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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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October 28, 2025

Mr. Jeff Novak
Acting General Counsel and Principal Deputy General Counsel
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Novak:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Energy on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, to testify at the hearing entitled “Appliance and Building Policies: Restoring the American Dream of Home Ownership and Consumer Choice.”

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. Your responses should be mailed to Calvin Huggins Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed to Calvin.Huggins1@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert E. Latta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Latta" clearly legible, and "E." in the middle.

Robert E. Latta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Robert Latta (R-OH)

1. Billions of taxpayer funds have been obligated and expended on weatherization over the past four years, including \$3.5 billion in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). DOE has not done a full assessment of the broader weatherization program since 2014.
 - a. What are DOE's plans to conduct a full assessment of the broader weatherization program?

The Honorable Laurel Lee (R-FL)

1. One of the bills we discussed is Mr. Goldman's H.R. 4758, the Homeowner Energy Freedom Act, which would repeal several provisions from the Inflation Reduction Act, including Section 50131, which incentivizes states to adopt the latest or zero-energy building codes.
 - a. Can you tell us how the "one-size-fits-all" approach to building codes that Section 50131 takes would impact housing costs?
 - b. According to data from the DOE, the most recent International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) was developed in 2024 and has been adopted by only one state. Meanwhile, the next most recent code was developed in 2021 and has only been adopted by 15 states. What does the low number of states that have adopted the IECC 2024 or 2021 tell us about the role of regional or state differences in decisions to implement a code?
 - c. When it comes to consumer choice and affordability in the housing market, what are some of the Administration's priorities at DOE?

The Honorable Erin Houchin (R-IN)

1. Thank you for recently testifying before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy on legislation including my bill, H.R. 5184, the Affordable HOMES Act. The bill would affirm that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has regulatory authority over manufactured housing construction standards by rescinding a provision of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) that directly contradicts the Manufactured Housing Construction Safety Standards Act of 1974. Will you commit to working with my office, Congress, and HUD on H.R. 5184 to re-establish HUD as the sole regulator of manufactured housing construction standards?

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ)

1. The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 explicitly separated the functions of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and what is now the Department of Energy (DOE). However, DOE has recently started to erode that firewall by detailing DOE staff to the NRC and retaining supervisory authority over some of those staff. Additionally, on July 29, David Taggart was listed as DOE's "Deputy General Counsel for Litigation" on the Department's website. On that day he was also listed as "Chief Counsel" on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's website, raising concerns that Mr. Taggart was serving in a dual-hatted role contrary to the intent of the law.
 - a. How many DOE staff are currently on detail to the NRC?
 - b. Who are their supervisors?
 - c. What date did Mr. Taggart cease to be a DOE employee?
 - d. After Mr. Taggart ceased to be a DOE employee, did anyone from DOE continue to act as his supervisor or assign him work?
 - e. Did Mr. Taggart ever simultaneously perform work for the NRC and DOE?
 - f. Has your office produced any legal memos or opinions since January 20, 2025 on the separation requirements imposed by the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 between DOE and NRC?

The Honorable Jennifer L. McClellan (D-VA)

1. With respect to the Weatherization Assistance Program:
 - a. How many DOE staff were responsible for administering the program prior to January 20, 2025?
 - b. How many DOE staff are currently responsible for administering the program?
 - c. What is DOE's policy on allowing staff to travel to conduct outreach and oversight for the program?
 - d. If staff are unable to travel, how do they conduct outreach and oversight?
2. With respect to FY25 appropriations:
 - a. Did DOE shift funding appropriated by Congress between programs within the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account?
 - b. Did DOE reallocate funding away from the Building Technologies Office against Congress's direction?

- c. How much of the funding that Congress appropriated for the Building Technologies Office did the office actually receive?
 - d. Did any of the remaining funding get allocated to other DOE offices? If so, which offices?
- 3. With respect to the Clean Cities and Communities program:
 - a. Virginia's Clean Cities Coalition is still awaiting notification about their contract for a project period that started on April 1, 2025. Please provide a specific date when DOE will notify Clean Cities Coalitions about their contract status for the project period that began over 5 months ago.
 - b. Has anyone at DOE ever been instructed to withhold information about the status of grants and contracts, or to provide only vague or generic replies to recipients?

The Honorable Paul Tonko (D-NY)

- 1. Please provide a timeline of when states should expect to have their plans approved by the Department of Energy (DOE) to allow them to access or spend funding allocated through the State Energy Program, Weatherization Assistance Program, and Weatherization Readiness Fund.
- 2. Please clarify your written testimony for H.R. 1355, which states that this legislation "mandates a new government program."
 - a. Has the Department administered the Weatherization Readiness Fund for the past several years?
 - b. Has the Department previously published guidance with program rules to support the implementation of the Weatherization Readiness Fund?

The Honorable Kim Schrier (D-WA)

- 1. The Direct-Feed Low Activity Waste Facility at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant has taken 23 years of work and \$24 billion taxpayer investment to reach a consensus-based, agreed-upon approach to finally start disposing of Hanford's nuclear waste. I'm happy to hear that the Department of Energy has signed the final paperwork necessary to begin hot commissioning at the facility by October 15th. Once the hot commissioning phase has been completed, what are the Department's plans with regard to full operations?

The Honorable Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX)

- 1. On May 30, DOE announced the termination of 24 Office of Clean Energy Demonstration awards totaling \$3.7 billion. They include several projects near my district

and around the Gulf Coast region, including \$330 million for Exxon Mobil's clean hydrogen complex in Baytown, \$270 million for Calpine's carbon storage project in Baytown, \$99 million for Orsted's clean methanol project east of Houston, and \$375 million for Eastman Chemical's plastic recycling project in Longview. During Secretary Wright's budget hearing before this committee earlier this year, his testimony mentioned that each project received an individualized review before they were terminated.

- a. Which official had the final sign off on these terminations?
- b. Why were these specific grants selected for review?
- c. What process has DOE leadership laid out for selecting grants to review?
- d. What is DOE's specific justification for terminating each of these grants?
- e. What specific evidence has DOE found to suggest that these projects are not financially sound and economically viable, aligned with national and economic security interests, and consistent with Federal law – the standards outlined in the Secretary Wright's Secretarial Memorandum titled "Ensuring Responsibility for Financial Assistance"?
- f. What specific legal authority is DOE exercising to terminate these grants?