

**Opening Statement of Chairman Greg Walden**  
**Subcommittee on Energy**  
**Hearing on “Department of Energy Missions and Management**  
**Priorities.”**  
**October 12, 2017**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Let me welcome Secretary Perry to his first appearance before the Energy and Commerce Committee. I understand that yesterday DOE held a ceremony to celebrate its 40 years as a cabinet agency. A lot has changed in this country and in the world since Congress created the department – especially in the national security and energy security space, where DOE provides critical functions for the country.

While the domestic and international energy posture is substantially different from what it was in the 1970s, I do not believe the importance of DOE’s role serving the national and public interest has diminished.

This past August, Secretary Perry joined me at an energy roundtable with local officials and energy leaders at the McNary Dam, on the Columbia River in Umatilla County, Oregon, which produces power for the Bonneville Power Administration. Of course, Secretary Perry could not leave Umatilla County without a famous Hermiston watermelon – the best in the world. I believe Secretary Perry also left with a greater appreciation of the tremendous, zero-carbon-emitting power resource we have that’s helping grow the economy in Oregon and throughout the Northwest.

The next day, I had the pleasure of accompanying Secretary Perry to DOE’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and then to the Hanford Site, just up the Columbia River from my Oregon district.

A couple of observations from that visit are pertinent for today: First, it was evident that abundant energy was critical to the historical success of Hanford’s industrial operations, which built nuclear reactors and

produced the plutonium vital to winning World War II and later maintaining the nation's nuclear deterrent program.

Second, Hanford's success, and subsequent cleanup operations, led to advances in engineering practices, research and development programs, and scientific activities necessary for the site's safe and secure operations. These advances led to the development of a world-class national laboratory. Today, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in collaboration and partnership with DOE's 16 other national laboratories, provide scientific and technical breakthroughs to meet our national security and energy security needs—from securing our electric grid to advancing storage technologies.

As we examine the DOE management and mission priorities today, we should keep in mind the benefits of the interconnected nature of the department's missions. But these missions across DOE's enterprise can be expensive and difficult to manage. And so, it is the responsibility of the secretary and the Congress to ensure the department is appropriately aligned to perform these missions in a cost-effective manner, and to the maximum benefit of the taxpayer.

As Chairman Upton has indicated, the energy threats today are not the same as the threats of the 1970s, but they remain significant. This committee will work in the coming months and through this Congress to ensure the department's organization and missions are aligned with the energy security challenges of today.

At my direction, Vice Chairman Barton has already started to facilitate, in coordination with the Energy Subcommittee, work to ensure DOE resources are focused on the core missions of nuclear and energy security, environmental remediation, and mission-enabling science and R&D programs. At the same time, the committee will be examining expired DOE authorizations—many of which expired over a decade ago, to ensure more fully appropriate program alignment.

I look forward to your testimony, Secretary Perry, it will be helpful to both these efforts. I'd also like for you to address the recent questions that have arisen regarding your travel expenditures. In closing, I look forward to working closely with DOE and my colleagues as we ensure the agency is positioned appropriately for the energy security challenges that lie ahead.