

OPENING STATEMENT

**Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)**

House Committee on Science, Space, and  
Technology

Subcommittee on Energy Hearing

*The Energy Water Nexus: Drier Watts and Cheaper  
Drops*

March 7, 2019

Good morning and welcome to our witnesses. Thank you, Chairman Lamb, for holding this timely hearing to bring attention to the interplay between water, one of our most valuable natural resources, and our energy systems.

Our energy and water systems are intrinsically interconnected. Not only does energy play an important role in the extraction, treatment, and transportation of water, but water is also used in many stages and types of electricity generation.

In my home state of Texas, we face a multitude of issues at the energy-water nexus. For example,

large amounts of water are used during the process of fracking for oil and gas extraction. However, the needs of the large oil and gas industry can be at odds with the needs of the agricultural community, where farmers struggle to conserve water and energy to save costs, especially in the face of increasingly extreme droughts in the state. Of course, water is an important resource for energy and agriculture, but it also is critically important for people. My own city of Dallas, Texas is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the U.S., which puts strains on our already limited water resources in the state.

Moreover, all of these issues are exacerbated by our rapidly changing climate. These days, we regularly withstand harsh droughts, extreme heat, hurricanes, and wildfires. This uptick in extreme weather events is causing water, food, and energy insecurity, which only increases the urgency with which we must act.

For these reasons, I have been working for many years in Congress to address to this important issue

through my work in developing the *Energy and Water Research Integration Act*. This Congress, I reintroduced this bipartisan bill with my colleague and friend Ranking Member Lucas. It instructs the Department of Energy to incorporate the consideration of water use and treatment into all of its relevant research, development, and demonstration programs and to establish additional coordination functions to ensure that we are giving this issue adequate attention and resources moving forward.

I again want to thank Mr. Lamb for convening this panel. I am very pleased to see the strong representation of witnesses from Texas here today, and I look forward to having a robust discussion on how we can best address these critical issues at the nexus of energy and water.

With that, I yield back.