

OPENING STATEMENT

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Subcommittee on Energy
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

“The Future of Nuclear Energy”
Energy Subcommittee Hearing

December 11, 2014

Thank you Chairman Lummis for holding this hearing, and I also want to thank this excellent panel of witnesses for their testimony and for being here today.

For decades, the federal government has provided critical support for energy R&D. From solar and wind energy to natural gas recovery, many of the technologies that are helping us transition to a clean energy economy and creating entire new industries wouldn't be nearly as far along as they are today, or would not exist at all, without the benefit of federal support and public-private partnerships. The same certainly holds true for nuclear energy and in fact, NuScale Power, who we'll be hearing from today, has been working with Sandia National Laboratories.

This morning we are here to discuss the federal role in the development and deployment of the next generation of nuclear power plants, and how this support may be better structured going forward. I'm eager to learn more about the costs and benefits of these new technologies over the course of the hearing - including ways we can improve the safety of new reactors to minimize the chance of another catastrophic event along the lines of the disaster that occurred at Fukushima just a few years ago.

I have stated numerous times that I support an “all of the above” approach toward a clean energy economy and achieving safer, more cost-effective, and environmentally friendly ways to utilize nuclear energy can play an important role in this mix. We just need to make sure that we are making the smartest investments we can with our limited resources, and that they are in the best interests of the American people. I want to thank the witnesses again for being willing to provide their insights today, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and with all of the stakeholders in this critical area moving forward.

Thank you again, Chairman Lummis, and I yield back.