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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
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June 26, 2017

The Honorable Rick Perry
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Perry,

We write to express our serious concern with the appointment of William C. Bradford to lead the Department of Energy's Office of Indian Energy. On June 22, 2017, *The Washington Post* reported on Dr. Bradford's extensive record of bigoted and misogynistic statements on Twitter as well as his controversial career in academia. Among his many offensive tweets, Dr. Bradford wrote that the internment of 120,000 Japanese-Americans during World War II was "necessary".

The internment was not "necessary," it was "wrong."¹ A blue ribbon commission established by Congress in 1980, after exhaustive study, found that the internment "was not justified by military necessity." To the contrary, it was driven by "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership," which resulted in a "grave injustice."² The Commission's findings have been echoed and implemented by Congress, 50 U.S.C. 4202(a), and the courts, *e.g.*, *Korematsu v. United States*, 584 F. Supp. 1406, 1417 (N.D. Cal. 1984). Even many of those who aided and condoned the internment came to see that it was "an inhuman mistake" and "ill-advised, unnecessary and unnecessarily cruel."³

The internment of Japanese-Americans was deeply immoral and serves as a reminder of what can happen when our country succumbs to fear. It is a shameful chapter that many people have dedicated themselves to ensuring never happens again. Public officials in leadership positions have the responsibility to serve all Americans regardless of race, gender, and religion. These officials must be held to the highest standards of conduct. Dr. Bradford's divisive rhetoric has no place in public service. While he has since apologized for his deeply offensive and hurtful statements, we are concerned that Dr. Bradford's character, as demonstrated by his past statements and writings, make him unfit to lead an important program like the Department's Office of Indian Energy. For this reason, we ask that you remove Dr. Bradford from his position of leadership immediately.

¹ Presidential Proclamation 4417 (Gerald Ford, 1976)

² Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* at 18 (1982)


³ *Personal Justice Denied* at 18

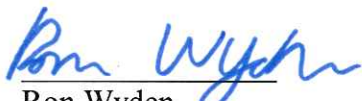
The fact that Dr. Bradford was able to clear the vetting process despite his documented history of offensive public statements is disturbing. What were the procedures and criteria for selecting and vetting Dr. Bradford and the other political appointees? If Dr. Bradford was vetted through the Presidential Personnel Office at the White House, what role did the Department of Energy play in the vetting process? What is the Department's protocol for handling reports of inappropriate communications or behavior from staff?

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this very important matter and to our questions.

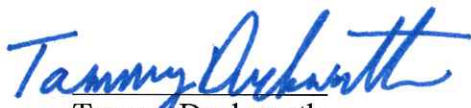
Sincerely,


Mazie K. Hirono
U.S. Senator


Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senator


Ron Wyden
U.S. Senator


Bernard Sanders
U.S. Senator


Tammy Duckworth
U.S. Senator