



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement by Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

Department of Energy: Management and Priorities

Chairman Smith: Good morning. Today, we welcome Mr. Paul Dabbar, the under secretary for science, and Mr. Mark Menezes, the under secretary of energy, to testify about the Department of Energy's (DOE) priorities under this administration.

As the committee awaits the president's fiscal year 2019 budget request, our discussion today will focus on broad priorities and management at the DOE.

DOE is the leading federal sponsor of research in the physical sciences and is a world leader in basic science research and technological development.

Our witnesses today are responsible for managing the bulk of the DOE programs within the Science Committee's jurisdiction, including over \$9 billion in civilian research, development, demonstration, and commercial application programs, as well as the DOE national labs. This amount is one-third of the DOE's budget.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last week, Secretary Perry explained that "America First" means maintaining American competitiveness around the world and being the lead provider of energy resources and technology on the global market.

Significant investments in basic science research by foreign countries, like China, threaten America's global standing as the leader in scientific knowledge. Without continued investment in basic and early-stage research at the DOE, the U.S. will lose its global technology edge.

DOE must also invest in the research infrastructure that brings the best scientists in the world to the U.S. That's why this committee has advanced bipartisan legislation to upgrade and construct best-in-the-world light sources, photon sources and neutron sources to facilitate discovery science.

The House has repeatedly passed legislation to authorize the construction of the Versatile Neutron Source, which would ensure that the next generation of nuclear reactors can be developed here in the United States.

Last month, Secretary Perry announced a reorganization of the department's management structure. This reorganization restores the statutorily directed role of each under secretary, prioritizing the science and energy missions within DOE.

This approach refocuses DOE civilian research programs on the basic and early-stage research that industry cannot perform.

The two under secretaries share oversight responsibility for the national laboratory system. DOE's national labs attract the best scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs from around the world, and it is critical that the system of labs operate efficiently.

Our witnesses today also share jurisdiction over the many functions designed to foster cooperation across DOE programs – such as crosscutting research initiatives, energy innovation hubs and multi-purpose research facilities.

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about how they will maximize cooperation between their respective programs and work to prevent unnecessary duplication or cost overruns at the department.

By investing wisely in basic and early-stage research, the department can achieve its goal of scientific discovery and technological breakthroughs for future generations.

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