

STATEMENT OF VICTORIA BAECHER WASSMER
NOMINEE FOR THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BEFORE THE
SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 17, 2013

Good Afternoon Chairman Boxer, Ranking Member Vitter and other members of the Committee.

It is my honor to appear today before you as President Obama's nominee as the Chief Financial Officer for the Environmental Protection Agency. If confirmed, I will work every day to be worthy of this privilege by serving the President and Administrator McCarthy with dedication and commitment.

Before I begin, I'd like to take a moment to thank my parents, Frank Baecher and Viola Reed Baecher, who grounded me in the spirit of public service. After attending the University of Chicago Graduate School of Social Work, they served as clinical social workers in Chicago area public school systems before retiring recently. It was through their example, over decades of dedicated service, that I learned the importance of giving back, being accountable, and working with purpose to make things better.

Over my 20-year career, I have spent 15 of those years in public service to the federal government. By building on my technical training with hands-on, practical leadership and management experience, I have had the opportunity to take on progressively challenging and invigorating jobs. After completing graduate studies in public policy at the Kennedy School of Government, I spent 6 years at the Office of Management and Budget. I first served as a policy analyst in the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs before

becoming a program examiner in the Transportation Branch, overseeing management, regulatory, policy and budgetary issues over an array of agencies. I learned from master senior executives and policy officials the importance of being a dedicated, responsible steward of the American taxpayers' resources.

After several years spent at the local transit agency – the Washington Metro – and in the private sector, the pull of federal service brought me back. I joined the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a manager and later Deputy Director in the Office of Budget. I went on to become a member of the Senior Executive Service and the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, managing the \$16 billion annual budget that allows the FAA to achieve its mission of providing the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world. Being responsible for such a large, complex budget for such a high-profile agency allowed me to apply a strategic, data-driven approach to implementing sound business practices that ensured performance and accountability.

In 2010, I became the Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Administration and Finance at the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). MCC, founded in 2004, was still maturing from a start-up international development agency into a results-driven, transparent, and innovative organization. I was responsible for realigning corporate services, including finance, human resources, acquisitions and information technology, to better support the agency's mission. I also implemented tighter internal controls and improved financial practices, which allowed for scarce budgetary resources to go further in supporting poor and lower-middle income countries that met criteria for being well governed.

In August 2011, I was asked to return to the FAA to create a new organization for the agency that had made significant investments in me as a senior leader. As the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Finance and Management, I have overseen the transition of the agency's finance, acquisition, information technology, and region and center

operations services into a single, integrated shared services model. After two years, I can proudly say we have moved from a new stand-up organization to a high performing, value-added operation. When constrained fiscal times necessitated improved efficiency and cost savings, my team and I navigated the agency's unprecedented budget cuts. Our data-driven strategies helped the FAA identify approximately \$637 million in FY 13 budget reductions, of which approximately \$320 million were through contract spending, travel and other non-pay reductions.

I was asked recently what my definition of success is. Throughout my career, success has meant working on a trajectory of improving something systematically, making change and getting results – where even after I have left, things are still moving forward. If confirmed to serve as the CFO, I will work just as hard and with as much commitment, using my full talents and experience in support of the EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions you may have.