

August 12, 2021

Dr. Jennifer Wilcox
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy
Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Dr. Wilcox,

I am writing to express my support for Touchstone Research Laboratory's application for funding through the National Energy Technology Laboratory's Advanced Coal Processing program (NETL). Touchstone is seeking funding to execute the Hydrophobic-Hydrophilic Separation (HHS) process in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

One of my primary goals is to ensure that West Virginia communities have the opportunity to discover innovative ways to expand the use of coal beyond combustion into high-tech structural and energy storage uses. This is why I invited Secretary Granholm to come to West Virginia in June for the Energy Communities and Economy Forum at NETL and the follow-up exhibit at the National Research Center for Coal and Energy building on West Virginia University's Evansdale campus in Morgantown. I expect that the Secretary came away from that visit with a deeper appreciation for West Virginians' inventiveness and resiliency as we work toward economic diversification.

For over two decades, Touchstone has been a pioneer in developing novel coal-based technologies and is seeking funding under the Developing Pathways to Coal-Derived Graphite area of interest (AOI-2). Their research will concentrate on cleaning low-, medium-, and high-ranked coals as well as waste coal, with the goal of making waste coal appropriate for feedstock in value-added synthetic graphite. Touchstone will have established a cost-effective technology for producing synthetic graphite while also benefiting our environment by lowering waste from coal cleaning plants if this project is completed successfully.

I sincerely appreciate you noting my interest in this application and affording it a full and fair review. Thank you in advance for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact my office if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator