

STATEMENT OF SAMUEL W. SPECK,
COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE, U.S. SECTION, INTERNATIONAL JOINT
COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

April 16, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today and grateful for the trust placed in me by the President in nominating me to serve on the International Joint Commission.

The United States and Canada share stewardship over the largest concentration of fresh surface water on the planet. Americans and Canadians share a vital interest in the effective management of our shared water resources at the border. Despite occasional localized disputes, the degree of cooperation between the United States and Canada in managing transboundary environmental concerns remains unprecedented in the world. For almost 100 years, the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 has guided our two countries in developing shared water resources for domestic supply, navigation, hydroelectric power, and irrigation in an amicable and mutually beneficial manner. It also provides a framework for preventing and resolving disputes over water quantity and quality issues. The International Joint Commission (IJC) plays a pivotal role in giving impartial science-based advice to assist our countries in attaining the goals of the Treaty.

If confirmed, I would bring to the position of IJC commissioner significant and successful leadership experience in state and federal government and higher education and a strong background in resolving boundary waters issues. My educational and professional background includes earned masters and doctoral degrees in government (Harvard University), extensive college teaching, thirteen years of service as an Ohio state representative and senator where I specialized in natural resources issues, appointment as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Associate Director for State and Local Programs and Support (1983-1986), and President of Muskingum College (1987-1999) during which time the college cut tuition by \$4,000. Most recently I served as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (1999-2007). At present I am involved in natural resources consulting and serving on a number of nonprofit boards (including the Ohio Nature Conservancy and Audubon boards) and on the International Joint Commission's International Upper Great Lakes Study's Public Information Advisory Group (PIAG).

During my tenure as Ohio's Director of Natural Resources I served on the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (member and chair), Great Lakes Commission (member and chair), and Ohio Water Resources Council (member and chair). In 2004, I was one of three state officials in the U.S. to receive the National Governors Association's annual award for Distinguished Service in State Government.

Perhaps most significant, I served for over four years as the chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers Water Management Working Group which

developed the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and the Great Lakes -St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. In December 2005, the Agreement was signed by Great Lakes Governors and Premiers and the Compact was endorsed by Great Lakes Governors. The compact and agreement represent an unprecedented commitment to preserve and protect the world's largest single source of fresh water. I am happy to report that as of March 2008, four of the eight Great Lakes States have enacted the Compact and legislative action is pending in four others. I hope that the Compact will soon be ready to be presented to Congress for its consent.

The International Joint Commission has had a long history of carrying out the scientific work and consultations that provided the basis for approving the development of hydroelectric power along the border and providing advice to governments in defining transboundary water quality objectives and managing shared water resources.

In addition, the Commission is uniquely positioned to assist the United States with cooperatively addressing a number of emerging challenges that exist along the boundary. These include:

- Responding to changing demographics, water use, and water levels and supply conditions on the border;
- Reducing the threats to human and ecosystem health from toxic substances; and

- Encouraging development of watershed boards that will build cooperative relationships among local stakeholders on both sides of the border and foster a sense of shared responsibility for the health of the watershed.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward continuing communication with appropriate Executive Branch agencies and with the Congress to help maintain the strong and productive relationship with Canada that is so important to our country and the shared water resources upon we depend.

I look forward to answering any questions that you might have for me.

