



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

Opening Statement

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Energy Subcommittee Field Hearing:
*How the Domestic Nuclear Industry Boosts Local Economies,
Curbs Emissions, and Strengthens National Security*
May 3, 2019

Good morning and thank you, Chairman Lamb, for bringing together such a distinguished group of witnesses, and in beautiful Shippingport, Pennsylvania no less. This morning, I am excited to discuss nuclear energy's importance to our local economies, national security, and our fight against climate change.

Nuclear energy is a major pillar U.S. clean energy production today. Generating 20% of our nation's electricity, the civilian nuclear fleet is a large driver of the U.S.'s emerging clean energy economy. In addition to its carbon free emissions, nuclear power plants generate electricity at all times of day, currently providing reliable energy when other clean energy sources cannot. We must take advantage of these critical resources if we are to halt climate change and grow our economy.

Each nuclear power plant employs hundreds of high-paying jobs, whose salaries are often significantly higher than the average local salary. This directly supports families, schools, and local governments across the country. Moreover, these jobs are often located in rural areas, and are the bedrock of communities' local economies.

And not only are nuclear power plants important to local economies, but they are integral to our national security. Our armed forces rely on specialized equipment, engineers, and scientists to run and maintain nuclear technologies across the military. Whether it's powering a nuclear submarine, or maintaining the reliability of our nuclear weapons, the domestic nuclear energy industry ensures a strong supply chain and workforce for our military's nuclear needs. A strong domestic industry also allows the U.S. to remain a global leader in nuclear standards and non-proliferation.

Given its great value, I am troubled to see nuclear plants across the country struggle due to non-competitive factors. We cannot afford to lose the clean energy, jobs, and global security that nuclear power provides. We must ensure that the true life-cycle value of nuclear energy is recognized, and that Congress gives the nuclear industry the tools to continue innovating. I am excited to hear from our esteemed panel of witnesses, so that we can explore this important topic further.

With that, I yield back.