

**To:** Energy and Water Development, and Other Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
**From:** The Honorable Sylvia R. Garcia (D-TX-29)  
**Re:** Member Testimony for Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Subcommittee Member Day

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Thank you, Mr. Chair, Ranking Member, and Committee Members, for the opportunity to provide written testimony for the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee Appropriations Member Day.

This is an important opportunity for Members of the House of Representatives to advocate for our constituents, highlight funding priorities, and help shape the appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2027.

I strongly support \$160 million in funding for the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office. This investment supports a program that assists in research, development, and demonstration of hydrogen and fuel technologies across multiple sectors, enabling innovation, strengthening the economy, and helping to ensure affordable and secure energy future. My district is home to the Hy Velocity Hub, a coalition of seven energy companies working to advance clean hydrogen production, reduce emissions from heavy-duty and hard-to-electrify sectors, and create economic opportunities. This effort supports national energy goals to promote low-carbon hydrogen and is projected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by millions of tons annually. I also support including report language that prioritizes hydrogen, allocating at least \$170 million to the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office. Of this, at least \$67 million should go to developing green hydrogen for difficult-to-electrify transportation like ships, trains, and planes. Additionally, \$75 million should

support H2@Scale activities to promote green hydrogen as a clean energy source and to develop the infrastructure needed to transport and store hydrogen.

In addition, I urge the Subcommittee to include \$12 million for the Coastal Ocean Data System (CODS) program in Fiscal Year 2027, with no less than \$8 million dedicated to long-term coastal wave and sediment observations, research, and data products. CODS provides high-resolution coastal data through a network of approximately 90 wave-monitoring buoys across 30 coastal states and territories, including the Gulf Coast. CODS data averages over 350,000 downloads per day and can exceed 600,000 during storm events, supporting real-time decision-making for navigation, dredging, coastal maintenance, and weather forecasting. This data is also critical to large-scale resilience efforts such as the Coastal Texas Project, or “Ike Dike,” which is essential to protecting the Houston Ship Channel and local communities in my district. Supporting the Houston Ship Channel is critical, as it serves as a critical link for transporting goods and commerce with over 200 countries around the world and generates billions of economic value to the U.S. and the surrounding industrial corridor from hurricane storm surge.

I strongly support the highest possible funding level for the Grid Deployment program, which is vital to modernizing and expanding the nation’s power grid. Through loans, grants, and technical assistance, this program promotes the development of new transmission infrastructure and enhances grid resilience. For my district, these investments will help reduce outage durations, improve reliability during extreme weather events—such as those that have affected my district in the past—and aim to weatherize equipment, increase grid reliability, and lessen the impact of

hurricanes, storms, heat, and cold, which my district has experienced due to power grid failures after severe storms. Additionally, this would lower long-term costs for taxpayers.

I also request \$90 million for the State Energy Program (SEP), which supports state-led energy planning, grid modernization, energy efficiency, and emergency preparedness initiatives. SEP leverages more than \$10 in non-federal investment for every federal dollar and delivers over \$7 in savings per dollar invested. In the Houston region, these funds would support energy efficiency retrofits in public buildings, expand electric vehicle infrastructure, strengthen cybersecurity and emergency response capabilities, and reduce energy costs for families while creating local jobs and lowering emissions.

Building on these investments, I also support the inclusion of report language that recommends \$65 million for outreach, development, and analysis for the Clean Cities Program. This initiative from the Department of Energy (DOE) has helped my district, the Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition (HGCCC), since 1996 to reduce air pollution by promoting and facilitating the use of alternative fuels, advanced vehicle technologies, and fuel conservation strategies throughout my district and city. I strongly support the inclusion of this language, as this program benefits both our region's air quality and economy.

Furthermore, I strongly support robust funding for carbon dioxide removal (CDR) technologies, including research, development, and demonstration of approaches such as direct air capture, enhanced mineralization, bioenergy with carbon capture and storage, ocean-based removal pathways, and carbon-storing construction materials. Continued investment in measurement,

monitoring, reporting, and verification is critical to ensure transparency and scientific integrity. I also support continuing the CDR Purchase Pilot Prize to accelerate innovation and commercialization.

I support the language report within the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to advance performance-based ratemaking, which shifts utility incentives away from capital-only investments and toward outcomes such as efficiency, reliability, and cost-effectiveness. This approach is critical as utility costs rise and reliability challenges persist during extreme weather.

Finally, I support the report language of Prohibiting USACE Communications Restrictions to ensure that none of the funds in the Act can be used to enforce or implement a policy requiring the Army Corps of Engineers to route all communications with Congress through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense. It also guarantees that Congress cannot be prevented from receiving basic factual information, such as budget details, reports, repair estimates, and project information. Additionally, I support the Report Language Recognizing Congressional Authority Over Water Projects to acknowledge that Congress alone has the authority under Article I of the Constitution to legislate, fund, and oversee the armed forces.

These requests reflect a comprehensive approach to strengthening our nation's energy and water infrastructure. They focus on making smart investments in innovation, improving reliability, and modernizing critical systems, while keeping costs and oversight in mind. Taken together, these priorities are intended to deliver real, measurable benefits for local communities, taxpayers, and working families of our nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my written testimony. I look forward to working with all Members of the Subcommittee to advance these priorities that are important not only to my district but also to working families, children, and taxpayers across our great nation.