

**Opening Statement of Chairman Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
“The Department of Energy’s Role in Advancing the National, Economic, and Energy
Security of the United States”
September 15, 2016**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

The Subcommittee on Energy and Power has accomplished a good deal to say yes to energy and update and improve the nation’s energy policy, and the American people are beginning to see the economic and energy security benefits. The Department of Energy has been a partner in these efforts, and I welcome back Secretary Moniz to discuss what we have already accomplished and what we hope to do in the years ahead.

The most direct benefit of America’s newfound energy abundance can be seen at gas stations in Southwest Michigan and across the country, where fuel prices have dipped toward \$2 per gallon, even in the midst of serious Middle East turmoil. This would not have been possible without the tremendous growth in domestic oil output along with the emergence of a North American energy market that now plays a prominent role on the world stage. We are also seeing abundant natural gas supplies and modest prices, which of course is critical as we head into the cold weather months.

But the benefits go well beyond cheaper fill-ups and more affordable heating bills. Energy has been one of the most important drivers for economic growth, and with expanded domestic energy production, reduced reliance on foreign imports, increased energy efficiency and productivity, and significant cost reductions, we are arguably more energy secure than ever before.

Although the private sector deserves the bulk of the credit for its advances in innovative technologies that have expanded our oil and gas supplies, Congress is making important policy changes, and DOE has been a valuable source of information in these ongoing efforts. For example, the agency’s Quadrennial Energy Review detailed the existing permitting challenges we face as we struggle to update and expand the nation’s energy infrastructure, and the Long-Term Strategic Review helped bring to light the need for improvements to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR).

With input from DOE, this subcommittee has spearheaded a number of efforts that have been passed into law. Last year’s long-term highway bill, the FAST Act, contains key provisions to modernize the SPR, improve emergency preparedness for energy supply disruptions, protect critical electric infrastructure security, and prioritize energy security in federal decision-making. Last year’s government funding bill lifted the decades-old restrictions on the export of crude oil, a long-championed priority of this committee, and we are beginning to see the job creation and energy diplomacy benefits of doing so.

We continue working on legislation. The pending energy bill contains language addressing the siting and permitting process for pipelines and hydroelectric generation, efficiency measures, and energy workforce development initiatives. Many of these provisions will be implemented by DOE.

Whether by backing basic research and development to enable a technology based energy revolution, protecting the electric grid from cyber-attacks, or by tracking and responding to

energy disruptions around the world, the department has an important role to play in our evolving energy marketplace.

Today's hearing will provide an opportunity for Secretary Moniz to preview some of the major challenges and opportunities presented by the nation's changing energy landscape. We will also have a chance to examine DOE's progress in implementing recently enacted legislation, including the upgrades to the SPR. Our energy future can be a bright one – if we adopt the right policies and implement them effectively and I welcome DOE's continued role in this effort.

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