



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

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## Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)**

**Full Committee Hearing:**

*The Genesis Mission:  
Prioritizing American Science and Technology Leadership Power*

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Good morning and thank you, Chairman Babin, for holding this hearing today, and to Under Secretary Gil for being here.

Under normal circumstances, I would now begin talking about the exciting activities under your portfolio and how much I look forward to working with you on each of them. That would certainly include my longstanding support for dramatically accelerating the development and commercialization of fusion energy.

However, I am duty-bound to raise my strong objection to the notion of even holding such a hearing before Secretary Wright appears before this Committee. As the Secretary should fully understand by now, this Committee has sole jurisdiction in the House of Representatives over the authorization of all of the Department of Energy's nonmilitary science and energy research, development, demonstration, and commercial application programs that he reportedly cares so deeply about. No disrespect to our friends on the Energy and Commerce Committee, but this Committee actually *far* exceeds the annual DOE budgetary authority that they oversee.

And yet the Secretary and his team have repeatedly found excuses to avoid testifying before us. Nearly every recent Energy Secretary has made themselves available to testify in front of this committee in the first session of a congress. However, Secretary Wright has decided to run out the clock while taking a series of highly consequential, legally dubious, and otherwise objectionable actions in his first 11 months in office that have raised profound concerns among our Members.

There must be accountability for the slap-dash, extremely politicized termination of billions in DOE awards that were previously provided across the country through extremely rigorous, independent, merit-based processes. The mass firings and coerced departures of dedicated experts throughout DOE; the illegal elimination of the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations; insanely inaccurate statements regarding the role that renewables play in ensuring the reliability of our electric grid; the widely debunked climate "science" report that the Secretary commissioned, and I could go on. I am happy to hear from you today Dr. Gil, but Secretary Wright really has a responsibility to respond to our inquiries on each of these matters himself.

But I also want to be clear that, however we may disagree on policy, my demand and expectation that the Secretary appear before this Committee on a regular basis is not partisan, it is an obligation of every Secretary regardless of administration. And it has always been implied that refusal to engage in this norm could serve as grounds for the Committee to issue a subpoena for testimony. Last Congress, when Chairman Lucas was having difficulty confirming a hearing date with Secretary Granholm's team, I called the Secretary directly and made sure that she understood my expectations as well. And I would have supported measures to compel her testimony if it came to that, but it didn't. That hearing was scheduled shortly thereafter.

Unfortunately, this is part of a broader pattern of Congress neglecting our oversight responsibilities. At this point in time last Congress, the heads of the following agencies had already testified in the Science Committee: the Department of Commerce, the Department of Energy, the EPA, the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Fire Administration, NASA, NIST, and NOAA. We had also heard from Inspectors General from many of these agencies. This Congress, we haven't heard from a single agency head or a single Inspector General. This is an unacceptable abdication of our Article I duties to oversee the agencies within our jurisdiction.

So, Mr. Chairman, while I look forward to a thoughtful and comprehensive discussion with Dr. Gil this morning, I hope that together, we can reassert and enforce the right of this Committee to have the Cabinet-level heads of each of the agencies under our jurisdiction appear before our Members going forward. With that I yield back.