



Opening Statement
Hearing on DOE's FY 2019 Budget Request
Chairman Lisa Murkowski
March 20, 2018

Good morning, everyone. The committee will come to order.

We are here today to discuss the President's budget request for the Department of Energy for Fiscal Year 2019. So we welcome to the committee Secretary Rick Perry, good to have you back in front of us, we look forward to your comments this morning.

Like last year, the request emphasizes funding for the National Nuclear Security Administration, which falls outside of our jurisdiction. In addition, the President's budget requests additional funding for the environmental management program to clean up our nation's legacy nuclear sites.

I appreciate those proposals, but the request offsets them with cuts to a number of energy and science programs that enjoy strong bipartisan support. It also seeks to eliminate all funding for ARPA-E, which is a program that undertakes innovative, pioneering work.

While we should always be looking for places to cut the budget, we should also recognize that innovation is critical to our nation's energy future – it creates jobs, it boosts growth, it adds to our security, and it increases our competitiveness. We need to focus on maintaining our global leadership in science, research, and development. Central to that mission are the hardworking scientists and engineers at our national laboratories and our universities.

Although I do not support all of the proposals in this request, I believe that we will find many areas of interest and agreement. I believe it is time to look at reforms that can reduce stovepipes at the Department and make better use of taxpayer dollars. I'm intrigued by the Department's decision to create a new cybersecurity office. And I look forward to seeing the remainder of the Department's budget justifications, which need to be released as soon as possible.

So again, Secretary Perry, I want to welcome you back before our committee. I will note as all members have previously been alerted, that the Secretary has a hard stop at 11:30 so you can head to the White House – I understand that you will be taking up some hopefully nuclear related discussions. We appreciate your time, so out of respect for our limited time with the committee this morning, I will end my opening remarks here, and simply note that I look forward to hosting you, Mr. Secretary, in Alaska in the near future.

Senator Cantwell?

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