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

Chairman Conor Lamb (D-PA)
of the Subcommittee on Energy

Subcommittee on Energy Markup of:
H.R. 3597, Solar Energy Research and Development Act of 2019
H.R. 3607, Fossil Energy Research and Development Act of 2019
H.R. 3609, Wind Energy Research and Development Act of 2019
Wednesday, July 10, 2019

Today, we are marking up three bipartisan bills that will bolster our country's research and development across a broad array of the energy sector and ensure we are improving our energy systems, our economy, and our climate. This Subcommittee has held two hearings related to these bills, which brought together experts representing industry, our National Labs, well-respected policy development institutions, and environmental advocacy organizations to discuss the R&D needs of solar, wind, and fossil energy technologies.

We're fortunate to have many world-leading companies, labs, universities, researchers and scientists right here in our country working on advancing and discovering energy technologies that can decrease energy costs for consumers and limit carbon emissions. These types of advancements can play a key role in mitigating climate change, producing scientific breakthroughs, and providing good jobs for American workers.
According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the electricity, industrial, and transportation sectors account for roughly 79% of the United States' greenhouse gas emissions. Energy innovation is a critical step in reducing these emissions while improving our economy and energy affordability. One of today's bills which I am a proud cosponsor of, the Fossil Energy Research and Development Act of 2019, embodies this dual opportunity. Supporting carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies will simultaneously help decarbonize fossil fuels and preserve American jobs in those important industries.

The Federal Government's research, development, and demonstration activities have already led to significant energy advancements. As we have discussed before this Subcommittee, the growth of natural gas production, which we are certainly seeing in western Pennsylvania, and the surge in residential and utility-scale photovoltaic solar panels across the country have clear ties back to Department of Energy R&D. We need to build on these achievements and accordingly, Congress must provide the direction, tools, and resources that DOE needs to meet the challenges of today.

Unfortunately, much of the existing law authorizing DOE's work through its Solar, Wind, and Fossil Energy Technology Offices is insufficient and outdated. These bills reauthorize DOE's existing work and provide updated guidance and tools that reflect the immense changes each industry has experienced over the past 15 years. Specifically:

H.R. 3597, the Solar Research and Development Act of 2019, reauthorizes and expands research, development, and demonstration on a range of solar energy technologies, including photovoltaic and concentrating solar power systems. The bill authorizes research on emerging technologies and market mechanisms to improve solar energy's efficiency and affordability, like new materials that could allow solar panels to be integrated into windows and other types of infrastructure.

H.R. 3607, the Fossil Energy Research and Development Act of 2019, reauthorizes and expands research, development, and demonstration of carbon capture technologies for power plants and industrial sources. It would also authorize R&D activities in carbon storage, carbon utilization, improvements in efficiency, and rare earth elements; launch new initiatives in carbon dioxide removal, waste gas utilization; and help prevent significant leaks of methane from natural gas infrastructure.

Finally, H.R. 3609, the Wind Energy Research and Development Act of 2019, reauthorizes and expands research, development, testing, and evaluation of wind energy technologies, including onshore and offshore turbines as well as airborne technologies. The bill specifically authorizes research on technologies that can enable next-generation, very large-scale wind turbines and floating offshore wind farms.

It's clear – the energy industry is critical to the American economy. Passing these bills would help ensure that our nation leads in energy innovation, allowing us to mitigate climate change, continue creating American jobs in the energy industry, and improve the air we breathe. I look forward to advancing these important bills out of our Subcommittee today.