

Introductory Remarks for Andrew Place
Nominee to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Before the Senate Consumer Protection & Professional Licensure Committee
September 30, 2015

Chairman Tomlinson, Chair Boscola and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I also would like to thank Senator Bartolotta for her support, in whose district I am proud to call home, as well as all Members of the Senate who I have had the pleasure of meeting throughout this process. Additionally, I appreciate the support of Vice Chairman Coleman and Commissioner Witmer, who are here this morning, along with the hospitality and support of Chairman Brown, who is unable to be here today because of a prior commitment. It is an honor to have been nominated to serve on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission by Governor Wolf.

I am immensely grateful for the support of my family; the broad community of colleagues who shape my perspectives; as well as the innumerable courageous and inspiring individuals I have had the privilege to know – people like my late sister, Fiona – who shape the person I am and hope to be.

I earned my bachelor's degree in economics with a concentration in mathematics from the University of Pittsburgh, and my master's in public policy and management from Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to my current position, I was a research fellow in Carnegie Mellon's Department of Engineering & Public Policy. This work, split funded between the university and the Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory, was focused on a forward-looking analysis of energy economics and technology potential for electricity generation. As a

consequence of this work, I was asked to advise on these issues at Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection, and ultimately spent eighteen months doing so.

I currently serve as Corporate Director for Energy & Environmental Policy for EQT Corporation. With its origins in the late nineteenth century and headquartered in Pittsburgh, EQT is one of the largest natural gas producers in the Appalachian Basin with a staff complement of 1,750; 2014 production of 488 Bcfe; 9,100 miles of pipe; and an acreage base of 3.4 million across six states. My work is focused on the economic, social and environmental balance necessary for wise and prudent energy policy choices; that is, understanding and mitigating risk, and characterizing the costs and benefits of the range of possible policy and operational choices.

Perhaps of particular note at EQT has been my role in establishing the Center for Sustainable Shale Development. This work, a collaborative among industry, environmental organizations and the foundation community, established a set of leading-edge practices, not regulation, to address and mitigate potential risks of unconventional natural gas development in Appalachia. This balanced, consensus-driven approach is of substantive value both to the corporation's operations – our social license to operate – as well as to the communities in which we operate.

My policy work notwithstanding, I am deeply committed to my family's farm in Greene County. Living in Greene assures I am grounded not only in the extraordinary beauty and legacies of the Commonwealth, but also by the challenges and opportunities with which its citizens contend.

In that regard, my nomination brings additional geographic diversity to the Commission. I will forthrightly represent the broad interests of the commonwealth's constituents, and my door will be open to all of you and to anyone who wishes to further the mission of the PUC. However,

I also expect to bring the benefit of additional regional connectivity to the Commission; with the goal to enhance the PUC's presence in the West – to educate consumers, and be informed by the region's unique resources.

As I have outlined, I bring broad qualifications to this nomination:

- Energy and environmental policy director based in Pittsburgh;
- Family farmer in Greene County;
- Former Acting Deputy Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection;
- And my work at Carnegie Mellon University.

I believe these diverse experiences prepare me well to serve as a Public Utility Commissioner.

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has a broad and challenging mandate to, quote, "...balance the needs of consumers and utilities; ensure safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates; protect the public interest; educate consumers to make independent and informed utility choices; further economic development; and foster new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner." The consistent theme carried throughout my portfolio of work is a commitment to this required balance, quantitative analysis and consensus building.

The work of the PUC touches everyone and everything in Pennsylvania. I approach that responsibility with the deepest commitment.

Many challenges and opportunities require the attention of the Commission:

- Supporting the prudent development of diverse energy sources and energy efficiency;

- Ensuring that reliability and affordability for consumers are addressed in ongoing discussions about the Clean Power Plan;
- Enhancing Pennsylvania’s critical utility infrastructure;
- Ensuring our commitment to rail safety and other utility security issues; and
- Bolstering competitive markets, for energy, telecom and transportation services.

I recognize and respect that the General Assembly passes laws and policies, which the PUC then implements and adjudicates. I further recognize that I am one of five Commissioners at an independent agency. I will be an unassailably independent voice on the Commission, while ensuring collegiality with my four colleagues – as also was true of my predecessor, Jim Cawley. Finally, I pledge to be a resource to all members of the General Assembly, and to your constituents.

While preparing these remarks, I read fellow Western Pennsylvanian, Governor Thornburgh’s 1983 inaugural address. He saw a Pennsylvania where “the scope for new jobs and industry matches the breadth of talents and skills of our diverse people ... the prospects for growth and opportunity equal the power of our resources ... the dreams and the hopes for the future are as great as the pride in our past, [and] the character of its leadership reflects the compassion and wisdom of its people.” That is an ideal of a past, present and a future I would be honored to serve.

Thank you again for your time and for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am at your service for any questions that you may have.