

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement
of
Subcommittee on Energy Ranking Member Bobby Rush

The Fiscal Year 2019 Department of Energy Budget

April 12, 2018

I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here today and I look forward to working with your office to ensure that the department moves the nation's energy policy forward in a way that benefits all Americans, and indeed all communities.

Mr. Secretary, history has shown us the importance of having people with different perspectives, and from different life experiences, at the table when important and consequential decisions are initially being made.

So, when I talk about having diversity in leadership positions at DOE, it's not just for the sake of having diversity. But rather, it helps to ensure that specific groups or communities aren't being excluded, intentionally or not.

Whether decisions are being made regarding which universities are awarded research grant money, or which businesses receive contracts, or even how a specific policy might impact a particular community, having diversity, in demographics and in opinion, helps make sure certain groups aren't being left out.

So, Mr. Secretary, I look forward to meeting with you soon to discuss your thoughts on this issue and to see how we might be able to work together to make sure the department is providing aid and resources to all communities, in a way that's sustainable regardless of the administration that's in office.

Mr. Secretary, besides the objective of making sure the department enacts inclusive policies, I also have strong views in regards to the FY19 budget proposal that was put forth by the Administration.

Specifically, Mr. Secretary, this budget proposal would cut the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, or EERE, by 70 percent from FY 2018 levels, with over \$600 million of these reductions coming from energy efficiency programs.

Mr. Secretary, these proposed cuts are a nonstarter, as far as I am concerned.

They would severely and negatively impact low-income families throughout my home state of Illinois, and the country, by eliminating extremely popular and much-needed initiatives, such as the Weatherization Assistance Program and the State Energy Program.

Additionally, the proposal would decrease funding for the Office of Science, which funds the 17 national laboratories, by \$869 million from the FY 2018 enacted level, eliminating the Advanced Research Programs Agency-Energy, or ARPA-E.

The budget proposal would also get rid of all DOE loan programs, including the Title 17 innovative clean energy projects loan program and the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing (ATVM) loan program.

Mr. Secretary, this FY 19 budget proposal reflects exactly the wrong vision for the country as it would take us backwards on critical issues like climate change, while also hampering American innovation and global competitiveness.

Instead, we must increase federal investment in advanced technologies, such as clean energy research and development, manufacturing, and low-carbon and energy-efficient technologies in order to help spur U.S. ingenuity and economic growth.

Thank you for being here, Mr. Secretary, and I look forward to working with you to address these important issues moving forward.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time...