

Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Opening Statement
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security
Hearing on “The Department of Energy’s FY 2024 Budget Request”
May 11, 2023
As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Chair Duncan.

Secretary Granholm, welcome.

Foundational to our lives and our future is access to affordable, reliable energy.

On Energy and Commerce, we’ve worked since the start of this Congress to achieve that promise, most recently by passing H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act.

Today, I am deeply troubled that DOE, under your leadership, has put America on a dangerous path that harms our energy security and benefits our adversaries, mainly China.

Since day one, DOE has enabled the President to shut down American energy.

Rather than sounding the alarm about America’s declining energy security, the administration canceled the Keystone pipeline...

...begged OPEC, Russia, and Venezuela to produce more oil and gas...

...supported the completion of Russia’s Nord Stream pipeline...

...and turned to China for solar panels and batteries made with slave labor and dirty manufacturing.

As a result, America’s energy prices are higher than ever and we are less energy secure.

Gas and electricity prices remain too high.

Our electric grid is becoming unstable.

This is driving inflation and hurting Americans and businesses.

Because of this, families have to make tough choices about whether to put gas in the car or food on the table.

Earlier this year, we heard from a local Virginia farmer, David Hickman, a fifth-generation farm owner, whose livelihood has been made worse by these policies.

He told us, and I quote, "this is the most perilous time for American agriculture."

In some places, like California, the government is even asking people to ration energy.

This should be a warning to the Biden administration.

One of our first orders of business this Congress was the passage of bipartisan bills to stop President Biden and DOE from mismanaging the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and sending our emergency stockpile to China...

...Now our SPR is at the lowest level in 40 years.

I'm equally concerned that this administration is making us more dependent on China.

America has the highest labor and environmental standards in the world...

We value liberty and equality.

...Madam Secretary, you support waivers for solar panels sourced from China...

...even when China violates our trade laws, uses slave labor, and pollutes more than any other nation.

DOE is spending hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars to force an energy transition on Americans...with the false promise of 100 percent wind, solar, and battery powered energy...

...the supply chains for which are basically controlled by adversarial China.

At the same time, the administration is threatening to ban natural gas stoves and other home appliances that Americans rely on.

We've seen the future that these proposed policies and government mandates lead to.

I recently visited Europe with other Energy and Commerce members.... and it was clear that Europe's "rush to green" destroyed their energy and manufacturing industries and increased their reliance on adversaries, like Russia and China.

Now, Europe is in energy crisis following Russia's war with Ukraine.

We cannot let Europe's mistakes become America's future.

DOE must return to its core missions to protect America's energy security and our way of life.

Which brings us to the budget request for fiscal year 2024.

Last year, DOE received a 200% boost in funding – nearly \$100 billion dollars... and up to \$350 billion in new loan authorities...

...in addition to its regular appropriations of \$46 billion dollars.

This year, the request is to increase that budget to \$52 billion.

It's our constitutional responsibility to ensure DOE carries out its mission as Congress intended.

DOE is responsible for two of the nation's most critical missions: maintaining our nuclear weapons and ensuring America's energy security.

Rather than carrying out its core mission...

...the department is prioritizing the implementation of this rush-to-green agenda and rushing to spend all the money the department has received through IRA and IIJA...

...without taking steps to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

The actions taken by DOE under your leadership...

...and the alarming comments you've made commending China and suggesting the U.S. follow the Chinese Communist Party's lead...

...have failed to reassure me that DOE's priorities are aligned with the needs of Americans or the national and energy security interests of the United States.

You must abandon this dangerous and radical agenda so people have the opportunity for a better life and secure future.

Thank you, I yield back.