

Jeff Duncan (SC-03) Opening Remarks
Energy Subcommittee Hearing
Department of Energy FY24 Budget Request
May 11, 2023

As prepared for delivery

The Subcommittee on Energy will now come to order.

Thank you all for being here today to examine the Department of Energy's Fiscal Year 2024 budget request. Today marks the first time Secretary Granholm has appeared before this subcommittee in over a year.

Madam Secretary, welcome back to the Subcommittee.

The Administration's budget request for FY24 is almost \$52B – a \$6.2B, or 13.6%, increase from enacted levels in 2023.

This includes a \$366M increase for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, a \$46M increase for cybersecurity, and a \$238M cut to nuclear energy.

This request is in addition to the billions of dollars already appropriated to DOE through the Democrat's tax and spend bill, the infrastructure bill, and the CHIPS Act, all of which passed last Congress.

I look forward to taking a closer look at the request and DOE's priorities today.

Energy is foundational and impacts every aspect of American life. Democrats "rush to green polices" are making energy unaffordable.

Over the past two years, energy prices have skyrocketed. This Administration has discouraged private sector investment in critical energy infrastructure like oil and gas pipelines, issued onerous regulations on energy production and processing facilities, maintained a needlessly complex bureaucracy that makes permitting reliable power generation like nuclear energy nearly impossible, and made our energy supply chains more vulnerable to hostile foreign actors.

Not long ago, America was an energy superpower. Increased American energy production helped strengthen our economy, gave our industries a competitive advantage, and allowed us to challenge adversarial energy dictators without having to worry about global markets, all while decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

President Biden and his Department of Energy have spent the past two years ceding that strength and autonomy to hostile nations like China, Russia, and Venezuela.

Since the beginning of 2021...

- Retail electricity rates have increased by 8%
- Gas prices have increased by roughly 46%

- Natural gas prices are up roughly 31%; and
- Home heating oil and diesel are up by 49%

Unfortunately, the Democrats and President Biden's regressive energy agenda takes a whole of government approach to phase out American energy production and ship it overseas to countries like China.

In fact, the Department recently announced its intention to award \$200M to a Chinese battery company, Microvast. We have yet to hear a good explanation from the Department regarding how this company was able to secure taxpayer dollars intended to establish domestic supply chains for battery technologies.

If we follow President Biden's energy agenda, Americans will become even more dependent upon China and Russia - the critical mineral supply chain for renewable energy technologies is largely controlled by these two countries.

This rush to green agenda includes the impractical goal of a "zero-carbon electric grid by 2035." And with this impractical goal comes calls for a massive expansion of transmission infrastructure. The driving force behind this push to build transmission is not reliability or to lower costs for consumers – it is largely to connect more renewable energy to the grid.

That is why I am wary of a lot of the so-called reforms to the transmission permitting process, as well as a lot of the transmission programs in DOE's budget request – most are a precursor to achieve this unrealistic "rush to green" goal.

President Biden's energy agenda discourages investment in traditional energy sources that provide 24/7 electricity generation. According to the EIA, last year we added the least amount of interstate natural gas pipeline capacity since the agency began collecting data nearly 30 years ago. This did not happen by accident.

Republicans on Energy and Commerce have solutions to reverse the Democrats' regressive energy agenda. H.R. 1, The "Lower Energy Costs Act" passed the House a few weeks ago with a bipartisan vote. The legislation would create a regulatory structure that encourages investment and innovation to bring all forms of energy online.

The Department of Energy's core mission is to confront the energy security needs that face our nation.

This budget request falls short of that goal. Instead, the Biden Energy Department prioritizes green new deal policies that raise prices for hardworking Americans and embolden foreign adversaries.

When America is a world leader in energy production, the world is a safer and cleaner place.

President Biden's Energy Department has put its foot on the scale in favor of green technologies at the expense of reliable fuels like nuclear, natural gas, and hydropower. This is making our

supply chains more vulnerable to foreign adversaries, dragging down economic growth, harming our national security, and raising prices for American families.

DOE must reverse these policies and return to its core energy security mission.

Thank you again Chair Rodgers for holding this hearing.

I look forward to hearing from Madam Secretary and now I recognize Ranking Member DeGette.