

May 2, 2023

Chairman Chuck Fleischmann
Energy & Water Development Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
2187 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur
Energy & Water Development Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
2186 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Dianne Feinstein
Energy & Water Development Subcommittee
Senate Appropriations Committee
331 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member John Kennedy
Energy & Water Development Subcommittee
Senate Appropriations Committee
437 Russell Senate Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, Chairwoman Feinstein, and Ranking Member Kennedy:

Major breakthroughs in energy technologies have long been driven by public investment in research, development, demonstration, and deployment (RDD&D). From the SunShot Initiative of 2011 to the Energy Storage Grand Challenge of 2020, federal support has helped the private sector deliver more affordable, reliable, secure, and clean energy to the American people for decades. As the global economy continues to shift toward clean energy, Congress' historical support for innovation in the energy sector will be more important than ever. To build on this legacy of American ingenuity and ensure America stays globally competitive, **we ask that Congress continue to increase baseline funding for Department of Energy (DOE) innovation activities in FY24.**

America has a long history of energy innovation. It was in New York that the world's first electrical grid came online. In Idaho, the world's first nuclear power plant. And in Ohio, the world's first modern wind turbine. Our investments in these and other energy technologies positioned the US as a leader in clean energy, but our early head start has since eroded. Meanwhile, China has taken the lead in clean energy deployment and has been able to corner many critical markets for these technologies.¹

To keep America globally competitive, Congress has taken bold action with a historic suite of legislation, including the Energy Act of 2020, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the CHIPS and Science Act (CHIPS), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This set of laws is already working together to build new domestic industries, jumpstart our decarbonization efforts, and ensure America maintains its ability to compete on the global stage. From the new "battery belt" forming across the American Southeast to dozens of new solar and wind manufacturing plants, these investments are paying back dividends in the form of over 100,000 new clean energy jobs spread across 31 different states.²

¹ Hensley, B., & Lappetelainen, A. (2023). Race to the top on clean energy: The US and EU response to China's dominance. Kaya. <https://www.unpri.org/download?ac=17824>; Clay, I., & Atkinson, R. (2022). Wake Up, America: China is Overtaking the United States in Innovation Output. <https://www2.itif.org/2023-us-v-china-innovation.pdf>

² Wanna, C. (2023, February 6). 100,000 Green Jobs Announced Since US Adopted Climate Law, Study Finds. Bloomberg.com. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-02-06/companies-adding-100-000-green-jobs-under-new-us-climate-law?leadSource=verify%20wall>; Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and CHIPS and Science Act Investments. (2023, February). Jack Conness. <https://www.jackconness.com/ira-chips-investments>

But while these generational investments in climate and our economy are a tremendous step in the right direction, their focus on deployment of commercial technologies has left gaps in the RDD&D continuum that may leave early-stage technologies exposed to the innovation “valleys of death” and unable to ever enter the marketplace. Additionally, sufficient and sustained federal support for a balanced portfolio of work across the innovation lifecycle – from basic and applied research and experimental development, to field validation and first-of-a-kind technology demonstrations – is essential to position US researchers, industries, and workers to develop and benefit from these new markets for emerging clean energy technologies. Lastly, well-targeted annual investments can help ensure a diverse suite of offices and programs receive the necessary funding to continue creating jobs, strengthening our energy security, and further reducing emissions.

Ambitious annual appropriations can help bridge RDD&D gaps, balance our nation’s clean energy innovation portfolio, and ensure America leads on the invention and production of emerging clean energy technologies that can be deployed both at home and abroad. Providing baseline funding for DOE innovation activities, as well as funding the groundbreaking programs authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act, will ensure America can lead globally in the energy innovation space. New research shows that aggressively competing for global markets in industries such as clean hydrogen, enhanced geothermal systems, and other clean technologies could continue to yield massive and lasting benefits for the US economy.³ Annual appropriations are critical to these efforts, as they not only provide sustained funding for key programs, but also send powerful market signals to private sector investors, entrepreneurs, and developers that America remains fully committed to energy innovation.

By continuing to prioritize the innovation and deployment of new clean energy technologies, we can ensure that the US is not just competitive, but a global leader. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to this strategy in the FY22 and FY23 appropriations cycles. We look forward to working with your offices to ensure these investments continue to provide all Americans with affordable, reliable, secure, and clean energy for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Third Way
ClearPath Action
Natural Resources Defense Council
8 Rivers Capital, LLC
Advanced Biofuels Business Council
Algae Biomass Organization
Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition
American Council on Renewable Energy
American Nuclear Society
BPC Action
Carbon Business Council
Carbon Engineering
Carbon180

³ Freed, J., & Hughes-Cromwick, E. (2022). When America Leads: Competing for the Future of Clean Energy Executive Summary – Third Way. Third Way. <https://www.thirdway.org/executive-summary/when-america-leads-competing-for-the-future-of-clean-energy-executive-summary>

Center for Climate and Energy Solutions
Citizens Climate Lobby
Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions
Clean Air Task Force
Clean Energy Business Network
Clean Energy Buyers Association
CleanTech Alliance
Combined Heat and Power Alliance
ConservAmerica Action
Constellation Energy
Council on Competitiveness
Data for Progress
DT Energy Consultants, LLC
Edison Electric Institute
Enel North America
Environmental Defense Fund
Evergreen Climate Innovations
Federation of American Scientists
Framatome
Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Energy Association
Geothermal Rising
Good Energy Collective
Great Plains Institute
Green Strategies, Inc.
Heat is Power Association
Information Technology and Innovation Foundation
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
Kanin Energy
Kinsley Energy Systems
LanzaTech
Lima Company
mHUB
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Grid
National Venture Capital Association
National Wildlife Federation
Nuclear Energy Institute
Nuclear Innovation Alliance
Oxy Low Carbon Ventures
Portland General Electric
Project InnerSpace
Rainey Center Freedom Project
Renewable Thermal Collaborative
Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce
SSTI
Svante
TechNet
The Breakthrough Institute
The Nature Conservancy
United Steelworkers

US Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium
Zero Emission Transportation Association