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

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Energy Subcommittee Hearing:
The Future of Electricity Delivery: Modernizing and Securing our Nation's Electricity Grid
Wednesday, July 17, 2019

Good afternoon and thank you, Chairman Lamb, for holding this hearing on two important and related issues that our nation's energy infrastructure is now confronting: the resilience of our electric grid and its security from cyber and physical attacks.

A few months ago, this committee held a hearing where we discussed the need for renewable energy research and development, specifically focusing on wind and solar energy. I am always excited to talk about how Texas leads the U.S. in installed wind energy capacity, with over 24 gigawatts of wind energy. However, significant work needs to be done to our electric grid to help utilize all this energy in the most efficient way we can, and in coordination with all of the other types of energy that are now being integrated into the grid.

I am pleased that the President's budget request reflects significant increases in research and development activities for both the Office of Electricity, where the Department performs its grid modernization work, and the Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response, which leads its grid cybersecurity work. I am disappointed, however, that the request also includes a 30% cut for research on resilient distribution systems within the Office of Electricity.

This would ultimately take money away from research on low cost distribution sensors, and it would cut the development of smart devices that can help minimize the impacts of local disruptions to our energy systems. If we are to successfully transform our Nation's grid to support the technologies of the future, we need to be sufficiently funding R&D in these areas as well.

The two drafts of legislation we will be discussing today would provide important guidance and support for these critical programs over the next several years. The Grid Modernization Research and Development Act of 2019 authorizes a broad research, development, and demonstration program on a wide variety of grid modernization topics, including advanced hybrid energy systems and a grid-scale energy storage initiative. The Grid Cybersecurity Research and Development Act of 2019 is an updated version of a bill that Mr. Bera and I introduced, along

with many of my Science Committee colleagues, in the previous two Congresses. This bill would authorize a cross-agency research and development program to advance electric grid cybersecurity efforts.

I am looking forward to hearing from the experts assembled here today on what we can do to improve the electric grid so that we are ready for the electricity needs of the future. This Committee is fortunate to be able to focus on supporting the development of a wide range of exciting, cutting-edge energy technologies. But the grid really is the backbone energy infrastructure of our Nation, and we should be doing everything we can to ensure that it is robust enough to utilize these new technologies in a safe and reliable way.

With that, I yield back.