

Confirmation Testimony  
By  
Acting Secretary Michael L. Krancer  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Before the Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee  
Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Madame Chairman, Chairman Yudichak and members of the Committee, I am honored to stand before you today seeking confirmation to become the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection. I was greatly honored and humbled when the Governor asked me to serve as Secretary of the DEP. I thank Governor Corbett for the opportunity he has given me to serve and for the confidence he has placed in me.

Public service is an important part of my career. I have private sector experience in law firms and in business. But many of you know me from having appeared before this Committee three times before for confirmation as a Judge of the Environmental Hearing Board. I have been presented to you by Governors of both parties. I have earned your vote of confidence three times before.

I bring to the Executive Branch the same philosophy I had as a Judge and as a candidate for Justice of the Supreme Court. As judges and as executives, we apply the law. Also, it was as a Judge, and it is now, my job to listen to all sides of an issue and all the facts and have an open mind. Then it is my job, and our job at DEP, to make decisions. I did that for over 10 years as a judge and I intend to do the same thing as DEP Secretary. Many of the decisions are difficult ones and not everyone always agrees, but we have to make decisions. We owe that to the people.

Governor Corbett has said that the primary purpose of government is public safety. I agree. My agency is on the forefront of protecting the public and the environment and that is what I intend to do.

Governor Corbett has also said that government must be open and transparent and must involve public and stakeholder participation. That is what a democracy does. I agree. My Agency will do business in an open and transparent way with input from the public.

Governor Corbett has stressed to us as his nominees the importance of the “three c’s”: (1) cooperation; (2) communication; and (3) coordination. I intend to operate the Department with all three of those principles in full operation. We will operate within the DEP with the “three c’s”; we will operate among our sister Agencies in state government and the Legislature and its members with the “three c’s”; and we will interact with the public with the “three c’s”.

Part and parcel of those principles is that the DEP is one DEP, we are not seven DEPs. Though we have six regional offices and a Central Office, we are one DEP. We owe it to the citizens of Pennsylvania to strive all the time for consistency in decision-making.

My personal leadership style is to be engaged. I am a people person. My office door is always open—literally and figuratively--and I am personally meeting and talking to every one of DEP’s employees at all of our locations.

I am a strong believer that morale and attitude in an organization count. The growth of this Commonwealth, including every new job, every recovery of an old site, every stream restored, has a DEP component. DEP personnel can and should be commended and recognized by DEP

leadership and reminded by all of us that their work is critical to both protecting the environment and economic growth.

We will be a civil and respectful Department in our relationships with the regulated community. DEP wants to, should and does work with those that we are charged by law to regulate to achieve compliance. When there is non-compliance or violation, or where there is a disagreement about that, we must and we do act in a manner that is based on sound science, protects public safety and the environment, and is civil, fair, ethical and respectful toward everyone.

In closing, we have tremendous opportunities right now in Pennsylvania. I believe strongly that environmental protection and economic development are interdependent. Environmental regulation is not in a zero-sum contest with business in which there is the victor and the vanquished. One need only look to the former Iron Curtain experience to prove that a moribund economy is the enemy of environmental protection. Responsible, strong, vibrant and growing business is the necessary engine for environmental protection and conservation.

Out of respect for your time, Madame Chairman, Senator Yudichak and members of the Committee, I will end here. I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and I am happy to respond to any questions you might have.