



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Chairman Conor Lamb (D-PA)
Subcommittee on Energy

Subcommittee on Energy Markup of:
H.R. 34, the “Energy and Water Research Integration Act of 2019”
March 27, 2019

Good afternoon and welcome to the first markup of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of this Congress. I’d like to thank Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas for introducing the Energy and Water Research Integration Act of 2019, which addresses the energy water nexus issues we are experiencing across our country today. I’m pleased our committee is starting off with bipartisan legislation. This legislation was examined in a hearing earlier this month, where the panel of expert witnesses discussed the unique intersection of energy and water and identified innovative solutions for improving their respective uses.

The Energy and Water Research Integration Act of 2019 aims to decrease energy and water intensity when we utilize these resources by integrating important water production, use, and treatment considerations throughout DOE’s relevant R&D programs. Reducing the water intensity of energy, and the energy intensity of water production, will help our environment and decrease utility bills for our constituents back home.

Congress instructed the Department of Energy to create a program to address these issues over a decade ago in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, and in 2012, the Department created the Energy-Water Nexus Crosscut Team. This team created a plan of future work and research for DOE, and the Department has held a series of roundtable discussions with stakeholders to ensure the issues were being addressed properly.

Unfortunately, this team was disbanded at the beginning of this Administration. Although the Administration recently launched a broad initiative that focuses on water production and announced two funding opportunities for desalination technologies, these are only components of the overarching energy water nexus.

Restoring a comprehensive focus into this connection and sector is critical. Global energy consumption and water demand continue increasing and likely will for decades into the future. This demand is exacerbated by climate change, and will evolve as this phenomenon continues in the years and decades ahead.

Passing the Energy and Water Research Integration Act of 2019 would ensure that our nation becomes more efficient with its use of energy and water. This is necessary to benefit citizens

across the nation and I look forward to advancing this important bill out of our Subcommittee today.