



National Association of State Energy Officials

January 21, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chairman Manchin
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources U.S. Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ranking Minority Member Barrasso
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources U.S. Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination of Governor Jennifer Granholm as U.S. Secretary of Energy

Dear Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Manchin, and Ranking Member Barrasso:

On behalf of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), and the governor-designated State Energy Directors from the 56 States, Territories and District of Columbia, we offer our strongest endorsement for confirmation of former Governor Jennifer Granholm to serve as the 15th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Secretary-nominee Granholm would be only the third governor to lead this critical federal institution, which oversees the nation's most important energy technology and computational research; provides protection and response assistance during energy emergencies; advances essential clean energy and energy efficiency technologies to address climate change and resilience; provides energy data for use by the states and the energy industry; and aids in protecting the nation's nuclear capabilities, as well as the unfortunate environmental legacy these weapons have left behind. Secretary-nominee Granholm is uniquely qualified for this role.

We had the opportunity to work closely with Secretary-nominee Granholm during her time as governor, through the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy and Michigan Public Service Commission. She is extraordinarily well-informed on energy policy, technology, research, markets, regulatory, and energy-related climate issues in energy as well as the transportation and manufacturing sectors. Her keen understanding of the states' substantial role in both energy policymaking and market development is an essential ingredient to ensuring the rapid and efficient achievement of energy goals set by Congress and the Biden Administration. Secretary-nominee Granholm's capabilities to manage and lead a large government organization are exceptional and meet the demands of DOE's portfolio and service in an important Cabinet-level position.

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An event of historic importance in Secretary-nominee Granholm's background is her leadership during the electricity "blackout" crisis of 2003. When a large portion of the nation's electric grid failed, impacting Michigan and over a dozen other states, Governor Granholm was ready. She acted swiftly to coordinate with President Bush and DOE to ensure public calm, assess needed actions, and worked to restore power in cooperation with the private sector. What could have been a significant disaster, was largely mitigated.

A critical factor in Michigan's ability to respond rapidly and effectively to the blackout and other incidents was Secretary-nominee Granholm's emphasis on the importance of pre-disaster energy emergency planning and preparedness. Michigan's experience has informed NASEO's own work as a national leader to coordinate energy emergency plan activation and response among the states and the energy industry. It has also served as a model for tools developed by DOE's Infrastructure Security and Energy Restoration Division within the Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response, which provide critical lifeline support to states, territories, and communities facing energy emergencies. Secretary-nominee Granholm understands the importance of the federal, state, and industry roles in keeping the lights on and fuels flowing – services that power American homes, businesses, mission critical facilities, and our national defense.

Secretary-nominee Granholm also understands the nation's urgent need to act on energy-related climate issues while simultaneously expanding economic opportunity and addressing equity and environmental justice for underserved communities. Her willingness as governor to work with the private sector and underserved communities demonstrates her longstanding commitment to advance the interests of both rural and urban energy users and communities of color. Her actions have shown that she values drawing on the strength of diversity, and stresses the importance of delivering government resources in a fair and transparent manner.

From a state perspective, Secretary-nominee Granholm understands how critical it is for DOE to substantially improve the way that it meets the needs of *all* of the states and utilizes the capabilities of the states to meet shared energy goals. As conveyed in NASEO's Bipartisan Recommendations to the Administration and Congress on November 1, 2020, the most important step DOE can take to address our energy, economic, security, and climate imperatives is to support states in leading on key energy issues in partnership with the private sector in such areas as:

- Speeding up private investment and development of large-scale clean energy installations such as offshore wind and electric vehicle infrastructure;
- Informing the complex electric distribution system planning needs of states as they guide the private-sector integration of electrified transportation, energy storage, interactive efficiency, and renewable power;
- Strengthening and modernizing energy emergency planning, preparedness and critical energy infrastructure resilience, and working with states and energy technology providers to ensure the security of our energy system;
- Streamlining siting of renewable resources, energy storage, and other energy infrastructure on federal lands and waters;
- Opening markets for ultra-efficient buildings, clean transportation, and other low-carbon technologies through research, demonstration, field validation, code training, technical assistance and deployment;
- Advancing carbon capture, transport and utilization in partnership with energy producers;
- Improving the energy and water efficiency of manufacturing processes and working with states and their small and mediums-sized manufactures to adopt job-creating and energy-saving advanced manufacturing technologies;

- Producing critical energy data and analysis across all energy sectors, for instance through the U.S. Energy Employment Report; and
- Ensuring more robust funding for the U.S. State Energy Program, the only DOE program providing funds directly to the states to pursue energy priorities in the above areas.

We believe that Secretary-nominee Granholm's contributions in Washington, D.C. will be respected on both sides of the aisle, much as they were during her tenure as governor. It is important for our country that DOE has a strong leader and one that understands the unique and important role of the states. Jennifer Granholm fits that bill. We urge the Committee to move quickly and we strongly endorse former Governor Jennifer Granholm's nomination.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DTerry', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Terry
Executive Director, NASEO

CC: State Energy Directors