



# Chairman Mike Simpson

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

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**Department of Energy  
Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Hearing  
June 20, 2017  
Opening Statement As Prepared**

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The hearing will come to order.

It is my great pleasure to welcome Secretary Rick Perry to this, his first hearing with the Energy and Water Subcommittee. Secretary Perry, congratulations on your selection as the 14<sup>th</sup> Secretary of Energy and thank you for your continued service to our country.

We have a lot to discuss today so I will keep my remarks brief.

This budget request reflects the importance of the Department of Energy's national security responsibilities. The budget request proposes a strong increase – \$994 million – for the nuclear weapons activities that we need to ensure effective nuclear deterrence now and for our future. This program and the other defense activities of this bill are – and will remain – a high priority for this Committee.

I am also pleased that this budget request proposes appropriate funding for Yucca Mountain. The previous Administration made the costly – and wrong – decision to abandon Yucca's license application – changing course on this program and ignoring the law.

The President's budget proposes a \$3.5 billion decrease for energy programs, reflecting the Administration's decision to focus resources on early-stage research and development. That is a substantial reduction – a reduction that this Committee must carefully review in order to understand the impacts to the important programs and activities within this bill. Like the President, we want to eliminate waste and duplication and ensure the best use of each and every taxpayer dollar. This hearing is an important part of our oversight process. I appreciate you being here today and hope that we can work together to move forward a budget that will ensure our energy independence and keep consumer prices affordable.

Please ensure that the hearing record, questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than four weeks from the time that you receive them.

Members who have additional questions for the record will have until the close of business Thursday to provide them to the subcommittee office.

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