



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

Opening Statement

Chairwoman Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX)
of the Subcommittee on Energy

Joint Investigations & Oversight and Energy Subcommittee Hearing:
*Management and Spending Challenges within the Department of Energy's Office of Energy
Efficiency and Renewable Energy*

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

Good morning and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Throughout this Congress, this Committee has demonstrated strong, bipartisan support for innovation in energy technologies that will both address the growing impacts of climate change and ensure that Americans are building and leading the industries of the future.

I believe I can speak for all of us when I say that we also have an obligation to ensure that taxpayer funds to address these critical missions are being managed wisely, and in accordance with law. But the Department of Energy's record in managing the various programs stewarded by its Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy over the last three years raises troubling questions.

First, how can the significant declines in EERE's staffing levels and overall expertise be reconciled with the significant increases in its budget over the last few years. Second, why has EERE been unable to spend such a historically large portion of its prior year funds for clean energy research activities despite clear Congressional direction on how these funds should be allocated. Third, we need a far better justification for why EERE would cancel a \$46 million funding opportunity after already carrying out a rigorous merit review and selection process for hundreds of applicants from companies and universities across the country. Some of the best and brightest in our nation collectively spent thousands of hours developing and reviewing their applications. They deserve a clear explanation for why their time and resources were wasted by the Department.

I look forward to gaining a better understanding from the Department and our second distinguished panel of witnesses about how to best resolve these issues, and how to further

enable EERE to achieve its mission to advance clean energy innovation as effectively as possible.

Thank you, I yield back.