

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

Ranking Member Alan Grayson (D-FL)  
Subcommittee on Energy  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

*Department of Energy Oversight: Energy Innovation Hubs*  
Energy Subcommittee Hearing

June 17, 2015

Thank you, Chairman Weber, for holding this hearing, and thank you to our witnesses for testifying today.

I am pleased to see we have the Director from each Energy Innovation Hub here this morning. These Hubs seek to accelerate scientific discoveries that address critical energy issues – particularly, barriers to advancing new energy technologies.

Today's hearing is well-timed. Two of the four existing Energy Innovation Hubs are up for renewal this year, while the others are just beginning. The Energy Innovation Hub Program was established only five years ago, so this hearing will provide Members an important opportunity to further understand what must be done to ensure the successes of existing, and future, Hubs.

Unfortunately, Congress has yet to provide authorizing legislation for the important work being performed at each Energy Innovation Hub. It is my hope that today's hearing will provide the insights needed to accomplish that goal. Toward that end, I have already introduced H.R. 1870 – a bill that would establish merit-based rules governing the selection, scope, and composition of future Hubs. Further, the committee accepted the legislative language from that bill as an amendment to the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, which was considered on the House floor less than a month ago. I appreciate the Chairman and his staff's efforts to work with me and my staff to ensure that this important provision was included in the final bill. I also thank Ranking Member Johnson for including it in the alternative COMPETES legislation, produced by the minority, that was offered as a substitute amendment – both in committee and on the floor.

While I am very excited about the possibility of our committee finally producing authorizing legislation for Energy Innovation Hubs, there are some issues I look forward to learning more about this morning. Particularly, issues regarding Hub management and length-of operation.

It is my belief that we must develop a plan for Hubs that reach the end of their second five-year contract. Presently, the Department is indicating that Hubs will conclude work after a maximum of ten years. I support this guidance in principle, because it fosters a sense of urgency within Hubs to define and achieve goals as expeditiously as possible. But what happens when a Hub has been extraordinarily successful? Shouldn't there be some process through which, according to a merit-based review system, that Hub is permitted to continue pursuing promising research?

Furthermore, how can the Department best make sure that the utility of a Hub has been exhausted, and that it is not on the precipice of profound new discoveries?

The answers to these questions, and others, are what I look forward to learning today. I also look forward to hearing each of your views as to how you view your own Hub in the context of larger Department of Energy research activities and goals. How, specifically, is the research you are performing contributing to the larger effort to solve some of our nation's most pressing energy challenges?

Each of you is involved in exciting and innovative work. I look forward to hearing from you, and watching each of your Hubs as they progress. It is my hope that this Congress can provide the resources you need to accomplish your goals, and I look forward to working with you, Chairman Weber, toward that end.

Thank you. I yield the balance of my time.