



Chairman Mike Simpson

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

Fiscal Year 2018 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill – Subcommittee Markup
June 28, 2017
Opening Statement As Prepared

Good morning. I want to thank all of you for your participation during hearings and throughout this process – this has been an aggressive schedule – 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, more than 2,700 member requests were submitted this year and each of those requests was carefully reviewed to include everyone's concerns to the greatest extent possible. This bill and report contain support for 83 percent of those requests.

I would like to especially thank my Ranking Member. As always, Ms. Kaptur, 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 \$37.6 billion, which is \$209 million less than last year's level and \$3.65 billion 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 makes some difficult choices in order to prioritize the most critical federal programs. The bill recognizes the Administration's efforts to reduce federal spending and the size of government by accepting a number of the President's proposals, including the request to eliminate the Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy and the Title 17 loan guarantee program of the Department of Energy. However, the power of the purse ultimately lies with Congress and this bill includes a number of additional targeted and responsible investments above the budget request where the members of this Congress see value.

The recommendation provides strong support for the Department of Energy's national defense programs. Weapons Activities is funded at \$10.24 billion, up \$921 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 infrastructure across the enterprise. The recommendation for Naval Reactors is \$1.49 billion and includes full funding for the Columbia-Class ballistic missile submarine, formerly referred to as the Ohio-Class replacement. Nuclear Nonproliferation programs are funded at \$1.8 billion, including \$340 million to continue a limited amount of

construction on the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility while we seek further clarity from the Department of Energy on the feasibility and costs of its proposed “dilute and dispose” alternative.

This recommendation includes strong funding for the Army Corps of Engineers – \$120 million more than last year – and \$1.2 billion more than the budget request. These projects protect our citizens, businesses, and other infrastructure from damages caused by floods and coastal storms and ensure our ports and waterways are able to move cargo and bulk goods around the country and internationally.

This recommendation makes use of all annual revenues from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. Harbor Maintenance activities are funded at \$1.34 billion, which is \$40 million more than fiscal year 2017, an increase of \$375 million above the budget request, and the same as the WRRDA target.

The bill strongly supports flood and storm damage reduction activities, providing a total of \$1.8 billion, an increase of \$74 million above last year.

The budget request proposed a substantial reduction to the energy accounts – one that emphasized early-stage research and development. Like the President, we want to ensure the best use of each and every tax dollar. However, while we have taken reductions to the applied energy accounts, funding is included above the budget request to advance the research and development needed to enable full use of our nation’s abundant fossil resources and advance the most promising technologies from all possible energy sources.

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 deep reductions to the Fossil Energy account. The recommendation rejects this proposal, instead providing \$635 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, the same as last year’s level, to keep the national laboratories and America’s researchers at the forefront of global scientific discovery. This bill includes \$6.4 billion for the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management, to carry out the federal government’s responsibilities to clean up five decades of nuclear weapons development and production.

Finally, the recommendation includes strong support for getting the Yucca Mountain license application finished up, with \$120 million going to the Department of Energy and \$30 million to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

These are some of the highlights of the recommendation.

#####