



COMMITTEE ON
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DEMOCRATS
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Rush Opening Remarks at Energy Storage Hearing

Washington, D.C. – *Subcommittee Ranking Member Bobby L. Rush (D-Ill) delivered the following opening remarks at a Subcommittee on Energy hearing on “Powering America: The Role of Energy Storage in the Nation’s Electricity System:”*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this critical and timely hearing.

Mr. Chairman, as we have discussed throughout this Powering America series of hearings, the domestic energy landscape is changing drastically in fundamental ways.

As we move towards a more decentralized, decarbonized energy economy, storage offers tremendous opportunities to integrate cleaner, renewable energy resources in order to build a more efficient, resilient, and effective electric grid.

Mr. Chairman, with the evolution of battery technology, in addition to decreased production costs, energy storage offers a uniquely flexible technology that can be utilized to meet the changing demands of customers, of utilities, as well as of the grid as a whole.

Energy storage is distinctive in that it provides consumers more control over when and how they use energy, while also helping them save money.

Mr. Chairman, with storage technology, utilities are able to defer, or even completely avoid making huge investments in other, more costly, physical assets such as wires, poles, transformers and substations, while still meeting the needs of energy consumers.

Additionally, Mr. Chairman, energy storage can help make the grid more resilient during severe weather events and provide emergency power during times of disaster.

Storage technology can play a vital role in rebuilding electric networks that serve local communities, as a cost-effective alternative to other traditional options.

This is true whether it be for establishing power for rural or isolated communities, or helping to quickly turn the lights back on for residents of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after a disastrous hurricane like Maria.

In fact, this technology can be used to establish microgrids and mini-grids, or it can be utilized in fully distributed generation networks.

Mr. Chairman, even with all of these tremendous benefits that energy storage offers, there are still significant obstacles impeding the emergence of this budding industry, including economic, regulatory and market barriers.

There must be a strategic and calculated effort by the federal government in order to fully develop this technology and appreciate its enormous benefits.

Specifically, there must be more federal funding to help offset the lack of investment from the private sector in electricity storage research, development, and demonstration.

Additionally, we must consider developing a federal energy storage roadmap, similar to those established by some states, in order to increase coordination among the various private initiatives, the national labs, and other federal agencies.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, while FERC Order 841 was issued to ensure fair and equal access for storage resources to compete in wholesale power markets, we must go even further on the federal level.

In each of their testimonies, almost all of the witnesses agreed that we must do more to remove barriers to grid and market access, allow storage to compete in all planning and procurement processes, and provide appropriate value and compensation for the unique flexibility that storage technologies provide.

Mr. Chairman, energy storage has the potential to fundamentally transform the way we produce and use electricity in a way that benefits the country as a whole, but we must be willing to make the necessary commitment and investment in this technology for it to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and with that I yield back the balance of my time...

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