

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Whitfield
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2014 U.S. Department of Energy Budget”
June 13, 2013**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

This morning’s hearing will focus on the proposed Fiscal Year 2014 budget for the Department of Energy. But it is also this subcommittee’s introduction to the nation’s new Secretary of Energy, Dr. Ernest Moniz. Congratulations Dr. Moniz on your overwhelming victory in the Senate. Hopefully some of the legislation we will be considering this year will get that kind of vote. I am genuinely looking forward to working with you to help fashion an energy policy that benefits the American people.

It is no secret that I have had my share of disagreements with the Obama administration and DOE over the past few years. Under this administration, DOE has often taken a back seat to the Environmental Protection Agency, and was all-too-willing to acquiesce to EPA’s anti-energy agenda rather than affirmatively assert its own pro-energy agenda. In particular, DOE allowed itself to become a part of the administration’s attack on fossil fuels when it should have been defending them as a core component of our energy future and a critical contributor to job creation, global competitiveness, and affordable energy prices.

In my view, the last thing we need is a Secretary of Energy who says things like “coal is my worst nightmare.” Nor do we need a secretary who sees this nation’s growing abundance of natural gas and oil as a problem to be solved rather than an opportunity to be embraced.

And we certainly don’t need a secretary who treats conventional energy and renewable energy as an either/or proposition where the federal government actively discourages conventional energy in order to create an artificial market for renewable energy.

We need a secretary open to all domestic energy sources that are economically competitive, be they conventional or renewable. All of the above has supposedly been the president’s motto, but his policies have suggested otherwise.

Yesterday I introduced legislation to repeal a provision in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 requiring a 100 percent reduction of domestic energy sources such as coal and natural gas to be used in new and modified federal buildings by 2030. This bill would allow the government more access to diverse energy sources and more cost effective measures for building structures. It is a simple and sensible measure that reaffirms the administration’s so called “all of the above” energy policy.

Fortunately, I see a positive future ahead in working with Secretary Moniz, and not a moment too soon. But I also believe that the proposed FY 2014 DOE budget that we will review today still reflects the mistakes of the recent past and is not a forward-looking proposal.

For example, we see in this budget an outsized request for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, a nearly \$1 billion increase. The Obama DOE has wasted too much money on green energy pet projects that have failed, and we owe it to the taxpayers not to repeat those mistakes. In sharp contrast, conventional energy sources receive funding far below their actual contribution to the energy mix. It makes no sense to me that DOE’s applied energy budget devotes more to renewables than all other energy sources combined.

And while the budget continues to throw money at things like electric car batteries and wind energy, it provides little for emerging issues like electric reliability and cybersecurity. It’s time to get serious about the energy challenges we face, and this misallocation of resources needs to be corrected.

For example, the shale gas and oil revolution holds tremendous potential for energy affordability and security, for job creation, for export opportunities, and for strengthening America's standing in the world. But it also poses implementation and innovation challenges for which DOE can play a role. DOE should be out in front of this revolution taking steps to facilitate it, but the proposed budget does not reflect this need.

Overall, while we do not have an energy budget that reflects energy reality, we look forward to working with the new Energy Secretary who understands current energy realities and management priorities.

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