

## OPENING STATEMENT

**The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Hearing on the 2013 Budget Request for the  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Department of Energy's Nuclear Energy programs  
March 7, 2012**

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Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this hearing to order. Today we have before us Gregory Jaczko, Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Pete Lyons, the Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at the Department of Energy, to present their fiscal year 2013 budget requests. I welcome you both and look forward to your testimony.

When we met last year, the nation of Japan had just been devastated by a tsunami and was in the midst of a nuclear crisis. I'm pleased that this country, both on the military and civilian sides, was in a position to provide technical and humanitarian assistance to the Japanese people. I'd like to thank you both for the work you did to help in such a time of need.

Although a year ago now, this tragic event, and the lessons we're learning from it, continue to shape the energy sector here in the United States and around the world. I hope we'll have a chance to hear today how our nuclear sector is applying these lessons, and how your programs are helping in this regard.

It's reassuring that the people of this country have been able to see past the Fukushima event. Perhaps the strongest sign of this is the recent NRC approval of the Vogtle plants in Georgia, the first such approval in over three decades. There is now wide acceptance that nuclear power is a safe, critical part of our energy mix, and I should note that this development occurred with the strong support of the Congress and successive Administrations over the years.

Unfortunately, the budget request for fiscal year 2013 does not build upon cooperation, but instead drives division. Although the President made a strong pitch in his State of the Union for an "all of the above" energy strategy, there's no sign of such a balanced approach in the documents before us. Instead of investing in the two most important energy sources for the economic development of this country, nuclear and fossil, this budget request cuts funding for fossil by 21 percent, and nuclear energy by 12 percent! At the same time, this request increases funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy by more than \$500 million. This is not what I'd call an "all of the above" energy strategy that's in the interests of this nation.

At the same time, I regret that this request continues the Administration's wasteful and misguided Yucca Mountain policy. Even worse, it requests funds to pursue recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission which have not been condoned by this Congress, in whole or in part. I understand that more work needs to be done before this country can develop a second needed repository, but I caution the Administration from rushing forward too quickly on the Commission's recommendations. This is too complex and important of a topic to be solved unilaterally by the Administration.

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