

# THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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## **President Obama Announces More Key Administration Posts**

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate the following individuals to key administration posts: Susan Burk, Special Representative of the President, with the rank of Ambassador, State Department; Raphael Bostic, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Michelle J. DePass, Assistant Administrator for International Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency; Cynthia J. Giles, Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Environmental Protection Agency; Michael L. Connor, Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior; Scott Blake Harris, General Counsel, Department of Energy; and Joseph C. Szabo, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation.

**President Obama** said, "These individuals bring the breadth and depth of experience to do the important work of keeping America safe and secure, strengthening our economy, achieving real energy independence and protecting our environment. I am grateful for their decision to serve, and am confident that they will be valuable additions to my administration as we work to tackle the enormous challenges ahead of us."

### **President Obama announced his intent to nominate the following individuals today:**

#### **Susan Burk, Nominee for Special Representative of the President, with the rank of Ambassador**

Susan Burk currently serves as the Deputy Coordinator for Homeland Security in the Office of the Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism at the Department of State where she has had responsibility for coordinating the Department's handling of cross-cutting policy issues related to homeland security and counterterrorism. Prior to assuming her present duties, Ms. Burk was the Department of State's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation Controls in the Bureau of Nonproliferation where she led efforts to respond to and prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advanced conventional weapons. Ms. Burk also served in various positions in the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency where she focused on regional and functional nuclear nonproliferation issues. She led U.S. preparations for the 1995 NPT Review and Extension

Conference. Ms. Burk received her M.A. in Government from Georgetown University. She has a B.A. from Trinity College, Washington, DC where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She is married to David M. Burk and has a daughter and a son.

**Raphael Bostic, Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Dr. Bostic is a Professor in USC's School of Policy, Planning, and Development. Mr. Bostic studies the roles that credit markets, financing, and policy play in enhancing household access to economic and social amenities. Dr. Bostic is an expert on housing and homeownership, and has extensively studied the roles that credit markets, financing, and policy play in enhancing household access to economic and social amenities. He is also currently studying the effects of community development financial institutions on neighborhood well-being, how anti-predatory lending laws impact credit flows, and the role of the private label secondary market in facilitating the flow of capital to subprime and possibly predatory loans. He teaches courses in affordable housing development, urban economics, real estate finance, policy and planning analysis, and public finance. Dr. Bostic was formerly Director of the school's Master of Real Estate Development degree program and was the founding director of the Casden Real Estate Economics Forecast. He previously worked at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, where he was awarded a Special Achievement Award for his performance associated with a review of the CRA. He earned his Ph.D. in Economics from Stanford University and his BA from Harvard University.

**Michelle J. DePass, Nominee for Assistant Administrator for International Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency**

Michelle DePass is currently a program officer at the Ford Foundation where she manages the foundation's initiative on Environmental Justice and Healthy Communities. Her work concentrates on the environmental and social justice intersections in the United States and supporting transnational linkages that support environmental justice policies and practices. She taught federal environmental law and policy at the City University of New York, developed and administered a bi-state workforce development training program for disadvantaged youth on superfund waste sites, and served as executive director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance. In this position, she assisted communities and community organizations in their negotiations with government agencies, implemented advocacy campaigns and co-organized the Northeast Environmental Justice Network. Subsequently, she served as Assistant to the City Manager of San Jose, California, advising on environmental policy matters, and served as an Environmental Compliance Manager for the City of San Jose. After completing a term with the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York as a William Kunstler Racial Justice Fellow, Michelle joined the New

Jersey Department of Environmental Protection where she was Senior Policy Advisor to the Commissioner. In this position, she developed a framework for an Environmental Justice Order that required the use of public health data to identify communities for priority compliance, enforcement, remediation, siting and permitting action. She received a B.A. in Political Science from Tufts University, a law degree from Fordham University School of Law, and a Master of Public Administration degree from Baruch College School of Public Affairs.

**Cynthia J. Giles, Nominee for Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Environmental Protection Agency**

Cynthia Giles is Vice President and Director of Conservation Law Foundation's Rhode Island Advocacy Center, where she has focused on state and regional advocacy to combat climate change. From 2001 to 2005, Cynthia served as head of the Bureau of Resource Protection at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Giles worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a variety of capacities from 1991 to 1997. From 1995-1997, she was Enforcement Director for Region 3 and developed a "results-targeted" approach to enforcement, which she has since published in a paper written for OECA. Her responsibilities included overseeing enforcement of federal laws regulating toxics and protecting air, drinking water and surface water. She also chaired a regional ozone compliance initiative, developing strategies for reducing smog-causing emissions from stationary sources. Prior to joining EPA, Giles was an Assistant United States Attorney, where she prosecuted violations of federal environmental laws. She holds a BA from Cornell University, as well as a JD from the University of California at Berkeley and an MPA from the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government. She is admitted to the bar in the State of Rhode Island, U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island and State of Pennsylvania.

**Michael L. Connor, Nominee for Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior**

Mike Connor has more than 15 years of experience in the public sector including serving as the Counsel to the U.S. Senate and Natural Resources Committee since May 2001. As Counsel, he has negotiated and managed legislation related to water reclamation, Indian lands and energy issues. Connor also directed the Water & Power Subcommittee which has legislative oversight of the Bureau of Reclamation and the US Geological Survey. From 1993 to 2001, Connor served at the Department of the Interior as deputy director and then director of the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office. Connor received his J.D. from the University of Colorado School of Law, and is admitted to the bars of Colorado and New Mexico. He has a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from New Mexico State University.

**Scott Blake Harris, Nominee for General Counsel, Department of Energy**

Scott Blake Harris is Managing Partner of Harris, Wiltshire & Grannis LLP, a Washington, D.C. law firm with nationally known telecommunications, litigation, and appellate practices. From 1994 to 1996, Mr. Harris served as the first chief of the International Bureau at the Federal Communications Commission. Before joining the Commission, he was Chief Counsel for Export Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce. Prior to government service, Mr. Harris was a partner at the law firm of Williams & Connolly. Mr. Harris is a magna cum laude graduate of both Brown University and Harvard Law School.

**Joseph C. Szabo, Nominee for Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation**

Joe Szabo is currently the Illinois State Legislative Director for the United Transportation Union. As State Director Joe has provided vision and direction to rail safety and regulatory issues and worked with business and civic leaders in the advancement of freight and passenger rail service. Joe also serves on the Federal Railroad Administration's Rail Safety Advisory Committee participating in the development of federal regulations on rail safety. Prior to this Joe served as the Mayor of the Village of Riverdale where he managed over 100 employees and budget of \$9 Million serving 15,000 residents. Joe was elected Mayor after serving ten years as a Village Trustee.