

Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Budget Hearing on the Department of Energy's Science Account
March 5, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

The hearing will come to order.

I'd like to welcome our witnesses, Dr. Bill Brinkman, Director of the Department of Energy's Office of Science.

This time of year, we would normally call you before the subcommittee to explain the President's budget request. The press reports that we may finally see that budget sometime this month, and I certainly hope it's no later.

Every day it's delayed simply increases the chances of being forced into another Continuing Resolution for fiscal year 2014.

Dr. Brinkman, your programs enjoy wide support here in Congress. Even so, they're not immune to budget pressures and sequestration. Like other non-defense programs at the Department, last Friday you lost approximately 5 percent of your budget – that amounts to a \$244 million cut. That would bring you down to just below fiscal year 2009 levels.

With such budget uncertainty, advanced planning and prioritization are critically important. This subcommittee has been encouraging you to develop clear plans and priorities under different budget scenarios. I hope you'll be able to let us know today how a flat or slightly decreasing budget scenario will affect your program.

Fortunately, you have been working with the larger science community to develop priorities, especially for Fusion Energy Science and Nuclear Physics. While we won't be able to explore your fiscal year 2014 budget request, we look forward to a robust discussion about your plans and your priorities.

We're all facing challenges in the coming months and years, and I'd encourage you to take this time to build consensus for any significant changes you'd like to make in order to strengthen your programs. These might be controversial, and we will need some time to openly consider them during the fiscal year 2014 process.

Before I close, Dr. Brinkman, I want to thank you for your work, and ask you to take these thanks back to the employees and contractors of the Office of Science.

With that, I'll turn to my Ranking Member, Ms. Kaptur, for her comments.

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