

Prepared Statement of James J. Markowsky
Nominee
Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy
United States Department of Energy
Before the
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate

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Chairman Bingaman, Ranking Member Murkowski, and distinguished members of the Committee, it is a great honor and a privilege to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy.

I thank Secretary Chu and President Obama for their support and confidence in recommending and nominating me. I also thank the Committee for considering my nomination. I would like to introduce my wife of 35 years, Carolyn, and my daughter, Lynn Berry, who are here with me today.

In 1948, my parents, who had fled the Ukraine four years earlier, emigrated from occupied Germany to the United States. They would never have dreamed that their son would one day be nominated by the President of the United States to serve this great country. I am proud to be a naturalized citizen of the United States of America and humbled by the honor of being here today.

If confirmed, I will have the rare opportunity and the special responsibility to oversee vital components of our nation's energy mix at a critical time in our nation's history. I believe my technical background and experience have helped equip me to tackle the challenges facing fossil energy today, and particularly the challenges facing coal. Our own country and, indeed, much of the world will continue to rely on coal as a primary energy source for many years. Our challenge is to ensure that this reliance is both economically and environmentally sustainable. Therefore, we must push aggressively and with a full commitment of resources to develop, demonstrate, and deploy those advanced combustion and emission control and capture technologies that will sustain our environment and support our economy.

After receiving my PhD in mechanical engineering from Cornell University in 1971, I joined American Electric Power Service Corporation (AEP). For the next 29 years I was fully involved in all aspects of both conventional and advanced coal-fired electric power generation.

Starting in the mid 1970s, I was named Program Manager for AEP's Pressurized Fluidized Bed Combustion (PFBC) program which resulted in the construction and successful operation of a 70MWe PFBC Demonstration Plant. This facility was partially funded by the Department of Energy and Ohio State's Coal Development Office.

As Senior Vice President and Chief Engineer at AEP in the early 1990s, I directed engineering organizations which were directly involved in the engineering and design for conversion of the 800 MWe Zimmer Nuclear Plant to a 1300 MWe coal-fired facility.

From 1993 until my retirement in 2000, I served as Executive Vice President. My responsibilities included providing overall administrative, operational, and technical direction for key areas within the AEP System's coal and hydro power generation facilities; these areas included fuel procurement and transportation; coal mining; facility planning, licensing, and environmental compliance; and engineering, design, construction, maintenance, and integrated operation of the fossil and hydro fleet. The power generation group was comprised of approximately 5,000 employees and was responsible for 21,000 MWe of coal-fired electric power generation and 800 MWe of hydro electric power generation.

Since 2000, I have participated in advancing two start-up companies, one involved with developing a computer-based procurement platform for large electrical power components and the other a biodiesel company. From 2004 to 2005, I was the President of Research and Development Solutions(RDS), LLC. RDS, LLC is a joint venture between EG&G Technical Services, Parsons, and Science Applications International Corporation that provides research and development support services to DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory in Morgantown, West Virginia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

More recently, I have been involved in the National Research Council's Committee on America's Energy Future, where I chaired the electrical transmission and distribution subgroup.

My entire career has been in the energy area, engineering, designing, and building facilities and/or evaluating the technical, environmental, and economic feasibility of fossil energy facilities. If I am confirmed, I look forward to bringing these experiences with me to the Department of Energy, to apply a lifetime of knowledge and achievement to address the ultimate challenge of my career: to make fossil fuels, and especially our nation's abundant coal resources, as environmentally sustainable as they are economically competitive.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I thank you for this hearing and I pledge to you, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy, I will work closely with you and others in the Congress to use this rare opportunity I will have to contribute to a healthier, more competitive, more energy secure America. Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.