the EIA projects that electricity expects that electricity demand will grow and as this happens electricity costs will continue to rise. We simply won't be able to meet our what she needs without substantially more transmission and generation. Expanding transmission planning across regions could lead to billions of dollars in energy cost savings and in fact, scientists at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory estimate that by 2050 transmission expansion could lead to 270 billion to as much as \$490 billion in savings. We will be looking to you Ms. Jereza, if confirmed, to help sure that the grid is reliable and resilient, and to see that it has adequate capacity to add the new generation resources that we need to meet our growing demand.

Finally, the Assistant Secretary for Energy for fossil energy is responsible for natural gas export permitting, but also has important responsibilities for fossil energy research and development, critical minerals production, carbon capture and sequestration, hydrogen production and methane emissions reduction. The job is bigger than just issuing export permits and I will be interested in hearing your thoughts on these other matters within the office's portfolio. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Witnesses

William L. Doffermyre to be Solicitor of the Department of the Interior

[*Testimony*](#)

Catherine Jereza to be an Assistant Secretary (Electricity) of the Department of Energy

[*Testimony*](#)

Kyle Haustveit to be an Assistant Secretary (Fossil Energy) of the Department of Energy

[*Testimony*](#)

Q&A Highlights

Chairman Mike Lee (R-UT) mentioned that Annex 4 of a Notice sent out by USTR could have a detrimental effect on LNG exports, requiring 1% of LNG export vessels to be U.S.-flagged and U.S.-built by 2029, gradually growing to 15% by 2047. He added that the Notice could allow USTR to suspend LNG export licenses until the terms of the action are met. He asked Mr. Haustveit about whether this was a good rule and Mr. Haustveit replied that anything that restricts our ability to deliver LNG to friends across the globe should be avoided.



Senator John Hickenlooper (D-CO) inquired with Mr. Haustveit whether he would work to ensure methane emission reduction research continues. Mr. Haustveit affirmed that he would.

Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) asked Mr. Haustveit how we can make sure carbon capture technology more commercially viable. Mr. Haustveit said that we need to work with the brightest minds in the country and find ways to not only capture CO₂, but also use the CO₂.

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) asked Ms. Jereza about her position on the proposed cancellation of bipartisan infrastructure law funds that go towards domestic battery manufacturing. Ms. Jereza said that we need to expand our capacity for domestic battery manufacturing. Mr. Haustveit echoed Ms. Jereza's statements and emphasized the importance of moving our supply chain out of China.

Senator Angus King (I-ME) asked Mr. Doffermyre whether it was okay to pull permits for renewable energy projects like wind, while protecting permits for pipelines. Mr. Doffermyre stated that it was important to look at the reliability of projects. Sen. King said that the wind project he was referring to in Maine had already been permitted and construction was about to start, though the permit was pulled anyway. He said that this creates unreliability in the industry and expressed his hope that Mr. Doffermyre will work to prevent already-approved permits from being pulled.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) inquired with Mr. Haustveit about whether he would protect carbon capture projects in Alaska. Mr. Haustveit said that carbon capture is something that he is very passionate about, especially the utilization piece, and agreed with the Senator that the technology is very important.

The hearing was adjourned.