



Chairman Mike Simpson

*Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and
Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations*

Fiscal Year 2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill

April 19, 2016

Opening Statement As Prepared

Thank you, Chairman Rogers.

I am proud to present to the Committee the fiscal year 2017 Energy and Water bill. Before I review the recommendation, I would like to thank Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey for their support of this bill and everything that they do to keep the appropriations process on track.

I would also like to thank my Ranking Member, Ms. Kaptur. I appreciate her help in putting together this recommendation, and it is a better bill because of her work on it.

The recommendation totals \$37.4 billion, which is \$259 million above last year's level and \$168 million above the request. Increases over last year are targeted to those areas where they are needed most – to provide for our nation's defense and to support our nation's infrastructure. This is a responsible bill, one that corrects a number of budget gimmicks used by the Administration to get around the discretionary budget caps.

The bill provides strong support for the Department of Energy's national defense programs. It fully funds the ongoing stockpile life extension programs and the Ohio Class ballistic missile submarine replacement. It will also make substantial progress towards addressing the continued deterioration of legacy facilities across the enterprise.

This bill rejects the budget request proposal to eliminate discretionary funding for the Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund and includes \$699 million for those activities.

Likewise, this bill rejects the budget request proposal to reduce investment in the energy sources that we rely on today. Within energy programs, the recommendation rebalances the portfolio to provide a true "all of the above" energy strategy.

This bill rejects the reduction proposed for Fossil Energy Research and Development, instead providing \$645 million to ensure the nation is utilizing its abundant fossil energy resources as efficiently and safely as possible.

This bill includes strong funding for Nuclear Energy, providing research and development to ensure a safe, efficient, and reliable nuclear fleet and laying the foundation for the next generation of nuclear reactors.

Yet again, the Administration cut funding for the Army Corps of Engineers – this year by \$1.4 billion – even as it used gimmicks to avoid the budget caps and increase spending elsewhere in its budget request. This is the funding that protects our citizens, businesses, and other infrastructure from damages caused by floods and coastal storms and that ensures our ports and waterways are able to move cargo and bulk goods around the country and internationally. This bill increases funding for the Corps of Engineers by \$100 million above last year.

The bill includes strong support for getting the Yucca Mountain license application finished up, with \$150 million going to the Department of Energy and \$20 million to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Finally, the bill includes provisions to stop the Administration’s regulatory overreach, which continues to harm our economy.

This is a strong bill, in no small part due to the input of the Members of this Committee. It will advance our national security interests and our economy. I urge everyone to support it.

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