

STEVE COHEN
9TH DISTRICT, TENNESSEE
2268 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3265
FAX: (202) 225-5663

ODELL HORTON FEDERAL BUILDING
167 NORTH MAIN STREET
SUITE 369
MEMPHIS, TN 38103

TELEPHONE: (901) 544-4131
FAX: (901) 544-4329

WWW.COHEN.HOUSE.GOV

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4209

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE (U.S.
HELSINKI COMMISSION)

December 3, 2025

Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse,

I write to express serious concerns regarding the nomination of Lee Beaman to serve on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Board of Directors and to urge the Committee to oppose his confirmation.

Mr. Beaman has no background in energy, utilities, electrical generation, infrastructure management, environmental policy, or ratepayer protection. His professional career has been centered almost entirely on automotive sales, beverage distribution, real estate holdings, and political fundraising. TVA, however, is responsible for managing one of the nation's largest nuclear fleets, maintaining a vast transmission network, overseeing major capital investments, and shaping the long-term resource strategy that determines the region's energy mix. These duties require Directors with meaningful experience in utility governance, engineering, finance, operations, and environmental stewardship. Nothing in Mr. Beaman's record reflects the expertise necessary to provide informed oversight of such a complex public utility.

Mr. Beaman's own public statements further call into question the motivations behind his nomination. In recent interviews, he acknowledged that he pursued a TVA Board seat not because of any expertise or interest in energy policy, but because he was personally encouraged to do so and because of the "ongoing race for energy to feed AI-driven demand for data centers."¹ He also holds equity stakes in businesses that depend on large-scale AI integration, including energy-intensive computing. At a time when data center growth is placing significant pressure on TVA's system and raising serious questions about cost-allocation fairness, it is essential that the TVA Board remain free from even the appearance of conflicts of interest. TVA's public-power mission must not be shaped by private ventures that stand to gain from Board decisions.

Separate concerns about Mr. Beaman's judgment and past conduct compound the risks associated with his lack of experience. He was asked to temporarily step away from a university board due to controversies surrounding his personal life.² He has longstanding ties to organizations known for extreme rhetoric, climate denial, and efforts to overturn the 2020 election. Reporting on his Capitol Hill rental property has raised questions about whether its use by sitting Members of Congress complies with disclosure expectations and ethical norms.³ And his contentious divorce, widely covered in the Tennessee press, included serious allegations that speak to concerns about temperament and decision-making.⁴ While personal matters must be handled thoughtfully, the breadth and seriousness of the publicly documented controversies raise substantial questions about his suitability to serve on a federal board overseeing critical energy assets and the long-term financial interests of millions of households.

The TVA Board of Directors plays an essential role in safeguarding reliable power, stewarding billions of dollars in public assets, and protecting the interests of more than ten million residents across the Tennessee Valley. Because these responsibilities demand Directors with deep expertise, sound judgment, and a commitment to the public good, For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose Mr. Beaman's nomination. Tennesseans deserve TVA Board members who bring real expertise, credibility, independence, and an unwavering commitment to the public interest. Confirming a nominee without relevant qualifications and burdened by significant ethical and character concerns would risk undermining the stability and

¹ Sichko, Adam, "Exclusive: Why Lee Beaman lobbied for a seat on TVA's board," Nashville Business Journal, <https://www.bizjournals.com/nashville/news/2025/10/27/lee-beaman-tva-nomination.html>

² Tamburin, Adam, "Lee Beaman leaves Belmont University, MBA boards until contentious divorce is 'resolved,'" The Tennessean, <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/2018/09/11/nashville-lee-beaman-leaves-belmont-university-board-until-divorce-resolved/1261165002/?gnt-cfr=1&gca-cat=p&gca-uir=true&gca-epti=z114543d00---v114543b0051xxd005165&gca-ft=147&gca-ds=sophi>

³ Simmons, Braden, "Analyzing the Influential Political House that Lee Beaman Built," Belmont Vision, <https://www.belmontvision.com/post/analyzing-the-influential-political-house-that-lee-beaman-built>

⁴ Elliott, Stephen, "Beaman Divorce Case Includes Allegations of Emotional Abuse, Use of Prostitutes," Nashville Scene, https://www.nashvillescene.com/news/pithinthewind/beaman-divorce-case-includes-allegations-of-emotional-abuse-use-of-prostitutes/article_6ec898cb-c0ba-5623-8876-9257f5b3844b.html

integrity of the nation's largest public power utility at a time when prudent oversight is more important than ever.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership overseeing the Tennessee Valley Authority stewardship.

As always, I remain,

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress