

□ **March 20th, 2012**

**Subcommittee Ranking Member Rep. Peter Visclosky**

"Good afternoon, Dr. Brinkman. It is good to have you here today.

"The Secretary of Energy, Dr. Chu, has said that he regards his two principal challenges to be energy independence and climate change. In the long term, I believe that much of the inspiration to overcome both of these challenges will come from the Office of Science.

"I appreciate that the Administration continues its support for basic science by requesting a two percent increase from FY 2012 for the Department of Energy's Science program. This is not the boost in funding that many advocates had hoped for, yet in our constrained fiscal environment it is significant.

"In many areas of science and technology, American researchers arguably remain the best in the world; however, our margin of leadership is neither as wide nor as clear-cut as it has been in the past and in certain areas we have clearly fallen behind. Given the constrained fiscal environment, it is particularly important that we strategically plan each major program area to ensure we are proceeding in a deliberate and thoughtful manner, increasing or maintaining our lead in the areas where we can and limiting our investment where we cannot.

"U.S. leadership in many areas of science and technology depends, in part, on the continued availability of the most advanced scientific facilities for our researchers. However, I remain concerned that many of the infrastructure plans of the Department were developed with a far more optimistic funding profile than the current reality will support. We must also ensure that any redundancy is eliminated, in order to maximize the scientific and technological advances within tight fiscal constraints. I hope to hear from you today how the Office of Science has begun to reevaluate the strategic plans of major program areas.

"While this Committee has been supportive of the Office of Science and other related programs, such as ARPA-E, we continue to have concerns regarding the duplication and interaction of several recent organizational initiatives; the Energy Innovation Hubs, ARPA-E, and the Energy Frontier Research Centers are just a few examples. While the Subcommittee will examine the performance of ARPA-E separately, the justification for this program, in part, was that different organizational models were necessary because the Department's existing programs were not sufficiently effective agents of "transformational" or "disruptive" technological advancements. While I appreciate that some of the early reviews of these new models have been positive, I would like to hear what you are doing to ensure that this "new" culture is being integrated into the other Science programs.

"Additionally, I will be interested in hearing your perspective on where we should be investing in science and how it fits into the Administration's "all-of-the-above strategy for the 21st century that develops every source of American-made energy."

"Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the time."

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