

OPENING STATEMENT  
**Representative Jacky Rosen (D-NV)**

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
Subcommittee on Energy  
*Advancing Solar Energy Technology: Research Trumps Deployment*  
December 13, 2017

Good afternoon and thank you, Chairman Weber, for holding this important and timely hearing today. It has been more than five years since this Committee last held a hearing specifically on solar energy. With the expanding deployment of solar power across our nation and the incredible advances made in this area over these past five years, I'm very glad we're getting a chance to reexamine these technologies. I would also like to thank this distinguished panel of witnesses for being here. I'm very interested in what all of you have to say that will help us further enable the development of this critical resource and industry.

Solar energy is an important and growing portion of our nation's energy consumption. Its success is not only because it is a clean and renewable energy source, but also because it has become cost-competitive with other types of energy. In my state of Nevada we are currently getting about 9% of our energy needs from solar technology and have doubled the amount of megawatts installed in the past year. In fact, a year ago, the city of Las Vegas fulfilled its promise to run all its municipal facilities on 100% renewable energy. On a personal level, I know firsthand from my life before Congress, the enormous benefits of solar energy. As the former President of Nevada's largest synagogue, I helped facilitate the installation of one of the largest solar projects by a nonprofit in Henderson, cutting our energy costs by nearly 70 percent.

I'm optimistic that the growth of solar will continue because of the research being carried out at our national labs, universities, and in American solar energy companies. For more than a decade, the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) has engaged in extensive research on renewable energy, and recently its Solar Decathlon team took first place for Innovation and second place for both Engineering and Architecture in the national DOE competition. UNLV is also leading an initiative to establish a "Solar Solutions Center", designed to employ research, policy analysis, and the business community to create solar energy jobs and improve technology. Strong investments in R&D will be vital to further decreasing the cost of solar energy.

However, I am very concerned by the consistent attacks on solar energy from both the current Administration and the Republican-led Congress. The Administration's proposed cut of nearly two thirds to DOE's solar technology program budget will have a profound and negative impact on our nation's ability to utilize this resource for the benefit of our environment and economy. Solar energy is less expensive now than it has ever been and it can continue to become more affordable, saving our constituents and small businesses money.

In addition, I am deeply concerned by the Republican tax bill that, among other incredibly harmful provisions, will hurt our solar industry by eliminating the 10 percent investment tax credit for large-scale solar projects. I submitted an amendment to prevent the eventual

elimination of tax credits for solar and geothermal energy, which unfortunately the Majority refused to adopt.

While this Administration and my Republican colleagues are trying to justify reducing U.S. investments in solar, China is spending more than double the United States on renewables, with initiatives to continue spending through 2030, at levels that far outstrip the U.S. Without strong support and investment by the federal government, we are likely to lose jobs in this growing industry and the opportunity to control our own energy future. My state of Nevada currently has over 8,000 solar jobs and the projected solar job growth is over 20%. We should be continuing to invest in the solar energy sector, and create more jobs, not gutting programs proven to work.

The next breakthroughs in solar energy are coming, whether here in the U.S. or somewhere else in the world. The only question is whether the U.S. will lead the way or whether we will pay foreign companies for our energy needs and lose jobs overseas.

I am looking forward to hearing what the witnesses have to say about how we keep these jobs in our country and achieve the clean energy future that our citizens deserve. Thank you.