

**OVERSIGHT OF THE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
**COMMITTEE ON  
OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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MAY 23, 2024  
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CONTACT NUMBER: 202-225-5051

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# OVERSIGHT OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Thursday, May 23, 2024

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
*Washington, D.C.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:02 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James Comer [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Comer, Grothman, Palmer, Higgins, Sessions, Biggs, Mace, Fallon, Donalds, Perry, Burchett, Fry, Luna, Burlison, Waltz, Raskin, Norton, Lynch, Krishnamoorthi, Bush, Brown, Frost, Lee of Pennsylvania, Casar, Tlaib, and Pressley.

Chairman COMER. The Committee on Oversight and Accountability will come to order.

I want to welcome everyone.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I now recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Madam Secretary, I want to thank you for being here today before the Committee. We are glad that you have returned safely after traveling to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates last week.

I am sure you were well-received abroad, but I hope the purpose of your trip was not to urge these foreign nations to boost their output of fossil fuels, especially while President Biden and his Administration, including you as Secretary of the Department of Energy, have taken several actions to make the United States less energy independent, including by trying to shut down American fossil fuel production.

President Biden and the Secretary should not be prioritizing foreign energy over American energy when we have the natural resources and producers to be energy independent. Unfortunately, the Biden Administration has pursued policies that have jeopardized economic opportunities, threatened U.S. energy security and national security, raised energy costs on Americans, and hurt American small businesses.

Today marks the Committee's 15th hearing at the full and subcommittee level during the 118th Congress, specifically related to the Biden Administration's American energy policies and burdensome regulations. Our oversight hearings have examined a range of topics, including energy efficiency standards, critical minerals,

nuclear energy, and the Administration's ban on liquified natural gas export permits to non-free trade agreement countries.

Decisions like the Department's ban on new liquified natural gas export permits are just the most recent example of how the Department has jeopardized our energy security, jobs, and producers.

According to the Center for LNG, increasing LNG exports provides great economic benefits, like bolstering labor incomes and lowering the cost of imported goods, thereby protecting consumers from inflation. Further, we know that increased U.S. LNG sent to Europe will safeguard the continent from reliance on Russian gas.

Rather than ask questions about the consequences of the LNG ban or other Administration policies, however, today, we will likely hear Committee Democrats demonize U.S. oil and gas producers.

While Democrats politicize energy and target American producers, average national gasoline prices surged on President Biden's watch to an all-time high, with an average national price of gas reaching more than \$5 a gallon in the summer of 2022. Congressional Republicans share a different vision for America's energy future. On March 30, 2023, the Republican Majority House passed H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, which would reform the permitting process, lower process for consumers, and help restore U.S. energy leadership for the world. And today, the Committee has released a report detailing the harms the Biden Administration policies have inflicted on American consumers and the U.S. economy, which I will enter into the record with unanimous consent.

Without objection, so ordered.

It is undeniable that gas prices are higher under the Biden Administration, with gas prices surging to over \$5 nationally in 2022 as a result of Biden Administration policies.

And as the Biden Administration rapidly overloads our grid with its electrification-at-all-costs push, American consumers face skyrocketing electricity prices. Electricity prices have risen faster than the pace of inflation and more so than any other commodity.

Our Committee's work in the 118th Congress has ranged from the Department's LNG ban, elimination of consumer choices for home appliances, historic depletion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and, of course, the waste of taxpayer dollars on the Secretary's now famous and disastrous 4-day summer 2023 electric vehicle road trip.

This work has expanded to include the Committee's government-wide investigation into the Chinese Communist Party's ongoing efforts to target, influence, and undermine every sector and community in the United States, including the energy sector.

But the Biden Administration's rhetoric on climate change and adoption of radical Green New Deal policies, specifically its electric vehicle mandates, play directly into China's hands.

Committee Republicans will continue to conduct oversight of government waste, fraud, and abuse. We will not stand by silently as the Biden Administration subverts America's energy independence and demonizes this critical industry.

I now yield to the Ranking Member for his opening remarks.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Thank you, Secretary Granholm, for joining us today. And I also hope that you are not traveling around the world promoting more fossil fuel combustion and use.

My colleagues had invited you here today to testify about President Biden's so-called war on energy, which we know does not exist. For better or worse, the United States is producing record high levels of oil and natural gas today. It has never been so high, so our colleagues can breathe easy if that is their principal interest.

At the same time, President Biden and the Department of Energy, in partnership with Democrats in Congress, are making historic and necessary investments in clean energy technology. Climate change is the defining crisis of our time, and we know that burning fossil fuels is, by far, the leading factor in contributing to climate change, a fact that fossil fuel companies knew about decades ago but suppressed.

Our recent joint staff report with the Senate Budget Committee showed the evolution of Big Oil's efforts to deceive the American public, from outright denial of the facts that they understood in the 1960s and 1970s, and then more up-to-date subtle propaganda and disinformation efforts today to try to lead us away from the solutions that we need.

Because of this deception, we have lost crucial decades in which we could have been systematically transitioning away from dirty, polluting fossil fuels to the cleaner alternative energies we need. Now we are forced to take much more dramatic actions to transition to clean energy as quickly as possible.

With every passing day, the consequences of climate change grow in intensity. In just the last week, we have learned, not only are the sea levels rising, not only are we seeing record forest fires, record drought, record flooding in different parts of the country, hurricanes of record velocity, but there is even greater disruption taking place to people's daily lives. There are swarms of mosquitoes in Harris County, Texas, in unprecedented numbers and sizes. The oceans are actually changing colors. We are in a very rapid downward descent because of climate change.

Researchers have found that the economic damage caused by climate change is six times worse than was previously predicted. A new paper estimates that just 1 degree Celsius of warming would cause the world's GDP to decline by 12 percent. We already hit more than 1 degree Celsius of warming since preindustrial times and are currently on track to hit 3 degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century.

We must break free from the carbon trap, which will require significant effort and investment into the clean energy transition. The Department of Energy, I believe, is doing that, thanks to funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Because of these historic investments the American people have made, the U.S. is on track by 2030 to double the amount of clean energy we generate and to cut emissions by 40 to 50 percent compared to 2005 levels.

The Administration's focus on clean energy has also spurred over \$400 billion of new investments in clean energy by private companies, about half of which is specifically being invested in manufacturing today. The U.S. economy has added 800,000 manufacturing

jobs since the start of this Administration, and the Inflation Reduction Act is anticipated to create more than 1.5 million jobs over the next decade. We have not had an unemployment rate this low in more than 50 years, and the clean energy economy plays a very important role in this economic renaissance.

Unlike my colleagues across the aisle who want to promote falsehoods about this imaginary war on energy, Democrats recognize that the transition to clean energy is not just good for our climate and good for our planet, but also good for our economy and good for our communities. Every single one of our districts is profiting right now from the benefits of projects funded by the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure legislation.

In fact, a company in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, in the good Chairman's district, is receiving \$480 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for sustainable battery manufacturing. Another company in Calvert City, Kentucky, also in the Chairman's district, which I use by way of illustration, is receiving up to \$35 million in Federal cost share under the Inflation Reduction Act to electrify and decarbonize its heating process.

This is taking place all over America today. This is happening now. These types of investments are significant and historic. They are exactly what we need to move away from the dangerous dependence on fossil fuels. And that is not a question of moral guilt. The whole society is implicated in it, but we have got to save ourselves from the implications of it.

I commend the work of the Biden-Harris Administration. I commend you, Madam Secretary, for everything you have been doing to ensure the United States is able to transition effectively away from dirty energy to clean energy while also making sure that our economy is strong.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

Today we are joined by the Honorable Jennifer Granholm, who was sworn into office on February 25, 2021, as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(g), the witness will please stand and raise her right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony that you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do.

Chairman COMER. Let the record show that the witness answered in the affirmative, and thank you.

We appreciate you being here today. Look forward to your testimony. Let me remind you, Madam Secretary, that we have read your written statement, and it will appear in full in the hearing record. Please limit your oral statement to 5 minutes.

As a reminder, please press the button on the microphone in front of you so it is on, and the Members can hear you. When you begin to speak, the light in front of you will turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow. When the red light comes on, your 5 minutes have expired. We would ask that you wrap up.

I now recognize Secretary Granholm for her opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JENNIFER GRANHOLM  
SECRETARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Secretary GRANHOLM. Great. Thank you so much.

Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the Committee, I am so proud to be here representing more than 100,000 talented, hardworking public servants who make up the Department of Energy.

Three years ago, I joined this Administration, believing that if America could come together around a national energy strategy, we could restore American manufacturing, we could create jobs, we could address the climate crisis and become energy independent and secure.

And today, we are doing just that. America is back. Thanks to Congress' efforts and the President's vision, we are executing a focused, deliberate strategy that positions our businesses to dominate, our workers to compete, and our communities to thrive. And it is working. We are rebuilding our manufacturing backbone.

Since the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, for example, companies have announced more than 600 new or expanded plants on American soil just for clean energy, hundreds of billions in planned investment, for batteries, for electric vehicles, solar, wind, nuclear and more; tens of thousands of jobs being created from the industrial Midwest to the industrious mid-Atlantic to the Southern battery belt to the Southwest sunbelt to the West Coast to the Gulf Coast.

By re-shoring and on-shoring manufacturing supply chains, we are also catching up to our global competitors. For example, right now, China possesses 65 percent of the world's lithium and 100 percent of its graphite, which are critical for 21st century technologies. But because of the President's investments, U.S. graphite production is expected to increase 25 fold by 2030. Lithium production is expected to increase 85 fold. And through it all, we have spurred a nationwide effort to modernize America's energy system, which will bring more clean power to more families at lower cost. For example, we are supporting the build-out of more than 600 miles of new transmission lines.

This strategy to strengthen America's energy security, to protect American jobs, and to save American families money is guiding our work across the Department. It is behind our successful usage of the Strategic Petroleum Reserves.

Our sales in the summer of 2022, kept Russia's weaponization of energy markets from hurting our consumers at the pump. And now, our replenishment strategy has almost finished restoring those supplies at a bargain for the taxpayer.

The strategy has also guided our energy efficiency rulemaking process. For example, last month, DOE finalized energy conservation standards for domestic power transformers that will increase their efficiency and competitiveness, while saving American steel jobs.

In short, Congress and the President have crafted a historic strategy to invest in America, and DOE is proud to help implement it. We recognize that we have been entrusted with unprecedented resources to do so, and that is why at every step of the way, we

are taking extra measures to protect the American taxpayer's investment, to meet the goals set forth by Congress, and to avoid potential for waste, fraud, and abuse.

We have set up new processes for our offices to coordinate on program designs so that we are eliminating redundancies, leveraging expertise across the Department, and learning from past experiences.

From day one, we have prioritized hiring specialists in project and program oversight, in grant management, in contracting, financial and audit oversight. And we regularly and proactively seek guidance from DOE's Office of Inspector General on how to best protect the integrity of our investments.

Our continued cooperation will be essential for keeping this momentum and building a stronger and safer future for the American people.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.

We will now begin our questions. We will begin with the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you for appearing before us today. We are going to be moving rather quickly today, so I am going to ask you to focus here.

Has the Department of Energy determined whether exporting LNG to our allies around the world is in the public interest, yes or no?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are in the middle of a study that is updating—

Mr. HIGGINS. We are in the middle of—

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. That is updating our assessment of what is in the public interest.

Mr. HIGGINS. Would that be a no?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are in the middle of updating our assessment.

Mr. HIGGINS. So, you have not yet determined?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It will be complete in the first quarter of next year.

Mr. HIGGINS. That would be a no, ma'am.

Please, let us not effort to filibuster each other. I asked you a simple question. Has the Department of Energy determined whether exporting LNG to our allies around the world is in the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. And I am answering in a simple way. We are in the middle of updating our assessment.

Mr. HIGGINS. That would be a no.

Have you made the touchdown? Have you got to the end zone? Well, we are working on it. We just got a first down.

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are in the middle of the play, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. That would be no, you have not made it to the end zone yet.

This is what we are dealing with, Mr. Chairman. We cannot get a straight answer out of this Administration.

We will see. You are on record today.

Why have you issued a long-term ban on export permit approvals prior to determining whether or not exporting LNG is within the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No. 1, we have not issued a ban. No. 2, it is not long-term. It is a pause to update our assessment. The assessment will be done by the first quarter of next year.

Mr. HIGGINS. Why have you issued the ban, according to your self-determination—

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is not a ban. It is not a ban, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. We are not going to get a straight answer out of you today, are we?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is not a ban, sir. That is a straight answer.

Mr. HIGGINS. It is a ban. What statutory authority do you claim to have to pause issuing permits—I will use your language—to pause issuing permits? What statutory authority?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The Natural Gas Act requires that we determine whether authorizations for export of liquified natural gas are in the public interest. We are determining what is in the public interest.

Mr. HIGGINS. Precisely. Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter into the record what I am about to read. Citing from Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act, Title 15, U.S. Code 717(b), under commerce and trade, Exportation or importation of natural gas; LNG terminals. Under paragraph (a), Mandatory authorization order, it says, and I quote, “The Commission shall issue such order upon application, unless, after opportunity for hearing, it finds”—not trying to find, in the process of finding, talking about finding, writing about finding—“it finds that the proposed exportation or importation will not be consistent with the public interest.”

Mr. Chairman, I ask that it be entered into the record.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. HIGGINS. In the Natural Gas Act, as I have just stated, it clearly states that you shall issue permits unless you find that it is not in the public interest, which has not yet happened. And yet you have issued—you have mandated a pause. You have not issued permits.

How can you pause permits and approvals if you have not determined that exporting LNG is or is not in the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are updating our assessment to make that exact determination, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. Is that your answer?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. That is your answer. I asked you how?

Secretary GRANHOLM. How? Because the act says unless—

Mr. HIGGINS. You say you are updating. You are updating.

Secretary GRANHOLM. The act says unless it is in the public interest.

Mr. HIGGINS. I have clearly stated, ma'am. The law requires you—does the law require you to issue permits unless you have determined that it is not in the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct.

Mr. HIGGINS. All right. Have you determined that it is not in the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is why we are doing the assessment.

Mr. HIGGINS. No, you have not.

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is why we are doing the assessment, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. And yet you have paused permits.

The Obama Administration conducted a study in 2014 and 2015. During that study, the DOE continued to process non-FTA export authorization applications while updating its studies.

You have precedent established by a former Democrat President in your Department that states that if you have pending applications that have been completed and are standing by, then you should move forward while you are in the process of not quite getting to the end zone on determining whether or not it is in the public interest.

It is clear to me that the American men and women around the country are watching today and that we recognize that you do not have the authority nor the precedents to take the actions that you have indeed taken.

This pause, Mr. Chairman, jeopardizes billions of dollars of interest, American jobs, American families, and a clean, reliable energy source that contributes to our national security and energy security and moral security for our allies. This is yet another illegal action by the Biden Administration being forced upon we the people.

Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields.

The Chair now recognizes Ranking Member Raskin from Maryland.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, welcome to the Oversight Committee.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Thank you.

Mr. RASKIN. And thank you for your great hard work on behalf of the American people.

And let me start with something that I mentioned before, which is we actually have record high production of gas and oil right now. Isn't that right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct.

Mr. RASKIN. Will you explain how that is measured and how that is monitored?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, we are—the oil and gas industry, we are record exporters of liquified natural gas. None of that has been stopped. We are the world's largest exporter of liquified natural gas. We are the world's largest producer of oil, crude oil, as well.

Mr. RASKIN. Yes. So, you are undertaking this public interest process that the very distinguished gentleman from Louisiana just invoked. You are in the middle of that process, and so you have paused in the LNG export permit process.

What effect will that actually have on LNG exports in the near and foreseeable future?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Thank you for the question, because it has absolutely no impact on any exports that are happening now. We have authorized 48 billion cubic feet of export of liquified natural gas, 48 billion. That is three times what we are currently exporting.

We are the largest exporter at 14 billion cubic feet. And, in addition to that, we have authorized another 22 that are under construction, 22 billion that are currently under construction.

The bottom line is so much has happened in terms of exports of liquified natural gas since the last assessment was done, we have exploded our authorizations.

So, this pause only applies to new ones coming down the pike. Everybody who is exporting now, everybody who is under construction, everybody who is authorized who does not have a final investment decision, all can proceed.

We are the biggest exporter. We will continue to be exporting. And it will not affect the jobs. It will not affect what is happening already in terms of exports.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, our colleague invites us to imagine that there is some kind of categorical ban on exports of liquified natural gas and that there is some sort of cutoff taking place. Is there a cutoff?

Secretary GRANHOLM. There is no cutoff. There is no cutoff. We have to do an assessment of what is in the public interest, given the huge amounts that we have authorized.

Mr. RASKIN. But that assessment is going forward. It is not about any of the projects that are currently taking place now, right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct. That is correct.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. So, we want to try to restore some sense of proportion and reality to the conversation. I know there is this effort to define your policies bizarrely as a war on energy. Can you just respond to that convoluted rhetorical claim?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, I think that the United States right now would be considered energy dominant. We are No. 1 in oil and gas. We are No. 1 in exports. And we are aggressively seeking to be larger in our deployment of renewable energy as well, which is what Congress has given us the authority to do.

So, we are an energy country, and we will remain an energy-exporting country even as we continue to deploy, deploy, deploy renewable energy for use at home.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. The ex-President just went before a whole bunch of oil and gas executives and essentially demanded that they give his campaign a billion dollars because he was going to release a rash of regulations reversing climate progress and reversing the policies of your Administration.

He promised to auction off more leases for oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and has been repeatedly chanting at rallies "drill, baby, drill."

What would happen to our climate goals if we actually undertook to reverse all of the progress made under the Biden-Harris Administration?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, obviously, we want to get to net zero by 2050 as a Nation, but also in conjunction with all other nations on the planet who are seeking to address climate change for the reasons that you stated in your opening statement, in terms of the number of extreme weather events, which costs us so much more than addressing climate change costs us.

Mr. RASKIN. Yes.

Secretary GRANHOLM. In the end, we have to—we have a responsibility to our citizens.

Mr. RASKIN. As Secretary of Energy, do you think climate denialism is dangerous to the future of our country?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Of course, it is. It is dangerous to us as humans. It is dangerous to our economy as well. The opportunity in clean energy is enormous across the country, so—

Mr. RASKIN. And I remember there was a time when the Secretary of Energy would appear to be at odds with the Secretary of the EPA and the people working on environment, but tell us about the inside of the Administration.

You have these record levels of gas and oil production and other renewable energies moving forward, but do you see your job as opposed to the job of the people who are working to preserve our climate?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Not at all. We work in conjunction with the Department of Interior, the EPA. We work together. And we want to make sure that we are producing energy enough to keep the lights on and to keep people moving, but we do it in the cleanest way possible. And we can do both.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, thank you for your hard work.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Sessions from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Secretary, welcome. We are delighted that you are here. We have had a series of days where, on both sides, we ask leading-edge questions, expect leading-edge answers. And on a bipartisan basis, we are delighted that you are here.

I spent the last 10 minutes hearing about how great of a job that the Secretary is doing in education. Tell me about LIHEAP's dumping billions of gallons of crude oil into the Northeast every year. And—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Did you say LIHEAP?

Mr. SESSIONS. LIHEAP.

Secretary GRANHOLM. The Low-Income Heating—

Mr. SESSIONS. Right. It uses diesel. That is the Federal Government's low-income opportunity and answer to keep people warm, poor people. 2008, a spike happened. We are putting an increasing amount of money into this. We are dumping billions of gallons of home heating fuel into the Northeast rather than going to a clean solution.

So, you are talking about all these great things that happen, but this government, for the last 4 years, and President Obama dumped billions of gallons of home heating fuel into the air. And yet you are sitting here talking about what a threat all this is that the energy companies are doing.

Why don't you tell us about LIHEAP.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, LIHEAP keeps the lights on for poor families.

Mr. SESSIONS. I know it does.

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is a really important safety net—

Mr. SESSIONS. I know it is.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. For poor people.

Mr. SESSIONS. So, what have you done to turn that needle around—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, let me tell you.

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. When you are trying to take care—when you want to ban natural gas?

Secretary GRANHOLM. What we want to do is to make sure that poor families have the same ability to—

Mr. SESSIONS. Oh, I agree with that.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. Weatherize their homes, for example, as wealthy people. So, one of the programs that is under our jurisdiction—

Mr. SESSIONS. Natural gas is far cheaper.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. Is weatherization. Natural gas is cheap right now. You are very correct about that.

Mr. SESSIONS. And it has been.

Secretary GRANHOLM. But what I am saying—

Mr. SESSIONS. And it is cleaner, which is your main thesis.

All right, Madam Secretary, I would like to go next, and I want to talk about Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Program. And this was designed as an opportunity that Congress gave the Secretary authority and money to innovate for ultra-efficient vehicles.

And yet it should contain, based upon the scenarios and the ratios, almost anybody that would qualify, based upon their ratio of making cleaner energy. And yet I see where over and over your department is going on the side of EV as opposed to other ideas.

Yet we know that electronic vehicles—just ask Avis and Hertz—they cannot even get rid of them. The diminishing value, the loss of jobs, the amount of problems that come with these. And yet I see your department giving money, loans, entirely to EV projects as opposed to others that may qualify also.

Could you please talk about that? You got a minute, 47 seconds, ma'am.

Secretary GRANHOLM. OK. The ATVM Program, through the Loan Programs Office, was directed by Congress. And so, yes, it is encouraging the development of technologies and businesses who are building batteries or who are extracting the critical minerals and processing them for batteries so that the United States is not beholden to other countries but that we are building our own energy security here in this Nation. That is the intent of the Loan Program Office in the vehicle space.

Mr. SESSIONS. And the amount of percentages or amount given to EV as opposed to other competing ideas?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, that particular program is designated largely for advanced vehicles. And so, advanced vehicles—

Mr. SESSIONS. These would be advanced vehicles. These would be people who have offered a loan that is not EV.

Secretary GRANHOLM. It might be a fuel cell, for example.

Mr. SESSIONS. It could be.

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are also interested in that. We are not foreclosing any of that. We are looking at emissions reductions.

Mr. SESSIONS. Good. Well, I would like to followup with you and, politely, to ask that you provide me the information about the

amount of people who have brought, under this vehicle program, manufacturing program, ultra vehicles, and to find out what percent that you have given and the amount of money to EVs versus other applicants that may have come under that, saying for a vehicle, not a battery, for the vehicle. And I would appreciate knowing that.

And I want to thank you for taking time with us today, and we will be following up on this LIHEAP issue to find out specifically what DOE thinks about this hundreds of billions of gallons of diesel being put—spewed into the Northeast on an annual basis.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Norton from Washington, DC.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, in the time since President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, communities across the country are already benefiting from historic investments in clean energy and climate resilience.

In fact, right here in the District of Columbia, that I represent, the Inflation Reduction Act is enabling the General Services Administration to upgrade Federal Government buildings from fossil fuel steam power to electric heat pump technology. The upgrades to the Ronald Reagan Building and the International Trade Center alone will strengthen our climate future and are expected to save more than \$6.2 million in taxpayer dollars every year.

So, Secretary Granholm, how are projects like this one transforming communities across the country?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are very interested in all projects that are community-based, by the way, that reduce costs for people. And so, whether it is energy efficiency or the generation of clean energy and giving people the ability to take control of their own energy future, in partnership with communities and on an individual basis. So, we are all in on all manner of efficiency and energy and supporting communities in doing so.

Ms. NORTON. Both the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are critical investments in our country's future. Within the first year of the Inflation Reduction Act's enactment, we added 170,000 new jobs in clean energy and climate resilience, with a projection of more than 1.5 million additional new jobs over the next decade.

Secretary Granholm, how has President Biden's investing in America's energy created new jobs and opportunities across the country, including the energy sector?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. To your point, so far it is about 800,000 jobs that have been created as a result of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, with the projection that it will be 1.5 million.

We have created over 15 million jobs. Over 15 million jobs have been created since this President took office, more than any President in any term in American history. And part of that has to do with the focus on clean energy and the opportunity that it brings to employ people.

Ms. NORTON. According to the Department of Energy, because of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,

by 2030 we are projected to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent at 2005 levels. It is also projected that clean energy electricity will account for 80 percent of the power generation by 2030, compared with 42 percent in 2022. In addition, President Biden's leadership will help families save up to \$38 billion in electricity bills by the end of the decade.

So, Secretary Granholm, how have the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law enabled the Department of Energy to invest in clean energy and fossil fuel alternatives?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The statistics that you cite are so wonderful because they happen to be accurate. And that 40 percent reduction in CO2 emissions, it is actually 40 to 50 percent, if you include what the private sector is doing and what other states are doing.

What these laws have done, is enabled both the Federal Government but also the private sector to really do the investments, because they have contained carrots. And we are all about the carrots at the Department of Energy.

So, the grants from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the tax credits from the Inflation Reduction Act have created an environment where America has become the irresistible Nation for investment in clean energy. We are the envy of other nations for having been so forward-leaning on creating jobs here. So, it is a very exciting time for both responsiveness to addressing climate change but also creating jobs in America.

Ms. NORTON. I am proud we passed the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and I am thankful for the Biden Administration's leadership in addressing the climate crisis and securing our country's energy future.

And I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Biggs from Arizona.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary, thank you for being here.

When you talked about net zero by 2050, you are talking, essentially, about eliminating all hydrocarbon-based fuel. Is that correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Net zero suggests that it is also using some hydrocarbon-based fuel, but it has been decarbonized.

Mr. BIGGS. Can you name the benefits of fossil fuel, in and of itself?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Can I name—

Mr. BIGGS. As an energy source.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, it is dense. And it keeps the lights on, keeps transportation going. It is an important part of our energy mix.

Mr. BIGGS. It is cheap, it is reliable, it is abundant, it is predictable, it is distributable, right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It's all of that, and it needs to be cleaned.

Mr. BIGGS. And so, when you have benefits to—the overall benefits, when you talk about net zero and when my climate friends, they do not really include the personal benefits or the economic benefits.

Can you name some economic benefits that come from fossil fuels?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, clearly, our economy has been built upon fossil fuels. Our economy is driven by fossil fuels. But fossil fuels have also created an enormous problem, which is climate change, and that is impacting individuals and economies too. So, let us clean it up.

Mr. BIGGS. Let us talk about some other things. With fossil fuels, you saw dramatic increase over the last 130 years of longevity and mortality rates. Is that correct? That is true, right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, yes.

Mr. BIGGS. You also saw a dramatic increase in sanitation and health impacts that were good, right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, I would not know that I would attribute that directly to fossil fuels, but yes, we have seen an increase in longevity, increase in health.

Mr. BIGGS. So, most—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Maybe despite.

Mr. BIGGS. With the number of petroleum-based products that you have out there, it affects virtually every aspect of your life, whether it is what you are wearing, your health apparatuses that you use. All of those come from petroleum-based products, right?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Petroleum-based products impact every aspect of our economy.

Mr. BIGGS. So, PJM Interconnection, the Nation's largest grid operator, released a report finding that the amount of generation retirement appears to be more certain than the timely arrival of replacement generation resources.

What they are really getting at there, is that we are reducing reliable energy resources before reliable sources come online. And that is really what we see happening, and that's the anticipation. That is why some states talk about rolling brownouts that are coming their way. They are very concerned about that, as am I.

Let us talk for just a second about electric vehicles, if we can. So, the funding came in the IRA, and the Federal budget estimated—let me get this right here.

In the 117th Congress, we passed the IRA. My Democrat colleagues did, anyway. And they provided—CBO and JCT estimated that the eliminate spending and tax breaks would cost around \$400 billion by moving to electric vehicles, commercial electric vehicles, heavy duty electric vehicles, tax credit for residential charging equipment, and \$3 billion for postal fleet electrification. They estimated that would have a net of \$400 billion cost.

Since that bill has passed, now for those same programs, the estimate is that the subsidies will be \$1.1 trillion over the same period of time.

Now, of that, \$7.5 million was generated for a nationwide electric vehicle charging infrastructure. And yet it has been reported that we now have four charging stations, I believe it is, and that was reported by NBC.

Does that sound accurate to you?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No, it does not.

Mr. BIGGS. Well, tell me how many new charging facilities do we have? I am sorry, seven? Seven. There has been seven built in four states.

Secretary GRANHOLM. So, let me just explain this. The National Electric Vehicle Initiative required states to develop a plan in order to be eligible for that \$7.5 billion. All states did. We approved all of those plans. All of the funding has been released to the states. These are all state programs.

So now, 36 states have released solicitations to be able to build out those charging stations. Twenty-two states have announced awards. There will be an additional 2,000 stations built by the end of 2024. That is the plan.

Mr. BIGGS. But you are guaranteeing that there is going to be 2,000 EV stations.

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is what we forecast.

Mr. BIGGS. That is your forecast. And the result is, you are putting those in—the taxpayers are putting those in. All of these are taxpayer subsidized. And yet Ford cannot even sell their cars. Most of these lots cannot sell—and I would like introduced into the record the article where Ford is announcing massive losses of \$1.3 billion, that they are losing, on an average, \$132,000 for every EV that they sell.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary. Good to see you. Thank you for all your good work.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Thank you.

Mr. LYNCH. Just really quick on LIHEAP. Look, LIHEAP, the reason we have to give people low income—excuse me, low-cost heating oil is because a lot of poor folk have oil-fired furnaces, right? That is why we are doing that.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, unfortunately. But that is why we are working so hard to weatherize and to update people's homes so that they do not—

Mr. LYNCH. Exactly. We have a whole—and we are working with the gas company, actually, to try to modernize some of these furnaces and make it a cleaner energy source. So, I appreciate the work you are doing on that.

Really interested in re-shoring some of the energy supply chain back to the United States. There is a grant that we put in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that allows battery material. So, EV batteries, all the components that go into that, we want to bring that home.

So, right now, there is one U.S. company that is competing for that grant. They are headquartered in my district, the Cabot Corporation, but they do all their manufacturing in Texas and in Michigan. So that is where the jobs would be created.

But they do great work. They are the only U.S. company bidding for this. And I just want to, you know, put a stake in the ground, put a flag in the ground on that for you to take a good hard look at that. It has been a while. It has been a while.

Secretary GRANHOLM. What is the name of the company?

Mr. LYNCH. Cabot Corporation. And they are a U.S.-based company. They do their work here. And they create carbon nanotubes

and other things that go inside these batteries. So, I am just flagging that for you if you could look at that.

Third, so, we—myself, Mr. Connolly, and some others, Mr. Raskin—put in \$3 billion for the post office to electrify their fleet. The post office has something like 237,000 vehicles. It is the second largest—after Department of Defense, they are the second largest owner of vehicles in the United States. We put \$3 billion to help them convert to electric vehicles.

I talked to Postmaster General DeJoy. He is doing it as fast as he can, but, you know, they are doing what the resources that we gave them. And we need to do this faster.

When you think about—this is a wonderful opportunity for us to accelerate and amplify the use of electric vehicles. Think about the pattern in which the post office uses their vehicles. They charge them overnight. They use them in the morning. They deliver during the day, and then they come back and charge overnight. Those charging stations, if we had charging stations at every post office that were available to the public completely during the day—and post offices are everywhere, everywhere.

So, there is an opportunity here, but we have got to deploy the charging stations. They are close to everybody's homes. We have, you know, general mail facilities that could house hundreds of these charging stations. We could use them for our postal fleet overnight when nobody is using them, and then we could offer them to the public, perhaps, during the day. And it would—I just think it would give a real boost to the use of EVs, the ease of which needs to be enhanced.

Your thoughts on that.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, 100 percent. We are interested in seeing 500,000 charging stations across the country at all locations that are easy, but even in some of the locations where you have not seen a big uptake in electric vehicles, like in rural areas, which is why postal services are everywhere and they are a great example of what we would like to see happen.

We have now, 180,000 charging stations across the country, 180,000. The goal is to get to 500,000 by 2030. And the private sector has stepped up a lot, but that is why the states are looking to fill in the gaps where charging stations do not exist. Every 50 miles along transportation corridors, for example.

Mr. LYNCH. Great. Thank you. I have 45 seconds left.

So, there is a program that we are bidding on in New England. It is called Power Up New England. So, it is a combination with us and all Massachusetts and all the other New England states. It would allow us to repurpose Brayton Point and one of the other power plants in our area in southeastern Massachusetts and connect them to the wind turbines that we have got going offshore.

So, it is a joint program. We have got facilities in southern Connecticut, Maine, northern Maine. And that is really, really, really important to us if we are going to convert—you know, that is a heavily populated area, New England, and we have got to upgrade our grid.

So, that is the Power Up New England program that Eversource and others are pushing. So, just ask you to take a good hard look at that as well.

Secretary GRANHOLM. OK.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your courtesy, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Perry from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary, I appreciate you being here answering questions for us.

I have got a letter here from the PJM regarding the Brandon Shores Power facility in Anne Arundel County, and I am just going to read from it.

According to the PJM Interconnection spokesman, “the PJM region and the state of Maryland are facing future reliability challenges as a result of the announced retirement of Brandon Shores unit specifically. PJM analysis showed that the deactivation of the Brandon Shores unit would cause severe voltage drop and thermal violations across seven PJM zones, which would lead to widespread reliability risk in Baltimore and the immediate surrounding area.”

So, let me make that plain for everybody. Brandon Shores, owned by Talen Energy, has entered into an agreement with the Sierra Club to not produce power, to not produce power. And so, the PJM, which operates in multiple states and schedules the power from various facilities, is asking that that agreement be held in abeyance until a reliable source can be built. But they are not going to do that.

The only thing that is going to save Baltimore from blacking out, from going without power, right, is an emergency designation from the Secretary and the Department of Energy. There is not enough time. Even if we wanted to build it—and we do not.

And let me be clear here. The alternative is that Pennsylvania, where I live, provides the power, and our land is taken by eminent domain to send the power to Baltimore, who has a perfectly functioning power plant right now in Anne Arundel County, but because of the agreement, they are going to shut it down.

So, my two questions to start with for this are, is the Department of Energy in support of these type of agreements between the Sierra Club—like this—between the Sierra Club and Talen Energy to shut down plants, No. 1?

And, No. 2, are you committed to the emergency declaration that is going to be required when the plant shuts down for over a million customers to have power and live in the 21st century?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, I am not familiar with that agreement. I would have to take a look at it. We certainly want to make sure that power stays on and that we add additional power to make sure that there is enough for people. So that is why we’re working so hard to ensure that we are deploying clean energy solutions.

Mr. PERRY. OK. Well, ma’am, I have the letter. I assure you it is real. And it is dated December 5th of 2023. So, it is not new. It is not a new concept. This is coming.

And so, assuming—let us just do it this way. I do not want to assume on your behalf. But assuming this is valid—you can see the logo up there. I will have it entered into the record. I will stake my reputation on what the PJM has offered.

Assuming that is correct, are you willing to commit to an emergency declaration so that the lights and the power can stay on for a million customers? It is going to require the Department of Energy.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We are always willing to exercise emergency authority if lights are going out.

Mr. PERRY. Do you think it is fair that the people of Pennsylvania have to watch their land chewed up to send power to Baltimore when they have got a perfectly well-operating facility? Is that fair that we do that?

And the facility can be transitioned. It is coal now. I know everybody hates coal. I do not, but a lot of people do. I am sure there are scrubbers on the plant. And the requirements just keep on increasing, such that the plant can no longer remain viable economically under the conditions that the Federal Government has set.

But is it fair that Pennsylvania then has to provide the power and the transmission across its land for Baltimore?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I think there are other solutions, though. I think that the notion that we are not able to—

Mr. PERRY. I think there are too, and I hope we can pursue them. I hope we can pursue them. I appreciate that, Madam Secretary.

In the little bit of time I have left, as Representative Biggs talked about, the loss of money to the car companies. Ford is delaying introduction of its all-new electric SUV. It lost \$130,000 on every EV. The division will lose \$5.5 billion in 2024. Tesla saw an 8.5 percent decline in deliveries. GM lost \$1.7 billion in Q4 of 2023.

This is all happening at taxpayer expense. The increase in EV usage and sales is wholly by the Federal Government, right? It is not because of the private sector. Private sector is actually declining.

And so, with that, while you are here, as a current Cabinet Secretary, would you commit to saying on the record that you will not support a bailout of the car companies once we bankrupt them, once these policies bank—because that is where we are headed, ma'am. We have already done this before. It cost us \$81 billion in 2014.

What will you commit to today regarding the car companies that are going to go bankrupt based on these requirements from the Federal Government?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The car companies do not say they are going bankrupt.

Mr. PERRY. When they do. When they do.

Secretary GRANHOLM. They are excited about the trajectory of electric vehicle sales into the future.

Mr. PERRY. They do not seem excited to me from—

Secretary GRANHOLM. They are continuing with their plans. They may have slowed them a little, but they are continuing with their plans to build electric vehicles.

Mr. PERRY. Because they are forced to by the Federal Government.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Because there is a 30 percent increase year over year in demand for electric vehicles.

Mr. PERRY. Only by the Federal Government, ma'am, Madam Secretary.

Secretary GRANHOLM. By individuals out there who want to save money as they drive.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman's time has expired.

Before I recognize Ms. Bush, did you have something, gentleman, you were wanting to enter into the record?

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to enter this order from the PJM, must produce power, to Brandon Shores and Talen Energy.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Now the Chair recognizes Ms. Bush from Missouri.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, it is good to see you again. And thank you so much for speaking with me at length when you were in the St. Louis area the last time about these issues.

St. Louis and I are here today to discuss the climate crisis, of course, and the need for clean energy, as well as the devastating impact of nuclear waste created and completely abandoned by the Federal Government that continues to devastate my community to this day. And we know you were not in the seat at the time. I just want to say that.

Secretary, as you know, Black and Brown communities are on the front lines of the climate crisis, and we have been the most impacted by the failure of the government to clean up toxic waste. And also, it is essential that, while we prioritize the transition to clean energy, we also address the legacy of the pollution in our communities.

World War II is still killing people in my district. For over 80 years, we have been grappling with the nuclear contamination left over from the Manhattan Project, particularly in Coldwater Creek, which is a main waterway central to our community, as well as West Lake Landfill.

In March of this year, the Senate passed legislation that would reauthorize the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, or better known as RECA, which provides health screenings and compensation for people sickened by the U.S. testing of nuclear weapons, as well as expanded to include St. Louis and other areas that have been historically excluded.

But now we are running out of time in the House. RECA is currently set to expire on June 7. We only have four legislative days left.

Secretary Granholm, do you support the reauthorization of RECA?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you.

Could you tell us what impact would a lapse in RECA cause on our victims?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, I think it is critical that the United States take responsibility for the fallout of its activities in World War II on humans, no matter where they are. And, unfortunately, in a lot of our cleanup communities, it takes a long time to eradi-

cate all remnants of radiation. So, we have a responsibility as a Nation, and I hope we live up to that responsibility.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. And thank you for listening when you and I had such a deep conversation about this and thank you for your desire for action.

I know that if we do not extend and expand RECA, victims will continue to suffer. And I have seen my community members—I actually know some who have died.

But while RECA is key to making our communities whole, we also must do the work to actually cleanup the waste. I recognize that a lot of the cleanup has been dumped on the Army Corps, but I would like to ask you about this as well.

We often hear a lot about the purported benefits of nuclear energy, painting it as the clean alternative to fossil fuels. Madam Secretary, how is the Department ensuring that the new waste by nuclear energy is handled and disposed of properly?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, thank you for that question. We are in the middle of a site-based process, a community-based siting process for nuclear waste.

Currently, as you are aware, civil nuclear waste is largely stored around those plants, which is safe, but it would be very helpful to the United States to have a national repository of nuclear waste that is safe.

We are in the process of this consent-based siting effort. There has been 12 entities that have been funded to reach out to communities who are potentially going to raise their hand and to decide how to compensate those communities for doing that service for our Nation.

That process is in the middle. It will take—it takes a bit of time. We are modeling it after a couple of other nations that did the same thing. It takes a bit of time to ensure that we get it right. But we are in the process of doing that, and we hope that will come out with a community or communities that are willing to do that.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. Thank you. So—and I appreciate that, that the community is also involved in these decisions. That is really important.

When we spoke in person during your visit to the St. Louis area, we spoke about the cleanup specifically in St. Louis. And, as you know, the Army Corps is the cleanup administrator for these sites.

Madam Secretary, how can I work with you to followup on your commitment to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to get a jobs training program funded by DOE to train members of our community to expedite the cleanup of the Manhattan project waste throughout my district?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Let us, you and I, followup on that together.

Ms. BUSH. OK. OK. I sincerely appreciate the Department of Energy's efforts to ensure that this cleanup happens. And communities like mine, the people depend on it. So, thank you for your work, and I look forward to working with you.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Burchett from Tennessee.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary, Tennessee is a massive hub for nuclear energy. Is the Biden Administration supportive of new nuclear deployment, especially the small modular reactors?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are, and we—

Mr. BURCHETT. Can you tell me how you all are helping with that deployment?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We thank very much Congress' funding in the 1924 budget for small modular reactors, as well as the approval to be able to advance nuclear reactors, different designs. We have got about \$12 billion that we are funding nuclear, writ large, including the uranium strategy and the HALEU strategy that will be the fuel for the small modular reactors.

Mr. BURCHETT. Can you give me a timeline? They keep telling me 10 years before those are rolled out, and that was about 5 years ago.

Secretary GRANHOLM. I sure hope not. I know the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved a design of one of the small modular reactors and others that are in the mix. That is the first step, of course.

But we are eager to partner with utilities, the tech community who are, obviously, going to be needing clean baseload power and could have small modular reactors attached to, for example, data centers. That kind of strategy, we are very—

Mr. BURCHETT. Do you have a timeline? Could you give me a date where—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, if—

Mr. BURCHETT. [continuing]. They will turn the switch on one of these?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Here is what we would like to see, is that the utilities step up to be able to do this—

Mr. BURCHETT. All right.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. Because it is the utilities who want to—but we are—it is certainly not the Federal Government that is holding it back.

Mr. BURCHETT. Let me switch gears. What is the responsibility of the Federal Protective Services within the Nuclear Security Administration?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Are you talking about transporting fuels?

Mr. BURCHETT. No, ma'am. I want you to speak—I was going to followup with the numerous reports by the Federal Protective Services officers describing suspicious occurrences of UAPs over nuclear facilities.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Let me just say, the Defense Department has said there is no evidence of UFOs, et cetera, or aliens in the United States. However, at those sites, there may be drones that may be nefarious. And so, we are definitely looking at that and making sure that our national security sites are protected.

We have a whole program related to counter—countering drones that may be coming from areas—

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. Well, this is not about drones, and this is prior to drones, even.

What protocols does the Department of Energy have for reporting and responding to any UAP sightings near nuclear infrastructure?

And people joke about this, but I get a lot of questions about this, concerning this and about this hearing today from my constituents. So, I would appreciate you answering that if there are any protocols.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, certainly there are protocols whenever we see anything unusual around our nuclear sites or our national security sites writ large.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. We will switch gears. The proper use of the reserve—is the proper use of the reserve, the strategic petroleum reserve in particular, considering its intended purpose is to provide an emergency stockpile of crude oil to protect against significant supply distributions from more natural disasters? Is that the proper use of that reserve?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. Should the U.S. face—say the U.S. were to face an actual military threat. How would you describe our ability to respond to extreme energy disruptions?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We would have an ability to respond. We have the largest reserve in the world right now.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. What is your strategy to help lower the prices at the gas pump without robbing our emergency reserves? It seems we do these things around election times, and both parties are guilty here.

Secretary GRANHOLM. No. The reason why barrels were sold from the strategic petroleum reserve in 2022 is because Russia invaded Ukraine, and there was a disruption in global supply. That emergency caused the President to release barrels so that he could temper that global supply disruption, including asking our allies from around the world to do the same, which they did.

Mr. BURCHETT. How many of our military bases in Europe depend on or utilize Russian energy?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Our bases in Europe?

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, ma'am.

Secretary GRANHOLM. I am not aware.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. Good deal. Under your leadership, the Department of Energy has targeted gas stoves, washing machines, refrigerators, and clothes dryers based on what was called unquantified benefits related to climate and public health.

How do you balance the meager unquantified benefits of these rules with the massive cost burdens imposed on American manufacturers and consumers?

Secretary GRANHOLM. First of all, they are quantified. Americans will save \$2 trillion in energy savings because their appliances are more efficient. We are required to do that under—

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, ma'am. But poor folks have to—when they do this, they have to buy these things. I think we are taking that—and I know the corporations love it when you all put these new rules and regulations in, ma'am, but I really wished we had a little more time, and I wish you would show up when we ask you to. I think that shows a lot of arrogance.

And Tennesseans are reminded of this leadership every time they go to the pump, and you all should be ashamed, I think, for your lack of accountability to Congress by not showing up when

you are asked. I mean, we had to threaten you with a subpoena just to get you all here.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Ms. Brown from Ohio.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Granholm, it is great to see you again. I am glad we had a chance to hear about, a couple of weeks ago, the Biden-Harris Administration's historic efforts to invest in diverse and disadvantaged communities as a result of the Inflation Reduction Act, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the CHIPS and Science Act, which I was proud to help pass these bills into law under the leadership of Speaker Pelosi and President Biden, which are already making a difference in the communities across the country, including my district.

Last year, the East Cleveland City School District received \$100,000 under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to make critical energy upgrades to lower energy use and costs, improve indoor air quality, and promote healthier learning environments. I would like to thank you firsthand for that investment in Ohio's 11th congressional District.

Now, Secretary Granholm, can you share with us the size and scale of the investments the Biden-Harris Administration has been implementing since these laws were passed and, specifically, how they have brought investment and opportunity to disadvantaged low-income and marginalized communities?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Great. Thank you so much for the question and thank you for raising the Renew America's Schools program.

Way oversubscribed, I will say. If Congress has anything to consider into the future, we need to provide more school districts and disadvantaged communities the ability to upgrade their schools because it was so successful. The Department of Energy, under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, is responsible for about \$98 billion worth of funds to be able to make our Nation more energy independent and more—and have our energy run cleaner.

We have, as a result, given out grants, and they have taken advantage of tax credits, too, to companies that are producing the products to get us there. As we give out grants, we want to make sure that all communities benefit. So, we require, for any business that is seeking a grant, to do a community benefits agreement, so that shows how they are employing the local community, how they are benefiting the local community, and it is an agreement. So, we are monitoring, and we are enforcing those agreements.

And as a result, we are seeing that double the amount of job creation and benefits are going to disadvantaged communities than the rest of the population relative to size. So, we are excited about that, and we are excited about—thank you—the incentives that have been built into the tax credits to locate in disadvantaged communities, because that, too, is causing great—you know, much more investment in communities that might not have seen it otherwise.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you so much. And as we continue our transition to a clean energy economy, I want to touch on one point in the National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization, which you

put forward, along with Ohio's 11th's very own Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Marcia Fudge, and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan.

This blueprint highlights the need for investments and expansion of electric vehicle charging stations. These stations must be constructed, distributed, and built equitably, prioritizing low-income and underserved communities. Since nearly every major auto manufacturer, from GM to Ford to Jeep, has plans to expand and convert to fully electric fleets within the next decade, along with other vehicles, like school buses and postal vans, we cannot leave these communities behind with this vital aspect of energy security and access to transportation.

So, Secretary Granholm, can you speak to how the Biden-Harris Administration is supporting construction of charging stations for marginalized communities?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Thank you so much. The \$7.5 billion that Congress approved under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for charging includes a significant component to go to communities that do not have access to charging right now, particularly in cities, particularly poor communities, particularly rural communities, places where the private sector has not yet built out charging stations.

And so, the challenge for all of that—so, for example, if it is in a dense, urban environment, where do you put the chargers, what if people do not have garages or access to a garage, what if they are in an apartment building? All of those questions, as a business model, we are trying to figure out how to incentivize access to charging stations in an easy way.

Of course, putting them in parking lots that are available to the public is one thing, but along street parking, can you create chargers that you pull down from the street lamps, for example? Are there other ways, creative ways to use technology to be able to give people access to charging?

So, the bottom line is, we want charging to be ubiquitous, we want it to be accessible by everybody.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you so much. Even my Republican colleagues who did not vote for these groundbreaking bills continue to take credit for the investments they are bringing to every corner and every sector of our country and economy. This is a testament to the value and need for these unprecedented and historic Biden-Harris and democratic-led investments in the American people, the economy, and our future.

And with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Donalds from Florida.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, real quick, on January 18, 2024, House Oversight held a hearing called "The Next Generation: Empowering America's Nuclear Energy." I submitted several questions to be answered at a later date. The NRC and FERC have both responded, but the DOE has not.

Do you have a commitment—are you going to commit to responding to my questions over the next 30 days?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I am not sure about over the next 30 days, but definitely we will commit to responding to your questions. I know it's in a review process. But we are also happy to sit and— with you in person and brief, too, on answers, but it is in a review process right now.

Mr. DONALDS. Madam Secretary, this was January. It is now May. You have got four or five people sitting behind you. What other review process do you need to answer just one Member's questions from Congress?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, believe it or not, it is beyond them.

Mr. DONALDS. Oh, I know it is beyond them. Let us move on. Let us talk spent nuclear fuel.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. DONALDS. We have roughly 88 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel. For the people watching this hearing, it basically takes up the size of one Olympic pool.

Many countries, including France, one of our great friends and partners around the globe, they have invested in recycling spent nuclear fuel now, and the amount of spent nuclear fuel we have in the United States, we could power the United States for roughly 400 years.

Is the DOE actually going through and exploring recycling spent nuclear fuel rods instead of the constant conversation and dogma about nuclear waste that is present in the United States? Do you think recycling spent rods is actually in the Nation's interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do. And we are looking at that, and I am excited that you are interested in it as well, because I think that is a program that we should continue to fund.

Mr. DONALDS. All right. So, when you say "interested," what does that mean?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It means we have got labs that are working on the research related to it. I know that we have funded a couple of companies as well that are also doing that.

We think that it is an important aspect of how we deal with nuclear waste.

Mr. DONALDS. OK. All right. Good. I want to followup with you on that because we should be using all that stuff at our disposal.

I am glad that my colleague from Tennessee, Mr. Burchett, spent time with you talking about modular reactors and micro reactors, so I am not going to go down that line. I think it is important for the American people to understand that the future of baseload power in the United States, everything from AI Quantum, digital assets, to our current needs from an energy apparatus, we are going to need massive amounts of baseload power.

And wouldn't you agree that solar panels and wind turbines are not going to be able to fulfill that need?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, if you add batteries, they become more baseload-like. But certainly, I am not saying that one has to be at the expense of another. I think both can happen.

Mr. DONALDS. Secretary, I think you would agree that battery technology really has not changed that much since the Duracell. And even the capacity has not changed that much.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Oh, it has. Sir, it really has.

Mr. DONALDS. I think you would agree with that.

Secretary GRANHOLM. We can have a conversation about that. It definitely has changed.

Mr. DONALDS. All right. I want to go back to a colleague—what the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins, because he went down a line of questioning with you about the Administration's pause on liquid natural gas.

For decades, the Department of Energy's position on liquefied natural gas has been that it is safe, it is clean, and it is actually in the Nation's interest for it to be procured and then also used in the United States and, obviously, transported and traded around the globe.

In short, what has changed at the Department of Energy?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The only thing that has changed is that the volumes that have increased so much, we need to take another look. It is not that the ones that have been approved are not in the Nation's interests. They were, and they are, and they are going to continue to operate.

It is the question of how much more new expansion and what will be the impact in the United States. So, if we export our natural gas, what does that do for—if we export—we produce right now about 100 BCF of natural gas, a little bit more. If we export the amount that is authorized currently, which is 48 BCF—that is about half—what does that do to prices at home? That is a question.

Mr. DONALDS. Let me ask you this question: Do you believe that just in basic supply and demand, that more supply in the market actually decreases prices? And wouldn't a decreased price actually be to the benefit of the public interest?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Oh, for sure. For sure it would be.

Mr. DONALDS. So, what are we talking about, Secretary?

Secretary GRANHOLM. So, this is what we have to look at. This is one of the questions—one of the questions that we are looking at. We also have to take a look at what it does for global supply, our allies, all of that.

Mr. DONALDS. And again, this is good conversation, but, you know, congressional hearings, our time is limited.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, sir.

Mr. DONALDS. Considering what is happening right now in Ukraine, isn't it in the public's interests here in the United States to increase exports of liquefied natural gas to cut down the ability of the Russian regime to actually earn money in the open market?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are exporting natural gas. We are not stopping that. We are—

Mr. DONALDS. Hold on. Hold on. Secretary—Secretary—Secretary—

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. The world's largest exporter. We have authorized—

Mr. DONALDS. [continuing]. I am going to reclaim my time because I have got 18 seconds now. We are not in a debate. This is a hearing.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. Forty-eight million cubic feet, but I am just—something is wrong.

Mr. DONALDS. You have put a pause, and you are saying it is in the public interest. But you cannot really identify what the public

interest is, because it is in the public's interest for prices to go down.

It is in the American public interest to try to limit the ability of the Russian regime to earn more money on the open market with their resources. Wouldn't you agree with that?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The pause does not affect that. The pause does not affect that. Everything is still going forward.

Mr. DONALDS. The price does affect their ability to earn money to wage war, Madam Secretary. You know that just like I do.

Secretary GRANHOLM. It does not right now. This pause is for a brief period of time to update a study. It does not affect any of that.

Mr. DONALDS. How long is the pause?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It will be finished—

Mr. DONALDS. I would argue, Madam Secretary, that the pause that you are doing is against the law because you have not finalized your parameters in what you are looking at. And in the event of that being finalized, you do need to execute the permits that are waiting.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Casar from Texas.

Mr. CASAR. Thank you, Chairman. Madam Secretary, I first want to thank you for your strong leadership at the Department of Energy.

Today, I want to talk a little bit with you about the broken and disconnected Texas grid, ERCOT, not just on behalf of Texans, but also because of the national implications of not fixing the Texas grid.

I want to start off by thanking you and the Department of Energy for putting millions of dollars toward electric reliability in Texas, including a recent \$30 million investment to help keep the lights on in San Antonio, Texas, but we still have a long way to go.

We have had so many mass power outages—in fact, hundreds of mass power outages—over the last few years in Texas, making us one of the most unreliable electric grids in the country. And most people remember and think about this as it relates to Winter Storm Uri where over 10 million Texans lost power, hundreds of people died.

And in the wake of that storm, you, Madam Secretary, said many things I agree with. You said that interconnecting Texas' grid will be great for Texas. It will be great for Texas to consider connecting to its neighbors.

You said that interconnecting Texas could also benefit the rest of the country because in good times, Texas is generating all sorts of clean energy, which we could send those clean ions out from Texas to take advantage of a market that is eager to accept it and could not agree more.

That is why I introduced the Connect the Grid Act, which would require Texas to interconnect with its neighbors. My office worked with your Department to draft this legislation, and we relied heavily on your excellent transmission needs study, which pinpoints our Nation's most significant transmission needs and identifies national interest electric transmission corridors known as NIETCs.

Just last week, the Department of Energy announced its preliminary list of NIETCs, a designation that is really important because it unlocks Federal financing for transmission, but Texas was missing from your list. And that was confusing to me because you and I agree that interconnecting Texas provides reliability, could save American lives, save tons of money, is an economic winner, and we cannot reach our climate goals without interconnecting the grid.

That is, in part, because Texas leads the country in wind generation. We are only second to California in solar generation. An upcoming MIT study finds that between 9 gigawatts and 36 gigawatts of interconnection between Texas and its neighbors could get us a 4 percent CO2 reduction nationwide and a 33 percent CO2 reduction in the state of Texas.

So, in the next few weeks, I want to send a letter to your Department urging you to do everything you can to interconnect the Texas grid, whether that is through funding transmission or through transmission planning and more. And I am interested in hearing from you, Madam Secretary, if you are considering adding Texas to your final list of NIETC designations, where does Texas fit into your transmission planning?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Thanks for that. Thanks for your leadership on this.

I think one of the NIETCs covers the panhandle of Texas. But you are right, it does not connect to ERCOT. And I stand by saying, of course, this is Texas' call, and so respect state sovereignty on this.

But I do think that when you consider the ability for a neighboring state to help in a time of crisis—and there is more and more of these extreme weather events that are happening and stressing grids—I think the Nation would love that. And, similarly, for those developers who are in Texas and who want to take advantage of the economy of clean energy to be able to export that power, I think, would be good for Texas, too.

But that is just me. I am just the Secretary of Energy. I am not in Texas, and I am not running Texas.

So, I look forward to working with you to see how we might be able to get there, but I do think it would be important to create a national grid that would include Texas at some point.

Mr. CASAR. I appreciate that. There already are interconnections, minimal interconnections in and out of Texas. And there is actually huge market demand—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Right.

Mr. CASAR [continuing]. To make further interconnections. It is just oftentimes that the politics has gotten in the way of the state interest and the national interest. And I would argue that this is not just a Texas issue, in that neighboring states badly need the power, and Texas has to be a part of the solution.

In the meantime, between here and full interconnection, are there any other actions that DOE could take to enhance grid reliability, or that kind of transmission in and out of the state?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, grid reliability, yes. We, obviously, thanks to Congress, have this grid resilience innovation program which we are funding to make sure that all states have the ability to access clean power and upgrade their grids.

We are really interested as well in funding things like advanced grid technologies, grid-enhancing technologies, like advanced conductoring, dynamic line rating, et cetera, which would make it more efficient for energy to be transmitted across grids.

In the connectivity part, though, I would hope that in the next round of NIETCs, we could have this conversation about, actually, a firm connection to Texas. But, again, we do respect how the state views this and, you know, perhaps things will have changed at that point.

Mr. CASAR. I think that the vast majority of Texans would agree that grid connection and fixing the grid should overcome those sort of smaller level politics.

So, I appreciate your time, and I yield back.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mrs. Luna from Florida.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, earlier when Representative Burchett asked you about some UAP stuff, you said that the DoD essentially had denied any existence of that, and you referred to them as drones, correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It has my understanding that the Department of Defense has looked at this—

Mrs. LUNA. OK.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. And issued a report about it.

Mrs. LUNA. I have a lot of questions. So, just quick and concise, if possible.

There have been persistent claims and reports, including those from credible whistleblowers to this Committee, suggesting that the U.S. Government, potentially including the Department of Energy, has been involved in reverse engineering technologies recovered from UAP. For example, the Pentagon's proposed Kona Blue program aimed at reverse engineering such technologies, although it was ultimately not established.

Can you clarify whether the Department of Energy has been involved in any such efforts, either historically or currently, to analyze reverse engineering materials from/related to UAPs?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I have no knowledge of that.

Mrs. LUNA. OK. There are several reports indicated frequent drone incursions over DOE nuclear facilities, including an incident on April 1, 2021, at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, also known as LLNL.

Can you detail the DOE's current security measures to prevent unauthorized drone activities or UAPs and what steps are being taken to enhance these measures of frequencies of incidences?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We have a whole counter-drone effort to make sure that all of our national security sites and our labs are protected from incursions from drones, I will just say, that are not authorized. So, there is a whole series of protocols probably not ripe for discussion in this public setting.

Mrs. LUNA. Correct. So, I reviewed some unclassified materials from around the 1940's and 1950's, and so they were not just being reported as drones back then, and I encourage you to look over those materials because I think that you guys should be upgrading that program to cover down on UAPs.

There have been documented sightings of metallic spheres over DOE facilities—if you want to call them drones in this instance—such as one report on April 30, 2019, over LLNL.

What investigations have been conducted in regard to these sightings, and what conclusions do you guys have about the nature and origins of these objects?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I am happy to followup with you on that.

Mrs. LUNA. OK. We will be submitting also, too, for public record some questions after this, if you could please answer those.

Considering the DOE's involvement in nuclear and sensitive research facilities, how does the DOE coordinate with agencies like the Department of Defense and ARROW to investigate UAP sightings?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are part of—we, obviously, are teamed with the Department of Defense because of our national security and nuclear mission.

Mrs. LUNA. Are you able to cite any specific investigations or shared data analysis efforts?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do not have information on that.

Mrs. LUNA. OK. As of right now, again, we will be submitting some questions for you after this, so I hope that you guys can answer those in a timely fashion.

And again, for those that might be tuning in to this, I would encourage you to look at some of those unclassified materials, and we will be happy to provide your office with that.

I will just followup by one other question, I guess, to close it out. Does the DOE currently work with JSOC in order to handle security measures?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We work with all of the security entities around the Federal Government. We are part of an overall, all-of-government effort, on both cyber, as well as national security.

Mrs. LUNA. Do you guys work with JSOC, yes or no?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, we do.

Mrs. LUNA. OK. All right. Thank you very much, ma'am.

I yield the rest of my time, Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Would the gentlelady yield your remaining time?

Madam Secretary, what is the exact position of this Administration with respect to nuclear?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are in favor of nuclear power.

Chairman COMER. Has the Biden Administration identified communities that are welcome to nuclear—there are communities around America that would welcome nuclear. I represent one, Paducah. There are communities that I do not think would be very receptive to nuclear.

Does the Administration have a data base of communities—I mean, you could say you are for it, but is it a sincere support of nuclear?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We are investing huge amounts in nuclear power and advancing small modular reactors, advanced nuclear reactors. We are supporting them with Congress' help. We firmly believe that nuclear is an important part of our trajectory to get to net zero.

Chairman COMER. What is the timeline?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is now. I mean, we are always encouraging utilities—for example, Vogel, as you are probably aware, has just turned on its fourth unit. We are very supportive of that. It was through the loan program office.

Chairman COMER. All right.

Secretary GRANHOLM. And that was made possible. We are—

Chairman COMER. With respect to that, Louisville or—what about coal, what is the exact position of the Administration with respect to coal? Because there is still an effort to continue to shut down more coal-fired plants.

I personally believe that coal needs to be in the entire energy portfolio in America. I represent a huge coal-producing district. We also have a lot of coal-fired facilities left in Kentucky that have uncertain futures. What is the position on coal?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I mean, obviously, coal is—coal burns and has a huge CO2 footprint, and so—

Chairman COMER. Clean coal.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, is there a good clean coal? We are excited to be able to continue to pursue that. We have been looking at all sorts of technologies through our national energy technology lab on coal and how you can capture and sequester the CO2.

We know that a lot of coal plants are shutting down because of economics, not because of the regulatory footprint—

Chairman COMER. I do not know.

Secretary GRANHOLM [continuing]. But we also—I mean, I—we also want to help energy communities to be able to produce the power for the next 100 years, too.

And that is why a lot of the incentives that have been adopted by Congress and that we are implementing are to put facilities on those coal plants that would—for example, nuclear. Nuclear facilities on coal plants would enable us to be able to continue to employ those workers and power our Nation for the future.

Chairman COMER. My time has expired. I will have some more questions later. The Chair recognizes Ms. Pressley.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you for joining us, Madam Secretary. Always a pleasure.

The climate crisis is real. The planet is not warming, as many experts have cited. The planet is burning. It is on fire. And the Department of Energy is essential to mitigating its harms while ensuring a healthy environment with clean air for all. Policymakers at all levels of government have a responsibility to do everything we can to transition from dirty fossil fuels. That is why I was really pleased to partner with the city of Cambridge, in my district, the Massachusetts 7th, to deliver \$1 million in Federal funding to create publicly available and community accessible electric vehicle charging stations.

Madam Secretary, while some of my colleagues across the aisle have spread disinformation about EVs, as co-founder and co-chair of the Future of Transportation Caucus, I would like to set the record straight. Investing in electric vehicles is good for the environment. It is good for people's pocketbooks. It is good for public health, and it is good for job creation.

Secretary Granholm, regarding that last piece in particular, can you speak to how the Office of Energy Jobs is helping folks take

advantage of opportunities from the proliferation of electric vehicles?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We are seeing, as you have noted, all of these job sites opening up factories to create batteries for electric vehicles, or electric vehicles, or assembling the batteries into the vehicles. And it is a new thing.

And so, the question is, how do you create a workforce that is capable of taking on this whole new sector of the economy. So, the Office of Energy Jobs has been working with our friends in labor to be able to create—and with our community colleges, to be able to create a workforce curriculum, for example, for batteries for electric vehicles that can be adopted in any part of the Nation, but can have certified workers to be able to do that.

Every time you have a new factory open up, there is an opportunity for an economic cluster and that cluster has to include the workforce component of it, and that is what the energy jobs office is doing.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. I know certainly in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we are encouraged by the developments in the space that we are already seeing and certainly look forward to our continued partnership with your agency.

Mr. Chair, I want to ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a *Boston Globe* article titled “What EV Slowdown? Electric transition is still booming in Massachusetts.”

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Now I want to discuss another priority in the Commonwealth, which should come as no surprise to you, and that is wind energy. Earlier this year the Department of Energy announced a multimillion-dollar center of excellence to accelerate the domestic wind energy industry-based in Massachusetts, ARROW, which stands for Academic Center for Reliability and Resilience of Offshore Wind, is led by the University of Massachusetts Amherst, with partners from across the Nation from Northeastern University in my district to Morgan State, an HBCU in Maryland, to the University of Puerto Rico.

ARROW will help propel us toward a 100 percent clean electricity grid, a goal outlined in the Green New Deal, and a key part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s climate agenda. Excited to see this work take off because there are significant benefits in harnessing wind as a renewable energy source, and one of those benefits is jobs, well-paid, union-backed jobs.

Secretary Granholm, how can Congress help support workforce development in the domestic offshore wind energy industry to fill those roles from manufacturers to electricians and beyond?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Thank you so much for that. I mean, I think the biggest thing that Congress can do, Congress has done, in terms of providing the incentives for these wind developers for the ability for us to build the wind turbines in the United States instead of importing them from, especially offshore wind from Europe, and so there has been a huge cluster of activity around just that, creating the workforce for those jobs.

Once the jobs are coming, you want to train people for jobs that are there rather than the hypothetical job that might come. And so that is exactly what is happening all across the country.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. And one more, in these last 30 seconds or so.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Ms. PRESSLEY. I just want to build upon the question posed by my good colleague there, Congresswoman Brown from Ohio.

How is the Department of Energy ensuring that marginalized communities benefit from job opportunities in the green economy? How do we ensure that the green economy is inclusive to Black, Brown, low-income folks, especially those who have been hardest hit by this climate crisis representing frontline communities?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Two things: I mean, Congress has done its part by providing additional incentives, tax credits, like an additional kicker if a development goes into a disadvantaged community, which is great, and that is doing a lot of the work.

DOE is doing our part by requiring these community benefit agreements for the grants that we give out, requiring that those private sector entities who get a grant from us have to have an agreement with the community about how people will be employed and trained and how the community will benefit that their presence.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now acknowledges Mr. Palmer from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, in response to a question a little while ago about the sale of oil from the strategic petroleum reserve, you said that that was in response to the war in Ukraine. Is that correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. PALMER. The first sale under the Biden Administration occurred in November 2021. Sold 50 million barrels in an attempt to lower gasoline prices. That is 3 months before the war began. So, I think you need to reevaluate your answer.

By the way, the price of a gallon of gas in December 2020 was \$2.28. December 2021 it was \$3.41. That is according to the Energy Information Administration. December 2022 it was \$3.32. So, the Administration sold 50 million barrels, plus the additional barrels they sold later, as you say, because of the war in Ukraine, to affect gasoline prices by nine cents.

And, by the way, according to EIA, the price of a gallon of regular gasoline right now is \$3.73, \$1.45 a gallon higher than it was in December 2020.

You made a comment while you were in Paris that China's dominance in the world's critical mineral supply chain is one of the pieces of the supply chain that we are very concerned about in the United States.

Do you stand by that?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. PALMER. I am very appreciative of that because I agree 100 percent that China is the existential threat to our economy and to our national security.

But what is interesting is Alabama just rejected a Chinese Communist party-tied EV company's project that would have been located in northwest Alabama near Muscle Shoals that is now being located in Michigan.

Did you have any role in the decision to locate that plant in Michigan?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you for the answer. Because I think it is interesting that decisions are being made to bring companies in that have direct ties to the Chinese Communist party to build EV batteries when we are already overly dependent on China for our critical minerals.

As a matter of fact, China is responsible for 60 percent of the worldwide production and 85 percent of the processing capacity. It is not just a matter of whether or not we mine the minerals here. It is a matter of whether we are able to process them or refine them. And I am not—I do not think there is a major rare earth refinery in the Western Hemisphere.

So, I just am concerned about where we are on critical minerals. I do not think our future is in electric vehicles, not in the short-term definitely, but I do think that this mass transition to renewables is making us even more—is creating an even greater national security risk because of our dependence on China for critical minerals and rare earths and the processing and refining.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Can I—may I respond to that?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, ma'am.

Secretary GRANHOLM. The Administration shares your concern, and that is why the President has signed into law and Congress has passed all of these incentives to bring critical minerals, extraction, refining, processing, incorporation into the battery in to the United States.

As I was saying at the very beginning, because of this—these incentives, our U.S. graphite production, for example, is expected to increase 25fold by 2030. Our lithium extraction and processing is expected to increase 85-fold. So, we want to get those processors here so that we can be independent.

Mr. PALMER. And I appreciate what you are trying to do there, but the problem with us is the permitting. We need to take an attitude, a position that this is so critical to our national security that we permit some of these mines immediately and we are not subjecting ourselves to endless litigation on the permitting.

We are going to abide by all the environmental rules, but your goals of achieving 100 percent renewable are not achievable with our dependence on China. Our goals of our national security and the security of our economy are not achievable as long as we have this dependence on China. And we are not going to get there in the mining, the processing, and refining unless we reform our permitting process.

So, are you willing to participate in that effort?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, absolutely. I agree with you on that. And that is the whole point is that we want to become independent of China. And bringing all of that here or with allies is so important, the full steps of the supply chain.

Mr. PALMER. Well, I really would encourage the Administration to be more sensitive to our positions on energy, critical minerals, rare earths, and on not inviting China to come in and build facilities here that will compromise us.

And I do appreciate your responses. It is one of these rare times that you and I have agreed, but I do appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have heard today, my Republican colleagues would like to use this hearing to bolster this narrative that the Biden Administration is enacting a war on energy, and we recognize that that is a false—as falsely promoting this idea that combating the climate crisis is somehow mutually exclusive with promoting economic security.

But we know that this is a decades-old myth that has been used to excuse the unmitigated polluting of frontline communities especially, communities like mine and Braddock and the Mon Valley of Western Pennsylvania. For generations, communities like this, largely Black or Brown, or poor and working-class communities, have been kind of made into these sacrificial lambs, right, left to sacrifice their health, to sacrifice the air quality or the water quality in their communities, mostly for the sake of good jobs, but also for the economic prosperity that the Nation has enjoyed.

Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act serves to prove that this argument is not just a false choice, but that we can, and we will, and we have the tools to fight the climate crisis while creating high-quality and union jobs.

In Pennsylvania, the IRA is expected to create more than 200,000 jobs over the next decade, and it will incentivize investments in low-income and disinvested communities that have been harmed the most and that stand to lose the most. But to make these goals and the intent of the IRA a reality, implementation matters, of course.

President Biden's Justice40 initiative, for instance, aims to ensure that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments, including investments in clean energy, workforce development, and the remediation of legacy pollution, go to disadvantaged communities.

However, prioritizing grants funding through Justice40 is not enough on its own to combat decades of underinvestment and disinvestment of frontline energy communities.

I am happy because I feel like in years past, some of these questions about how do our policies impact marginalized and frontline communities probably would have gone unasked. And I am proud that we have had several folks sitting here today ask these very questions.

I do want to leave a second. If there is anything specific or even more specific, like, for instance, a community like mine that is a community that, for a long time, has not had the opportunity to turn a corner because we have not had the opportunity to think about the future economies, particularly as we think about steel, how can communities like mine, in the shadows of the steel industry, as it is struggling to figure out how and where it goes next, how does this—the IRA and the DOE impact our communities?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. I mean, let me just say, the great thing about the President having signed that first executive order on Justice40, that means that everybody is thinking about how do

we make sure that we do right by communities that have stood at the back of the line.

And so, what Congress did in providing, for example, a 10 percent incentive, additional stackable tax credit for locating in a disadvantaged community, that has achieved—policy works. That has actually achieved and steered and drawn investment to disadvantaged communities.

We are doing our part with our community benefits agreement. We have just stood up an entity called Ready, which is working with communities to know how to negotiate a community benefit agreement on their behalf—what do I ask for, et cetera—giving them technical assistance and making sure they have got a level playing field in negotiating.

But all of the work that Congress has done has given us the ability to help communities that have been at the back of the line.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. And, similarly, again, as someone from Pittsburgh, I represent both a marginalized frontline community, and also a community where labor is incredibly important.

Part of building a new energy economy is the development of a workforce that is high quality and unionized. A 2023 DOE Office of Energy Jobs report found that workers in the energy sector were more than 1.5 times more likely to be represented by a union or covered under a project labor or collective bargaining agreement.

In Western Pennsylvania, we know the value of good union jobs. So, it is crucial that Federal investments coming to our region and every other region benefit and strengthens our robust unionized workforce. And as we grow our unionized workforce, to be very clear, we also have the dual responsibility of ensuring we are creating pathways for those traditionally underrepresented in the trade unions, and particularly women and people of color, to participate.

Secretary Granholm, how is the DOE working to ensure that the growing energy workforce includes high-quality union jobs, and even more specifically, the intent is to focus on labor agreements specifically, right? So, how is the Department prioritizing project labor agreements and competitive grants at locations to ensure we are supporting unionized workforce?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We encourage project labor agreements, and projects that come to us are evaluated on the strength of their community benefit plans, which also require paying of prevailing wage and having strong labor practices. So, we are doing our part to embed a movement that will allow for more unionization, but we cannot require unionization.

We can just say we expect people to be treated well and paid well and, hopefully, the private sector takes it from there.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. I appreciate that. I appreciate your time. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Grothman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Yes. I will point out, I think we have the most divisive Administration I have ever seen. And one of the things that bothers me—I have union workers in my district. I get along with them well. Some of them support me, but there is this almost hatred for non-union workers.

And I hope the—there are rumors out there that, maybe, illegally on some contracts—and you do not do a lot of the contracting—they are giving preferences to unionized companies; in other words, discriminating against non-union. I know that should not be done, but that rumor is out there. And certainly, statements like that in which we, in essence, run down non-union workers and imply that we should not care about them are not helpful in an already divided country.

In any event, there is the mandate that we have a lot more electric vehicles within the next 7 years. I talked to a lot of my car dealers about it. They feel that we are—there is no way we are going to be generating enough electricity in this country to deal with this many.

I would like to ask you, how much additional electricity do you think this country is going to have to generate in order to prepare for this onslaught of electric cars in 8 years?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, we are going to see demand increase, not just because of vehicles, but because of data centers and AI, as well as the additional manufacturing facilities that are coming on-line. NERC has projected that it will—in the next decade, we will see about a 15 percent increase in electricity demand. But the good news is, we have got the tools to be able to respond to that demand increase.

Can I just say one other thing? Just to be very clear, we care about all workers, union or not. Just to make it very clear, we care about all workers having the benefit of a good paying job, and that is what we are working for.

Mr. GROTHMAN. You ought to sit on this Committee for a couple of months. I mean, some of the Members on the other side of the aisle, they—it is like all they care about is if you are unionized. I know so many good people, great people who are not unionized. They should represent them as well.

The next question I have—and you can tell me whether this is true. I knew a guy with a car and—electric car, and he had to hook up stuff in his garage, he wanted to be prepared to hook up right there. And he felt for the hookup it cost him \$8,000. Is that possible?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do not know. I do not know the circumstances or how far away he was from the line, et cetera.

Normally, that is definitely way more expensive than what it would cost to just plug in in your garage.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I kind of want to followup here on what Mr. Donalds said.

Right now, we are kind of cutting back a little bit on the amount of natural gas we are producing, which will result in raising the cost of natural gas, which will be bad for the American middle class, like a lot of policies. Maybe the poor are subsidized, and the rich do not care, but it hurts the middle class. Not to mention it is going to drive up the price of natural gas for countries that export it, like Iran and Russia.

Could you comment on that? I mean, the fact that, obviously, if we are restricting natural gas production, we will be driving up the cost or we could drive down the cost by producing more?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are not doing anything to restrict natural gas production.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. You do not feel that your policies are increasing the price of natural gas on the world markets?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No, sir.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. With regard to the strategic oil reserve—I am not sure that is true. With regard to the strategic oil reserve, do you know right off your hand how many billions of barrels we had when President Biden took office and how many we have today?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We have 365 million barrels today. The maximum that the reserve holds is over 700, but I do not know the exact number the day he took office.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I think it is about a 40 percent reduction since he took office.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Could be.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Does that concern you? I mean, you always figure you can get a short-term benefit in getting rid of our strategic oil reserves, but if it ever comes down to when we really need them, if this country was at war or whatever, then we would have a big problem.

Do you have any goals—if it has dropped from 630 to 368, do you have any goals between now and the end of President Biden's term as far as where you want to have that wind up? Are we going to work our way back to 630? What do you think?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are in the process of solicitation for refilling. We have been refilling. We have refilled about—

Mr. GROTHMAN. Just very mildly.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Pardon me?

Mr. GROTHMAN. Very mildly. Do you think we can get back to the 630, or how close to the 630?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, let me just say, part of the reduction was because of congressionally mandated sales as well. We have got about 100 million of congressionally mandated sales that are still on tap. We can talk about that. We worked with Congress—thank you—to cancel 140 million.

So, we are basically back to where we would have been had we not been doing the releases in response to the war in Ukraine.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK.

Secretary GRANHOLM. And we have the largest in the world. So, I am not concerned—to your initial question, I am not concerned that we would—

Mr. GROTHMAN. We started it at 630. Where do you think we will be next January?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I think we will be back to where we would have been, again, because of congressional sales, absent the release of the 180 million barrels.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Frost from Florida.

Mr. FROST. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you so much, Madam Secretary. It is great to be here with you.

The Department of Energy has sent a lot of money to the state of Florida, to strengthen and modernize our power grid, build resilience as the climate crisis worsens, creating better jobs, reducing

energy burden and costs for disadvantaged communities. And this money is made possible thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Florida was not the only recipient. Obviously, you were also able to get the DOE to award funds directly to community organizations and solar companies in Puerto Rico, in a model that I have heard a lot about on a trip, actually, recently I took to Puerto Rico ensuring that the award was not bottlenecked with an administering agency.

My constituents want to see this model used more broadly across the Federal Government, especially for folks in Puerto Rico, for HUD awards, Department of Justice awards, et cetera.

So, I am just curious, how exactly does this model work, specifically as it relates to Puerto Rico? And can you talk about anything that you had to overcome, any administrative hurdles you had to overcome to make that happen?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Thank you so much for this question. Puerto Rico, as you know, is very unique in the fact that there are layers of bureaucracy there to get anything done. Congress gave us \$1 billion to be able to do rooftop solar. Thank you so much for supporting that.

What we have done is we went throughout all of the island to hear how we should be distributing this—how should we be prioritizing the putting of solar panels on homes? And citizens there said, to a person, please prioritize people with disabilities, people who are poor and in last mile communities, and people who have got a health issue. So, we have done that.

And we have done this by tapping local community members who are in the best position to identify who those people are, verified, of course, through their—you know, are they qualified for SNAP, et cetera. They have to be a verification. But they are our eyes and ears and arms, really, on the ground to identify who should be able to get rooftop solar.

So, we are excited to begin that process. We hope that this summer we call the summer of solar for Puerto Rico and to be able to make people energy-independent in light of how fragile the grid is there.

Mr. FROST. Yes, of course. Thank you so much for sharing that.

You know, what Americans want when it comes to Federal funding is more community engagement, empowerment by directly granting awards to local governments, community groups, advocacy—or nonprofits, organizations, and small businesses.

Now, a lot of my colleagues on this Committee have been talking about their concern for American-made energy, and I want to talk about that. Fossil fuels, like coal, natural gas, petroleum products are driving the climate crisis, as we know. Clean energy comes from renewable, zero-emission sources, like solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, and biomass sources.

And the clean energy transition is urgent for humanity, but also for the state of Florida, as we are a frontline community in the climate crisis. Advances in technology and grid management, like those facilitated by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, shore up reliability of renewable energy.

Madam Secretary, how can we combat the climate crisis without transitioning to clean energy?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, you cannot.

Mr. FROST. OK. And if we fell behind other countries in following these advancements in solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, and biomass energy, how might that impact our ability to sustain and meet our growing energy needs?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, let me just say that this is—you know, our allies, our economic competitors out there, they are all vying for a piece of this from an economic point of view. They see the fact that this is a \$23 trillion global market, this clean energy. All of these countries are going to need the products to be able to get them to their goals.

So, we have friendly competition with our allies and our adversaries about who is going to get those jobs. And so, on the jobs front, this is very important, and it is why the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law have been so impactful that we have got 600 factories so far that have announced that they are expanding as a result of those incentives in the United States making us competitive globally.

So, from a global competition, economically, it is vital. Obviously, we have got to do our part from a climate change perspective as well. All of the countries do. So, we are working on both fronts, and actually, one complements the other. And it is a win-win.

Mr. FROST. Exactly. I think it is a really exciting time in this work, too. I mean, we have the opportunity to build a new green economy, centers workers, fights the climate crisis, and where everybody can do well.

And we cannot shackle America, shackle our country because not only are we going to suffer as a humanity, but we lose out on the economic benefit.

And last question, Madam Secretary. Can we invest in clean energy while also looking out for the workers who currently work in fossil fuel production?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Absolutely. Absolutely. It is really a primary focus. And I know, Mr. Chairman, you raised this as well. It is a primary focus of this Administration. Leave no worker behind. Give them an opportunity to have a future-facing job, for their children to have a future-facing job that pays well. That is the MO of this Administration.

Mr. FROST. Of course. Thank you so much. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Burlison from Missouri.

Mr. BURLISON. Thank you. Secretary Granholm, we have talked in this hearing about the overregulation of gas stoves, the washers, dryers, refrigerators, but I wanted to kind of dive into the subject of light bulbs.

In July of last year, the Department of Energy made manufacturing or selling most incandescent light bulbs illegal. In the U.S., violators who manufacture an illicit light bulb are charged a penalty of \$542 per bulb. To add insult—

Secretary GRANHOLM. I am sorry, can you say that one more time?

Mr. BURLISON. Yes. The fine for an illicit bulb is \$542 per bulb.

You are shaking your head.

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is news to me.

Mr. BURLISON. You might want to look into that.

To add insult, April 12 of this year, you released a new rule for the LED light bulbs, OK? Now, and even your agency estimates that this new rule will cause the price of LED bulbs to nearly double. Are you aware of that?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I think that is an incorrect statement.

Mr. BURLISON. Elaborate. Because your agency says that they estimate that the current light bulb's average price is \$2.98 a bulb. After this new rule, which will—right now, 99 percent of LED bulbs do not comply with the new rule. The price would go to \$5.68 per bulb, which is a \$2.70 increase per bulb, nearly doubling.

Secretary GRANHOLM. No. I think you are cherry-picking a bulb, a bulb, not the overall bulbs. The bottom line is LED light bulbs have been an enormous success. They are hugely impactful for everyday citizens. They save average households \$225 a year. They last 25 times longer. They are 89 percent more efficient.

Mr. BURLISON. Yes.

Secretary GRANHOLM. They save people money.

Mr. BURLISON. Then why are you issuing new rules on them that cost—

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, we are required to issue rules pursuant to the EPCA and the—

Mr. BURLISON. I would think you would want to encourage people who now cannot buy an incandescent bulb, because it is illegal to manufacture. I would think that you would want them to—

Secretary GRANHOLM. They will be saving money with an LED bulb, though. They will be saving money, significant amounts of money.

Mr. BURLISON. Well, and I think that there—the question is, do you think American people, do you think the American consumer is dumb?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Absolutely not.

Mr. BURLISON. So, if someone is buying an incandescent bulb and choosing to do that over an LED bulb, are they incompetent?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Of course not. Of course not. But we all know that industry can have very persuasive advertising that may not fully reveal the pluses and minuses.

And the whole point—

Mr. BURLISON. That is another way of saying that they are not educated.

Secretary GRANHOLM. No, no, that is not a way of saying that at all, sir. Please do not put words in my mouth.

What I am saying, though, is that LED bulbs are incredibly efficient. And the conservation standards that we roll out, we are very proud of, because they have saved consumers—they will have saved consumers \$2 trillion by 2030, making more efficient appliances.

Mr. BURLISON. By making all of them—the upfront cost is going to be more. Anyway, you are taking away choice, ultimately, from consumers. You are taking away that choice.

I want to talk about electric vehicles. Last year, you had an EV trip in 2023. How did that go?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It was a great trip. There was one glitch, but it was a great trip other than that.

Mr. BURLISON. OK. What was the glitch?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Which was that we could not get a charging port, but that is part of what the trip was identifying—both barriers as well as how well things are going, including the visiting of all of these electric vehicle manufacturing, battery manufacturing—

Mr. BURLISON. And you had the privilege of having staff painstakingly even map this trip out, correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. BURLISON. And did you have a situation where they locked down a charging station and made it unavailable for consumers?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. BURLISON. Were you aware that there was a family that was impacted?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No. I only—I learned about this afterward. It was a mistake.

Mr. BURLISON. Thank you for admitting that. Have you reached out to that family and apologized to them?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I will apologize to them now. I do not know who they are, but I saw—I heard about it in the story, and it was not appropriate for staff to do that.

Mr. BURLISON. I appreciate those remarks. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Ms. Tlaib.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We always talk about choice in this Committee. You know, there is a really big choice that I think a lot of my residents want to make, which is the choice to breathe clean air.

Secretary Granholm, you know this, throughout my public service career, I have represented numerous communities, frontline communities, that have had really some of the highest burden of hosting fossil fuel infrastructure.

It has never been clearer that we must rapidly phaseout fossil fuel production and transition to clean renewable energy. It is deeply disturbing to me that fossil fuel production is at a record high under the current Administration. And I know President Biden is fully aware of that position.

I grew up in southwest Detroit, where I thought smelling like rotten eggs was normal, that all my friends had asthma was normal. To see in one of my communities I represented in the State House and then 4 years in Congress, 48217, to see white crosses in front of people's homes, I thought, you know, what is this about? It was a white cross campaign to say if anybody had cancer or survived cancer or somebody in their family died of cancer, they put a white cross on their front lawns, trying to humanize and understand the toll of hosting corporate polluters.

Even now, in 48120 in my community, I have two very, very dense populated schools. And in their background is literally just—I mean, just one of the largest polluters in the state of Michigan. And I always look at Wayne County's Clean Air Act standards, and continuously we do not follow sulfur dioxide, and a number of other issues comes up over and over again with my residents.

So, it is important to me the decision what you all are doing regarding liquified natural gas. It is documented, well-documented, public health harms caused by LNG exports and how they are associated to larger harms to Black, Brown, indigenous communities, low-wealth communities. And so, LNG exports perpetuate, I think, systematic environmental racism and really just embedded in our fossil fuel economy.

So, Secretary Granholm, as a member of the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council, do you believe DOE should consider environmental justice implications of approving additional LNG exports and extending the life of LNG terminals?

Secretary GRANHOLM. One of the factors that we are evaluating in our review is what the impacts are on communities.

Ms. TLAIB. Does this warrant additional study, though, by DOE prior to resuming LNGs, the licensing?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, that is why we are going through this. We have two national labs who are looking at a variety of factors, and this is one of them.

Ms. TLAIB. We all know—and I know, Secretary, you know—DOE has a statutory duty to conduct these public interest determinations before authorizing exports to certain countries and has a mandate to deny projects that are not in the public interest.

It should not be controversial. And these are for my colleagues, please. It should not be controversial that the public interest determination should consider the most up-to-date science and best practices. This is so critical in understanding and mitigating the short-and long-term health problems that toxic LNG export sites cause, including heart disease, cancer, and organ damage.

Secretary Granholm, how is DOE working to protect health, the health, the public health, and economies of the marginalized communities that most often are forced to live near these export facilities?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, in general, we have a whole effort that is particularly focused on the Gulf Coast, which is where so many of these facilities are, not just LNG terminals but the petrochemical industry. It is one of the reasons why we are enthused that there is a whole component, for example, of the hydrogen hub that is focused on electrification of diesel trucks, of making sure that there are less—fewer particulates in the air that people are breathing.

It is clearly environmental justice, Justice40. Ensuring that we get clean investments into communities is embedded throughout not only the Department of Energy but the Administration.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes. And it is important for my colleagues to know both Trump and the Obama Administrations have done this before. This is not the first time.

Last, this is just a friendly request. Please, as DOE updates its studies that inform the public interest determination, that it would include meaningful public engagement with host communities as part of that process. I think that is incredibly important for the American people to be part of this process, that it is not a closed-door process, that they understand that they have a say in what they have to live with.

Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes the Committee's energy expert, Representative Fallon from Texas.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Granholm, when were you confirmed, roughly, month and year?

Secretary GRANHOLM. In February 2021.

Mr. FALLON. February 2021, right after the Administration started. So, I was a little bit concerned when I saw the news report that, in November 2021, you were asked how many barrels of oil the U.S. consumes daily, and you did not know at the time. Do you remember that?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I remember.

Mr. FALLON. OK. So, chance for redemption. How many barrels of oil do we consume every day?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We consume about—well, the world does a hundred. We do about 20. Again, these are ballpark.

Mr. FALLON. Yes. I just saw it on your website. It was 102 in 1922.

So, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, we were talking about that before, founded I believe it was 1975. And do you know at the height—and I think one of my colleagues just asked you—at the height of the prior Administration what the number was?

Secretary GRANHOLM. It was—well, I can tell you that the maximum was about 720.

Mr. FALLON. Right. And that under the Trump Administration, at one point it was at 695 million barrels. When you all took office, do you have any idea where it was at?

Secretary GRANHOLM. What was it at?

Mr. FALLON. I believe it was 638. And today it is at, you just said 365, I think?

Secretary GRANHOLM. 365.

Mr. FALLON. OK. So, it is a 42 percent reduction. And you testified, before I came in the Committee, that it was—the Ukrainian war had something to do with the sale. That was not accurate, because 50 million barrels was sold in November 2021, before the invasion.

And then you just said, when I did get here, that it was congressionally mandated. But according to the congressional Research Service, the congressionally mandated is only a fraction of that 270 million. Are you aware of that?

Secretary GRANHOLM. There was 140 million in congressionally mandated sales that we have canceled to be able to give back.

Mr. FALLON. I understand that.

Secretary GRANHOLM. And then there is another 99 million that is teed up to go.

Mr. FALLON. But that congressionally mandated, some of that that was canceled was for Fiscal Year 1924 to 1927, was it not?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes, it is multiple years.

Mr. FALLON. So, I am talking about what actually has physically happened. We have sold 270 million barrels. That was not—those 270 million barrels were not—the majority of that was not congressionally mandated sales.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, because we have canceled, because we have ended up canceling. But my point is—

Mr. FALLON. We are going around in circles. But that cancellation was from sales that would have occurred in the future, not what has already happened in the past.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct, correct.

Mr. FALLON. So, if it was not Ukraine and it was not congressionally mandated—

Secretary GRANHOLM. It was Ukraine. 160 million—180 million barrels were from the Ukraine war—the war in Ukraine.

Mr. FALLON. No, you did it after they happened to have invaded, but that was not the reason. I think the reason was because you were trying to depress the price of gasoline at the pump before—

Secretary GRANHOLM. There was a constriction on the global market.

Mr. FALLON. Ma'am, excuse me, I am reclaiming my time. I am not going to be interrupting you.

It was before the midterm elections in November. Because this in 1975 was designed for, I do not know, an act of God, natural disaster, national emergency, time of war, none of which has occurred in this country. And 270 million barrels were sold inexplicably.

And by the way, I don't think that—was it your testimony that we have the largest reserve, Strategic Petroleum Reserve in the world?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. FALLON. Not China?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We have the largest in the world. That is publicly made available.

Mr. FALLON. OK. So, the Chinese do not have a billion barrels in reserve?

Secretary GRANHOLM. They do not publicly report what they have.

Mr. FALLON. OK. Because that is what the experts believe it is. So, we have a fraction of what they have.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, I do not know what they have.

Mr. FALLON. OK. So, over the past 20 years, has the United States increased or decreased our carbon footprint?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Over the past?

Mr. FALLON. Twenty years.

Secretary GRANHOLM. We have decreased.

Mr. FALLON. We have decreased it by about 20 percent. Has China increased or decreased?

Secretary GRANHOLM. They have increased, sir.

Mr. FALLON. Increased by? Do you have any idea?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do not know their—

Mr. FALLON. I am talking Energy 101. I am not going to get complicated.

Secretary GRANHOLM. I do not have the percentage in front of me.

Mr. FALLON. OK. It is triple, about 300 percent. So, we have done exceptionally well.

So, would you agree that the United States has a greater commitment to protecting the environment than, let us say, China?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I think we have a great commitment, a greater commitment to protecting the environment than China, yes.

Mr. FALLON. Yes, I think that is manifestly obvious, considering what they have done the last 25 years or so.

And incidentally, for the record, our economy is larger than theirs. And yet they are far more apt to, unfortunately, ignore their responsibilities for the environment.

Do you think that we have a greater commitment to protect the environment than, let us say, Venezuela?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I think we have a greater commitment to protecting the environment, yes.

Mr. FALLON. Yes. And Qatar as well?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes.

Mr. FALLON. OK. Because we have a strong environmental lobby. We have rule of law. None of those countries have those kinds of things.

So, it perplexes me that we would put, essentially, a ban—people call it a pause—on liquified natural gas exports. And we are just giving a gift to one of the most evil dictators in the world, Vladimir Putin.

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are not giving a gift to Vladimir Putin. We are pausing for months while we update a study, and it will resume after that update happens.

Mr. FALLON. Oh, I bet you it is going to resume magically right after the November elections. But be that as it may, I have talked to prime ministers and foreign ministers in Europe, and they are not happy with this at all. I hope that you talk to the same people.

Secretary GRANHOLM. I have talked to them, and I explained.

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Secretary GRANHOLM. And they—

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Fry from South Carolina.

Mr. FRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I am actually going to pick up right where Mr. Fallon kind of left off a little bit. But I want to focus, Madam Secretary, on the companies themselves.

In April of this year, Brad Crabtree testified in front of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth and Energy Policy that companies were concerned about the pause.

Will this pause, in your mind, impact the planning horizons of LNG producers and exporters?

Secretary GRANHOLM. No.

Mr. FRY. No? So, you would disagree with the characterization by Mr. Crabtree?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, he said their companies are concerned. I understand that they were concerned, but once people explain that it is a pause, that none of the existing operations are going to be affected, none of the authorized amounts which have not even begun construction yet have been affected, none of the construction projects that they are undertaking have been affected—it does not affect any of that, none of that. They can proceed apace.

Mr. FRY. Let me ask you this: How did the DOE factor in the pause on the companies in the critical aspect—I would say like how did they—how did you all weigh that on the production side for the companies?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The companies are able to produce right now. Nobody is stopping any of the companies that have authorization from proceeding. We export. We have capacity to export 14 billion cubic feet. That exists. That is not being stopped. We have authorized another 12 billion cubic feet, which are under construction. That is going forward. We have authorized up to 48 billion cubic feet, the difference of which has not even begun construction. That is not impacted by the pause.

This does not impact anybody who is doing business or is in construction or even contemplating doing business. And it only will last until the first quarter of next year, when we complete the analysis of what is in the public interest.

Mr. FRY. Recent reporting, Madam Secretary, from the *Wall Street Journal* noted that Sarah Brennan, the Associate Director at the Rockefeller Family Fund, which has a history of funding anti-fossil fuel groups, stated in an email to environmental groups that, quote, “The pause is the result of a sustained 4-year push that built upon years of opposition to gas exports by community groups and lawyers.”

So, I would ask you, can you tell us how much advance notice was provided on the pause before it was publicly announced?

Secretary GRANHOLM. This was DOE’s decision. We announced it when we announced it. We did not provide advance notice to groups or anything. We announced it when we announced it.

Mr. FRY. Madam Secretary, has it always been the intent of the Administration, the Biden Administration, to enact this pause from the beginning?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I am not aware of what the intent was inside the White House. As I say, this is the Department of Energy’s evaluation and decision.

Mr. FRY. I am going to switch gears here.

Despite decarbonization policies being a key contributor to the premature retirement of fossil fuels, demand for electricity is going to continue to rise throughout the United States.

My home state of South Carolina will need new generation as coal plants close or potentially close in the coming years. But without proper and realistic guidance from DOE and the EPA, there is little hope that the grid will actually be as resilient as the Administration claims.

Madam Secretary, the DOE signed a memorandum of understanding with the EPA to ensure grid reliability. Is that correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is correct.

Mr. FRY. Do you believe that the MOU process can still function properly if all the entities obligated to ensure reliability say that it actually is not achievable?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The EPA is not saying that it is not achievable.

Mr. FRY. No. The entities are saying that it is not achievable.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Oh, I am sorry. I thought you said the entities who were parties to the MOU.

I think the entities are concerned about whether it is doable. But our experience at Department of Energy—and we consulted with EPA on this—and our knowledge of carbon capture technology tells

us that that technology is ready, and it can be installed, and it is doable.

Mr. FRY. So, to me, the MOU seems, in a way, for the EPA to shift potential blame to the Department of Energy.

Even before you testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee 3 weeks ago, at least three regional transmission organizations have cited premature retirement of fossil fuel resources as a growing concern with the future of America's grid stability. Couple these concerns with FERC's own forecast of summer supply shortfalls, and it is clear, I think, that we will have issues with reliability.

Many experts have said that the Administration's ambitious power plant and carbon capture goals are not achievable in the desired timeframe with our current technology.

So, who is wrong here?

Secretary GRANHOLM. The goals are achievable with current technology.

Mr. FRY. Do you think it is the experts or the EPA for whom you have already provided this MOU to implement something that is illegal or harmful to American consumers?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are not implementing anything that is harmful to American consumers. In fact, it is helpful to America to breathe clean air and have a clean power plant.

We are the experts at Department of Energy. We have 17 national labs that are working on this. We have an MOU with the EPA. We know what technology is available, and we believe it is doable.

Mr. FRY. Thank you.

And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Waltz from Florida.

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Secretary, thank you for coming in.

In preparation for the hearing, I rewatched or I watched your appearance on The View. And after one of the hosts was kind of condescending and insulting the intelligence of the 74 million people that voted for President Trump, you talked about—because they were talking about how the prices of everything are so high.

You talked about, well, in response, what the American people need to do is take advantage of tax credits to weatherize their homes and take advantage of credits to buy EVs.

I found it kind of astounding, because I did not hear anything in your response—and I want to give you a chance today—to talk about how the American people need to deal with this.

Energy and Federal Government spending are the two greatest drivers of inflation, and it is eating Americans alive. They cannot afford rent. They cannot afford groceries. They cannot afford electricity, right there in your wheelhouse. They cannot afford gas.

So how are we, with the energy prices so high, with spending so high on a lot of these credits—by the way, EVs only make up 1 percent of the cars on the road—how are we driving down prices to help the American people?

Secretary GRANHOLM. We are really obsessed with reducing prices for people too and totally get it.

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Secretary, it is not working. The inflation rate is up almost 20 percent.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Inflation—

Mr. WALTZ. Gasoline is up 55 percent.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Inflation is coming down. When you say— from what point is gasoline up 55 percent? I do not know what your measurement is. Is it from the start of the Administration?

Mr. WALTZ. Gas prices are high. I mean, look at where they were in the mid twos to now the mid threes. That is—

Secretary GRANHOLM. The mid twos were in the middle of a pandemic. All those prices that you are talking about, they are in the middle of a pandemic when prices are through the floor. It is not a normal time.

However, let me say, we are obsessed with making sure we bring down prices for people. It's one of the reasons why—

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Secretary, I appreciate—I only get 5 minutes.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, you have asked a question, so—

Mr. WALTZ. No. On behalf of the people I represent, I appreciate that you are obsessed with it. What you are doing is not working. These prices are still unacceptably high.

Secretary GRANHOLM. OK. This is why the President has focused on every way possible to help reduce prices for people. This means whether it is on prescription drugs or whether it is weatherizing your home to reduce your electricity bill, whether it is helping people to be able to get an electric car, so they do not have to pay gasoline prices, whether it is reducing student loans. Every pocket of way, the President is trying to reduce costs for people.

Mr. WALTZ. Except that he is doing that by printing money and throwing Federal dollars at the problem.

You have got one group of Americans paying student loans for another group. You got one group of Americans paying through their taxes EVs for another group, which, by the way, are not environmentally sound, in terms of the materials that go in them.

And I would encourage you to read the book Red Cobalt that talks about the 40,000 children that work in the cobalt mines of Congo, some as young as 6.

But let us just stick with prices for a moment. Clearly has not worked here, but let us talk about abroad. The intelligence community has confirmed for me that—and a number of analysts have confirmed, I mean, obviously Russia fuels its economy on oil and gas. Iran fuels its economy on oil and gas. At about \$55 a barrel, Russia can no longer fuel its war machine. It actually goes into kind of economic survival mode.

So, wouldn't it make sense to flood the global market with cleaner—you admitted in prior testimony American gas is cleaner than what came through Nord Stream Two, correct?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct, it is cleaner.

Mr. WALTZ. So, why wouldn't we flood the world with cleaner, cheaper American oil and gas, drive down the prices? Now you have not only solved what is going on with the Iranian-supported terrorists in the Middle East, you have put Putin on his back foot as well in terms of the war in Ukraine. You have now solved two global problems and the inflation problem here at home.

But, instead, the climate agenda is counter to all of that. We are restricting our supply, and then we are allowing Iran to pump to China. We are allowing Venezuela to pump. Russia is pumping more than it ever has through India and China, for that matter, into Europe.

How does this make sense?

Secretary GRANHOLM. This is such curious—this is so curious to me, because we are the No. 1 producer of oil and gas. We are the No. 1 exporter of liquified natural gas.

Mr. WALTZ. But we could be so much more if we were not tapping the brakes in ANWR, we were not putting a ban—

Secretary GRANHOLM. We have such oil dominance. We have—we are doing more than the previous Administration, significantly, by getting more.

Mr. WALTZ. How much more could we be doing, Madam Secretary? How much more could we be doing? Because the price of oil is still hovering around 80—demand is still out there. That is why the price of oil and gas are still so high.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Correct.

Mr. WALTZ. That is why everybody is still buying Russian oil and Iranian oil.

Secretary GRANHOLM. That is correct. But it is not this Administration that is hampering the production of oil and gas. I mean, you can make that face, but we are No. 1 in the world. We are at record levels.

Mr. WALTZ. OK. We are at 13. Could we be at 15 million a day?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Nobody is stopping—

Mr. WALTZ. Could we be at 16?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Nobody is stopping additional.

Mr. WALTZ. Could we be at 17?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Nobody is stopping—

Mr. WALTZ. Just final question, Mr. Chairman.

I just had lunch with the speaker of the Parliament of Lithuania. She was in near panic mode. Lithuania right on the front line, probably next after Ukraine with Russia.

She said, Congressman, we buy 85 percent of our gas through the terminals in Louisiana and in Texas. These are bought on very long-term contracts. We are having to think 10 years out. She said, “I do not know what to do with the ban.”

Secretary GRANHOLM. There is not a ban.

Mr. WALTZ. She said, “I am going to have to start looking elsewhere.”

Secretary GRANHOLM. We have spoken with her.

Mr. WALTZ. Our allies believe it is a ban.

Secretary GRANHOLM. No, they do not. We have spoken with them. They do not believe it is a ban. It is not a ban.

Mr. WALTZ. I encouraged her to come talk to you.

Secretary GRANHOLM. It is in order to be able to update an analysis of what is in the public interest. Nothing is stopping from what is currently being exported.

Ms. TLAIB. Time is expired.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman’s time is expired.

I will now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

And Madam Secretary, let me go back and correct something you said earlier when we were discussing coal. You said coal is shutting down because of economics. It is shutting down because of the economics created by the Biden Administration, and even further back than that, the Obama-Biden Administration.

But, Secretary, my congressional district is home to the former Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Paducah, Kentucky, which is undergoing cleanup by the Department of Energy.

As you are aware, the Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations package required the Department to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether a new administrative facility is the best benefit to the taxpayer versus upgrading the current 70-year-old facility.

Madam Secretary, what is the status of this cost-benefit analysis, and when can you expect that it will be available for review?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Let me get back to you on that.

Chairman COMER. OK. And just let me say, I urge you to move quickly on this analysis so that we can ensure that the upcoming appropriations bill allows the Department to move forward with the best option to support cleanup efforts, which is our goal there in Paducah.

I was glad to see the Department of Energy award grant funding to the Paducah Chamber of Commerce to review how cleanup efforts can be complemented by future reindustrialization, which is a goal there.

Can you provide an update to how the Department intends to ensure that cleanup complements reindustrialization?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Well, you are talking about that site or at any site?

Chairman COMER. Yes. Or any site, but that one specifically would be great.

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. I mean, this is one of the things that I think was so important in the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is that it gave us an incentive to be able to offer, for example, 48(c) tax credits to former energy communities or energy communities that were challenged.

And so, to be able to lure manufacturing to those communities is embedded in the tax laws that were passed by Congress. That is true for the way the Loan Programs Office is operating as well. There is a whole component there to be able to help loans for communities that have powered our Nation for the past 100 years.

Chairman COMER. I strongly encourage the Department to work closely with the community to ensure that reindustrialization continues in parallel with the cleanup efforts.

So, as you know, a crucial part of this reindustrialization will be attracting industries that recognize and utilize the specialized skills and knowledge of the existing regional nuclear energy workforce. To that end, I understand that DOE plans to issue a funding opportunity announcement for novel and innovative nuclear enrichment technologies.

Given that DOE has had this funding for nearly 2 years, can you provide a timeline on when that funding opportunity might be released and when DOE plans to make those awards?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. Let me—I have to check with our Office of Nuclear Energy on the exact timing on it, but I can get back to you.

Chairman COMER. Will that FOA be tailored to encourage the commercialization of new technologies, like laser enrichment?

Secretary GRANHOLM. I will have to check with them to see what exactly they are contemplating as new technologies.

Chairman COMER. OK. Look forward to getting a response.

In recent months, Congress has taken significant action to bolster the front end of the nuclear fuel cycle, including passing a ban on Russian uranium imports, passing the Nuclear Fuel Security Act, and appropriating \$2.7 billion to incentivize the new LEU and HALEU capacity.

Can you provide assurance that DOE will not establish criteria that would discourage or prevent new market entrants from participating in any competitive funding opportunities associated with this new funding?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Sure. If we are putting out an RFP, we would make sure that it is competitive. We encourage all suppliers.

Chairman COMER. So, when does the DOE plan to make awards related to that new funding?

Secretary GRANHOLM. Yes. We are going to—I mean, obviously, this is a whole strategy, this uranium strategy, the \$2.7 billion. And so, we are really being thoughtful about it. I know you had a hearing with Dr. Huff about the way it is being implemented, both for HALEU as well as for low-enriched uranium. So, we expect that in the next few months we will be able to have more to say about the sequence and the timing of putting out funding opportunities.

Chairman COMER. Well, we would like to work with you on that. And I have a community, Paducah, that is really ahead of the curve and working together.

And I strongly encourage you—they have had a multiyear relationship with the DOE over the previous three or four administrations. So, we think there is a lot of opportunity there to where the community can work with DOE and lots of new opportunities for good-paying jobs.

And in my remaining few seconds, I have to say that I want to make a plug. We are very blessed in America to have the greatest energy economy anywhere. That is anchored by the oil companies. And oil is something that—it is a commodity we use every day.

I strongly encourage this Administration not to saddle the industry with excessive and burdensome rules and regulations that are only increasing the cost to consumers, which is fueling inflation in America.

We believe that our—as many of my colleagues have stated—our energy opportunity is much greater than what we are utilizing now. And we believe the thing that is holding us back are bad policies and burdensome rules and regulations by the Biden Administration.

So, we strongly encourage you to work closely with the energy companies. Not only do they provide tremendous energy for American consumers; they provide good-paying jobs to their workers and

pay a lot of taxes that keep our communities afloat. So, I wanted to mention that, because this was an energy hearing.

I do not see any further questioners, so we will close.

I want to thank you, Secretary, for being here today and for answering questions. The Oversight Committee is not as bad as they say on TV. Hopefully you will tell your colleagues in the Cabinet that this was a good experience, and hopefully we will see more of your Cabinet colleagues in front of this Committee, like we are supposed to do.

So, with that and without objection, all Members will have 5 legislative days within which to submit materials and to submit additional written questions for the witnesses, which will be forwarded to the witnesses for their response.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:32 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

