



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

Opening Statement

**Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)**

Full Committee Hearing:

*Oversight of the Department of Energy's Research and Development Enterprise*  
Tuesday, June 25, 2019

Good morning, everyone, and thank you Mr. Secretary, for appearing before us today. It is good to see you again. As you know, this Committee has jurisdiction over all of the Department of Energy's vitally important science and energy research and development activities, laboratories, and facilities, so I hope we see you much more frequently from now on, and I look forward to working with you throughout this Congress.

With the budget season mostly behind us, I'd like to bring just a few items to your attention. I'll start with the good news, which is that despite the Administration's best efforts to make draconian cuts across the board to DOE research and development programs, most actually fared well in the House of Representatives. I am particularly pleased to see the increases to the budgets for ARPA-E and the Loan Programs Office, both of which have yielded truly transformative results for energy technologies of all types.

I am also quite happy that the House supported a substantial increase to the ITER international fusion project, which I strongly advocated for as well. It is crucial that we honor our commitment to this project, and ensure that we are providing the support that the Department of Energy itself identified would be necessary to maintain its construction schedule and minimize its total cost to U.S. taxpayers. The completion and operation of ITER will make substantial contributions to what we know of fusion energy today. If successful, this project could be a huge game changer in the energy future of not only our nation, but for humanity as a whole.

Now, for the bad news. Yet again, it is extremely disheartening and quite frankly disturbing to see the dramatic cuts laid out in the Administration's budget proposal. I know you must think I sound like a broken record, Mr. Secretary, because we had this same conversation last year, but unfortunately it is necessary until the Administration stops producing these short-sighted proposals and deploys a thorough, thoughtful process for developing its budget request. I am thankful for your enthusiastic support of all these programs, Mr. Secretary. But enthusiasm alone is not enough for the American people. We need to see constructive, forward looking budget proposals being submitted to Congress.

Moving beyond the budget, we are here today to allow our Members to ask questions pertaining to all research and development programs within the entire Department, as the title of this hearing suggests. Constituents from Member districts on both sides of the aisle benefit greatly from these programs, and we believe it is our duty to ensure the responsible use of their tax dollars. Many of these programs haven't been authorized in many years, or ever, in some cases. We hope to create some thoughtful, bipartisan legislation this Congress to support the important science and energy research stewarded by the Department, and we want to work with you in that effort. With that, I would like to thank you again for being here, Mr. Secretary, and I look forward to a productive discussion this morning.