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Hearing on

Drilling Down: Oversight of the Challenges and Opportunities Facing U.S. Energy Production

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Good morning, Chairman Fallon, Ranking Member Bush, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and holding this important hearing on the energy industry's workforce shortages and efforts to overcome these challenges.

Introduction

My name is Bill desRosiers, and I am honored to serve as the Manager of External Affairs for Coterra Energy. Coterra Energy is a premier, diversified energy company with operations spanning the expansive the Permian and Anadarko Basins and the Marcellus Shale. From the rugged terrains of Texas and New Mexico to the rolling hills of Eastern Oklahoma and Pennsylvania, our mission is clear: to responsibly develop and produce some of the cleanest oil and natural gas in the world.

The core of our mission is not in geological source rock, heavy equipment, horsepower, or computer power, but in our workforce. Thousands of men and women labor every day to discover, produce, transport, and utilize energy resources across the United States. This energy makes modern

living possible. It powers our homes, fuels our vehicles, and drives our industries. It is the foundation upon which our comfortable and convenient lives are built.

Indeed, the contributions of the energy sector to our society are vast and varied, and I could easily spend hours outlining the myriad ways energy enriches our lives. But I'm here today to highlight the unique approaches Coterra Energy has used to invest in education specifically to cultivate a skilled workforce - not only for our company but for the entire energy industry and the 11 million jobs it supports.

Energy Workforce Outlook

The need for energy workers continues to grow and may accelerate, in the coming decades. The need for oil and natural gas remains robust, eve as various sectors of the economy are electrified and the growth of big data, data centers, electric vehicles and fleets increase what Americans demand from the power grid.

Meanwhile, "greener" electricity production requires a reliable energy source as backup, To name one specific example, the emerging hydrogen economy amplifies the importance of traditional sources that remain the most economical feedstock for producing energy from hydrogen. Finally, we cannot overlook the 6,000 everyday products and high-tech devices made from oil and natural gas, that cannot be replaced by switching to solar panels or hydrogen.[1]

As we navigate this evolving landscape, it's crucial to consider the impending demographic shift within the existing energy workforce. According to McKinsey & Company:

> In the United States, over a quarter of energy sector employees [an estimated 400,000] are at or near retirement age, with many of them serving as frontline workers. While this may not necessarily signify a sudden retirement cliff, it underscores the urgency of maintaining a healthy

[1] (U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Managemen 2019)

recruitment pipeline into traditional oil and gas businesses over the coming decade.[2]

This figure only represents the direct jobs. According to *Impacts of the Oil and Natural Gas Industry on the US Economy in 2021*, a report prepared for the American Petroleum Institute by PwC, "Combining the industry's direct, indirect, and induced impacts, the industry's total impact amounted to 10.8 million full-time and part-time jobs and accounted for 5.4 percent of total US employment in 2021."[3] Thus, the number of potential workforce retirements will likely be significantly higher than direct job estimates.

Projections from the firm Lightcast, utilizing Bureau of Labor Statistics data, predict a growing need for workers in key subsectors of the U.S. oil and natural gas industry over the next decade. The dataset includes projections for 15 critical subsectors between 2024 and 2034, with an anticipated cumulative 5 percent increase in jobs nationally. Beginning with 910,290 jobs in the current year, this total figure is expected to rise by 44,708 to 954,998 projected jobs by 2034.[4]

Moreover, the energy industry must address the imminent loss of valuable experience, and industry knowledge, and institutional expertise, via retirements and replace it with a younger technical workforce that can maintain and expand energy production to meet our country's and the world's needs. We need proactive planning and innovative approaches to answer this challenge.

What Are the Needs of the Energy Industry?

Before delving into Coterra's multifaceted approach to workforce development, it's crucial to understand how the energy industry has transformed in recent years. Gone are the days when it was enough to have a strong back and a willingness to get one's hands dirty. Today's energy sector demands a workforce with a unique blend of technical prowess, adaptability, and a commitment to sustainability.

[2] (Fantaguzzi, et al. 2024)
[3] (PwC 2023)
[4] (Lightcast 2024)

Similarly, in the past decade, the stereotypical image of an energy industry employee has undergone a remarkable evolution. Take, for instance, our wellsite operators or pumpers—interchangeable nomenclature depending on the region. These individuals are no longer just tasked with manual labor, turning valves, or tightening fittings. Instead, they are the backbone of our operations, managing daily production requirements, and providing real-time input to field managers, remote engineers, and energy marketers in our corporate offices.

What's striking is the shift in the required skill set. Many of our workers now boast backgrounds in high school career and technology programs. Skills in welding, diesel mechanics, or electronics are essentially prerequisites. But it doesn't stop there. More and more people are pursuing energy specific higher education, such as two-year degrees in applied science of petroleum and natural gas or energy technology, all in a bid to enhance their capabilities and knowledge.

Opportunities for these individuals have expanded exponentially. They're not just managing equipment; they're driving our efforts towards responsible energy production while adhering to industry-leading environmental health and safety protocols. In fact, they're at the forefront of our initiatives to reduce methane emissions, underscoring a commitment to sustainability that now is embedded in all Coterra’s operations.

Furthermore, the nature of their work has become increasingly complex, often requiring them to travel to remote corners of the country. Yet, they remain connected, leveraging cutting-edge technologies to collaborate seamlessly with colleagues and manage operations.

It is this adaptability, technical expertise, and dedication that have made the United States the world's top energy producer. The energy revolution we're witnessing today is not just a result of geological abundance but also the ingenuity and skill of our workforce.

Against this backdrop, Coterra Energy has built a multifaceted strategy to invest in education and training to help ensure that we meet and exceed, the workforce needs of an of an ever-evolving industry.

Coterra's Approach to Energy Education and Workforce Development

We recognize the importance of fostering interest and expertise in the energy sector from potential candidates at an early age. To achieve this, we focus on three primary areas of outreach: general energy Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education for middle- and high-school students, collaboration with high school career and technology education centers (CTE), and partnerships with institutions like Lackawanna College's School of Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG) and Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT).

Mobile Energy Learning Unit (MELU)

Our commitment to fostering energy education is seen in our flagship initiative, the Mobile Energy Learning Unit (MELU). Developed in collaboration with the Energy Education Foundation (EEF)[5] in Houston, more than 15 years ago, MELU serves as a dynamic platform to introduce middle- and high-school students to the complexities of the energy industry.

As a current EEF board member, I am proud to be actively involved in shaping the direction of this vital organization. EEF's mission is to develop the next generation of energy professionals through education in the community, advocacy, and professional and technical engagement in the energy sector. With EEF's dedication to excellence, nearly 260,000 students annually receive STEM education experiences, contributing to the development of a skilled energy industry workforce.

[5] https://www.energyeducation.org/

MELU comprises 24 comprehensive energy education and STEM lessons meticulously designed to captivate students' interest and foster their understanding of the energy sector. EEF's traveling exhibits showcase six self-contained stations, featuring hands-on activities centered around energy, oil, and natural gas industry technologies and sciences. Each station is designed with curriculum-based content aimed at engaging students in grades 5 through 8.

Coterra partnered with EEF and industry partners to develop tailored content to resonate with students from the unique Marcellus region. This version of MELU addresses pertinent topics such as porosity, permeability, sedimentation, safety, geology, drilling technology, fractional distillation, and general mechanical engineering concepts, all while incorporating career exploration elements.

Moreover, MELU is equipped with pre- and post-tests, which have helped to assess the knowledge participants have gained from the program. Using these assessments, educators can gauge the effectiveness of MELU in reinforcing STEM concepts and fostering a deeper understanding of the energy industry by students.

Since its deployment, MELU has made a profound impact, reaching tens of thousands of students across Pennsylvania. From bustling urban centers like Allentown and Harrisburg to rural communities like Tunkhannock and Williamsport, MELU's versatility and effectiveness have engaged students, teachers, and parents from diverse geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds.

In 2023, Coterra further expanded the reach of MELU by introducing and underwriting the cost to bring a MELU unit to the Permian region, with a specific focus on the New Mexico side of the border. Travelling through cities like Carlsbad, Hobbs, and more rural areas like Lovington and Artesia, MELU offered invaluable insights into the energy industry to local students and spurred their interest in energy careers.

Coterra's employees are working with other energy industry subject matter experts to design and build MELU 2.0—which is designed to significantly extend the unit's impact. MELU 2.0 will incorporate cutting-edge technologies currently used in the energy industry, closely aligning with the advancements discussed earlier in my testimony. Moreover, the new unit will integrate elements of advanced manufacturing and power generation, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the latest innovations in these critical areas.

One notable aspect of MELU is its alignment with the STEM concepts taught in schools during this age group. The science taught through MELU is objective and factual, which allows MELU to serve as a valuable educational tool that facilitates students' exploration of energy career pathways.

Career & Technology Education

As we continue our narrative, the next major focus of Coterra is centered around Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers. With their significant direct, indirect, and ancillary connections to the energy sector, CTE centers are vital conduits for nurturing talent and fostering a skilled workforce. These educational institutions play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the energy industry, offering direct pathways to enter the workforce after high school or helping students pursue an energy-focused associate degree, as I will describe later in my testimony.

Our journey with CTE centers began in 2010 when Coterra first partnered with the Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center (SCCTC). Coterra started by volunteering in welding and small engine repair programs, donating supplies, and providing financial support. In 2012, we deepened our commitment through Pennsylvania's Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, investing significantly in scholarships for tool kits, certifications, and skills development for students facing financial constraints. To date, we have invested over $2 million in the Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center, benefiting more than 1,800 students.

In 2020, we further expanded our support to SCCTC by helping establish a CDL trucking school. The school has successfully graduated over 200 students, with about 70 of them being 18 years old and still enrolled in high school. This allowed them to benefit fully from our EITC tax credit program, covering the entire cost of a CDL B. Recently, I was told the CDL school is booked through October, with most enrollees falling into the high school classification.

Recognizing the tremendous benefits brought by our partnership with SCCTC, Coterra supported additional CTE centers in 2018 and 2019. Each CTE school offers a unique set of class offerings tailored to regional socioeconomic challenges. A common thread among all these centers is the dedication and hard work of their students, who, with financial support and mentorship, undeniably bolster our economy.

As of today, Coterra's cumulative career and technical educational support in Pennsylvania, including the CDL school, exceeds $7 million across 26 CTE centers, with more than 5,500 students benefiting in some way.[6] We at Coterra, especially those volunteering inside the classroom, serving as mentors, or providing subject matter support, are increasingly inspired by these young men and women.

Despite the lack of a comparable EITC program to help drive CTE investment in the Permian region, Coterra has extended its educational and training efforts to Texas and New Mexico. This includes Coterra's support for the new Career and Technical Education Center of Hobbs (CTECH). CTECH's mission is to empower students for high-skilled, high-wage, and high-demand careers while developing their professional skills, technical knowledge, academic foundation, and real-world experiences, to help ensure their success after graduation. The facility offers an oil and natural gas energy program with

[6] Figures aggregated from annual donor reports provided by Commonwealth Charitable Management to Coterra Energy

focuses on oilfield processing (well pumper), programmable logic controllers, and robotics, making it the first of its kind in New Mexico.

Coterra, working with the Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP), provided financial support for the build-out of this $56 million facility, which is the first CTE center in Southeast New Mexico. [7] In addition, Coterra employees are volunteering in the classroom, and the company is working with its vendors and contractors to arrange for equipment and tangible supplies. We also are making targeted investments into various programs and supporting general awareness-building around the school. In addition to our financial and human capital support, Coterra recently hired our first graduate from CTECH, Cameron Fulfer. Cameron brings a valuable background in diesel mechanics and is training as an pumper with our production field team. Already, Cameron's dedication and skill set are making a positive impression with our team, and we are eagerly anticipating his career start.

Additionally, we are investing in Lovington School District's energy pilot program, with a specific focus on surveying careers in the energy sector. This initiative is followed by a one- to two-year high school-based program designed to transition students into a welding career, electronics career, or into a dual enrollment opportunity to pursue an associate degree in applied science.

I have the privilege of working directly with Paden Hagler, a 25-year-old educator at the school, with a unique background. Hagler initially wanted to be an educator and pursued a traditional college education, earning his teaching certification with a plan to return to the head of a classroom in rural New Mexico. However, life took a different turn for Paden and his wife, also an educator, when they wanted to start a family, and found that challenging on two teachers' salaries. Instead, Paden entered the energy industry, starting as a welder helper before advancing to a welder/fabricator. Later he transitioned into stack testing, working across the Permian to help companies manage emissions. After a

[7] (Permian Strategic Partnership 2022)

few years of financial security, Hagler returned to the classroom at Lovington High School, where he was given complete freedom to build the right CTE program, drawing inspiration from existing energy career-focused programs he had visited in the Marcellus and Anadarko basins, as well as Lackawanna College School of Petroleum.

Coterra has supported Hagler and his students by offering meaningful milestone rewards, such as steel-toe boots, fire-resistant clothing, industry tool kits, and field trips, such as what we offer CTE centers in Pennsylvania. Hagler's curriculum, modeled after other successful programs, has attracted 30 students, and Coterra continues to engage with Hagler and his students to help ensure their success.

It's essential to highlight two more aspects of our CTE focus. First many CTE centers are in rural parts of the country and are the only technical education available to students for hundreds of miles. Given the social and economic challenges, exacerbated by inflation and other issues, the ability to access a convenient CTE center is tremendously important. Second, Coterra does not restrict its CTE funding to specific programs. We firmly believe in supporting all high school students, irrespective of their area of study, because we understand the broader economic and societal benefits of a skilled workforce.

Lackawanna College School of Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG)

Established in 2010 to address the growing demand for skilled workers in the Marcellus region, Lackawanna College's PNG has become a cornerstone of workforce development in Northeast and North Central Pennsylvania. With 367 graduates to date and an outstanding 95% placement rate post-graduation, the school has solidified its reputation for producing highly qualified professionals across the Marcellus Shale. Many of these graduates have ascended to lead roles as operators, supervisors, or foremen within the industry. Additionally, inspired by their experiences, several graduates have pursued further education in collegiate engineering programs nationwide. The school offers two distinct degree

paths, each designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful energy careers.

The Petroleum & Natural Gas Technology Associate Degree program prepares students to become operations technicians responsible for the production and processing of oil and natural gas. Through a comprehensive curriculum, students delve into key concepts such as oil and natural gas discovery, drilling techniques, production processes, pipelining, and marketing strategies. Practical training is emphasized, with hands-on experience provided through field equipment simulations and a summer internship with an oil and natural gas producing or midstream company. Additionally, students gain a thorough understanding of safety regulations and ethical considerations relevant to the industry, preparing them for the demands of the field.

Meanwhile, the Petroleum & Natural Gas Business Administration-Associate Degree program focuses on developing students' management, marketing, and human-resource skills tailored to the oil and natural gas industry. In addition to core business principles, students learn about the specifics of oil and natural gas exploration, drilling operations, production management, and handling procedures. Technology plays a significant role in the curriculum, with students using management information systems and computerized spreadsheets to effectively analyze industry data.

Safety training remains a priority in both degree paths, so that graduates are equipped to navigate the industry's operational challenges while adhering to best practices and regulations.

Coterra's commitment to Lackawanna PG is demonstrated through a $2.5 million endowment in 2014, aimed at supporting the program's growth and sustainability. Our investment was complemented by contributions from industry peers including Williams, DT Midstream, and Southwestern Energy, further solidifying Lackawanna College's role as a leading training institution for well site technicians and pipeline operators.

Recognizing the industry's evolving nature, Lackawanna College recently launched of the Career & Technical Institute (CTI), a forward-thinking initiative that integrates PNG programs with disciplines including robotics, electrical vehicle maintenance, and cybersecurity. This innovative approach reflects the College's commitment to preparing students for diverse career paths while meeting the dynamic demands of the energy and advanced manufacturing sectors. Seeing the impact this innovative new institute would create Coterra announced an additional investment of $1 million into its endowment at Lackawanna College to further accelerate the program's success.

Success Stories from Lackawanna College's School of PNG

Allow me to share three success stories that illustrate the transformative impact of Lackawanna's PNG program and career and technical education.

Ben Whitaker is a production foreman at Coterra. He and the other foreman are responsible for leading and providing technical guidance and mentorship to their teams. During high school, Ben attended the Scranton Career & Technology Center, focusing on industrial machine technology. After graduating, he secured a position as a CNC operator at General Dynamics Land Systems in nearby Eynon, where he contributed to the production of defense parts for M1A1 Abram tanks. Unfortunately, due to federal budget cuts, Ben and others were laid off from the plant. In the following years, Ben took on various construction and maintenance roles to pay his bills until he decided to enroll in the School of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

During his first term at PNG, Ben regularly crossed paths with members of Coterra, including myself. Through guest lectures, field tours, and volunteering opportunities, we had the chance to become acquainted with Ben and appreciate his personality. Following his first year in the program, Ben interned for Coterra, becoming the first field intern in the Marcellus region.

Ben's extensive technical skills, honed during his time at the Scranton CTC and his employment at General Dynamics, set him apart from other summer interns in the field. After he finished his internship and studies at PNG, Ben was offered a position at Coterra. He initially served as a night shift well tender, gradually progressing to day shift and then assuming the role of lead well tender. Eventually, Ben's dedication and competence led to his promotion to foreman.

Ben's story doesn't end there, as I will illustrate with the next two individuals' stories.

Tommy Evans, currently a well tender at Coterra, initially pursued a traditional four-year degree at Susquehanna University, only to find himself back home in Luzerne, Pa., burdened by student debt and lacking meaningful job prospects in professional studies and sociology. After working odd jobs trying to piece together a career, Tommy enrolled in Lackawanna College's PNG, unsure if additional education could remedy his career dilemma.

During his first year in the program, Tommy crossed paths with Ben Whitaker, securing a summer internship with him at Coterra, which later transitioned into a commitment to work while completing the program. Tommy's dedication paid off, as he utilized his internship earnings to rapidly pay down his student loans, ultimately becoming debt-free from his college loans within 18 months of graduation. Today, Tommy continues to thrive at Coterra, working his way up the ranks and even serving as an adjunct instructor at Lackawanna College, where he helps train the next cohort coming out of the program.

Finally, **Zoey Wright**, is another example I'm excited to share. Zoey represents the epitome of the modern energy worker described at the beginning of my testimony. Zoey is set to graduate from high school this May, earning her degree from the Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center Welding Program. However, Zoey's already working in the industry, having started her journey through

dual enrollment classes during her high school sophomore year. These classes have allowed Zoey to complete an entire year of Lackawanna College's PNG program.

Zoey's dedication, tenacity, and work ethic prompted her instructors to reach out to me during her junior year of high school. I immediately introduced her to Ben Whitaker, who offered her a field internship with Coterra between her junior and senior years of high school—an opportunity reserved that had previously been for college students. I'm not aware of another case where we have brought a 17-year-old into our internship program. Under Ben's guidance, Zoey excelled in her internship, progressing from safety and equipment identification to hands-on activities and eventually running her own routes, akin to a seasoned well tender.

Zoey's achievements have not gone unnoticed. Earlier this year, the American Petroleum Institute (API) recognized her extraordinary accomplishments. API President and CEO Mike Sommers personally invited Zoey to Washington, D.C., where her success story was beamed across the world from API's annual agenda-setting State of American event. Zoey's journey will continue this summer when she explores the midstream sector of the energy industry, spending time working in the compression and pipeline sector. Zoey is expected to complete her studies at the PNG in Spring 2025, and I am confident she will have many job opportunities waiting for her.

Dual enrollment programs at high school career and technology education centers leading into energy-specific two-year associate degrees are proving to be highly effective. While Zoey's story marks the conclusion of this segment of my testimony, she represents just one of 70 dual enrollment students Coterra is working with and financially supporting in the 2023-24 academic year in Northeastern Pennsylvania. This partnership has yielded promising results over the past few years, with dozens of new students enrolling in the school of PNG. Many of these students may never have otherwise considered such a path, let alone pursued a post-high school technical program or ventured into the energy

workforce.[8] This success is particularly notable given the evolving composition of the typical energy worker.

The stories of Ben, Tommy, and Zoey are truly unique, especially when you explore how interconnected they are.

Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT)

For over a century, PCT has been at the forefront of postsecondary education, offering students a unique blend of academic learning and hands-on experience. Grounded in a legacy of honoring the working class, PCT has empowered countless individuals, many of whom are the first in their families to pursue higher education, to forge brighter paths forward.

Coterra's commitment to supporting PCT reflects our dedication to shaping the future of the energy workforce both directly and indirectly. Through our ongoing investment of $1.5 million in PCT, we aim to expand the reach of our impact, particularly in critical areas such as welding and electrical trades. This partnership with PCT underscores our belief in the value of focused education in preparing individuals for success in the energy sector and beyond.

In the following section, I will highlight three key areas where our partnership with PCT is making a tangible difference, recognizing that these initiatives represent just a portion of our extensive and growing collaboration.

Dual Enrollment

Over the last three years, our support has enabled over 2500 students to participate in dual enrollment activities from 30 CTE centers across Pennsylvania. This initiative empowers students to gain

[8] (Miller and Riccardo 2021, 3)

practical skills, industry knowledge, and college credits while still in high school, facilitating seamless transitions into higher education and the workforce.

According to Penn College President Michael J. Reed, "Earning college credit for courses taken in high schools and career and technology centers gives students a head start on their higher-education experience while allowing them and their families to save money. The dual enrollment option shortens the path toward earning a college degree and, ultimately, to securing sustainable employment."[9]

While not yet finalized, Coterra is on track to underwrite the cost for all students participating in PCT's dual enrollment program in the 2024-25 academic year.

Electrical Program Expansion

Every wellsite, compressor station, utility interconnect, manufacturing facility, and power plant requires expertise in electrical systems. While these individuals may not be working directly on well pads every day, their role in ensuring reliable electricity supply is crucial for the entire industry. Recognizing the importance of supporting trades like electrical work, Coterra partnered with PCT in 2023 to fund the expansion and renovation of its electrical labs. This investment aims to increase program capacity and provide additional educational opportunities through the acquisition of industry-grade equipment.

Graduates from Penn College's electrical program are highly sought after, evidenced by the program's impressive 100% placement rate. Moreover, approximately 82% of students enrolled in the college's electrical program are hired before graduation. The proposed project will address these issues by preparing and training students from rural and/or low-income backgrounds to enter the electrical industry. It will offer them various career pathways, ultimately leading to increased earning capacity and employment opportunities.

[9] (Pennsylvania College of Technology 2023)

Veterans Pilot Program

While most of this testimony has focused on traditional pathways into the energy workforce and expanding dual enrollment opportunities for high CTE students, it's crucial to highlight our efforts in supporting those who have served our country. Despite veterans receiving GI benefits to assist with the cost of college education, these benefits can vary and may not fully cover all expenses.

To address this challenge, Coterra is funding a pilot program with PCT to enhance access to higher technical education for veterans. Through this initiative, Penn College will award veterans an additional $5,000 grant on top of their post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. This funding aims to provide impactful support, mitigating or eliminating financial barriers to the pursuit of a college education. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a significant percentage of veterans have completed some college but have not obtained a degree, highlighting the importance of programs like these in supporting educational attainment.

Although the funding in this program is not explicitly restricted to careers paths into the energy workforce, the broader benefits to our economy and society are undeniable. Penn College's designation as a Military Friendly® School, coupled with its comprehensive support services for veterans and military students, makes it well-suited to execute this project.

Expanding These Efforts Nationwide

Coterra's strategic partnerships with Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT) and Lackawanna College School of Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG), combined with our investments in high school career and technology education centers (CTE), form the cornerstone of our workforce development program. These collaborations are instrumental in cultivating a skilled and proficient workforce tailored to the needs of the energy, manufacturing, and power generation industries. By graduating technically

adept individuals, these institutions equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the evolving energy landscape.

I will now provide an overview of additional efforts we are undertaking across the country to complement and further expand our impacts. These initiatives encompass a range of educational programs, outreach activities, and partnerships aimed at fostering talent in Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

New Mexico Junior College (NMJC)

NMJC offers an associate of applied science program in Energy Technology, similar to Lackawanna College's PNG curriculum discussed earlier. NMJC's program aims to equip students with the skills necessary to thrive in the energy workforce of the Permian Basin, with a strong emphasis on site security, environmental protection, and other essential aspects of meeting the nation's energy needs. NMJC houses an impressive, simulated oil and gas production site on campus, accessible to Coterra and other industry partners for hosting high school collaborations and other general industry trainings.

Coterra collaborates with NMJC to provide technical support, subject matter experts in classrooms, and is actively working to expand dual enrollment opportunities for regional high school students, including those from the Career and Technical Education Center of Hobbs (CTECH) and Lovington School District's energy pilot program. NMJC is in the final stages of completing its new workforce development facility, which will house programs aligned with CTE pathways such as welding, diesel mechanics, automation, machine learning, CDL, and oil and gas. Coterra's collaborative effort with NMJC is expanding opportunities for students to pursue two-year associate degree programs and certification courses and empowering students to enter and succeed in the energy industry's workforce.

Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP)

Coterra proudly stands as an original supporter of the PSP, recognizing it as a value-added component to our education efforts across the country. The PSP's mission aligns seamlessly with our dedication to workforce development and education. By partnering with federal, state, and local leaders, the PSP aims to strengthen and improve the quality of life for residents of the Permian Basin.

Specifically, the PSP's Education Committee is focused on initiatives that expand and strengthen teacher talent, improve professional development for educators and leaders, and provide resources for enhanced strategic planning and innovation within school districts. One of the greatest initiatives that we have had a heavy influence on is the PSP Energy Internship during the summer. Students from throughout the southeast region of New Mexico, otherwise known as the Permian, are invited to participate in a two-week, energy-focused experience that includes activities, interactive learning, visits with companies, and site tours. Students have a capstone project they work towards over two weeks and are paid at the end of the internship, wrapping up the experience with mock interviews and career advice from industry professionals. By supporting these efforts, Coterra contributes to the exposure of our industry to students who would not otherwise be considering a career or pathway towards employment.

Despite growing up around the industry, many students in the Permian have not had the opportunity to understand the significance of oil and natural gas or explore potential career opportunities within the field. Together with the PSP and our fellow members, we are collectively working towards the shared goal of delivering the best public schools and expanding career and technical education in Texas and Southeast New Mexico.

The Oklahoma Energy Resources Board (OERB)

Through the OERB, Coterra is actively participate in various programs to enrich educational experiences and promote STEM career opportunities. The OERB's Educators Support Initiative equips

teachers with essential resources such as free curricula, supplies, and training opportunities, so they can effectively educate students about the oil and natural gas industry. Additionally, we engage with educators across Oklahoma through the OERB's bi-annual educator conference, providing a platform for immersive learning experiences and professional development.

Coterra also contributes to the OERB's Community STEM Nights, collaborative events designed to highlight STEM career pathways by bringing free science, technology, engineering, and math exhibits to communities across Oklahoma. By partnering with local organizations, museums, and universities, we inspire K-12 students to explore the possibilities of becoming future scientists and engineers.

Furthermore, our involvement extends to supporting the PetroTech Technical Training Program, which offers individuals the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and certification necessary for careers in Oklahoma's oil and natural gas industry. This technical training program opens doors to fulfilling and lucrative positions as geological, engineering, or land technicians.

Conclusion

Throughout my testimony, we've explored the vital role of these especially productive versions of workforce development in shaping the future of the energy sector. At Coterra Energy, we recognize that investing in human capital is essential for driving innovation, ensuring operational excellence, and sustaining industry growth in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities.

Our partnerships with educational institutions such as Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT) and Lackawanna College School of Petroleum and Natural Gas (LC PNG) represent the cornerstone of our commitment to cultivating a skilled and proficient workforce. Moreover, our investments in high school career and technology education centers underscore our dedication to reaching students at an early stage of their educational journey. By collaborating with these institutions, we empower students with hands-on learning experiences, technical expertise, and career pathways that directly translate into

meaningful employment opportunities within the energy, manufacturing, and power generation industries.

As we look to the future, continued investment in workforce development is paramount. By prioritizing education, training, and mentorship, we can ensure that the energy sector remains at the forefront of innovation and remains a driving force for economic prosperity and societal advancement. Together, let us continue to invest in our most valuable resource – our people – and pave the way for a sustainable and thriving energy future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am eager to address any questions the members of this committee may have and to remain engaged in this crucial conversation on workforce development in the energy sector.

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