



**Opening Statement  
Hearing on DOE's FY 2018 Budget Request  
Chairman Lisa Murkowski  
June 22, 2017**

Good morning, everyone. The Committee will come to order. I apologize for the delayed start, but hopefully we will have an opportunity to hear from the Secretary and learn of the President's views for the Department of Energy

We are here today for the last budget hearing our committee will hold this year, focused on the President's request for the Department of Energy.

Secretary Perry, I want to welcome you to your first hearing following your bipartisan confirmation here in the Senate. While it took us a little bit longer than we had hoped to get you into this role, we are glad to have you at the helm and we look forward to helping you get a full complement of folks there at the Department.

The budget request for the Department of Energy takes a different approach this year than in the recent past. The President has made a concerted effort to increase funding for the National Nuclear Security Administration to focus on our nuclear weapons program – this is a portion of the Department that falls outside the scope of this committee. The administration has also requested robust funding for the cleanup of nuclear wastes left behind by our country's Cold War legacy.

To offset those funding increases, the budget request proposes deep cuts to research and development for energy and science. It also proposes to phase out innovative programs, such as ARPA-E, that have demonstrated success.

I understand what drove this proposal, but am also concerned by certain parts of it. The United States is the world leader in science and energy. We like it that way and we want to keep it that way. And at the core of that excellence is the work done at our national laboratories and universities by the men and women who dedicate their careers to furthering science.

Members on both sides of this committee want to maintain and strengthen that leadership. We need to be careful that we don't get in the way of the good work or proper role of the private sector. But keeping that in mind, many of us have found good, bipartisan opportunities where it makes sense to increase funding for R&D.

I appreciate the need to derive savings and balance our budget, but that cannot come at the expense of our efforts on energy innovation. Good science should not sit on a shelf, and the Department should continue to push the limits of science in order to ensure that the next generation of energy technologies is developed here, in this Country.

Although I do not support all of the proposals in this budget request, I believe we will find some areas of agreement. I also believe we can undertake reforms at the Department to help save taxpayer dollars. Our work on the loan programs is a good example of how that can work.

My goal for the Department of Energy is to drive down the costs of emerging, pre-commercial technologies to make energy more affordable, reliable, clean, diverse and secure. Take it back to *Energy 20/20* - those principles haven't changed. This is particularly important for my home state of Alaska, where our energy costs are orders of magnitude above those in the Lower 48.

Secretary Perry, thank you again for appearing before our committee today. I hope to host you in Alaska soon. I know you have made similar commitments to colleagues in the Congress here. I look forward to hearing your priorities outlined before the Committee this morning.

Senator Cantwell, I'll now turn to you for your opening remarks.