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SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES FY2017 ENERGY & WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies today approved a \$37.5 billion measure to fund U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) programs and critical infrastructure projects administered by the Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation.

The FY2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill, scheduled to be considered by the full Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday, represents a \$355 million increase over the FY2016 enacted level and \$261 million above the President’s budget request.

The bill provides added resources to strengthen the U.S. nuclear deterrence posture, ensure nuclear stockpile readiness and safety, and prepare for existing and future nuclear threats.

It also promotes programs to improve American energy security and economic competitiveness. For the second year in a row, the subcommittee approved the highest level of funding ever for the DOE Office of Science in a regular appropriations bill to spur greater innovation in energy research, high-performance computing and next-generation technologies.

Important to American commerce and public safety, the committee rejects the President’s budget recommendation to cut U.S. Army Corps of Engineer funding by 23 percent and instead approves a responsible level of funding to improve and maintain flood control projects and ensure the viability of national and regional ports and waterways.

“Legislation approved today brings us one step closer to doubling basic energy research at the Office of Science, fully funds projects that are supported by the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, and takes an important step toward solving the 25-year-old nuclear waste stalemate,” said **U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander** (R-Tenn.), chairman of the Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee. “Today’s vote is proof that the appropriations process is working. Sen. Feinstein and I have worked hard to create a bipartisan bill, and I look forward to the bill being considered by the full Appropriations Committee.”

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Bill Highlights:

The Senate FY2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill totals \$37.5 billion, \$355 million above the FY2016 enacted level and \$261 million above the President's request. While meeting national priorities, the legislation makes targeted reductions to lower-priority programs.

Nuclear Security – \$12.9 billion, a \$341 million increase over FY2016, for DOE nuclear security programs, including Weapons Activities, Naval Reactors, and Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. This includes:

- \$9.3 billion for Weapons Activities, \$438 million above the FY2016 enacted level
- \$1.4 billion for Naval Reactors, \$45 million above the FY2016 enacted level when accounting for programmatic transfers
- \$1.8 billion for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation, \$118 million below the FY2016 enacted level

Army Corps of Engineers – \$6 billion, an increase of \$11 million above the FY2016 enacted level and \$1.378 billion above the President's budget request. The bill provides:

- For the third year, the bill exceeds the targets in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 for appropriations from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for the Corps of Engineers.
- The bill also makes and full use of the estimated annual revenues from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, to advance American competitiveness and export capabilities
- The bill provides \$700 million above the President's budget request for construction of river and harbor, flood storm damage reduction, shore protection, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related projects authorized by law.

Bureau of Reclamation – \$1.14 billion, \$327 million above the President's request, for the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation to help manage, develop, and protect the water resources of Western states.

Science Research – \$5.4 billion for science research, an increase of \$50 million above the FY2016 enacted level, to support basic energy research, development of high-performance computing systems, and research into the next generation of clean energy sources--all important areas for lessening U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources and for improving economic competitiveness.

Environmental Cleanup – \$6.4 billion for DOE environmental management activities, \$133 million above the FY2016 enacted level, including \$5.4 billion for Defense Environmental Cleanup to continue remediation of sites contaminated by previous nuclear weapons production. The bill also funds cleanup activities at other non-defense related nuclear sites.

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Solving the Nuclear Waste Stalemate – The bill includes a pilot program for consolidated nuclear waste storage, introduced by Alexander and ranking member U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.). It also includes language that allows DOE to store nuclear waste at private facilities that are licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Energy Programs – \$11.2 billion, an increase of \$157 million above the FY2016 enacted level and \$136 million below the President’s request. Within this total, the bill prioritizes and increases funding for energy programs that encourage U.S. economic competitiveness and that will advance “all-of-the-above” solution to U.S. energy independence.

Fossil Energy Research and Development – \$632 million, the same as the FY2016 enacted level, for technologies to advance coal, natural gas, oil, and other fossil energy resources. In addition, the bill provides \$1.058 billion, a \$72 million increase from the FY2016 enacted level, for nuclear energy research, development, and demonstration activities.

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) – The bill eliminates funding for ITER, which is under construction in France, saving \$125 million. ITER continues to crowd out other federal science investments where the United States has maintained leadership, including high performance computing and materials science.

Other policy items:

The bill prohibits any changes to the definition of “fill material” and “discharge of fill material” for the purposes of the Clean Water Act.

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