



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

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

Subcommittee on Energy Hearing

Unleashing American Power: The Development of Next Generation Energy Infrastructure

March 23, 2023

Thank you, Chairman Williams, for holding today's hearing, and thank you to our panel of expert witnesses for joining us.

We are here today to discuss several important energy technology areas, but I'd like to focus my remarks this morning on grid security. This topic is one that hits close to home, as we approach the ten-year anniversary of the Metcalf transmission substation sniper attack. At the time, then Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Jon Wellinghoff, stated that the attack was "the most significant incident of domestic terrorism involving the grid that has ever occurred [in the United States]." Since then, more advanced technologies have been integrated into the grid, which widens the realm of possibilities for physical attacks on the grid. Not to mention cyberattacks – I know everyone here remembers the Colonial Pipeline ransomware attack from less than two years ago. We can fortify the grid through the deployment of existing technologies and via standards development and implementation, but there is a gaping research and development need here as well.

My good friend from California, Mr. Bera, has introduced legislation in the past three Congresses to address these research needs. And not only would advancing grid security R&D help prevent physical and cyber attacks on the grid - it would also help address needs to fortify the grid against other types of physical damage, such as damage caused by wildland fires.

More broadly, we need to be doing everything we can to ensure the security of our grid as we significantly expand its capacity to harness the next generation of clean energy technologies, like fusion, to tackle the climate crisis and meet the future energy needs of every American.

So I look forward to the discussion ahead of us this afternoon on not only grid security, but on hydrogen and pipeline technology research as well. My colleague Mr. Tonko introduced important, bipartisan legislation with Ms. Bice late last year to advance the next generation of hydrogen technologies, and I welcome any thoughts on how this bill could be further improved in this new Congress. I am also interested to learn more about research needs to help reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, which was the subject of a bipartisan bill by another one of my Science Committee colleagues last Congress, Mr. Casten.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and to our witnesses for being here today. I yield back my time.