

**Chairman Lamar Alexander Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development**

**Markup of the FY2019 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies
Appropriations Bill**

May 22, 2018

(As prepared for delivery)

The Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development will please come to order.

We are here today to consider the fiscal year 2019 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill and report it for consideration to the full Committee on Appropriations.

This is the second Senate subcommittee markup of a fiscal year 2019 appropriations bill, the Agriculture bill was reported earlier this morning.

Senator Feinstein and I have worked together this year the same way we always have – in a fair and accommodating manner – with the goal of drafting a bipartisan bill for the subcommittee’s consideration that prioritizes spending and reduces waste.

I would also like to thank the staff who have been working together to put this bill together over the past 2 weeks.

Doug Clapp, Chris Hanson and Samantha Nelson with Senator Feinstein.

Tyler Owens, Adam DeMella, Meyer Seligman, Jen Armstrong, Molly Marsh, and Rachel Littleton of my staff.

We have a history of crafting bipartisan legislation. In 2016 the last time the Senate debated individual appropriations bills, Energy and Water was the first to reach the Senate floor and was approved 90 to 8.

We expect this year’s bill will be approved by the full Appropriations Committee Thursday, which means this could be one of the first appropriations bills considered by the Senate this year.

The bill before us today provides a total of \$43.8 billion, which is \$566 million more than last year, and \$7.2 billion more than the budget request.

The funding included in this bill supports several federal agencies that do important work, including the U.S. Department of Energy; the Army Corps of Engineers; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; the National Nuclear Security Administration; the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

This subcommittee received an allocation for defense spending that is \$92 million above last year, and an allocation for non-defense spending that is \$474 million above last year.

Reaching an agreement was not easy because we started with an unrealistic budget proposal from the Administration.

Over the last three years, Congress has developed quite a consensus on science and research.

Last year, this Subcommittee increased funding for the Office of Science by 16%. That was the third straight year of record funding in a regular appropriations bill for the program that supports our 17 national laboratories and supercomputing.

Other Subcommittees have also increased funding in research and innovation, including the National Institutes of Health. Senator Blunt tells me that his Subcommittee increased funding for biomedical innovation by 23% last year.

So when you get three straight years for the National Institutes of Health, three straight years of record funding for the Office of Science, and impressive funding levels for supercomputing there seems to be a bipartisan consensus on science and research.

I would tell President Trump and the Office of Management and Budget that science, research and innovation is what made America first, and I recommend that he add science research and innovation to his “America First” agenda.

So I'm going to try to talk to the president and others at the White House and say, ‘Why don't you include this in your America First agenda?’ I mean, why not biomedical innovation? Why not national laboratories? Why not supercomputing? We need to lead the world in that.

Congress wants to do it, both Republicans and Democrats. We need to get the Office of Management and Budget on board.

The Department of Energy’s budget request for fiscal year 2019 was only \$25.5 billion dollars, a decrease of about \$9.5 billion – or 26% below – what Congress provided last year.

Despite this—the bill Senator Feinstein and I have negotiated funds many of the priorities that we can all agree on, while staying within the budget caps that Congress agreed to in February.

This type of spending, discretionary spending, makes up only 30 percent of all federal spending and is rising at about the rate of inflation. This is not the part of the budget that is rising out-of-control and bankrupting our country.

The bill provides \$6.65 billion – a new record level of funding for the Office of Science; \$6.927 billion for the Corps of Engineers; \$375 million for ARPA-E; makes full use of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund – in other words we use all of the money we collect in taxes each year from the ships that use of the waterways to improve the waterways; takes steps to help resolve

the nuclear waste stalemate; modernizes our nuclear weapons stockpile, and funds cleanup of hazardous materials at Cold War sites.

I'm also pleased to say the bill makes supercomputing a national priority—which is something Secretary Perry and I both feel strongly about.

\$677 million is provided within the Office of Science and the National Nuclear Security Administration to deliver at least one Exascale machine in 2021 to reassert U.S. leadership in this critical area.

We also continued our intensive oversight to make sure taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and effectively, and that large construction projects stay on time and on budget.

For example, last year the National Defense Authorization Act authorized Secretary Perry to terminate construction of the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility if he could certify certain conditions were met.

We agreed with the Armed Services Committee and included similar language in the fiscal year 2018 Energy and Water appropriations bill.

On May 10, Secretary Perry canceled construction of the MOX Facility and we look forward to working with the Department of Energy and Senator Graham to ensure that plutonium leaves South Carolina sooner and at a lower cost to taxpayers.

In my opinion, we should spend more, not less, on our nation's water infrastructure – and this bill reflects that priority. Infrastructure is another area President Trump says is a priority.

This is another area in which President Trump and I agree this is a priority for our country.

This bill meets the funding targets set by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for the 5th year in a row. This means Mobile Harbor in Alabama, Savannah Harbor in Georgia, Long Beach Harbor in California and many others across the country will be adequately funded.

Of particular importance to Tennessee, the bill ensures that there will be enough funding for the Corps to continue building a new Chickamauga Lock in fiscal year 2019, for the 5th consecutive year.

The funding level in this bill also funds the three higher priority locks—Olmsted Lock, the Lower Monongahela Lock, and Kentucky Lock—to ensure that construction on these projects can continue.

Our legislation also sends a strong signal for developing new technologies that will support the next generation of nuclear power plants.

This bill supports that effort, and provides \$47 million for research to support existing light water reactors, which is a \$27 million more than the president's request.

We included \$150 million for Advanced Reactor Technologies, which is \$76 million more than the president's budget request, including \$30 million for a Transformational Challenge Reactor to work on new methods of reactor design, manufacture, licensing, and operation.

We funded the Center for Advanced Simulation of Light Water Reactors, also called CASL, at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. CASL is important for supporting our existing fleet of reactors as well as advanced reactors we may build in the future.

The bill also takes important steps toward solving our country's stalemate over what to do with nuclear waste, and this is another bipartisan issue that Senator Feinstein and I agree on.

Our legislation includes a pilot program for consolidated nuclear waste storage, which Senator Feinstein and I have included in the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations bill for the past six years.

The bill also provides funding for the U.S. Department of Energy to support storing nuclear waste at private facilities.

A total of \$14.8 billion is provided for the National Nuclear Security Administration, which will ensure that the modernization of our nation's nuclear weapons stockpile continues.

\$703 million is included for the Uranium Processing Facility in Tennessee, which keeps the project on track to be completed by 2025 at a cost of no more than \$6.5 billion.

This legislation also advances our efforts to clean up hazardous materials at Cold War sites. A total of \$7.2 billion is provided to support cleanup efforts, which is \$581 million above the president's budget request.

I am very pleased with this bill, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the bill in the coming weeks. With that, I'd like to recognize Senator Feinstein for her remarks.

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