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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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March 9, 2026

Mr. Alex Fitzsimmons
Director, Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Fitzsimmons:

Thank you for agreeing to testify at the Subcommittee on Energy hearing on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 10:15 a.m. in 2123 Rayburn House Office Building. The hearing is entitled “Protecting America’s Energy Infrastructure in Today’s Cyber and Physical Threat Landscape.”

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 Seth Ricketts Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed to Seth.Ricketts@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 that reads "Robert E. Latta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "Latta".

Robert E. Latta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Bob Latta (R-OH)

1. When I asked you about the timeliness of information sharing by smaller utilities as it relates to threats to the system, you confirmed that the information sharing was timely, but that ‘there is more we can do in that department.’ As a fundamental part of CESERS mission, how can you further enhance information sharing between your office and the private sector, and vice versa.

The Honorable Brett Guthrie (R-KY)

1. A culture of constant improvement is important for DOE, energy stakeholders, and their mutual work to safeguard the energy sector.
 - a. All the bills today reflect measures that would support constant improvement, as a general principle. Will these be useful to strengthening the Department’s energy sector responsibilities?

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA)

1. There's approximately \$160 million remaining in the Rural and Municipal Utility Cybersecurity program, with less than a year left in its current authorization. Many cooperatives and municipal utilities have told us that while they appreciate DOE's creative efforts with programs like the ACT Prize, the competitive application process for technical assistance has created barriers for smaller, resource-constrained utilities.
 - a. What specific barriers have you observed that prevent smaller utilities from accessing RMUC resources?
 - b. How would the proposed legislative changes, particularly making technical assistance non-competitive, improve program implementation and reach?
2. Iowa State University is leading CyDERMS, a regional cybersecurity center focused on securing Distributed Energy Resources. As we integrate millions of new devices we're dramatically expanding the attack surface of our grid. At the same time, we're deploying AI and machine learning tools to detect attacks and manage these distributed systems. This creates a paradox: we're using high-tech AI solutions to secure increasingly complex systems, but that technology itself could be a vulnerability.
 - a. How do you think about this balance?
 - b. Are there certain applications where simpler, lower-tech approaches might actually be more secure?
 - c. How do we ensure that the AI tools we're deploying to defend the grid don't become the vector for attack?

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ)

1. During questioning, you asserted that political retribution – if an awardee is located in a state that voted for President Trump – has nothing to do with whether or not an award was canceled by the Department of Energy (DOE) last October. However, in a court filing dated December 23, 2025, that was signed by an Assistant Attorney General, the Department of Justice stipulated that, “A primary reason for the selection of which DOE grant termination decisions were included in the October 2025 notice tranche was whether the grantee was located in a ‘Blue State.’” I entered this court filing into the hearing record during my questioning.
 - a. In response to Representative Tonko’s question about the Department of Justice’s stipulation, you stated that “we do not agree with the court’s filing.” Is it DOE’s stance that the Department of Justice stipulation quoted above is incorrect or misleading?
 - b. Why did DOE consider if an awardee was in a “blue state” when deciding to cancel or announce the cancellation of an award?
 - c. Who directed DOE to consider if an awardee was in a “blue state” when deciding to cancel or announce the cancellation of an award?

2. Beyond the awards illegally canceled by DOE throughout 2025, we have received countless anecdotes of other awards where DOE has simply refused, without cause, to definitize a final award or move from one gate stage to the next. In other cases, DOE has simply ignored outreach from an award recipient, refusing to answer questions from the award recipient.
 - a. Why has DOE ceased engaging with recipients of awards it has not canceled?
 - b. Has Secretary Wright or anyone from the Executive Office of the President directed any DOE employee to cease engaging with certain award recipients?
 - c. Has Secretary Wright or anyone from the Executive Office of the President directed any DOE employee to refuse to advance projects through their milestone phases?