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House of Representatives

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Vice Ranking Member Melanie Stansbury
Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs
Hearing on “Spending on Empty: How the Biden Administration’s Unprecedented Spending Increased Risk of Waste, Fraud, and Abuse at the Department of Energy”
April 18, 2023

Good afternoon and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Congressional Democrats made landmark, generational investments in our infrastructure, clean energy, and domestic manufacturing capabilities when they enacted the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act.

Our extreme GOP colleagues want to cast these laws as “wasteful,” despite the numerous benefits they provide for the American people and the planet, in order to curry political brownie points with climate deniers and special interests.

Let me be clear: These investments will lower costs and create jobs for millions of Americans, increase domestic energy production, and combat climate change.

As Democrats, we are committed to championing positive investments in domestic energy production, and manufacturing, as well as providing good, well-paying jobs for Americans.

In fact, the Inflation Reduction Act has already catalyzed more than 100,000 clean energy jobs and led to increased investments by businesses in manufacturing across the U.S., including:

- In the West, in Colorado, where private sector company CS Wind plans to expand the largest wind turbine factory in the world;
- In North Carolina, where Toyota has invested \$2.5 billion in its electric vehicle battery facility and Wolfspeed has committed to building the world’s largest carbide materials facility;
- In South Carolina, BMW has announced a \$1.7 billion investment to shift to elective vehicle manufacturing and Bosch announced a \$260 million investment in the production of electric motors;
- And in Texas, where SK Signet announced plans to build an electric vehicle charger manufacturing facility, Tesla is investing \$770 million to expand its vehicle factory, and Air Products and AES announced a \$4 billion investment.

As this hearing gavel in just days away from Earth Day, and it is important for us to talk about how these historic investments will help to combat climate change and move our country toward a clean energy future.

It is vital that we make the shift to clean energy sources. Such efforts are our best chance of avoiding the most devastating impacts of climate change. Democrats’ investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act are the best way to do that.

I would also like to point out that investing in our communities is not a waste. The communities that most need these investments are also the ones most likely to suffer the effects of climate change.

Roughly \$1.8 billion out of the \$4.5 billion for clean energy initiatives in the Inflation Reduction Act are slated to go to low-income American homes. In addition, the Biden-Harris Administration's Justice40 Initiative aims to ensure 40 percent of the benefits achieved through investment in climate action and clean energy initiatives flows to underserved communities.

We also know that the Department of Energy is committed to responsibly stewarding these funds and ensuring these historic investments are working for the American people. Republicans' concerns highlighted today seem to stem from special reports.

But these concerns date back to legislation from 2009. The Department of Energy has worked tirelessly to address those concerns over the last decade and prepare itself to properly administer these investments and the millions and billions it administers through our National Labs and science and technology programs.

President Biden is also committed to ensuring that these funds are used appropriately. In fact, the President's Fiscal Year 2024 budget includes a nearly 55 percent increase for the Office of Inspector General.

While Republicans claim they are conducting, "real oversight" of the Biden-Harris Administration, they seem to be focused on programs, agencies, and funding that the Biden-Harris Administration has specifically worked to fortify from fraud, waste, and abuse and talking points with little relationship to reality.

In fact, the Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized preventing fraud, waste, and abuse across the federal government. And the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act are no exception.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing the testimony today.

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