



Chairman Mike Simpson

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

**Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations Bill for
Energy and Water Development
April 13, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Good afternoon. We are the second bill to go to markup this year. It has been an aggressive schedule. I want to thank all of you for your participation during hearings and throughout this process – I know there were many times that you had to be at two – or even three – hearings at the same time – and everyone worked hard to address the issues affecting this bill. I think that as you look at the bill and report, you will see that it reflects your input.

In fact, the Subcommittee received a 33 percent increase in Member requests this year – 2,700 requests were reviewed and this bill and report contain support for 95 percent of those requests. I would also like to especially thank my Ranking Member. We had several days this year where we were in this hearing room for the better part of the day so that everyone had a chance to participate. You have been great to work with and the bill we recommend today is better for your input.

We are also fortunate to have strong leadership in our Full Committee Chairman and Ranking Member – your keen understanding of the important work that is done in this bill – and your support of it – are invaluable.

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 recommendation provides strong support for the Department of Energy's national defense programs. Weapons Activities is funded at \$9.3 billion, up \$438 million from last year's level, to keep our nation's nuclear deterrent reliable and effective. This increase will fully fund the ongoing stockpile life extension programs and will make substantial progress towards addressing the continued deterioration of legacy facilities across the enterprise. The recommendation for Naval Reactors is \$1.4 billion, an increase of \$45 million, and includes full funding for the Ohio Class ballistic missile submarine replacement.

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 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. The request proposed to use \$240 million in prior-year balances to offset reductions to the Fossil Energy account. The recommendation rejects this proposal, instead providing \$645 million for Fossil Energy Research and Development to ensure the nation is utilizing its abundant fossil energy resources as efficiently and safely as possible.

Funding for the Office of Science is \$5.4 billion, an increase of \$50 million over last year’s level, to continue its support of fundamental science research that keeps the national laboratories and America’s researchers at the forefront of global scientific discovery.

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.

Instead, this recommendation increases funding for the Corps of Engineers by \$100 million above last year. This amount includes unallocated program lines of \$1.4 billion, with \$549 million going to flood control projects and \$735 million going to navigation.

This recommendation makes use of all annual revenues from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. Harbor Maintenance activities are funded at \$1.263 billion, the same as fiscal year 2016, an increase of \$312 million above the budget request, and \$122 million above the WRRDA target. Finally, the recommendation 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.

These are some of the highlights of the recommendation.

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