



June 16, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

As the Committee prepares to mark up the Fiscal Year 2024 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urges your strong support for the Department of Energy's (DOE) innovation programs, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, permit streamlining measures, and the U.S.- Israel Energy Cooperative Agreement. We believe that these programs are fundamental to enhancing U.S. energy security, accelerating the clean energy transition, and supporting the water and energy infrastructure necessary to create new jobs and contribute to economic growth.

Energy Innovation: The Chamber commends the Committee for its longstanding, bipartisan support of energy research and development programs that are vital to economic security and environmental progress. Specifically, there is a growing consensus that the development and commercialization of new emissions-reducing technologies are critical to determining how quickly and at what cost greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced. We also know that development of these same technologies holds enormous potential to strengthen the long-term energy security of the United States and its allies. As the Committee advances this legislation, the Chamber urges priority attention to the following innovation programs:

- Sufficient resources to ensure effective implementation of the clean energy programs prescribed in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Energy Act of 2020;
- Strong funding for the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, including resources necessary to complement BIL funding for the Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program's large-scale projects;
- The Chamber supports the Subcommittee funding recommendation for advanced Small Modular Reactor RD&D, and recommends full funding for the Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Program in FY24 to expedite the availability of High-Assay Low Enriched Uranium (HALEU) for civilian domestic research, development, demonstration, and commercial use;
- The Chamber opposes rescission of funding from FY23 appropriations that supplemented DOE's existing loan guarantee program with additional funding in loan guarantee authority, as the loan program office undertakes important work to leverage private investment in large and promising clean energy projects.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps): The Chamber urges the Committee to support full funding for the Army Corps' Civil Works Program authorized in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act. We also support full funding for the Corps' Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program to continue the important implementation of this loan program that leverages public-private partnerships. The Chamber encourages the House to invest all revenues collected into the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for their intended purpose of port dredging and maintenance. We strongly believe that funding for the Army Corps should be targeted to navigation, flood protection (e.g., green, and grey infrastructure), permitting, resilience, and water supply management priorities.

Distribution Transformers: The Chamber strongly supports language that will prevent DOE from mandating onerous energy conservation standards on distribution transformers during a time when the supply chain for such transformers is already unduly stressed with such transformers being critical to support a lower-carbon energy transition, and all for uncertain and potentially negligible efficiency gains.

Permit Streamlining: The Chamber supports permitting processes that enable building smart, modern, resilient infrastructure through such programs as the Nationwide Permits Program (NWP) that would avoid unnecessary delays and overly burdensome requirements. The importance of permit streamlining measures has only grown considering increased attention to priorities such as electric reliability, energy security, and the energy transition. We therefore support funding and policy direction that streamlines project permitting, including by urging the Corps to provide the regulated communities a full 180 days to comment should any revisions be proposed to nationwide permit 12 (NWP-12).

U.S.-Israel Energy Center: The Chamber supports full funding for the U.S.-Israel Energy Center. The Center advances energy and water innovation by facilitating cooperative industrial R&D, technology sharing, regulatory convergence, training, and education among national laboratories, academic institutions, and companies in both nations.

The Chamber appreciates your consideration of these recommendations as you mark up the Fiscal Year 2024 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil L. Bradley
Executive Vice President, Chief Policy Officer,
and Head of Strategic Advocacy
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations