

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Hearing on the President's FY24

Department of Energy Budget

Witnesses: The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary U.S. Department of Energy

April 20th, 2023

[\[VIDEO\]](#) [\[AUDIO\]](#)

Sen. Cantwell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, great to see you here.

I think the profiles of my two colleagues from certain states that represent a more historic energy supply are interesting thoughts. But I just want to assure you, there are many other parts of the United States who are very enthusiastic about moving forward in the transformation and very enthusiastic about the amount of investment.

I just want to reiterate your own points. This is what you just told us, together we have advanced the energy, and economic, and national security of the United States. We are cementing America's place as a trailblazer in the green clean energy economy, and for the future, in our fight against the climate crisis.

I couldn't agree more. That's exactly what we did with these pieces of legislation. That's exactly what you're briefing us on this morning. That's exactly what my state wants to see. The amount of innovation that's happening and being unleashed is phenomenal. So, I just want to thank you for being at the epicenter, particularly on the \$17 billion that we authorized in part of the CHIPS and Science bill to make sure that our national labs are continuing to be front and center.

And one thing I do think people agree on in general is hydrogen and moving forward on hydrogen, the IRA's hydrogen production tax credit. I wanted to ask you about this, particularly as it relates to 45V, and when that guidance will be finalized.

Obviously, we don't want to see some entities like BPA penalized or entities that do business with BPA be penalized over the fact that throughout BPA's cycle, sometimes they might purchase shoring up power from other places.

So, the Inflation Reduction Act put \$10 billion in tax - So anyway, I wanted to get your thoughts on the 45V and when we would see the implementation? And would you commit to working with us on implementing solutions for the intent of that.

Sec. Granholm: Of course, and I know that Treasury is churning out guidance as fast as they can. And this is a priority we have, especially because we have Hydrogen Hubs selections to be able to make, some of which are determined. And we'll be determining those based upon that guidance. So, they know that this is a high priority.

Sen. Cantwell: Yep. And so, for, again, the Green Hydrogen Hub, which I think is what we've been focused on in the Pacific Northwest, I think this becomes an important element.

I'd like to turn to the 48C Energy Manufacturing Credit. The Inflation Reduction act put \$10 billion in this, and applications will start this summer, and DOE will support that selection process.

The fusion innovation, again, is just the amount of work that's being done. Would you agree that the clean energy of fusion, which is 100% carbon free would be eligible for those tax credits. In addition, Washington State fusion companies would benefit from a milestone-based development program similar to the one used to accelerate development of the commercial space launch industry.

So, DOE stood up this milestone program last year and requested proposals. I'm told that it's way over subscribed. And so, I'm pleased to see that the budget request that you have increases in the Fusion Milestone Development Program. What are the administration's plan to further expand this program?.

Sec. Granholm: Yeah, first of all, this is a record amount of funding for fusion. And it is a signal obviously, now that our National Ignition Facility has achieved ignition, that it can be done, even though most of the commercial fusion is based upon magnets rather than lasers. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that it's possible. So, I hope that we can continue.

And thank you for the support in CHIPS and Science, the authorization was very important, that allows us to continue to take steps in this budget as downpayment to get to that full authorized amount.

Fusion, obviously, is a hugely important piece of that going into the future. With respect to its eligibility for 48C, I'm assuming because it is a clean energy manufacturing process that it would be eligible, but I'd have to get back to you to confirm.

Sen. Cantwell: And lastly, obviously, I can't go without asking you about Hanford. You know, we've done great progress on low level waste. Now we have to focus on the high-level waste.

You did a report that showed that it will cost between \$300 and \$640 billion to complete Hanford cleanup with an end date of 2078. So, this year's budget at \$2.8. Seems like a lot but it's not really when you think about that it's only a couple of a percent of the remaining cleanup costs.

We don't want anybody coming with a proposal to do it on the cheap, but I would like to hear from you any ideas on what we could do to help accelerate the process of cleanup.

Sec. Granholm: We want to do it right. And we want to do it in partnership with the community. And your leadership and the leadership of Senator Murray have been tremendous in ensuring that we continue to increase the investment.

It is not a cheap prospect, as you know. And so that effort to continuously invest, but do it efficiently is totally what the folks at Hanford and our Environmental Management Office are all about.

Sen. Cantwell: Well, I would look forward to discussions about that, since you did work out this analysis of what it was going to take to 2078, because I think it is below the tri-party agreement. And I would just say, Mr. Chairman, this is a national priority. This is cleaning up Hanford.

Listen, we're still proud to this day of the work that was accomplished in a short period of time in a major transformation by our nation in response to World War Two, but we also have to clean it up. And so, we hope that we can continue to make progress on that. Thank you.