



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Deborah Ross (D-NC)
of the Subcommittee on Energy

Energy Subcommittee Hearing:

*From Transformative Science to Technological Breakthroughs:
DOE's National Laboratories*

February 12th, 2025

Good morning and thank you, Chairman Weber, for convening this hearing today to discuss the importance of the national laboratory network to preserving our nation's leading edge in science, and in developing the energy solutions and workforce of tomorrow. I also want to thank our distinguished witnesses for being here to share your testimony and insights on this topic.

As a nation, we have entered a pivotal stage where we have not one, but several emerging clean energy technologies that have the potential to reshape and improve our economy. We have advanced and modular nuclear demonstration reactors being designed and built right now that, when completed, will give investors the confidence needed to make them the backbone of our electrical grid. We have fusion, the holy grail of energy, making strides now defined in years, not decades. And we have energy storage technologies making leaps in performance and safety, which, when paired with new smart grid technologies, will make intermittency concerns with renewable energy a thing of the past.

These energy technologies are poised to not only decarbonize the electrical grid, but to make it more resilient, reliable, and secure in times of climate disasters. In my home state of North Carolina, we are seeing hurricanes becoming increasingly stronger in the wake of climate change, and we need our grid infrastructure to improve accordingly. We also need to continue to support partnerships that share advanced computing resources between the national laboratories and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that would enable more accurate forecasting of weather and climate events, allowing first responders to prepare ahead of time, and potentially save lives.

And as I have come to understand, at the forefront of all these technologies and partnerships, is the Department of Energy's national laboratory network. I am looking forward to hearing from our expert witnesses on the valuable work the national laboratories are doing, how they are improving the security of our communities, and what Congress can do to help.

That said, I am also deeply concerned about the impacts that this Administration's blanket freeze on federal funding provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - in flagrant violation of several

recent court orders - is undermining the ability of these labs in partnership with the private sector to strengthen our grid and prevent future severe impacts on our communities. So, I will be digging into that as well.

With that, I thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.