

Fiscal Year 2014 U.S. Department of Energy Budget

Witness:

The Honorable Ernest J. Moniz

Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy

Committee Members Present:

Ed Whitfield (R-KY), Subcommittee Chairman

Bobby Rush (D-IL), Subcommittee Ranking Member

Fred Upton (R-MI), Full Committee Chairman

Henry Waxman (D-CA), Full Committee Ranking Member

Joe Barton (R-TX)

Steve Scalise (R-LA)

Ralph Hall (R-TX)

Lois Capps (D-CA)

John Shimkus (R-IL)

Kathy Castor (D-FL)

Michael Burgess (R-TX)

Paul Tonko (D-NY)

Lee Terry (R-NE)

Gene Green (D-TX)

Bob Latta (R-OH)

Doris Matsui (D-CA)

David McKinley (R-WV)

Donna Christensen (VI)

Adam Kinzinger (R-IL)

Mike Doyle (D-PA)

Pete Olson (R-TX)

Morgan Griffith (R-VA)

Cory Gardner (R-CO)

Bill Johnson (R-OH)

On June 13, 2013, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing to discuss the fiscal year (FY) 2014 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) budget proposal. In his first testimony as Secretary of Energy, The Honorable Ernest J. Moniz addressed some of the House's concerns regarding the FY 2014 budget and spoke broadly about his plans as Secretary.

In their opening statements, Subcommittee Chairman Ed Whitfield (R-KY) and Full Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) said that the current budget plan does not follow the "all-of-the-above" energy strategy, one supporting both conventional and renewable energy, which the current administration claims to adhere to. Instead, Upton said, the current budget favors renewable energy and has a large "disparity in funding levels [which] directly conflicts with the President's stated commitment to an 'all-of-the-above' energy strategy." Whitfield and Upton both said they are encouraged to work with Secretary Moniz on this and other issues.

In Ranking Member Bobby Rush's (D-IL) opening statement, he said he also supports the "all-of-the-above" agenda of the Administration. Rush also stressed the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education, especially for minorities, and was pleased with the past efforts DOE has put into STEM education for minorities.

During his testimony, Secretary Moniz said that America is still overly reliant on oil. The FY 2014 budget, Secretary Moniz explained, will double American energy production by 2030. Secretary Moniz also reported that the FY 2014 budget will support research for all types of domestic energy, including fossil fuels, geothermal, nuclear, and others. Secretary Moniz also mentioned DOE's role in keeping the U.S. the world leader in supercomputers. However, Moniz stated, competitors are not far behind, and Congress needs to maintain funding to ensure U.S. leadership in this area.

Many questions were raised regarding the fossil fuel budget. Steve Scalise (R-LA) said the Administration's current policy has made it harder to explore on federal lands, and has reduced energy production on federal lands. Scalise argued that the President's "all-of-the-above" strategy does not include oil and gas, and has been limiting production by delaying bills such as the Keystone XL

pipeline (H.R. 3) and the Offshore Energy and Jobs Act (H.R. 2231), which would open several outer continental shelf areas for leasing. Secretary Moniz emphasized that although he intends to increase oil and gas production on U.S. federal lands, many of the problems Scalise brought up regarding energy production are issues for the Department of the Interior.

Ranking Member Henry Waxman (D-CA) and David McKinley (R-WV) brought up climate change issues. Secretary Moniz agreed with Waxman that there is a large anthropogenic component contributing to climate change. Secretary Moniz also stated that despite carbon emissions being at a 20-year low there is a “nearly unanimous” consent that we are on a “pathway to very negative consequences” regarding climate change.

Bob Latta (R-OH) asked Secretary Moniz “what is your stand on fracking?” Secretary Moniz responded that “all of the environmental issues that have arisen...are manageable.” Secretary Moniz went on to say that many of the problems have been due to poor execution in cementing and well completion.

Joe Barton (R-TX) asked Moniz about the process and timeline regarding natural gas exportation permits. Secretary Moniz responded that DOE will begin working through these permits in an expeditious manner, and expects to have them completed within the calendar year.

Opening statements and witness testimony, as well as a video archive of the entire hearing, are available from the committee website.

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