

Roth: Teague good for energy and environment

By [Jim Roth](#)

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“Strong energy policy is strong environmental policy,” said Gov. Mary Fallin in a statement announcing the appointment Col. Michael Teague as the new secretary of energy and environment recently.

We can achieve balance for the sake of each. Our governor is to be commended.

Teague will replace two of Oklahoma’s finest in former Energy Secretary Michael Ming and former Environment Secretary Gary Sherrer. Under their leadership, the governor revealed Oklahoma’s first energy plan, which called for greater utilization of Oklahoma’s native energy blessings while also demonstrating that our industries truly are world-class when it comes to environmental compliance. It was under those former secretaries that greater energy efficiencies for Oklahoma were achieved, with very real tax savings for Oklahomans, in addition to spurring policies that have helped us breathe that Oklahoma air a little cleaner.

Now, Fallin, in a move to create more efficiency in government, has blended the secretary of energy and the secretary of environment into one new position. So, certainly, because it is uncharted territory, Teague has his work cut out for him to help achieve the governor’s new ambitious vision.

Yet, Teague is no stranger to challenges. As the former Tulsa District commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, he has a deep personal knowledge of how energy, infrastructure, and the environment all play together. So, in Teague, the governor has chosen someone who understands the importance of being a good steward of our state’s resources for the good of our industry and Oklahoma consumers alike.

Meanwhile, the governor has been a long-standing proponent of our state’s backbone industry: oil and gas. In fact, the governor said Teague’s “mission will be to help develop policies that encourage energy exploration and production as well as responsible environmental stewardship.” Fallin gets it, and her charge to the

new secretary will no doubt continue her commitment to our native blessings, including that above-ground resource that comes sweeping down the plains.

Thankfully, our governor has been a smart advocate for all of Oklahoma's economic opportunities in the energy industry, with the "Oklahoma First" energy plan, which includes the rapidly improving wind power industry, whose economic qualities have never been greater, helping bring more jobs and money to our state.

Here's wishing our state's new secretary of energy and environment much success as he picks up the baton from two former, great secretaries and a forward-looking governor with a balanced approach. Oklahoma's energies and Oklahoma's environment should both do well.

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