

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.**

Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2022 DOE Budget”

May 19, 2021

Secretary Granholm, welcome to the Energy and Commerce Committee. We have so many issues that we can work on within the Department of Energy, from clean energy deployment and energy cybersecurity, to overseeing our nation’s nuclear weapons stockpile and cleaning up the legacy sites where these weapons were produced.

I’d like to begin by addressing the recent Colonial Pipeline cyberattack that shutdown a critical piece of our nation’s energy infrastructure and led to both gasoline and jet fuel shortages along the east coast. This Committee has a longstanding history of bipartisan work on energy cybersecurity issues, including through the pipeline cybersecurity legislation that was reintroduced last week by Ranking Member Upton and Chairman Rush.

Last Congress, this subcommittee held a hearing on pipeline safety and security, and I spoke about my concern that the Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) Pipeline Security Program lacks the resources and expertise to protect our country from attacks like the one we saw on the Colonial Pipeline. This incident shows we have to do more to protect our nation’s energy infrastructure.

Fortunately, the electric sector has a rigorous framework for mandatory reliability standards developed by the North American Energy Reliability Corporation and enforced by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. But no similar rigorous program exists for pipelines, just a set of voluntary guidelines overseen by TSA. This is a big gap and I believe it’s time we consider mandatory, enforceable reliability standards for our nation’s pipeline network.

We have to ensure our nation’s energy infrastructure is not just secure, but reliable and resilient. That requires robust investments, and President Biden’s American Jobs Plan does just that. It prioritizes funding for the clean energy infrastructure we need to tackle the climate crisis and creates good paying jobs right here in the United States.

Along with Chairmen Rush and Tonko, I introduced the CLEAN Future Act earlier this Congress. We’ve had several hearings on this in both the Energy and the Environment and Climate Change subcommittees. The CLEAN Future Act would achieve net zero greenhouse gas pollution, combat the climate crisis, put Americans back to work, and rebuild our economy. The CLEAN Future Act and the American Jobs Plan share similar goals and policies. Both plans make substantial investments in transportation electrification, including the deployment of electric vehicles, charging stations, and zero-emissions school buses. They both invest billions of dollars in clean energy deployment, upgrading the nation’s grid and making homes and buildings more energy efficient.

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The rest of the world, particularly China, is already making major investments in clean technology and jobs that could and should be created right here at home. We cannot watch from the sidelines as other nations surpass us. We must invest in our workers and the growth of our clean energy economy.

After four years of the Trump Administration flouting the law by refusing to update and revise efficiency standards for appliances, DOE certainly has a lot of work ahead on this critical program. I questioned your predecessors, Secretaries Perry and Brouillette, several times about the Department pushing out anti-efficiency rulemakings, such as rolling back LED lightbulb standards, while ignoring scores of appliance efficiency upgrades mandated by law. This program saves consumers money and helps reduce energy consumption. We must get this important program back on track.

I also want to mention our nation's nuclear security mission. I've always believed in the principal of civilian – not military – control over our nation's nuclear weapons. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is a critical part of DOE's mission and must remain so. It's too important to be left to its own devices.

Lastly, the Committee has conducted years of oversight on the Department's Environmental Management program, which cleans up the legacy waste sites where nuclear weapons were developed and built. Taxpayers spend billions of dollars every year on this important program, but the Department's environmental liabilities continue to grow. I think that more cohesive and consistent management of this program is critical to speeding cleanup at these sites.

The Committee has a long history of bipartisan cooperation on both NNSA governance and Environmental Management oversight, and I look forward to working with the Department and my colleagues on this Committee on these critical issues.

Thank you again, Secretary Granholm, for joining us today. I yield back.