

Statement of David B. Sandalow
Before the
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
May 5, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murkowski and Members of the Committee: Thank you for holding this hearing in this busy time. I am honored to come before you as President Obama's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of Energy for Policy and International Affairs. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Chu for entrusting me with this challenging assignment. I am also deeply grateful to Senator Lugar for his friendship, support and generous introduction, as well as his long record of distinguished leadership on international energy issues.

I would like to introduce my wonderful wife of 19 years, Holly Hammonds, and our children, Ben, Maya and Holly. I am also delighted to introduce my brother Marc and sister Judith. The love and support of my family sustains me in everything I do. I am also thinking today of my warm and loving grandmother Mary Davis Cohn, who was taken from us recently after a long and full life. Today's hearing would have made her very happy.

When he appeared before this Committee in January, Secretary Chu spoke of an "ambitious and urgent mission -- to move to a sustainable, economically prosperous, and secure energy future." If confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs, I would be a principal advisor to the Secretary on energy policy as he pursues this mission and would help coordinate the Department's engagement on international affairs.

My own professional background provides long training for this post. I am currently a senior fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, where my research and writing focuses on energy policy. In recent years, my work has included books and articles on oil dependence, plug-in electric vehicles and climate change. I have helped organize large conferences, expert seminars and bipartisan dialogue on the same topics. During the 1990s, I served as Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment & Science, as a senior director on the National Security Council and as an associate director on the staff of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. I have served as executive vice president of World Wildlife Fund-US, as an attorney at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and as an attorney in private practice. At the beginning of my career, I worked to create jobs for the people of Michigan in a position with the Michigan Department of Commerce.

In the early 1980s, I was privileged to spend part of a summer in Shanghai, China, as part of one of the first groups of exchange students to live in China following normalization of U.S.-China relations. At the time, there was one international phone line in the entire city of Shanghai we could use to call home. I remember taking cabs to the Heping Hotel on weekends to do just that. In contrast, last year, when I landed at Beijing Airport after the 14-hour nonstop flight from Washington, my Blackberry automatically connected

with a wireless network moments after my plane landed. By the time we reached the gate, I had already sent several emails to family and colleagues back home.

If you had told me more than 25 years ago that I would one day send written messages around the world from a device I could fit in my pocket as I sat waiting to unload from an airplane, I would have been skeptical. In much the same way, many people today doubt we will ever be able to provide clean, cheap and secure energy for billions of people around the world. However I believe that clean energy technologies have the potential to transform the world in the next 25 years as much as information and communications technologies have in the past 25. I believe clean energy technologies can help speed recovery from our current economic troubles and provide good jobs for Americans for decades to come.

The U.S. Department of Energy can play a central role in this transition. I am honored to be nominated to a leadership post in the Department at this special moment. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Members of this Committee -- and with many others -- to help President Obama and Secretary Chu build a clean energy future.