Leadership History of the Council on Environmental Quality

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) established the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) in 1970 within the Executive Office of the President. The Chair of CEQ serves as the principal environmental policy advisor to the President of the United States. Since 1970, there have been 11 Senate-confirmed Chairs of CEQ. In the absence of a Chair, CEQ has been led by an acting Chair or a senior agency official.

The Honorable Mary B. Neumayr (2017-Present)
Chief of Staff: (2017-2019); Chair: (2019-Present)
Confirmed by the Senate: January 2, 2019
Designated Chairman: January 7, 2019
Serves under: President Donald J. Trump

Managing Director
Appointed: March 2015
Served under: President Barack H. Obama II

Mr. Michael Boots (2014-2015)
Acting Chair: (2014); Chief of Staff (2014-2015)
Appointed Acting Chair: February 24, 2014
Served under: President Barack H. Obama II

The Honorable Nancy H. Sutley (2009-2014)
Chair
Confirmed by the Senate: January 22, 2009
Designated Chairman: January 2009
Served under: President Barack H. Obama II

The Honorable James L. Connaughton (2001-2009)
Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: June 14, 2001
Designated Chairman: June 18, 2001
Served under: President George W. Bush

The Honorable George T. Frampton, Jr. (1998-2001)
Acting Chair: (1998-2000); Recess Appointment: (2000-2001)
Recess Appointment: August 4, 2000
Served under: President William J. Clinton

1 NEPA provides that CEQ be comprised of three full-time Senate confirmed Council members, one of whom the President designates as Chairman. See 42 U.S.C. 4342. Over the past two decades, Congress has included provisions in enacted appropriations legislation stating that CEQ shall consist of one member, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, serving as Chairman and exercising all powers, functions, and duties of the Council. The Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump Administrations have all nominated one Member that, upon confirmation, has been designated as Chairman with all authorities and responsibilities.
Chair
Confirmed by the Senate: December 22, 1995
Designated Chair: January 5, 1995
Served under: President William J. Clinton

Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: July 31, 1989
Designated Chairman: August 7, 1989
Served under: President George H. W. Bush

The Honorable A. Alan Hill (1981-1989)
Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: July 8, 1981
Designated as Chairman: July 8, 1981
Served under: President Ronald W. Reagan

The Honorable James Gustave Speth (1979-1981)
Acting Chairman: 1979; Chairman: 1979-1981
Confirmed by the Senate: April 4, 1977
Designated Chairman: August 2, 1979
Served under: President James E. Carter, Jr.

The Honorable Charles H. Warren (1977-1979)
Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: March 8, 1977
Designated Chairman: March 11, 1977
Served under: President James E. Carter, Jr.

The Honorable John A. Busterud (1972-1977)
Acting Chairman: (1973); Chairman: (1976-1977)
Confirmed by the Senate: October 9, 1972
Appointed Acting Chairman: September 1973
Designated Chairman: December 9, 1976
Served under: President Richard M. Nixon; President Gerald R. Ford, Jr.

The Honorable Russell W. Peterson (1973-1976)
Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: November 7, 1973
Designated Chairman: November 30, 1973
Served under: President Richard M. Nixon; President Gerald R. Ford, Jr.

Chairman
Confirmed by the Senate: February 6, 1970
Designated Chairman: February 6, 1970
Served under: President Richard M. Nixon