

OPENING STATEMENT OF CYNTHIA L. QUARTERMAN
NOMINEE FOR THE POSITION OF ADMINISTRATOR OF
THE PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

Chairman Rockefeller, Senator Hutchison and other distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you this afternoon.

I welcome the opportunity to testify today with this other distinguished nominee as you consider my nomination to serve as the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) of the United States Department of Transportation. I am honored to have been nominated by President Obama for this important position and, if confirmed, look forward to joining Secretary LaHood and his strong leadership team at the Department. My plan is to dedicate myself fully, working closely with you, to ensuring that PHMSA meets its vital safety mission.

At your indulgence, I would like to take a moment to publicly thank my husband, Pantelis Michalopoulos, who is here with me today, and our three-year old daughter, Charis, for their unwavering support of my decision to return to public service.

As the Committee is well aware, the agency is in its infancy, having been established only three years ago to ensure the safe and environmentally sound transportation of hazardous materials through our country. I believe that my more than 20 years of experience, in private practice and government service, involving the transportation of hazardous materials by pipeline provides me with the necessary substantive knowledge to lead this agency forward. In addition, I believe that my government service at the Department of the Interior and my private practice at Steptoe & Johnson, LLP, have provided me with substantial management and leadership experience that will help me to succeed in the position for which I have been nominated. My work experiences have given me an excellent perspective on how organizations and their personnel work, how to ensure focus on mission objectives and achieve the performance results that the Administration, the Congress and the public expect and deserve.

As Director of the Minerals Management Service (MMS), I had the overall management responsibility for an organization of more than 1200 employees with a budget of more than \$200 million and revenue collections in the billions. One of its primary roles was the safe and environmentally sound oversight of mineral, oil and gas exploration, development and production on the Nation's outer continental shelf. Those operations involve the use, exploitation and transportation of hazardous materials, including by pipeline. I oversaw a team of inspectors, engineers, and scientists who helped to ensure that the agency's mission was fulfilled despite operating in a period of great expansion into the deepest offshore areas, and fulfilled it was without any serious incident. We worked hand-in-hand with other entities, including the Coast Guard, PHMSA's predecessor agency, NOAA, EPA, the states, the environmental community, industry and many others. Owing to the offshore development nature

of its mandate, MMS's programs were often controversial; I nonetheless was able to move the agency from conflict towards consensus. One indication of that success was the MMS's receipt of the Hammer Award for innovation in government. If confirmed, I will do everything in my power to improve the operations of PHMSA continuously so that we as a Nation can provide the highest caliber of safety for the transportation of hazardous materials to protect our communities and the public at large.

Mr. Chairman and other distinguished Members of the Committee, if confirmed, I commit to you that I will work diligently to fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to me. Thank you.