

Energy & Water Appropriations Subcommittee  
Member's Day Testimony  
Rep. Jared Polis (CO-02)

Chairman Simpson & Ranking Member Kaptur,

Thank you for providing the opportunity for members to come before your subcommittee and address our priorities within the FY18 Energy and Water appropriations legislation.

I know that you are always looking to save as much money as possible, and I would like to make a few suggestions for programs that you could shrink or entirely cut for that purpose.

**Fossil Fuel R&D**

The first major spending line is Fossil Energy Research and Development. Fossil Fuel R&D is a dead end for America, and the world. Not only for our economy, where markets are clearly turning away from dirty fuels like coal, but for the health and safety our communities, our oceans, our air, and planet.

The version that came to the floor last year appropriated almost \$300 million more than the President requested.

We don't know how much the new President will request, but it shouldn't matter because you should be zeroing out the line item. Last year your bill included \$645 million for fossil energy, and I would encourage you to appropriate far less, if not zero. Those funds could be directed to the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy fund or go to savings in our budget.

Instead of subsidizing the Oil and Gas industry, by throwing hundreds of millions of dollars at Fossil Energy Research, we should focus on shrinking our deficit and leveling the playing field with renewable energy technologies. Even if we gave a few hundred million to EERE, it still wouldn't come close to the funding and subsidies of oil and gas..

EERE funds national labs such as the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in my home state of Colorado. From 2009 to the end of 2015, EERE's Building Technologies Office finalized 40 new or updated efficiency standards for more than 45 household and commercial products, estimated to save consumers more than \$543 billion and reduce carbon pollution by 2.3 billion metric tons through 2030. Is saving our kids from dirty air that causes asthma attacks or saving consumers and our economy billions of dollars really worth saving a dying industry?

The list of amazing EERE projects is endless, but here are just two examples:

### **3D Printing Wind Blade Mold**

EERE is working with American manufacturers to apply 3D printing, AKA additive manufacturing, to renewable technologies. Blades are one of the most costly components of a wind turbine, but the additive manufacturing of these blades could reduce those costs, and thus the cost of producing wind energy.

### **Plug-in Electric Vehicles**

In Colorado, EERE's Vehicle Technologies Office awarded \$500,000 through the Clean City Coalition to support Project FEVER (Fostering Electric Vehicle Readiness in the Rockies), and

to foster the development of Colorado state policies to accelerate the adoption of plug-in electric vehicles. The Clean Cities project has helped Colorado develop a comprehensive EV and EV supply equipment readiness and implementation plan for Colorado. Since its inception in 1973, Clean Cities has saved around 8 billion gallons of petroleum.

Taxpayer dollars should be going to these types of programs and projects. Not the many components of the Fossil Energy R & D portion of the budget that we fund today, and that we saw last year, that only serve to dirty our air and our water, and move towards the destruction of the climate. Just one example is funding for the extraction of methane hydrates, which is essentially going to destroy the ocean in a similar way that gas extraction has been a scourge on our lands. Haven't we learned our lesson with natural gas extraction? Experts fear that drilling in hydrate deposits could cause catastrophic releases of methane that would greatly accelerate global warming. Why would we want to invest funds in trying to pull methanes out of the ocean, when we have so many issues around methane in our ozone?

Additionally, there is one account under Fossil Energy that will create technology that allows oil and gas companies to drill in oil shale formations where there is less than 50,000 barrels per day. We should be stopping oil shale drilling, not finding ways to keep drilling in more and more places. Oil shale is one of the most dirty extraction methods out there. The distillation process for oil shale releases toxic pollutants into the air—including sulfur dioxide, lead, and nitrogen oxides. Current analysis indicates that existing oil shale research projects would reduce visibility by more than 10 percent for several weeks a year. And the Natural Resources Defense Council states that in a well-to-wheel comparison, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from oil shale are

close to double those from conventional crude, with most of them occurring during production. The BLM reports that mining and distilling oil shale requires an estimated 2.1 to 5.2 barrels of water for each barrel of oil produced—inputs that could reduce the annual flow of rivers across the west. For example, the Colorado's White River dropped by as much as 8.2 percent.

How does it make sense to spend money propping up oil and gas companies that are making hand over fist right now?

### **W80-4 Nuclear Warhead**

Finally, I would ask that you address the accelerated timeline of the W80-4 nuclear warhead. In 2015, I joined with my colleague Mr. Quigley to offer an amendment that would save \$165 million in taxpayer dollars by placing funding for the development of the W80-4 nuclear warhead back on its original acquisition schedule. The existing air launched cruise missile and warhead isn't being phased out until the 2030's, yet the FY2015 budget request sped up the development for the warhead by two years to FY2025. Fitting the W80-4 nuclear warhead onto the next generation long-range cruise missiles will free up \$165 million to put towards deficit reduction. At a time when the budget is so tight, there is no reason for us to waste dollars unnecessarily accelerating the procurement schedule.

Thank you very much for your time today, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

