

Opinion: Commerce Department nominee deserves the job

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the June 21, 2011, Los Angeles Times.*

John Bryson's nomination to be President Obama's next secretary of Commerce has been met with the predictable combination of delusion and obstructionism that characterizes the modern confirmation process. Some Senate Republicans vow to hold him hostage to the passage of several long-sought free-trade agreements; others insist they will reject him based on his presumed politics, which they wish were more like theirs. None has advanced an argument worthy of defeating this nomination, and though sensible people will withhold a final judgment until after Bryson is questioned, his credentials are encouraging, as are the endorsements of those who know him.

Bryson is a familiar figure in Los Angeles. A longtime chairman and chief executive of Southern California Edison and Edison International, he is a pillar of the region's business community, admired by the Chamber of Commerce and his fellow executives. He also was a founder of the Natural Resources Defense Council, where his work earned him respect and appreciation from California's environmental movement. He's been president of the California Public Utilities Commission and even served as a director of Boeing, dipping his toe into the nation's military-industrial complex. He is thus the rare nominee to present himself to Congress with endorsements from the Chamber, military suppliers and the nation's leading environmental organizations.

Read the whole story