

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<https://oversight.house.gov>

Ranking Member Jamie Raskin Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery Hearing on “Oversight of the U.S. Department of Energy” May 23, 2024

Thank you, Secretary Granholm, for joining us today. And I also hope that you’re not traveling around the world promoting more fossil fuel combustion and use.

My colleagues have invited you here today to testify about President Biden so called war on energy, which we know doesn’t exist. For better or worse, the United States is producing record high levels of oil and natural gas today. It’s never been so high so our colleagues can breathe easy, if that is their principal interest. At the same time, President Biden and the Department of Energy, in partnership with Democrats in Congress, are making historic and necessary investments in clean energy technology.

Climate change is the defining crisis of our time. And we know that burning fossil fuels is, by far, the leading factor in contributing to climate change—a fact that fossil fuel companies knew about decades ago, but suppressed. Our recent joint staff report with the Senate Budget Committee showed the evolution of Big Oil’s efforts to deceive the American public from outright denial of the facts that they understood in the 1960s and ‘70s, and then more up to date, subtle propaganda and disinformation efforts today to try to lead us away from the solutions that we need.

Because of this deception, we’ve lost crucial decades in which we could have been systematically transitioning away from dirty, polluting fossil fuels to the cleaner alternative energies we need. Now we are forced to take much more dramatic actions to transition to clean energy as quickly as possible.

With every passing day, the consequences of climate change grow in intensity. In just the last week, we’ve learned, not only are the sea levels rising, not only are we seeing record forest fires, record drought, record flooding in different parts of the country, hurricanes of record velocity, but there is even greater disruption taking place to people’s daily lives. There are swarms of mosquitoes in Harris County, Texas in unprecedented numbers and sizes. The oceans are actually changing colors. We are in a very rapid downward descent because of climate change.

Researchers have found that the economic damage caused by climate change is six times worse than was previously predicted. A new paper estimates that just one degree Celsius of warming would cause the world’s GDP to decline by 12%. We already hit more than one degree Celsius of warming since pre-industrial times and are currently on track to three degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century.

We must break free from the carbon trap, which will require significant effort and investment into the clean energy transition. The Department of Energy, I believe, is doing that thanks to funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Because of these historic investments the

American people have made, the U.S. is on track by 2030 to double the amount of clean energy we generate, and to cut emissions by 40% to 50% compared to 2005 levels.

The Administration's focus on clean energy has also spurred over \$400 billion of new investments in clean energy by private companies, about half of which is specifically being invested in manufacturing today. The U.S. economy has added 800,000 manufacturing jobs since the start of this administration, and the Inflation Reduction Act is anticipated to create more than 1.5 million jobs over the next decade. We have not had an unemployment rate this low in more than 50 years. And the clean energy economy plays a very important role in this economic renaissance.

Unlike my colleagues across the aisle who want to promote falsehoods about this imaginary war on energy, Democrats recognize that the transition to clean energy is not just good for our climate and good for our planet, but also good for our economy and good for our communities.

Every single one of our districts is profiting right now from the benefits of projects funded by the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation. In fact, a company in Hopkinsville, Kentucky—in the good Chairman's district—is receiving \$480 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for sustainable battery manufacturing. Another company in Calvert city, Kentucky—also in the Chairman's District, which I use by way of illustration—is receiving up to \$35 million in federal cost-share under the Inflation Reduction Act to elect purify and decarbonize its heating process.

This is taking place all over America today. This is happening now. These types of investments are significant and historic. They're exactly what we need to move away from the dangerous dependence on fossil fuels. And that's not a question of moral guilt. The whole society is implicated in it. But we've got to save ourselves from the implications of it.

I commend the work of the Biden-Harris Administration. I commend you, Madam Secretary, for everything you've been doing to ensure the United States is able to transition effectively away from dirty energy to clean energy, while also making sure that our economy is strong.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

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