

Testimony of Congresswoman Kay Granger (Texas-12)

Ranking Member of the Committee on Appropriations

Before the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies

Member Day Hearing

April 9, 2019

Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and Members of the Subcommittee – good morning, and thank you for allowing me to testify before you today on my priorities for the fiscal year 2020 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. I have two priorities I'd like to bring to your attention, both with a history of strong bipartisan support.

First, I request that you support, at a minimum, the President's budget request for nuclear waste disposal for the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. This funding will allow the two agencies to resume regulatory activities concerning Yucca Mountain.

Currently, spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste is temporarily stored at 121 locations across 39 states. While these locations provide safe storage, they were never intended to be permanent. This material needs to be relocated to a more secure, safe, and reliable facility. By law, Yucca Mountain is that facility.

We must provide the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission with the resources needed to continue and complete the licensing process. This process will provide the answers the public needs on long-term safety of the site.

My second priority for the fiscal year 2020 Energy and Water bill is robust funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civil works program, specifically the Construction account. The civil works program supports our economy, protects public health and safety, and improves the environment.

Of paramount importance to my constituents and to the future of my hometown of Fort Worth is a Corps project called Central City. The federally-authorized project – known locally as the Trinity River Vision/Panther Island Flood Control Project – will reestablish essential levels of flood protection in the Corps-built Fort Worth Floodway. This effort is vital to protecting over 2,400 acres of existing neighborhoods valued at over \$2 billion. This ongoing construction project enjoys widespread support in the Fort Worth community, as evidenced by the recent – and overwhelming – passage of a \$250 million bond issue to reinforce local funding for the project.

At this subcommittee's hearing on the Corps budget request two weeks ago, in response to questions Ranking Member Simpson asked on my behalf, Assistant Secretary James re-affirmed his support for the project and Lieutenant General Semonite agreed that the Corps has an obligation to complete a project once it has begun.

Unfortunately, the budget request is woefully inadequate to address our nation's water resources infrastructure needs. Therefore, I ask the subcommittee to once again prioritize robust funding for the Corps of Engineers as you develop the fiscal year 2020 bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on my priorities for the fiscal year 2020 Energy and Water Appropriations bill.