COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Opening Statement of Energy Subcommittee Ranking Member Randy Weber

Energy Subcommittee Field Hearing

The Future of Advanced Carbon Capture Research and Development

November 22, 2019

Thank you, Chairwoman Fletcher. I'm excited to be back home in Texas and have the opportunity to hear about groundbreaking new research and development in carbon capture technology.

Today's hearing is a chance for private sector organizations to highlight their leading roles in fossil energy innovation through carbon capture, storage, and utilization technologies. The scope and range of technologies being pursued is as vast as the untapped oil and gas reserves here in Texas!

Coal and natural gas make up 64 percent of net electricity generation in the United States, and that number is expected to only dip to 58 percent by 2040. Simply put, the use of fossil fuels isn't going out of style anytime soon.

We have incredible domestic fossil energy resources, and our economic stability depends on the power they produce.

So it's no surprise that a robust industry has developed here at home focused on investing in the next generation of technologies to produce and use American fossil fuels more efficiently, more safely, and at a lower cost for American consumers. In fact, I think I am well within my rights to label Houston, Texas as the carbon capture capital of the world!

We've seen incredible research and technology successes through collaborative, public-private partnerships right here in our backyard. One such example is the Air Products production facility in my district, just down the road in Port Arthur.

This facility, which was sponsored in part by the Department of Energy, captures over 90 percent of the CO2 from the product streams of two commercial-scale steam methane reformers and injects that carbon dioxide into the West Hastings oilfield for enhanced oil recovery. In return, DOE has estimated that an additional 1.6 to 3.1 million barrels of oil will be produced annually from this CO2 application process.

Another example is the Petra Nova facility, just a couple miles southwest of here – a facility my colleagues and I will have the chance to visit this afternoon. This facility captures carbon dioxide from a coal-fired plant and then, much like the Air Products facility, routes the CO2 to the West Ranch oil field, also in my district, for enhanced oil recovery. Within the first 10 months of opening, this field saw oil production boost by 1,300 percent.

Additionally, the Department of Energy is making smart, targeted investments in early-stage research to advance the next generation of production and emissions control technologies through the DOE Fossil Energy Research and Development (FER&D) program.

Funded at $740 million in FY 2019, FER&D conducts research that supports clean, affordable, and efficient use of domestic fossil energy resources. The complex fossil energy research challenges we face today will require an all hands-on deck approach. Academia, industry, and the Department of Energy are the ideal partners to develop these solutions.

With support from DOE, the technology developed and deployed at facilities like Air Products and Petra Nova are reducing the emissions from local refineries, and producing affordable, American fuel to power our economy.

I look forward to hearing more about these partnerships from our witnesses today. I want to thank our all witnesses for testifying today, and the Chairman for holding this hearing.

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