

COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY**  
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Energy Subcommittee Chairman Randy Weber (R-Texas)**  
*Innovations in Battery Storage for Renewable Energy*

**Chairman Weber:** Good morning and welcome to today's Energy Subcommittee hearing examining innovations in battery storage technology. Today, we will hear from government and industry witnesses on the state of large-scale battery storage, and recent technology breakthroughs achieved through research and development at the national labs and universities around the country. Our witnesses today will also provide insight into how innovative companies are transitioning basic science research in battery storage technology to the energy marketplace.

Energy storage could revolutionize electricity generation and delivery in America. Cost effective, large-scale batteries could change the way we power our homes, reduce infrastructure improvement costs, and allow renewable energy to add power to the electric grid without compromising reliability or increasing consumer costs.

As a Texan, I know the value of reliable, affordable energy. With a population that is increasing by more than 1,000 people per day, and energy intensive industries driving consumption, Texas is by far the nation's largest consumer of electricity. The Texas economy needs reliable and affordable energy to power long-term growth. With battery storage technology, Texas could count on power from conventional and renewable energy sources regardless of the weather, saving money for Texas consumers and keeping the Texas power grid reliable and secure.

Although large-scale battery storage has been available for decades, there is still more work to be done. Fundamental research and development into the atomic and molecular structure of batteries is needed to better understand the operation, performance limitations, and failures of battery technology. At our national labs, we have the facilities and expertise necessary to conduct this basic research.

The private sector plays an instrumental role in commercializing next generation battery technology. Through partnerships with the national labs, innovative battery companies can take advantage of cutting edge research and user facilities, and develop cost-effective, efficient energy storage technology that can compete in today's energy marketplace. Instead of duplicating deployment efforts that can be done by the private sector, the federal government should prioritize basic research and development on energy storage. This investment in energy storage technology R&D can benefit all forms of energy while maintaining reliability and the security of the nation's electric grid.

Current U.S. policy for advancing the deployment of renewable energy is built around federal subsidies and tax credits. But these policies tend to increase costs for the American people, and are counterproductive to the development of battery storage technology that could make renewable power a good investment in the real world. By creating an incentive to invest in renewable energy deployment

instead of energy storage, the federal government is steering investment away from battery storage technology. And the truth is, without affordable and efficient energy storage, renewable energy will never be able to match the efficiency, affordability, and reliability of fossil fuels.

Instead, the federal government should end market-distorting subsidies and tax credits for the renewable energy industry, and allocate resources to basic research and development necessary to solve the challenge of energy storage.

I want to thank our witnesses for testifying to the Committee today, and I look forward to a discussion about federal energy storage research and development, and the impact efficient and affordable batteries can have on energy reliability and security.

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