

**TESTIMONY OF
A. STANLEY MEIBURG
ACTING DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

May 18, 2016

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today about the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to address employee misconduct.

I am Stan Meiburg, and I have had the privilege of working at EPA for nearly 40 years – holding positions at our headquarters in Washington, D.C., our regional offices in Atlanta and Dallas, as well as Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. For 18 years, I served as Region 4's Deputy Regional Administrator before retiring in early 2014.

Since returning in October 2014, I have been honored to serve as Acting Deputy Administrator, discharging the duties of chief operating officer for the agency. Each day, I am reminded of the excellent work EPA employees do on behalf of the American people: from our engineers and scientists in the field to our technical experts and lawyers drafting regulations. I am proud to be a part of this agency and its mission to protect human health and the environment.

In all workplaces, there are employees who engage in misconduct, and, unfortunately, EPA is no exception. When such unfortunate instances occur, we are committed to holding our employees accountable. We have and will continue to work with the powers granted to us by Congress and the administrative tools at our disposal to ensure improper conduct is met with appropriate penalties and, conversely, that excellence is rewarded accordingly. But I must stress: the isolated misconduct of a few does not reflect and must not overshadow the dedication and hard work of over 15,000 EPA employees, who commit themselves every day to the important work of the agency.

Since my appearance before this Committee last spring, we have made multiple positive changes to the EPA's management policies and procedures.

EPA has taken measures to support our first-line supervisors, who carry substantial responsibility in ensuring that misconduct is addressed promptly and appropriately. We have updated the first-line supervisors' toolkit and organized focused groups to ensure that we understand their needs, in an overall effort to ensure that supervisors are able to take fair, legal and effective disciplinary action, for the betterment of the agency as a whole.

In addition, earlier this year, the agency revised its policy on administrative leave, addressing a concern that this Committee has raised in the past. The agency now demands additional justification and review for administrative leave requests and limits the time

period of leave to 10 days, with limited exceptions, such as when an employee poses a danger to the agency and its employees.

Finally, earlier this year, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy issued an agency wide elevation memo, encouraging staff to raise issues of concern to managers, and instructing managers to be receptive to those concerns. It is our hope that this directive, in conjunction with providing training and tools to our employees, will help our first-line supervisors to address misconduct quickly and effectively when issues arise.

In addition to our own work, the EPA's Office of the Inspector General plays a critical role in addressing misconduct and helping the agency operate at our best. As a result of the work of this Committee, and especially Ranking Member Cummings, we have improved our working relationship with OIG, which has enabled us to take more efficient administrative action. We now meet biweekly to discuss the status of pending OIG investigations into employee misconduct, and have agreed upon procedures and timelines for effective information sharing. These meetings, and the improved bilateral communication, contribute to the EPA taking action more quickly upon OIG's completion of its investigations and help reduce the need for additional fact-finding by the Agency in preparing administrative actions.

In closing, EPA and its employees have spent nearly five decades working to safeguard public health and the environment for the people of this country. I am proud of

what we accomplish every day. On the rare occasions when misconduct occurs, we must address it appropriately. I look forward to discussing the progress that EPA has made in this regard with you today. Thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.

A. Stanley Meiburg

Acting Deputy Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



Stan Meiburg

Stan Meiburg serves as the Acting Deputy Administrator of EPA, continuing a career spanning 38 years at EPA in locations around the country. He has broad experience in the management of the agency across the spectrum of EPA's activities, and has received numerous awards, including recognition as a Distinguished Federal Executive in 2012 and as a Meritorious Federal Executive in 1997. He received EPA's Gold Medal in 1990 for his work on the Clean Air Act Amendments, and Silver Medal in 1983 for work on state-federal relations.

Meiburg spent 18 years as Deputy Regional Administrator of EPA's Region 4 office in Atlanta, Georgia, following service as Deputy Regional Administrator in EPA's Region 6 office in Dallas, Texas. He is the second person in EPA history to serve as Deputy Regional Administrator in more than one region.

From 1990 to 1995, Meiburg was Director of Region 6's Air, Pesticides and Toxics Division. From 1985 to 1990, he was Director of the Planning and Management Staff of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards in Durham, North Carolina, leading work on the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments as well as planning and budgeting for the air program.

Meiburg joined EPA in 1977, serving in a variety of positions in Washington, D.C., Research Triangle Park, N.C., and Dallas, Texas, before coming to Atlanta. Meiburg holds a B.A. degree from Wake Forest University and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in political science from The Johns Hopkins University.