

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Whitfield  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power  
Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2015 U.S. Department of Energy Budget”  
April 3, 2014**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

This morning’s hearing will focus on the proposed Fiscal Year 2015 budget for the Department of Energy. Welcome, Secretary Moniz. We’re very pleased to have you here today to share your views on the Department of Energy’s FY 2015 budget.

DOE is tasked with developing and implementing a coordinated national energy policy, one that should further an “all-of-the-above” strategy that promotes greater production of all of America’s resources. It should foster private sector competition and innovation of advanced energy technologies. A national energy policy should also continue to support job creation and our manufacturing renaissance by providing regulatory certainty, rather than overreaching regulations, so we can maintain access to low-cost energy supplies.

But the DOE budget before us today, I am disappointed to say, is not reflective of a true national energy policy. Rather, it contributes to the lending of taxpayer support to the President’s Climate Action Plan. To be sure, the DOE FY 2015 budget request includes \$9.8 billion for DOE science and energy programs that DOE states “will play a key role in achieving [the President’s Climate Action Plan] goals.” In other words, over a third of DOE’s entire \$28 billion budget is being allocated to the President’s climate agenda.

This budget affirms that DOE is all-too-willing to acquiesce to EPA’s anti-energy agenda rather than affirmatively assert its own pro-energy agenda. This budget further creates additional concerns in my mind that DOE is blatantly putting the President’s climate change agenda ahead of the interests of a balanced national energy policy and the interests of the American people. This mission is further evidenced by the fact that DOE’s budget once again overwhelming favors the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), which houses all of the President’s favored green energy programs. In fact, EERE’s \$2.3 billion budget request is more than the combined budgets of the Offices of Electricity, Fossil Energy, Nuclear Energy, and ARPA-E.

We’ve seen the Obama Administration waste too much money on green energy pet projects that have failed, and we owe it to the taxpayers not to repeat those mistakes. That is why I am disappointed to see yet another DOE budget pursuing the same failed policies in pursuit of a climate agenda that has repeatedly been rejected. The fact that the President and DOE continue to circumvent Congress to unilaterally pursue policies that are not supported by the American people is an affront to the democratic process.

DOE instead should be taking a much more balanced approach that reflects current energy and economic realities. For example, America’s abundant energy resources – including coal, oil and natural gas – holds tremendous potential for energy affordability and security, for job creation, for export opportunities, and for strengthening America’s standing in the world. But it also poses implementation and innovation challenges for which DOE can play a role. DOE should be out in front of this effort, but the proposed budget does not reflect this need.

Another issue that is of great concern to me in the proposed budget is the substantially reduced funding for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MOX) currently under construction at Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina. In the case of the MOX plant, DOE has decided to abandon construction of the facility being built to eliminate 34 tons of surplus weapons plutonium, a project initiated by the Clinton Administration. At this point, \$4 billion has been spent and the facility is 60 percent complete, yet DOE has decided to shutdown construction apparently without any Record of Decision, any proposed alternative, or any analysis of the ramifications. Congress appropriated funds for construction, but it is my

understanding that DOE intends to use those funds instead to shut down the project resulting in 1800 people at risk for lay-offs.

It seems to me that if DOE is going to abandon a \$4 billion investment, the taxpayers and those at risk of losing their jobs deserve a thorough basis for it. I would urge DOE to use the funds for construction of the facility as originally appropriated by Congress.

Again, I want to thank Secretary Moniz for appearing before us today on DOE's FY2015 Budget proposal. I look forward to hearing his testimony and asking him questions on issues before the Department of Energy.

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