

CONFIRMING BRENDA MALLORY AS CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Passed: 53-45

SUMMARY:

The Senate confirmed Brenda Mallory as Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), putting a lifelong environmental advocate in charge of coordinating the federal government's agenda for protecting the environment and making her the first African American to lead CEQ. *(April 14, 2021, Roll Call No. 150)*

BACKGROUND:

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) coordinates the federal government's environmental agenda and advises the president on matters related to natural resources and public health. The council also ensures that environmental reviews of federal projects under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are conducted thoroughly, transparently and efficiently.

Brenda Mallory has had a distinguished career addressing environmental issues in the private, nonprofit, and public sectors. After graduating from Columbia Law School, she worked for a law firm advising local governments on compliance with NEPA and other federal environmental requirements. She later went on to serve in several roles within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including as Principal Deputy General Counsel, and played an integral role in the development of the Clean Water Rule. She also led the agency's environmental justice and diversity initiatives, helping to reform the EPA Office of Civil Rights and integrate environmental justice considerations into the EPA's regulatory processes. In 2014, she became CEQ's General Counsel, assisting with major initiatives including the designation of Bears Ears National Monument. Following the end of President Obama's second term she worked for two nonprofit environmental organizations to enhance environmental protections across the U.S.

OUTCOME:

On April 14, 2021, the Senate confirmed Mallory, 53-45. "Yea" was the pro-conservation vote.