



Chairwoman Marcy Kaptur
Subcommittee on Energy and Water

Hearing on the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration's
FY2020 Budget Request
April 2, 2019

The Subcommittee will come to order.

Administrator Gordon-Hagerty, I want to thank you and your team for being here today. We continue our budget hearings with the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) fiscal year 2020 request.

The National Nuclear Security Administration and its workforce are responsible for the consequential mission of ensuring the safety, security, and effectiveness of our nation's nuclear deterrent. This includes nonproliferation activities and powering the Navy's nuclear ships and submarines. I want to underscore the enormity of this mission while recognizing your service and contributions to the nation. I know that each of you here today feel that awesome responsibility.

The nuclear deterrent and the science-based Stockpile Stewardship Program that underpin it are national priorities. With a credible deterrent, we can deter conflict, pursue diplomacy, and advance the interests of the United States and our allies. And I must pause here to note that diplomatic engagement is a critical part of deterrence—which is something I'm not sure this Administration grasps.

Successfully maintaining a credible deterrent requires a balanced and cost-effective strategy that includes prudent program, project, and risk management from NNSA. Congress, and this Subcommittee in particular, must balance the need to maintain our nuclear weapons stockpile with the importance of reducing both domestic and global vulnerabilities through nonproliferation efforts.

Unfortunately, the budget request before us today does not achieve that balance. The Administration seeks a 12 percent increase for Weapons Activities alone, \$1.3 billion above the 2019 level. As I said at this very hearing last year, these increases are simply not realistic given other constraints on the federal budget, and unsustainable year over year.

The reality is that we have two more years of sequestration ahead of us if a budget deal is not reached. Even with a budget deal, we will face difficult choices in allocating limited resources. I look forward to hearing NNSA's plan to appropriately prioritize and cost-effectively manage the nuclear enterprise.

In turning to nonproliferation, these programs play an indispensable role in our national security by securing nuclear material globally and providing important insights into foreign nuclear programs.

While the top-line number in this request appears positive at a glance, I am concerned that the Administration is taking its foot off the gas pedal with respect to key nonproliferation programs. For example, a \$64 million reduction is proposed for the Global Material Security program, which helps prevent nuclear and radiological terrorism and trafficking. This program protects people and communities from serious threats, and these cuts leave vulnerable the U.S. and our allies worldwide.

I remain mindful of the national security imperative of the nuclear deterrent along with a strong nonproliferation program. The NNSA makes up a sizeable portion of this Subcommittee's bill, and as such, we must ensure that precious resources are provided as part of a balanced, coherent strategy.

Again, thank you for your service to our nation and for being here today. With that, I'll close my remarks.

I'll now turn to our Ranking Member, Mr. Simpson for his opening remarks.