

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

STATEMENT OF MARCUS PEACOCK  
NOMINEE TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR  
U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
JULY 12, 2005

Mr. Chairman, Senator Jeffords, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee for the position of Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. I am indebted to the President for his trust and the privilege, if confirmed, of serving the public in this new capacity.

There are three important things I would like you to know about me. They make up who I am and govern how I would conduct the job of Deputy Administrator if confirmed.

First, I am a first generation American. My parents emigrated from war-torn England with three suitcases, a couple of trunks, and \$200. Leaving their family and friends behind, they took a great risk because of the opportunity they saw in this country. This was an opportunity not just for themselves, but for their children and their children's children. It is the greatest gift I have ever received. I love this country and cherish the rights we enjoy -- rights that give us the opportunity to realize our dreams. The first function of any government should be to protect and honor those rights.

Second, I grew up in Minnesota. Minnesota gave me two things. First, one cannot grow up in that great state without appreciating the outdoors. Even when it is 20 degrees below zero. Indeed, my deep interest in the environment started at about age 15 at winter camp. I was

working on laying out an orienteering course and found myself standing alone in the middle of a frozen lake while a fellow Boy Scout moved a marker along the shoreline. For some reason, at that moment, the serenity and peacefulness of that setting connected with me. My eyes opened up to a deeper wonder of nature. That day started a lifelong interest in the natural world. It drove me first to an interest in science and, ultimately, engineering. It is a fascination my wife and I share with our kids through hiking, camping, canoeing, and birding.

Minnesota also gave me a strong sense of community. Public service is a high calling in Minnesota and public servants are expected to express the highest possible level of integrity. An adage etched into the old Minneapolis Convention Center struck home with me. It said, "Participation in the rights of citizenship presumes participation in the duties of citizenship." My parents helped me appreciate the rights of citizenship in the United States. Minnesota helped me understand that those rights came with an obligation to the community and the Nation.

Finally, I am an engineer. I have not practiced engineering as a profession for many years. Nonetheless, I like to think I practice engineering everyday. To me, the core of engineering is a disciplined process for problem solving. It requires one to be clear, open-minded, and analytical. And it focuses on getting results. As a manager and budget officer, I have seen many different types of problems. Engineering has given me the skills to break problems into manageable pieces and work with others to come up with solutions that get results. I think this is exactly the kind of skill one needs to be a Deputy Administrator.

Should I be confirmed, I would bring to EPA a strong sense of public service, a deep appreciation for the environment, and an excellent set of problem solving and management skills.

Under the President's leadership, our country has made great strides in cleaning up our air, water, and land in a way that allows our nation to continue to grow and prosper. The air my children breathe today is much cleaner than when I was a kid. Our food and drinking water supplies are safer. Our land is better protected.

Building on this success, EPA Administrator Steve Johnson has laid out two key challenges for the Agency. First, we must make sure we are using the best available scientific information to make decisions. Second, we must formalize collaborative approaches to solving problems. On this second point, traditional methods of environmental protection do not work as well as in the past on our remaining challenges. Collaborating with States and other partners to solve remaining environmental problems needs to become more routine. I look forward to helping the Administrator tackle these challenges and make sure the air, water, and land my grandchildren breathe, drink, and live on are even cleaner than what we have today.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed I will do everything I can as Deputy Administrator to continue to serve the people of this great country, protecting their health and the health of our environment. Thank you very much and I would be happy to answer any questions.