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Member Day Hearing – Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies

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Thank you, Chairman Fleishman, Ranking Member Kaptur, and Members of the Committee for this opportunity.

Climate change is causing extreme weather events in every region of the world. Domestically, it does not matter if you are in a blue state or a red state, the impacts of climate change are costing billions of dollars in damage. My California congressional district sits on the San Francisco Peninsula, where we see sea level rise all around us. It has been well documented in the scientific community that carbon emissions from fossil fuels are driving this climate crisis. America has the responsibility and the technological capability to lead the world's transition to a renewable energy economy by reducing emissions.

However, although reducing emissions should continue to remain the primary focus of our global efforts, it will not be enough. According to recent reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the National Academies, we must also actively remove carbon from the atmosphere to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

Carbon removal technology can be another tool in our toolbelt address this crisis, but it will require even more investment from the federal government to make it viable.

To date, most federal investments have focused on capturing carbon dioxide at the point source of pollution, like smokestacks. However, this prolongs our dependence on fossil fuels. Reduced carbon emissions are still carbon emissions. Moreover, carbon that has already been emitted is not affected with this approach.

In contrast, I am advocating today for carbon removal: technologies that permanently pull carbon out of the atmosphere. Today, there are a number of companies in my district and across the country that are developing technology to do just that. So far, much of the funding to develop and deploy carbon removal technology has relied on private sector investments. Large scale investment in this technology has been held back by a lack of standards and clear market value. This is where the federal government must play an important role.

By purchasing carbon removals and setting standards for those removals, federal investment would send a signal to the private sector that carbon removal systems can be trusted and ultimately mitigate the impacts of climate change.

To that end - I am requesting that the Subcommittee include in this year's Appropriations bill \$15,000,000 for the Carbon Dioxide Removal MRV account at the National Labs in the Department of Energy. I am also requesting that report language be included that directs the Department of Energy Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) to accelerate the commercialization of carbon dioxide removal technologies through advancements in monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV), and encourages FECM to continue this work in partnership with the National Laboratories and the Office of Technology Transitions Technology Commercialization Fund.

Further, I request that the Subcommittee include in the bill \$35,000,000 for the Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) Purchasing account at the Department of Energy. along with report language that directs the Secretary of Energy to follow through on the competitive purchasing pilot program that the Secretary was directed to establish in the FY23 Energy and Water joint explanatory statement for the purchase of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere or upper hydrosphere.

I want to reiterate that I am advocating for funding for these programs in addition to those that reduce carbon emissions overall, including speeding our transition to clean energy and away from fossil fuels. However, given the magnitude of the crisis we face, we must bring every innovation to bear in addressing it and I believe carbon removal is worth pursuing.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak this morning. And I thank the Chair and Ranking Member and their staff for all the work they will put into preparing this year's bill.