



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

## **Opening Statement of Subcommittee Ranking Member Randy Weber**

Subcommittee on Energy Markup

*H.R. 6084, H.R. 6097, H.R. 4481, and H.R. 4733*

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Thank you, Chairwoman Fletcher, for the opportunity to speak on these energy bills this morning.

On the Science Committee, we have a responsibility to support the research and development activities that will grow our economy, strengthen our national security, protect our environment, and help maintain U.S. leadership in science and technology for the next generation. This is especially true on the Energy Subcommittee, where our actions can have a direct impact on the future of the U.S. clean energy economy which touches all of these sectors and interests.

So, when considering energy legislation, we need to take the long-term and big-picture approach. This means strategically prioritizing R&D that supports the development of a diverse, domestic, and clean energy portfolio, driving innovation in areas where industry cannot, and providing the maximum return on investment for the American taxpayer. And while I believe that this a goal of each of the four bills we will consider this morning, only two of these are currently bipartisan.

So first the good news. The two bipartisan bills we will consider this morning are H.R. 6084, the Water Power Research and Development Act, and H.R. 4733, the Low Dose Radiation Research Act. H.R. 6084 authorizes DOE's activities in hydropower and pumped energy storage, part of the Administration's Energy Storage Grand Challenge.

It also provides necessary support for marine and hydrokinetic energy infrastructure and programs. It does all of this with a responsible funding increase, with the majority of these funds going toward early-stage energy research. I want to thank Representative Bonamici for working with us to come to a bipartisan agreement on this legislation.

We will also consider Representative Posey's Low-Dose Radiation Research Act, which authorizes basic research into the biological effects of low dose radiation. In order to best serve our nation's energy, medical, defense, and space travel needs, we need foundational research in the radiology and biology to directly define the impact of low doses of radiation.

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This issue is long-standing priority for the House Science Committee, and I am pleased to continue my support for this important bipartisan legislation.

Now to the areas where there is still work to be done. Today, we will also consider H.R. 6097, the Nuclear Energy Research and Development Act and H.R. 4481, the Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act of 2019. I want to emphasize that while I cannot support either of these bills in their current state, I support the intent behind both of them and anticipate further productive discussion.

On the Science Committee, I have long served as an advocate for advanced nuclear energy research and development. Last Congress, after four years of work, my bill, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (NEICA), which authorized key industry partnerships and critical infrastructure needed for next generation nuclear R&D, was signed into law.

H.R. 6097 would follow on this legacy by authorizing significant increases in spending across DOE's nuclear energy portfolio. And again, while I support the intent, I believe this approach is both unrealistic and unproductive. We must be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars – even when it comes to supporting R&D we agree on. For an issue as critical as this, we must take our time and clearly delineate nuclear energy priorities.

That said, I look forward to working with Representative Lamb on this legislation. With your commitment to come to the table on our concerns, I believe we can reach an agreement before we consider this bill at Full Committee.

Next, H.R. 4481 authorizes DOE's activities in energy critical materials R&D activities. Critical materials play an important role in supporting technologies that will shape future U.S. energy consumption. DOE has the capability to conduct the R&D needed to help get the U.S. back on track as a global leader in this area, but in order to understand our full economic risk, it's vital that we assess our resources here at home, and better understand what materials are vulnerable.

H.R. 4481 is a good starting point, but I feel strongly that any legislation in this area must include detailed plans for specific interagency collaboration and comprehensive programs that assess and leverage our domestic resources. Again, I look forward to working with my friends across the aisle on to address these concerns moving forward.

While, I know we cannot agree on everything, we have a lot of common ground here, and I feel confident that by negotiating in good faith, we can find a path forward.

I yield back the balance of my time.