



Chairwoman Marcy Kaptur
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Hearing on Energy Workforce Development Opportunities & Challenges
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As Prepared

Welcome to our third hearing. Thank you all for coming and please let me especially thank all of the witnesses here today.

Today, our subcommittee will discuss future energy jobs and the need to ensure that our nation has a ready, capable workforce both for today and the next generation to meet our nation's growing energy demands.

Developing clean, cutting-edge energy technologies and safeguarding our national nuclear security requires our concerted attention. The Department of Energy (DOE) itself is responsible for addressing energy, environmental, and nuclear security challenges, relying on approximately 100,000 federal employees and contractors to fulfill these duties.

We look forward to hearing from our expert panel about workforce development opportunities and challenges in nuclear security and the broader energy sector with a particular focus on the vital role of industry, organized labor and its training academies, science, technology, engineering, and academia. In particular, questions I hope we discuss today include:

- What are we doing to improve the diversity and readiness of America's workforce to meet future energy and nuclear security needs, and is it enough?
- What should the U.S. be doing and thinking about to create more skilled worker pipelines and training collaborations in the nuclear security and energy workforce?

As we get started, I want to highlight a few key points with respect to today's energy workforce that represents both the opportunities and challenges facing us.

- Roughly 12 percent of today's energy industry workforce is eligible to retire. That is about 800,000 jobs that would need to be filled.
- 76 percent of energy industry employers reported hiring difficulty.

According to the Energy and Employment Report for 2019, which was just released yesterday, the U.S. energy sector employs about 6.7 million Americans today. This job sector is projected to grow by an additional 1.5 million people by 2030.

This does not include the 42,000 men and women in the national nuclear security complex. These challenges underscore the need to invest in our energy workforce—the steel and ironworkers, nuclear operators, electricians, plumbers and pipefitters, engineers, scientists and physicists—and how critical those investments are for a ready, capable workforce.

With respect to nuclear security, DOE is in this midst of a scope of work it hasn't seen since the Cold War to sustain the nuclear deterrent. There are many risks and challenges in this mission, thus DOE requires the necessary workforce to accomplish its mission in a safe, secure, and cost-effective manner.

As the energy sector evolves to include more sustainable forms of energy, as our nuclear security needs also grow, and as more Americans retire, it is paramount that today's energy workforce transitions to meet new opportunities, and that we build the "workforce of tomorrow."

In my view, energy workforce development is about collaboration and establishing closer partnerships between labor, STEM, the national laboratories, industry, and academia. Collaboration is—for example—creating new opportunities for workers in coal country as our energy mix changes. Collaboration can ensure the next generation is ready to be nuclear welders or nuclear physicists. And collaboration means reaching more people in more places, including those with diverse backgrounds and skill sets or those with little familiarity with this employment sector.

I want to again thank our witnesses for their testimony today, and I look forward to our discussion.

I'd like to turn now to our Ranking Member, Mr. Simpson for any remarks he may have.