AMERICAN
ENERGY UNLEASHED

A Special Advertising Supplement To The Washington Times

American energy unleashed

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The Washington Times
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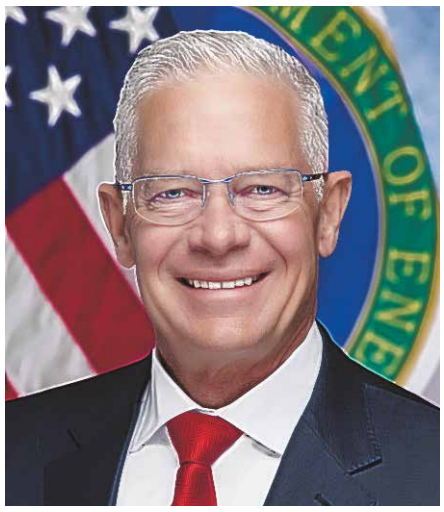
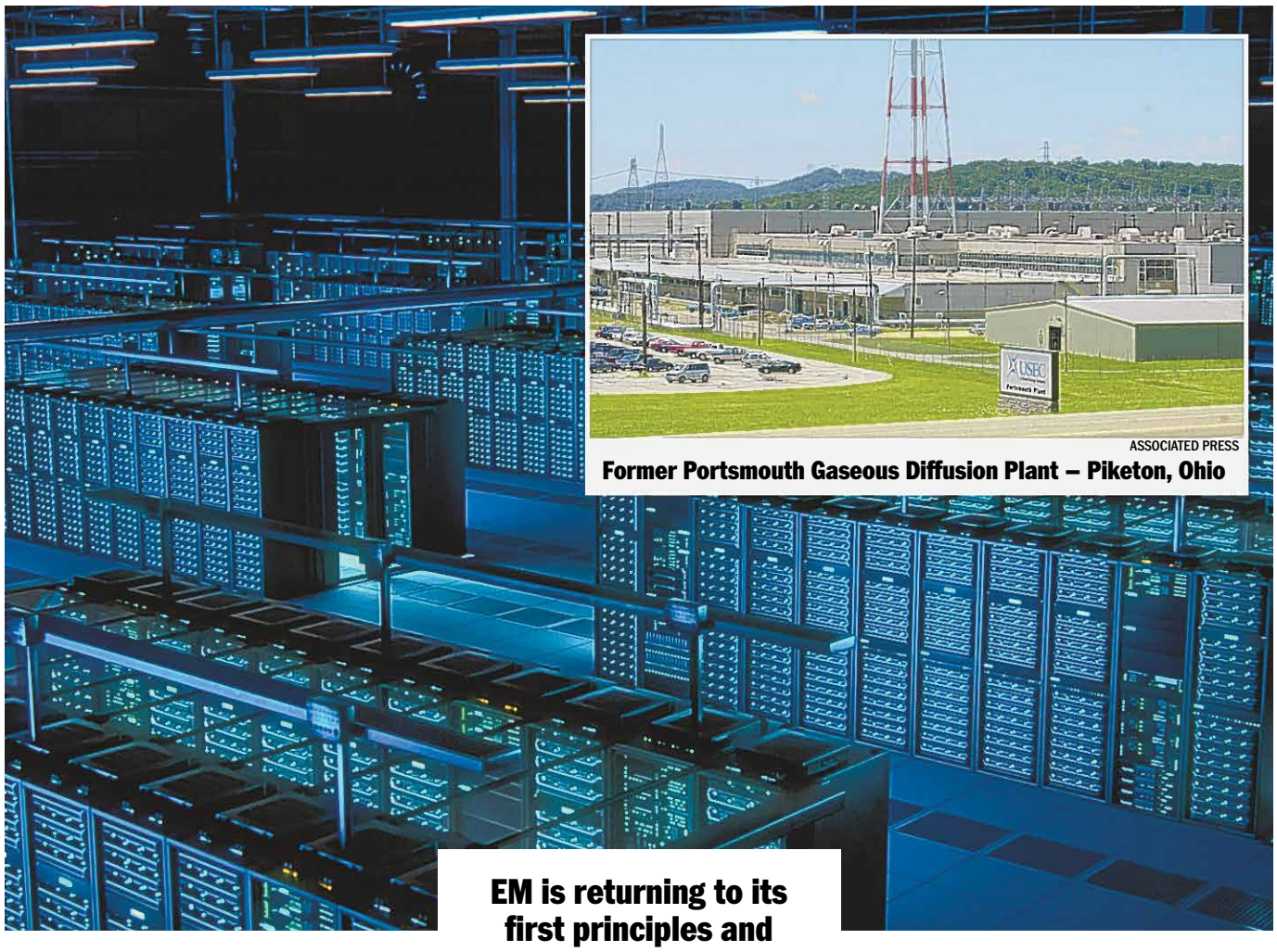
A new day for environmental management



By Timothy J. Walsh, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Environmental Management



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Former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant – Piketon, Ohio

Under President Donald Trump, American energy dominance and scientific leadership are experiencing a triumphant revival. We are witnessing the largest revitalization of American-made energy in our history and transformative efforts to secure America's place as the global scientific leader. The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management (EM) is playing a critical role in achieving these successes.

For 37 years, EM has worked to fulfill the federal government's obligations to communities nationwide affected by the byproducts of nuclear development and testing from the Manhattan Project and Cold War eras. The office that I am now honored to lead has successfully cleaned up over 90 of the 107 sites where legacy nuclear development allowed us to win WWII and the Cold War. While EM has achieved great successes over the decades, EM's central mission to remediate and return land to local communities to benefit the people living there has drifted to the margins over the years. Instead of cleaning up for the future, EM has been stuck in a perpetual cleanup mindset, without looking ahead to the opportunities we can seize to aid our fellow Americans once cleanup missions are successfully completed.

Now, thanks to the leadership of President Trump and Energy Secretary Chris Wright, EM is returning to its first principles and reclaiming its mission to protect human health and the environment while giving Americans in communities nationwide hope for the future.

A recent example of how EM is reclaiming its purpose is the historic announcement we made in March, when I joined Sec. Wright and Commerce Sec. Howard Lutnick in announcing a public-private partnership with Japanese company SoftBank to build the world's largest AI data center and new power generation on DOE land.

What was once the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, which played a critical role during the Cold War to enrich uranium, will now be the site of a massive multi-billion investment that will create new jobs and opportunities for the people of southern Ohio. The importance of this project cannot be understated. Land that was once unusable due to legacy nuclear national security missions, has now been successfully remediated and given new life, rekindling hope for the future in an area of our country that has seen too many jobs disappear over recent decades and increasing affordable energy.

As Sec. Wright stated: "Energy abundance is national security — when America produces more, families pay less and adversaries have less leverage. DOE is restoring commonsense energy dominance by ending reckless climate alarmist policies and putting American prosperity first."

The Portsmouth site is just one example of EM's success. You can also look to the Oak Ridge site in Tennessee, where EM recently completed demolition of the Manhattan Project-era K-25 building, providing space for national security missions and billions of dollars in new investment to free America from foreign sources of enriched uranium to fuel the nuclear renaissance which will power our nation into the future.

EM is returning to its first principles and reclaiming its mission to protect human health and the environment while giving Americans in communities nationwide hope for the future.

Many of the sites across EM's portfolio nationwide are perfect for future public and private investments once cleanup missions are successfully completed. These sites, stretching from coast to coast, have existing capacity to create and transmit energy, are near critical natural infrastructure assets, and have existing highly trained and capable workforces that can transition seamlessly from legacy cleanup work to new jobs producing energy, expanding new nuclear capabilities, and building and operating AI data centers. These sites, such as Portsmouth and Oak Ridge, are ideal locations for new "Energy Dominance Parks" that will support the four pillars of DOE: to enhance our national security, unleash affordable and abundant energy, cement America's position as the global leader in new technologies, and strengthen our economy by creating thousands of new jobs.

To be clear, EM's mission to cleanup sites where legacy nuclear testing and national security missions took place will continue uninterrupted and unabated. The federal government has an obligation to these communities to fulfill its cleanup missions on time and without wasting taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. As we carry on ongoing cleanup work and protecting human health and the environment, EM and DOE will continue to look for ways to put Americans first with new opportunities that will strengthen our great nation for generations to come.

It is a new day at EM. President Trump and Secretary Wright have revitalized and renewed the important work that EM is doing for the American people. We will keep delivering for our nation to ensure America's prosperity with affordable energy and national security is secured for the 21st century.

Timothy J. Walsh serves as Assistant Secretary for the Office of Environmental Management at the U.S. Department of Energy, providing strategic leadership for the safe and effective remediation of environmental legacies stemming from eight decades of nuclear weapons development and government-sponsored nuclear energy research.

Different by design: How Southern Company is fueling growth that benefits all customers

By Southern Company

As electricity demand surges, driven by data centers, advanced manufacturing and a rapidly evolving economy, communities are right to ask a simple question about new energy infrastructure: who pays, and who benefits?

Here's the bottom line in the regions we serve: Southern Company is building new energy infrastructure designed to benefit everyone without shifting costs onto existing customers. We do this through smart, customer-first planning and by making sure new large load customers like data centers pay the full share of their costs. This practice helps ensure that new growth doesn't have to mean higher rates for families and small businesses, and that, done right, it can deliver value for everyone.

Right now, the base rates our retail customers pay for electricity are frozen across much of our service area as we execute an unprecedented level of infrastructure buildout to meet projected demand. This outcome isn't accidental. It's the product of how our system is designed and regulated and our commitment to always putting customers at the center of everything we do.

Meeting new electricity demand is vital to the American economy and our global competitiveness. However, we believe it is just as important to meet demand in a way that delivers real value for existing customers. For our country to get this right, it will take more than capital and putting steel in the ground. It will require the right experience and the right market framework.

That's why policymakers should take a closer look at what's happening in the Southeast. Southern Company's subsidiaries operate under a vertically integrated, stateregulated model across the regions where we serve retail electric customers, meaning we are responsible for generating, transmitting and delivering power to the communities we serve. In other words, we don't just build part of a system and move on to the next thing. This end-to-end responsibility allows us to plan comprehensively, from the power plants to the wires that reach homes and businesses.

This holistic view matters a lot in an era of expansion driven by data centers and hyperscalers. It allows us to understand precisely what it costs to bring a major new customer onto the grid and to price that connection accordingly to help ensure existing customers are protected. There's no guesswork and no passing the bill down the line. Growth is planned, measured and accounted for by design.

This same structure also benefits large customers that come with complex energy needs. Data centers and other hyperscale users require reliable, dispatchable power at scale and confidence that infrastructure will be delivered on time. Our model enables faster decisionmaking and streamlined execution, which is critical as the United States competes in a global technology race.

The Southern Company system is scaling up responsibly to meet projected new demand. Over the next five years, we expect to roughly double our current pace of investment, supported by an approximately $80 billion capital plan that includes approximately 10 gigawatts of approved new generation and nearly 1,000 miles of new transmission. In the regions we serve, we can confidently say there will be power.

Southern Company is proving that growth can take place in a way that strengthens the grid and protects customers at the same time.

But this investment alone isn't customer protection. That protection comes from how growth is structured. In Georgia, for example, our large new customers are served under longterm contracts that are often 15 years or more and include minimum bills, cost-of-service recovery and strong financial safeguards. We make sure growth is paying for itself, or it doesn't move forward.

Our customers are already feeling the results of this approach with multi-year rate freezes in place in Georgia and Alabama. In Georgia, for example, Georgia Power is working with the Georgia Public Service Commission to ensure that growth from data centers will not only keep base rates frozen through at least 2028, but to also deliver additional savings for customers after that.

Southern Company is also using public-private partnerships to amplify customer benefits. Earlier this year, Georgia Power and Alabama Power secured up to $26.5 billion in loan guarantees from the U.S. Department of Energy, which is the largest energy infrastructure commitment in the Department's history. That financing is expected to reduce interest expenses by more than $300 million annually, which translates to over $7 billion in estimated customer savings over the life of the loans. When we can reduce the cost of building new infrastructure, our market structure allows us to pass those savings directly onto our system's customers.

The essential energy infrastructure investments in the loan package include power from natural gas, nuclear uprates and license extensions, hydropower and battery energy storage, as well as transmission system improvements and grid enhancements to help provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to Alabama Power and Georgia Power's combined 4.3 million customers.

There is no onesizefitsall solution to America's energy future. But Southern Company is proving that growth can take place in a way that strengthens the grid and protects customers at the same time.

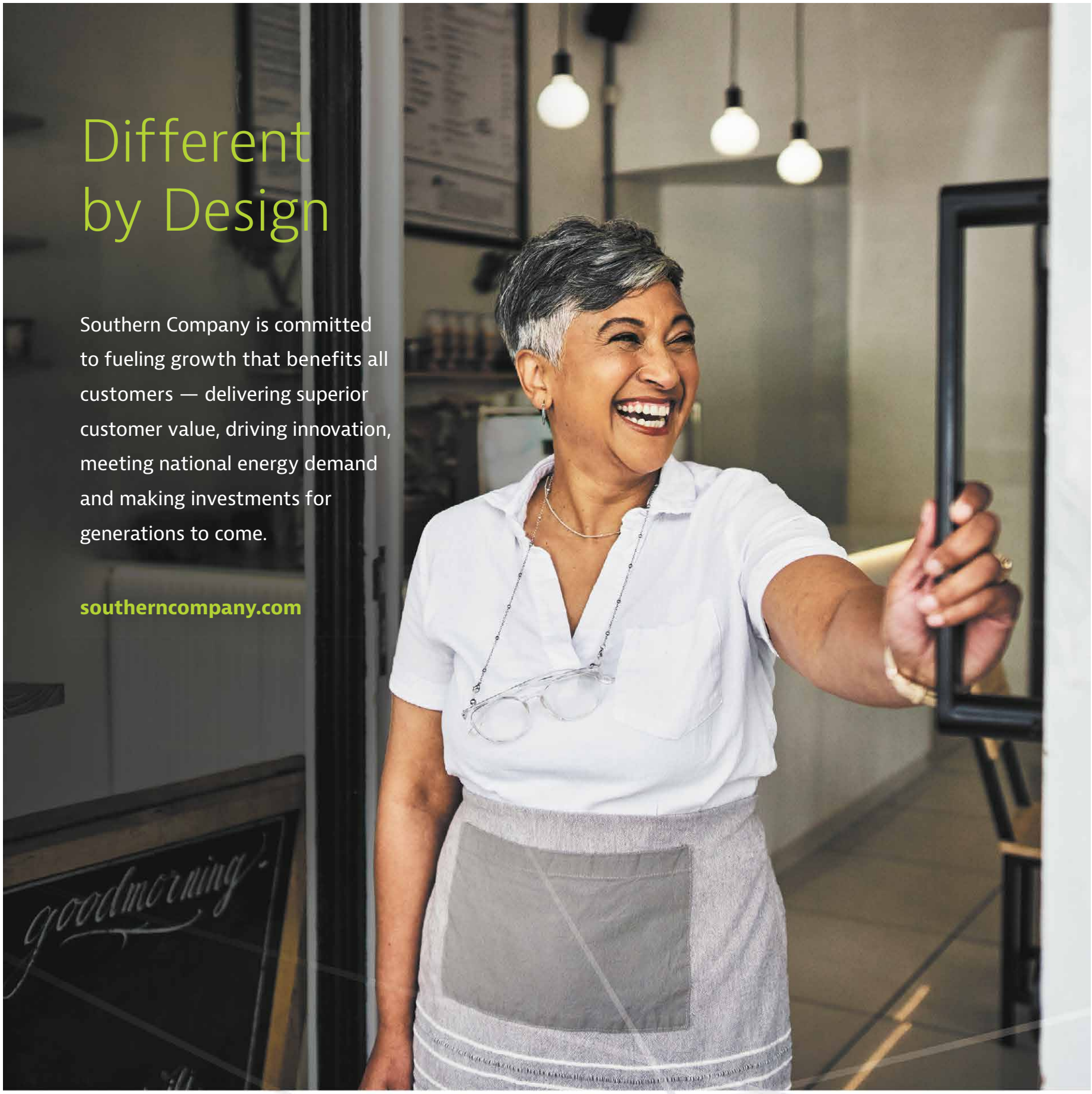
We are different by design. And it's working.

Southern Company

Different by Design

Southern Company is committed to fueling growth that benefits all customers — delivering superior customer value, driving innovation, meeting national energy demand and making investments for generations to come.

southerncompany.com



Southern Company

Staying competitive on energy means fixing a broken permitting system

By U.S. Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah

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Workers install a battery energy storage container as part of expanding energy storage infrastructure, reflecting growing electricity demand and grid modernization efforts.

Timing is everything.

Markets move fast. Technology moves faster. Capital flows to where projects can actually get built.

Right now, that's not always the United States.

We are living through an extraordinary moment of technological advancement. Artificial intelligence is changing industries at a pace few had predicted even a few years ago. New manufacturing capacity is coming online. Energy demand is rising in ways that would have been hard to imagine a decade ago.

But there is a growing disconnect between how quickly America can innovate and how quickly we can execute.

Businesses are ready to invest. We have the technology. The American workforce is more than capable, and the capital is ready.

Yet too often, projects stall out before a shovel hits the ground.

What's standing in the way is a permitting system that regularly acts as an insurmountable barrier to getting projects off the ground.

Developers face years of review across multiple agencies. Even after approvals are secured, projects can be tied up in litigation with no end in sight. Even if they clear that process, they face the risk of endless litigation with no shot clock for resolution. At some point, the numbers stop making sense. Investors see the uncertainty and walk away.

That is not how a competitive economy functions.

Delayed projects mean higher costs.

Higher costs mean higher prices.

Higher prices mean lost competitiveness.

For our nation's energy sector, failing to fix this broken system could have drastic consequences.

According to the Department of Energy, U.S. electricity demand is projected to rise dramatically by 2030, driven largely by data centers and advanced manufacturing. Meeting that demand requires building new generation, expanding transmission and revamping infrastructure at a pace we have not seen in decades.

The United States has always been a nation of builders.

When the country needed electricity, we built transmission lines across the country. As interstate commerce boomed, we built highways that connected the country. When cities needed to grow, we built skyscrapers in record time.

The Hoover Dam was authorized in 1928, construction began in 1931 and the project was completed in 1936. The Golden Gate Bridge took five years to build. The Empire State Building was completed in just over a year.

Those projects were possible because the system didn't stand in their way.

But none of these iconic projects could be completed on timelines resembling those under today's permitting regime.

If we are going to get back to building, permitting timelines need clear boundaries. Projects should not remain in limbo for years without resolution.

If we are going to get back to building, permitting timelines need clear boundaries. Projects should not remain in limbo for years without resolution.

Litigation must be grounded in real harm. Lawsuits should come from those directly affected, not from parties seeking to delay projects solely in the hope that they will fail.

The issues raised in court should mirror those raised during the review process. Businesses should not face new objections, after the fact, that could have been addressed earlier.

Once agencies have consulted in good faith and addressed impacts, there must be a clear endpoint.

Without that certainty, even well-planned projects can be tied up indefinitely.

For the business community, this is about whether the United States remains a place where large-scale investment makes sense.

Companies deciding where to build factories, data centers, and energy infrastructure are comparing timelines across countries and asking a simple question:

Can this project get done?

If the answer is uncertain, capital will go elsewhere.

That outcome is avoidable.

There is a bipartisan recognition that permitting reform is necessary.

But both sides must come together and get this done.

The United States cannot afford a system where delay is the default outcome. Not when global competition is intensifying. Not when energy demand is rising. Not when the next generation of innovation depends on infrastructure that does not yet exist.

The road forward is clear. The question is whether we have the will to act.

The rest of the world is not waiting, and neither should we.

Sen. Mike Lee has represented Utah in the U.S. Senate since 2011. He is chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

At Montana's Bull Mountains Mine, coal production supports local jobs and contributes to America's growing energy needs.

The future of Made-in-America energy

By U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont.

Our nation's energy sector supports more than 8.5 million jobs, contributes trillions to the U.S. economy and provides critical support to our nation's national security. However, with the need for U.S. energy expected to grow nearly 50% in the next 25 years, it is crucial we do everything we can to meet this rise in demand and bolster Made-in-America energy. That is why I am a strong supporter of an all-of-the-above energy agenda. Montana is a prime example of what is possible on the national level as we work to harness all sources of energy.

Montana is rich in natural resources, from wind and hydro to coal and natural gas. For four years, however, President Joe Biden's administration waged a relentless war on Montana's energy industry.

Montana is rich in natural resources, from wind and hydro to coal and natural gas. For four years, however, President Joe Biden's administration waged a relentless war on Montana's energy industry.

Montana has more recoverable coal than any other state in the nation, but all our major coal mines were on the cusp of shutting down because of the Biden administration's burdensome regulations and anti-energy policies. Thankfully, under President Donald Trump, those days are over. We worked together to save each of Montana's coal mines. Most recently, it was my honor to stand next to President Trump at the White House on the 4th of July as he signed the Working Families Tax Cut into law, which included my provision to keep Montana's Bull Mountains Mine open and saved nearly 400 jobs.

Last year, Congressional Republicans also overturned a harmful proposal from the Biden administration that would have banned future coal leasing in all of eastern Montana. President Biden's Miles City Resource Management Plan would have blocked coal mining on two million acres of land, stifled job growth and caused the loss of nearly $4.3 billion in future revenue. I introduced a congressional resolution along with my Montana colleagues Sen. Tim Sheehy, Rep. Troy Downing and Rep. Ryan Zinke to overturn this catastrophic proposal, and President Trump signed it into law this past December.

Montana mining is back thanks to President Trump and his administration.

However, there's always more work to be done. In addition to coal, nuclear and fossil fuels, hydropower is also an important source of baseload power for our nation. Hydropower is especially prevalent in Montana. A primary issue facing the hydropower industry is burdensome regulation as well as costly and lengthy licensing processes. My "Build More Hydro" bill would help extend hydropower licenses for projects licensed before 2020. By improving the licensing process, we can streamline projects and help ensure their timely completion.

Critical energy projects often get delayed because of outdated, bureaucratic systems. I'm also working with my colleagues on the bipartisan ePermit Act, which will modernize the federal permitting process. The ePermit Act will bring us into the 21st century by digitalizing the permitting process, allowing for swifter review and completion.

These permit and license reform bills are critical for energy projects, both in Montana and across the nation, and I'll fight to get them across the finish line.

We've made a lot of progress in the past year to ensure American energy dominance. I am confident that under the leadership of President Trump, we are paving the way for a bright future in America — a future that will create even more jobs and ensure our nation remains the global leader in energy production.

A fifth-generation Montanan, Sen. Steve Daines serves as the senior U.S. Senator from Montana. He's a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, as well as the committees on Finance, Foreign Relations, and Indian Affairs.

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Energy-intensive data centers are becoming a cornerstone of the U.S. economy, making reliable power and efficient infrastructure development critical to global competitiveness.

America's broken permitting system is a competitiveness problem

By Chris Jahn

The United States is in a global race that will define our economic and national security future. Energy, advanced manufacturing, and AI are the building blocks of leadership in the 21st century. Yet America is trying to compete with one hand tied behind its back.

Our broken permitting system is slowing us down. Projects that should be done in months take years. Uncertainty replaces predictability. Investment gets delayed, or worse, redirected overseas. That is not just a regulatory problem. It is a competitiveness problem, and one we can no longer afford to ignore.

American chemistry is at the center of this moment. Our industry makes energy systems more efficient, strengthens the electric grid and delivers the advanced materials that power AI, semiconductors, and data centers. Simply put, without chemistry there is no American energy dominance.

A modern, pro-growth permitting system is essential to protecting America's energy advantage.

The United States has a real advantage that sets us apart from global competitors: abundant, affordable energy. U.S. natural gas remains a critical strength. It supports reliable power generation and serves as the key feedstock for chemical manufacturing. This advantage is a major reason energy-intensive industries continue to invest in America.

But that edge is not guaranteed.

Today, even as demand for energy and advanced technologies surges, our permitting system is failing to keep pace. Our industry produces specialized materials essential to cooling and operating AI data centers. When permitting delays and infrastructure constraints make it harder to build those projects here at home, investment is pushed overseas. That should concern anyone who cares about U.S. competitiveness and national security.

Electricity demand is rising rapidly, driven in part by the growth of AI and data infrastructure. At the same time, electricity prices are increasing, and the gap between the United States and other markets is narrowing. If we want to remain the most attractive place in the world to build and manufacture, we need policies that expand energy supply, modernize infrastructure and keep power affordable.

That starts with permitting reform.

A modern, pro-growth permitting system is essential to protecting America's energy advantage. Manufacturers need reliable access to power and feedstocks, along with a predictable and efficient process to build facilities, expand capacity, and strengthen supply chains. Today's system is too slow, too uncertain and too fragmented. Modernizing it would mean clearer timelines, fewer duplicative reviews and greater transparency, without weakening environmental protections.

This is why legislation like the bipartisan Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act matters. It delivers balanced, bipartisan reforms to the National Environmental Policy Act that cut red tape, establish firm deadlines and move critical projects forward. These reforms would help unlock affordable energy, resilient infrastructure and advanced manufacturing that keeps America ahead of global competitors and foreign adversaries.

Permitting reform is essential to deploying new energy-efficient technologies at scale. Chemistry delivers the materials that allow power plants, factories and data centers to do more with less energy, but those gains only matter if projects can be built in the United States. When permitting slows deployment, it limits capacity, raises costs and weakens America's competitiveness.

These are the costs of delay, and Congress has the power to address them.

Congress should act quickly to pass the SPEED Act. This is not about politics. It is about competitiveness. It is about whether America can build, innovate, and lead.

If we want the United States to remain the global leader in energy, AI and next-generation manufacturing, we must fix the system that determines whether projects move forward at all. Smarter permitting will unleash American energy, reinforce our manufacturing base and secure a stronger, more resilient future powered by American chemistry and built by American workers.

Chris Jahn is the President and CEO of the American Chemistry Council.

America Must Lead the Next Era of Energy and AI

America's future leadership depends on our ability to build here at home.

Chemistry helps turn American energy into accessible power for families, reliable electricity for businesses, and the infrastructure behind manufacturing and AI.

Permitting delays are putting U.S. competitiveness, energy security, and jobs at risk.

Modernize permitting.

Unlock chemistry.

Unleash American energy.

Protect U.S. competitiveness.

American Chemistry Council

CHEMISTRY CREATES AMERICA COMPETES™

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American AI dominance will require baseload power

By U.S. Rep. Brett Guthrie, R-Ky.

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From the steam engine to the lightbulb to the personal computer, Americans have long invented and built advanced machines that changed the trajectory of human history for the better. Embracing innovation improves the health and prosperity of our communities, creates family-sustaining jobs and protects our homeland. As artificial intelligence (AI) sparks a new technological revolution, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce remains focused on the United States winning the global race for AI dominance.

If our nation falls behind, we risk ceding to adversaries such as China the ability to shape global technology standards. American companies are leading the current wave of AI innovation, but our adversaries are gaining ground. To maintain our advantage, American startups, manufacturers, and businesses in every sector must be powered by affordable and reliable electricity, which will also ultimately keep costs down for consumers in the long term.

Right now, our main constraint to winning the race for AI is the need for on-demand, dispatchable power that can secure our grid and protect consumers, while also providing the energy supply AI technologies need. To address these needs, our committee has been working to advance commonsense permitting reforms that will help to provide the power industry and consumers require.

Unfortunately, years of government incentives for intermittent and unreliable power sources, like wind and solar, have left our grid more vulnerable to potential blackouts and unprepared to meet the energy demands that new technologies will require.

Forcing wind- and solar-produced electricity onto our grid has led to rising electricity prices. States with mandatory renewable portfolio standards saw rates rise by 28.8% during the Biden-Harris administration, and those with 100% net-zero targets had a 31.2% increase in prices over the same period. Mandates rely on subsidies paid out of taxpayer pockets, which artificially increases the cost of power on the market — thus hitting taxpayers a second time through higher electricity rates. Despite efforts by some politicians to support these power sources, at the end of the day they fundamentally do not provide the baseload power needed for a reliable grid.

American companies are leading the current wave of AI innovation, but our adversaries are gaining ground. To maintain our advantage, American startups, manufacturers, and businesses in every sector must be powered by affordable and reliable electricity, which will also ultimately keep costs down for consumers in the long term.

To ensure reliability and avoid blackouts and brownouts, a parallel source of power generation, usually relying on natural gas, coal and nuclear, must be built to provide backup power.

Addressing these problems means working with groups from across the energy industry, including producers, grid operators, regulators and manufacturers.

What has been clear from our hearings this Congress is that we need permitting reform to support the development of dispatchable baseload power. To do this, we've advanced a series of bipartisan bills that both help to bring more electricity onto the grid and keep power plants from going offline prematurely. We need both approaches to meet industry demand and protect consumers.

Two of the bills we've passed through the House include the Improving Interagency Coordination for Pipeline Reviews Act and the Reliable Power Act.

First, the Improving Interagency Coordination for Pipeline Reviews Act, led by Rep. Richard Hudson, R-N.C., modernizes the federal permitting process for interstate natural gas pipelines by bolstering FERC's role as the lead agency for environmental reviews and as the coordinator of Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality reviews. Pipeline infrastructure approvals are too often delayed due to inaction from blue-state governors, and this authority needs to be strengthened under FERC so that we can build the pipelines we need to supply electricity generation.

Further, the Reliable Power Act, led by Rep. Troy Balderson, R-Ohio, confronts the threat of rolling blackouts by requiring FERC review and comment on any federal rules that impact electricity generation during periods of high reliability risks.

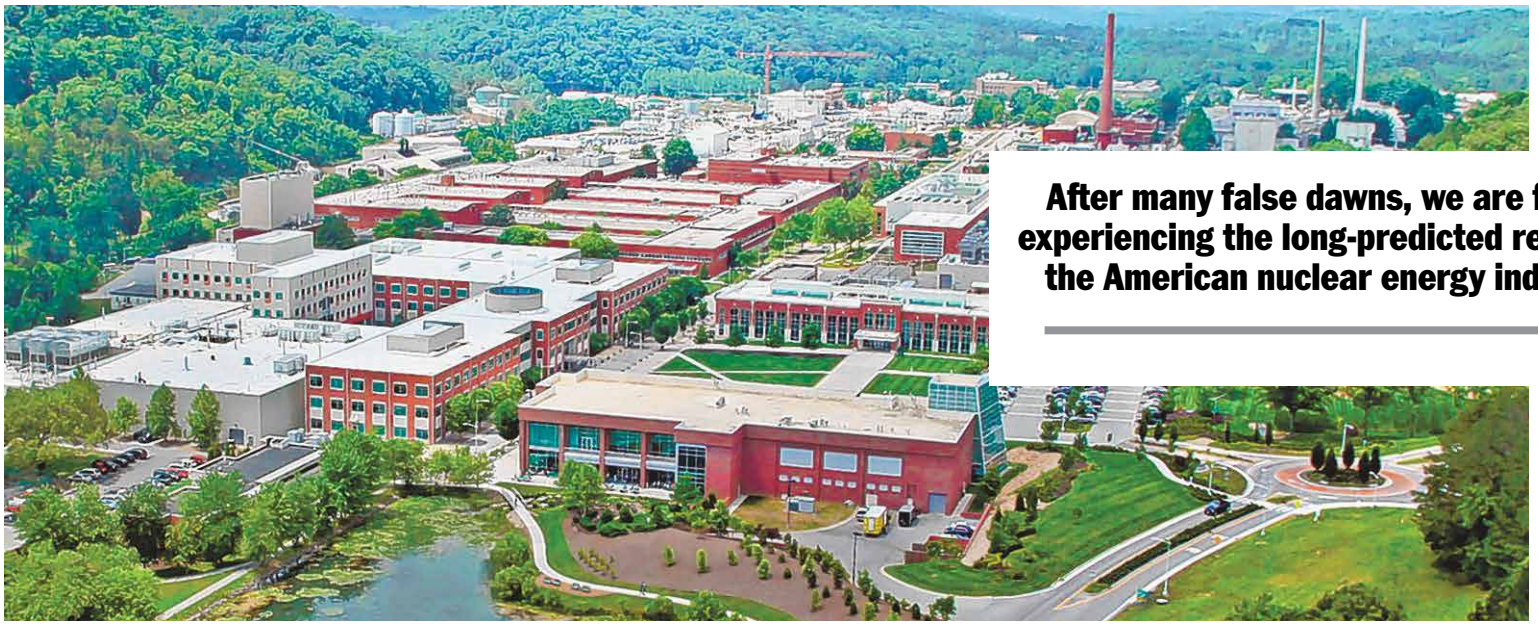
While we continue to enact permitting reforms, we must also support our communities so they share in the positive effects that an AI buildout can have for their area. Part of this process includes ensuring new electricity demand won't drive up costs.

Testimony we've received in previous hearings and National Laboratory reports show that data centers — connected responsibly — can mitigate, if not lower, consumer bills by supporting necessary grid upgrades, financing essential local services and absorbing fixed costs. It's vitally important that industry works with local communities to address concerns with necessary buildout.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we must remember that part of the American story has always been leading the way on innovation, from inventing the lightbulb to producing the Model T at scale. Over the last three decades, American industry has ushered in the digital age, but we but we cannot let our guard down now. China will continue to press for AI dominance using every means at their disposal, including massive amounts of energy production.

To strengthen our grid, promote onshoring of American manufacturing and support the development of AI, our nation needs commonsense permitting reform and a commitment to working together to achieve these goals.

Rep. Brett Guthrie represents Kentucky's 2nd Congressional District. Following his military service in the Army, Guthrie joined a Bowling Green-based manufacturing business that was started by his father and represented the 32nd district in the Kentucky Senate. Guthrie was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008 and serves as the chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.



After many false dawns, we are finally experiencing the long-predicted revival of the American nuclear energy industry.

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At Oak Ridge National Laboratory, breakthroughs in nuclear science are shaping both national security and the future of clean energy.

Nuclear cleanup enables a brighter nuclear future

By U.S. Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, R-Tenn.

Nuclear energy was born as a peaceful consequence of the atomic bomb: the pinnacle of humanity's destructive potential. In fact, the Atomic Age witnessed the birth of many incredible civil uses of the scientific discoveries and technological innovations resulting from the nuclear arms race. We take for granted that hospitals around the world depend on life-saving radioactive isotopes to treat cancer patients. Consumers worldwide enjoy safe food, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment thanks to radiation sterilization. Industries as diverse as oil and gas, mining, construction and manufacturing all use radioactive sources for critical processes.

To this day, our nuclear weapons program continues to produce peaceful uses that benefit all mankind. Recently, the first peaceful fusion reaction resulting in net energy gain was achieved at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) weapons lab, in an experiment meant for nuclear stockpile stewardship.

There is once again a renewed linkage from the Manhattan Project to the civil nuclear industry. New nuclear is booming on the very land that was used to build the nuclear weapons meant to deter and, if necessary, destroy the Soviet Union. When the Cold War ended, the United States no longer needed to operate its massive nuclear security enterprise producing hundreds of nuclear weapons a year that spanned sites across the country. Many of these sites from Hanford, Wash., to Savannah River, S.C., were dangerously contaminated with hazardous and radioactive waste after decades of sometimes haphazard wartime production of nuclear weapons.

The federal government has a moral obligation to remedy the affected local communities by cleaning up these legacy sites. Since 1989, the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management (DOE-EM) and the incredible federal contractor industry have cleaned up 92 of the original 107 sites, returning the remediated land for new public use, natural conservation, economic development or national security missions.

For much of my tenure in Congress, I have been the co-chair of the Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which promotes awareness of our nuclear legacy and builds a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our affected communities. For years, this bipartisan group of legislators from across the country have worked together to ensure the success of our nuclear cleanup missions. This is near and dear to my heart, as I represent the Manhattan Project secret city of Oak Ridge, Tenn. Oak Ridge is still home to a large DOE reservation that includes Oak Ridge National Laboratory, NNSA's Y-12 National Security Site, and a substantial nuclear cleanup mission.

That cleanup mission in Oak Ridge is an excellent demonstration of how DOE-EM is at the forefront of unleashing American nuclear energy. Thousands of acres of remediated land that used to host massive nuclear weapons production facilities is now home to dozens of new and legacy nuclear industry companies. In just Oak Ridge today, Kairos and GE-Hitachi are building new reactors that will put electrons on the Tennessee Valley Authority's grid, Orano and BWXT are building uranium enrichment plants, X-energy and Standard Nuclear are building fuel fabrication and production facilities, Oklo is building a nuclear recycling facility, Radiant is building a microreactor factory, and Centrus has a centrifuge factory. Oak Ridge is leading the way with this and more, but this phenomenon is being replicated across our legacy cleanup sites as the domestic nuclear industry is revitalized after decades of stagnation.

After many false dawns, we are finally experiencing the long-predicted revival of the American nuclear energy industry. For decades, the United States experienced flat energy usage, and so it made little sense to invest the huge, up-front capital costs necessary to build large nuclear power plants and the supporting services. Yet now we are witnessing a surge in demand for electricity, driven by the AI data center boom, post-pandemic reindustrialization and the increasing electrification of everyday life. While there is no shortage of justifications for building new nuclear power (it improves energy independence; it is carbon-free; it has the most efficient land to power output ratio of any energy source), it is the urgent demand for electricity that has fundamentally changed the economic calculus.

Titans of modern industry — Google, Microsoft, Amazon, and Meta — are investing massive sums into new reactor projects and power purchase agreements with the existing fleet. We are also seeing decommissioned nuclear plants get brought back online as companies and utilities desperately work to generate more power. As chairman of House Energy and Water Appropriations, I will continue working to ensure DOE has the resources to further the nuclear demonstration projects that are helping derisk the first-of-a-kind costs of new small modular reactors (SMR) and expand domestic enrichment capabilities.

Working together, government, industry, and academia are making this new nuclear future a reality. Abundant, affordable, clean, and reliable nuclear energy will be foundational to this new era of American energy dominance powering our shared prosperity, national security, and way of life for generations to come.

Rep. Chuck Fleischmann is the Chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee of Appropriations and also serves on the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. As chairman of Energy and Water, Fleischmann leads the charge to provide funding for the federal agencies and programs responsible for the United States' national laboratories, water and energy infrastructure, nuclear security, and energy independence.

As America accelerates nuclear ambitions, BWXT delivers necessary speed and scale

By Rex Geveden

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF WAR

A U.S. Navy nuclear-powered submarine, part of the nation's strategic deterrent force.

For the first time in decades, America is experiencing broad, bipartisan momentum to expand nuclear energy. The Trump administration's framework, pairing targeted investments with long overdue regulatory modernization – as well as passage of the bi-partisan ADVANCE Act – are the strongest signals in a generation that nuclear power will play a larger role in both our national security posture and our energy strategy. But policy alone does not build reactors, produce advanced fuels or cause complex supply chains to suddenly materialize.

The threelayer nuclear demand cake

Consonant with a favorable policy environment, we see striking public and private market demand signals for all things nuclear that could be described as "threelayer cakes."

On the public side, Layer One is the ongoing modernization of the nuclear triad (think submarines) – a pressing national security requirement that demands absolute reliability, schedule discipline and a zero defect culture. This layer is non-optional; it sets the baseline for the entire nuclear enterprise.

Layer Two is the reconstitution of Cold Warera capabilities the U.S. unwound in the 1990s, such as defense fuels and various types of uranium processing – precisely the areas BWXT is moving to rebuild at industrial scale. Renewed global threats now require the U.S. to re-establish these critical capabilities. BWXT's expansion in Tennessee, where we are scaling new facilities to meet these needs, directly supports this strategic middle layer.

The top layer represents emerging missions in new domains, from nuclear power and propulsion for cislunar space to terrestrial microreactors, where high density, resilient and long duration power enables entirely new capabilities for national security, disaster response and rapid tactical deployment.

Investing across all three layers – anchored by scale – is how the nation succeeds. And the need for scale doesn't end with defense. On the commercial side, the three layers of demand are decarbonization of the electrical grid, electrification of transportation and industrial processes and the remarkable power demands of AI/data centers. All of these require reliable, long duration power that is available on demand. Nuclear uniquely offers that: reactors that run for years without refueling, with fuel sources that are widely available and not concentrated in vulnerable chokepoints.

But to fully deliver on that promise, the limiting factor isn't technology; it's industrialization. The companies that will win are those that can manufacture qualified hardware, produce certified fuels and create repeatable processes at volume. That is BWXT's home field.

Re-Writing the Nuclear Narrative

There's a persistent narrative that legacy nuclear companies can't move fast. The facts say otherwise. When missions require speed with discipline, the advantage goes to teams that have already delivered nuclear systems under the most demanding requirements. What sets them apart is industrial scale backed by deep experiential qualifications – the ability to surge capacity, meet exacting standards and deliver on schedule. As policy aligns and demand accelerates, that combination is what will turn today's nuclear ambitions into operating assets.

We proved that last year. In April, we purchased land in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; by January, we opened a new, purpose-built factory on that same plot of land seven months after we broke ground. This new Centrifuge Manufacturing Development Facility is the key step towards re-establishing a domestic uranium enrichment capability for defense fuels.

Winning the Nuclear Resurgence

Our philosophy is simple: we're not betting on a horse; we're betting on the race. Whether the opportunity is gridscale plants, small modular reactors or offgrid microreactors, BWXT shows up as the merchant supplier and technology partner that can scale the sector. Sometimes that means providing picks and shovels for today's builders; other times, it means deploying our own technologies for specialized missions. That dual posture – industrial supplier and innovator – gives customers options and gives the nation resilience.

For more than half a century, we've quietly powered America's most demanding nuclear missions including more than 420 reactor systems for the nuclear navy. As the nation turns to nuclear for resilient grid power, emerging defense missions and accelerated energy deployment, BWXT is not starting at zero. We are compounding decades of experience across nuclear manufacturing, fuels and qualification. That compounding effect matters, because the next era of nuclear will require more than innovation. It will require industrialization at speed.

The next era of nuclear will require more than innovation. It will require industrialization at speed.

The Department of War's Project Pele demonstrates this approach. Too often, advanced concepts stall because the industrial base isn't ready. We approached Pele as both a technology challenge and an industrial base expansion challenge. By standing up the supply chains, processes and quality systems required for repeatable production, we are helping transform a first of a kind concept into a many of a kind factory. And while that long-term work continues, we're simultaneously on track to meet the president's May 2025 Executive Order timeline that directs the U.S. Army to build a nuclear reactor and begin producing electricity for military installations "within the next three years."

America's nuclear future will be shaped by what happens on the factory floor as much as in the laboratory or hearing room. The administration has set the stage; now it's time to build. BWXT stands ready to drive that transition, leveraging scale and experience to meet the nation's strategic energy needs.

Rex Geveden is president and chief executive officer of BWXT.

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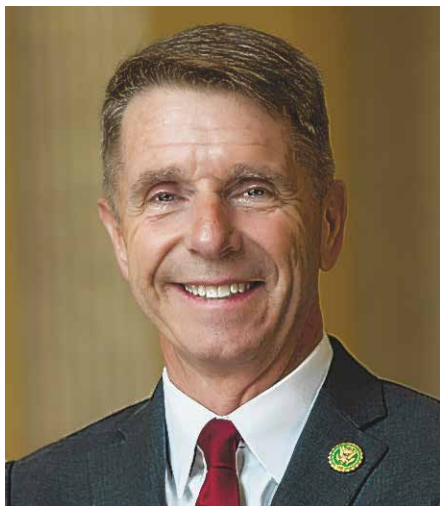
We must protect the Chesapeake Bay for generations to come



By U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va.

For communities across Virginia's First District, the Chesapeake Bay is more than just a body of water; it is the backbone of the economy and a way of life. The Bay is a major economic driver, supporting thousands of jobs that families in our region depend on and generating over $1 billion in economic activity. Spanning over 64,000 square miles, the Chesapeake Bay is one of the most vital resources in our nation, but it continues to face challenges.

Environmental stewardship is not just a responsibility — it's an investment in future generations

I grew up in the Chesapeake Bay watershed region and spent countless hours outdoors hunting, fishing and enjoying the natural beauty of my surroundings. Before coming to Congress, I worked as a marine scientist and director of the Division of Shellfish Sanitation at the Virginia Department of Health. I believe we must do everything in our power to responsibly steward America's environment and vast natural resources

In Congress, I have supported numerous pieces of legislation that aim to preserve and strengthen the Bay's health. Most recently, I introduced the Advancing Water Research and Collaboration (AWRC) Act, which strengthens the critical partnership between states and the federal government to coordinate, plan, organize and conduct research at public universities across the nation. This piece of legislation also ensures that water research will continue to address evolving challenges and protect the Bay for years to come. Environmental stewardship is not just a responsibility — it's an investment in future generations.

Protecting our waterways and fisheries has long been a priority of mine. My leadership on the bipartisan America's Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act focused federal resources to the Chesapeake Bay watershed. It strengthens conservation programs that improve soil health, reduce runoff and enhance water quality — all while helping farmers lower costs and boost productivity. This law — signed just last year — enhances wetland protections, reduces pollution, increases recreational opportunities in Virginia and promotes public-private partnerships to restore habitats while respecting state and local expertise.

I also introduced the bipartisan Chesapeake Bay Conservation Acceleration Act this Congress, which works to boost voluntary conservation efforts that help achieve water quality goals, increase soil health and provide economic benefits throughout the region. The bill directs federal funds to the approximately 83,000 farms in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to help create a more robust agriculture workforce throughout the area.

Building on these efforts to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, I've also focused on addressing threats within the water itself. For decades, the invasive blue catfish have threatened the Bay's ecosystem, harming biodiversity and creating economic challenges for the region's watermen. To address this growing threat, I partnered with Rep. Sarah Elfreth, D-Md., to introduce the Mitigation Action & Watermen Support (MAWS) Act, which recently passed the House with bipartisan support. This legislation creates a new market for blue catfish, reducing their population within the Chesapeake Bay while supporting the seafood industry. The MAWS Act takes meaningful steps to support the environment and local waterfront economies, thus ensuring that the Bay remains an economic engine for the region.

As we put these priorities into action at the local level, it is also essential that we balance conservation with maintaining access to our waterways. Through the Community Project Funding process, I secured federal funding for dredging Winter Harbor in Virginia's Mathews County, which will restore safe navigation and strengthen the harbor's waterfront. Investments like these ensure that our coastal communities can continue to thrive while we protect the resources they depend on.

Protecting the Chesapeake Bay is personal to me, and I will continue advocating for policies that ensure our nation's public waters and lands remain healthy for generations to come: generating economic activity, boosting local economies and ensuring Americans can enjoy the great outdoors.

Rep. Rob Wittman serves as vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee. Prior to his election in Congress, he spent 26 years working for the Virginia Department of Health's Division of Shellfish Sanitation and as an environmental health specialist for local health departments in Virginia's Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula regions.

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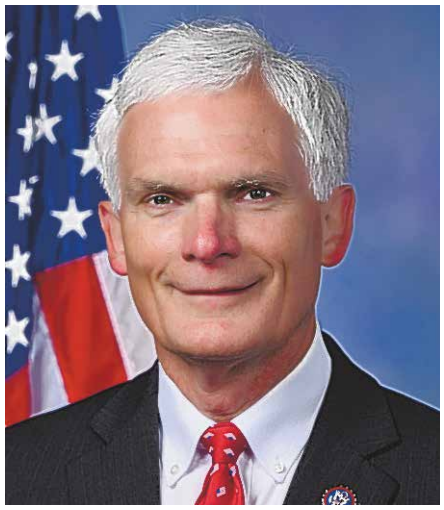
Wildlife like this pelican depends on the health of the Chesapeake Bay, underscoring the importance of protecting one of the nation's most valuable natural resources.

Congress must pass the SECURE Grid Act



By U.S. Rep. Bob Latta, R-Ohio

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This year, Ohio and communities across the country have faced a wave of extreme weather – tornadoes, severe windstorms, hurricanes, and deep freezes – that have tested the reliability of our electric grid. When disasters strike, families do what they can to prepare like stocking up on essentials in case the power goes out. But Americans shouldn't have to rely on backup plans to keep the lights on. They should be able to count on a resilient, reliable electric grid that withstands these challenges from the start.

In Ohio and across the Midwest, we have seen firsthand how prolonged outages can shutter small businesses, disrupt hospital operations, close schools and leave families without heat in the dead of winter. These are not just inconveniences. They are serious threats to public safety, economic stability and daily life.

Additionally, growing geopolitical threats require us to safeguard our grid from cyberattacks by foreign adversaries. These natural and man-made risks demand a proactive, coordinated response. That's why Congress must pass my legislation, the Securing Community Upgrades for a Resilient Grid Act, or the SECURE Grid Act, to ensure states are fully equipped to prevent, withstand and respond to threats to our electric infrastructure.

I introduced this bill with Rep. Doris Matsui of California, my Democratic colleague who serves on the Energy Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. As chairman of the Energy Subcommittee, I have long maintained that strengthening our grid must be a bipartisan priority grounded in reliability, resilience and forward-looking policy.

Just last month, the Senate introduced its version of the SECURE Grid Act, led by Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto, D-Nev., Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, and Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H. Their leadership underscores that this is both a bipartisan and bicameral effort. Congress must come together to support this legislation and move it across the finish line.

Each year, states must submit a State Energy Security Plan (SESP) to access funding through the State Energy Program. In these plans, states must consider all energy sources and energy providers, provide a state energy profile and provide a risk assessment and risk mitigation approach. The SECURE Grid Act builds on this existing framework by requiring states to take a more comprehensive approach to grid security. Future plans need to account for a wider range of threats, including supply chain disruptions, extreme weather vulnerabilities and the risk of physical attacks on critical infrastructure.

By evaluating these risks upfront, states will be better positioned to identify weaknesses and strengthen their energy systems before disruptions occur. The legislation also promotes stronger coordination between states and manufacturers of critical grid components, ensuring a clearer understanding of potential vulnerabilities and a more proactive approach to safeguarding our energy infrastructure.

The United States does not just need more energy, we need energy that is resilient, reliable, and capable of withstanding the challenges ahead. The SECURE Grid Act would do exactly that.

Just as importantly, this legislation recognizes that energy security is national security. A more resilient grid not only protects American households, it strengthens our economy, supports job creation, and ensures that the United States can compete and lead in a rapidly evolving global energy landscape.

The United States does not just need more energy, we need energy that is resilient, reliable, and capable of withstanding the challenges ahead. The SECURE Grid Act would do exactly that. The SECURE Grid Act passed out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee unanimously last month, and I am hopeful it will soon be brought to the House floor for a vote.

Congress has a critical opportunity to act before the next crisis, not in its aftermath. Strengthening our grid now will save lives, protect communities and prevent costly disruptions in the future. The sooner this bill becomes law, the sooner we can strengthen our grid and better prepare for the challenges ahead.

Rep. Bob Latta is a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, where he serves as chairman of the Energy Subcommittee. He is also a member of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Environment Subcommittee and serves as co-chair of the Grid Innovation Caucus.

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Workers install new grid transmission lines, part of ongoing efforts to expand energy infrastructure and support economic growth.

Unleashing American energy demands permitting reform

By Heather Reams

Energy prices continue to climb, and as the demand for power keeps surging due to a range of economic factors, the need for permitting reform to unleash America's full energy potential has never been greater. The question is no longer whether Washington should act, but when it will.

Republicans in Congress have led on this issue for years, introducing a series of bills aimed at streamlining the overly burdensome permitting process that stalls energy development. The Trump administration has also made clear that permitting reform is a priority.

The missing piece is simple: Democrats must come to the table in a serious way. Senate Democrats fortunately appear ready to restart long-stalled talks on permitting reform, but if they wait much longer, it could be too little, too late. There's a reality everyone in Washington understands: the legislative window is short. If Congress doesn't move quickly, midterm politics will take over, and any real chance of reform could slip into the next Congress if not well beyond.

Right now, more than 1,000 projects worth up to $1.5 trillion are stuck waiting on permits because of these logjams. These delays not only stall existing projects, but deter investors from engaging in new projects, too.

America's energy needs are also increasing by the day. In fact, the demand for electricity is expected to grow 25% by 2030, making time a luxury we don't have. It takes enormous amounts of power to support new data centers, advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies like AI. New pieces of our economy are also being electrified, putting even more pressure on our energy system.

Meeting that demand requires building tons of new infrastructure: power generation, transmission lines, storage, pipelines and the facilities needed to produce critical minerals. The problem is not that we don't have the resources or the technology, it's that it simply takes too long to build.

Our permitting system wasn't built for the kind of growth and infrastructure we need today. Federal reviews can take years if not up to a decade or longer to complete, leaving critical projects in limbo. Right now, more than 1,000 projects worth up to $1.5 trillion are stuck waiting on permits because of these logjams. These delays not only stall existing projects, but deter investors from engaging in new projects, too.

This issue spans far beyond energy. The United States is in a global race to lead in artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing and the technology that will define the next several decades. But we can't compete if we can't build the infrastructure needed to support these industries.

Republicans have been clear and consistent on this for years. They've introduced smart legislation that would result in comprehensive, project-agnostic permitting reform. They've also made clear that unlocking American energy is key to economic growth and global competitiveness. The Trump administration is reinforcing that urgency by looking for ways to move projects forward using existing authorities.

Now it's time for Democrats to step up. Continued delays and half-measures are not enough when demand is rising so quickly and projects are stalling. Any long-term solution will be more successful if it's passed in a bipartisan fashion, but that can only happen if both sides are willing to engage — and time is running out.

The bottom line is simple. The United States needs to build more and build faster with a permitting system that reflects urgency and reality. Comprehensive permitting reform will strengthen energy security, support economic growth and ensure America can compete and win in the industries of the future. The opportunity is here. Republicans in Congress and the Trump Administration are ready. The onus falls on Democrats to come to the table.

Heather Reams is president and Chief Executive Officer for Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions (CRES).

Meeting energy demand requires an all-of-the-above energy approach.

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Iran conflict: A reminder that coal helps promote US energy independence

By Michelle Bloodworth

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The conflict in Iran and its ensuing economic impacts are stark reminders that that energy abundance is key to energy independence and national security. Fortunately, the United States has abundant energy supplies. The U.S. has enough coal reserves to last more than 400 years, and enough natural gas to last nearly 100 years. We are undertaking a nuclear renaissance that seeks to quadruple our nuclear energy capacity over the next 25 years, and renewable power continues to grow. These abundant and diverse domestic resources make our nation's energy system more resilient than most other countries, a fact worth celebrating. At the same time, we must be careful to avoid policies that limit our ability to take full advantage of these resources.

As the conflict disrupts global supply chains for oil and natural gas, countries that enjoy abundant supplies of domestic energy like the United States are better equipped to manage the fallout.

Unfortunately, the situation with Iran is not an isolated example of the fragility of international energy supply chains. The war in Ukraine led to a sharp decline in Russian natural gas exports to Europe creating expensive consequences for consumers. In the four years after the war began, household electricity prices in the EU increased by 30% and natural gas prices climbed by 79%.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to severe disruptions in the marketplace as electricity demand cratered and then rebounded dramatically. In 2021, a growing number of countries turned to coal to meet this newfound demand and global use of coal-fired power generation rose by nearly 9%, the largest annual increase on record.

Each of these resources brings their own strengths to the table. For example, coal used for electricity generation can be stored on-site and dispatched at any time, in any weather conditions, providing enhanced reliability and price stability. These attributes will become even more important as electricity demand continues to increase.

As the global marketplace confronts the energy disruptions created by conflicts in Iran and Ukraine, it must also contend with the rapid and sustained growth in electricity demand driven by the deployment of artificial intelligence. Global demand for electricity grew by 4.3% in 2024, the largest absolute increase in demand ever recorded. And this record demand is expected to continue, with the International Energy Agency forecasting that global electricity demand will increase at an annual rate of 3.6% from 2026-2030, driven by rising consumption from industry and data centers. And while renewables' contributions to electricity generation will continue to grow, coal is expected to remain the single largest fuel source for power generation worldwide in that timeframe.

Demand for electricity is also expected to continue growing in the United States. By 2030, our domestic electricity demand is expected to grow by 25% and by 2050, it is expected to grow by 78% compared to current levels. This is largely due to the power demands of new data centers. The U.S. Energy Information Administration reports that "continued development of these large computing facilities and growth from expanded industrial use of electricity are likely to continue driving growth in U.S. electricity demand."

This growth in demand for electricity makes it more important than ever to ensure that public policies are allowing the United States to utilize our domestic energy resources like coal. Unfortunately, some administrations did the opposite, working to enact policies that would force American coal plants to retire prematurely.

Nearly one-third of America's coal fleet – roughly 57 gigawatts – is scheduled to retire by the end of the decade absent major policy changes, with more than half of the fleet facing retirement by the mid-2030s. For perspective, these premature coal retirements are the equivalent of shutting down more than 50 nuclear reactors. EPA rules have played a major role in forcing previous coal retirements.

As the conflict disrupts global supply chains for oil and natural gas, countries that enjoy abundant supplies of domestic energy like the United States are better equipped to manage the fallout.

Fortunately, President Trump is proactively working to repeal these onerous regulations that are threatening America's energy supply. For example, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin announced last June that the agency would repeal the Biden EPA Carbon Rule which would force the entire U.S. coal fleet to retire within a few years but do nothing meaningful to address climate change.

The Trump administration is also taking important steps to reinforce coal's importance to national security. In March, the Defense Logistics Agency – Energy, within the U.S. Department of War, issued a solicitation for a nationwide, coal-based power purchase agreement to support U.S. military installations. Utilizing the dependability of coal-based electricity is a sensible way to support our nation's critical defense infrastructure.

The Iran conflict is again demonstrating on a global scale that electricity grids worldwide are best served by relying on resources that are readily available and capable of operating despite external disruptions. Coal uniquely provides these attributes.

It is vital that policymakers also recognize this reality and ensure the U.S. has policies that allow us to take full advantage of our abundant domestic coal resources.

Michelle Bloodworth is president and CEO of America's Power.

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Energy Security Starts with Coal

Global conflict and rising energy demand are exposing a hard truth: nations that rely on imported energy are vulnerable. As disruptions to oil and natural gas ripple across global markets, electricity prices spike, and supply becomes uncertain. Fortunately, the United States doesn't have to rely on imported energy because we have more coal than any other country and enough to last for decades.

Coal power plants

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For more information about the nation's fleet of coal power plants, please visit **www.AmericasPower.org**

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Unleashing America's energy independence

By U.S. Rep. Adrian Smith, R-Neb.

With rising global tensions, volatile fuel prices and persistent uncertainty in the energy sector, the case for American energy independence has never been stronger.

Energy independence is no longer a theoretical goal; it is a vital part of America's national security and economic survival.

Fortunately, America's heartland is already delivering a winning solution. Ethanol has long proven its value as a reliable, clean and affordable homegrown fuel. Which is why, almost every gallon of gasoline sold in America today contains at least 10% ethanol.

But E15, gasoline blended with 15% ethanol, goes a step further to deliver even greater benefits. As prices at the pump continue to rise and the summer driving season quickly approaches the need for nationwide, year-round access to E15 has never been clearer.

Yet despite broad support and clear benefits, progress in Washington has not come easily.

While we have yet to pass legislation enabling nationwide, year-round E15, recent legislative efforts continue to propel the issue into the national energy spotlight.

As a result, support for nationwide, year-round E15 has never been stronger at the highest levels of government. For the first time, there is clear alignment across House and Senate leadership, alongside unequivocal support from the administration.

That unified support reflects a growing recognition that E15 is not just good policy; it is an essential part of America's energy independence.

Let me be clear: it is past time we make nationwide, year-round E15 a reality by passing my Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act and signing it into law.

The question is no longer whether E15 makes sense; it does. The question is whether my colleagues in Congress will join me and do the right thing.

The biggest obstacle is not evidence or public demand, but resistance from a handful of midsize refiners who refuse to allow certainty for consumers, retailers, and agriculture producers in favor of their own interests.

It is clear to any reasonable person that the current status quo is not working and this uncertainty must end. I recognize no deal will satisfy every interest completely, but good-faith negotiations require all parties to be honest about what they need and willing to move beyond protecting outdated advantages.

Biofuel and agriculture producers have stepped up in that spirit, and it is high time for others to do the same. The stakes are too high to accept delays.

Nationwide, year-round E15 would expand domestic markets for American biofuel producers, support farmers and rural communities, all while strengthening our domestic energy supply. It would also provide immediate relief to consumers — lowering costs at the pump by up to 30 cents per gallon — at a time when families need it most.

We already know E15 works. It is compatible with 97% of vehicles on the road today and can be delivered through existing infrastructure. Summertime waivers have demonstrated its success, but we cannot continue to substitute temporary fixes for permanent solutions.

The question is no longer whether E15 makes sense; it does. The question is whether my colleagues in Congress will join me and do the right thing.

Nationwide, year-round E15 is not just an energy policy, it is a practical step toward a stronger, more secure, and affordable future.

With unprecedented support from the administration and leadership across Washington, the opportunity is here. It's time for bad actors to get out of the way so Congress can cement America's energy independence by making nationwide, year-round E15 a reality once and for all.

Rep. Adrian Smith represents Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District. He serves as chairman of the Trade Subcommittee on the House Ways & Means Committee, and also chairs the Congressional Biofuels Caucus.

Let America Build

By U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman, R-Ark.

Now is the time to let America build, and the only way we do that is by returning certainty and clarity to the federal permitting process.

The broken federal permitting process is costing American manufacturers more than $7.9 billion annually, preventing critical infrastructure and energy projects from being built and increasing project costs across every industry. According to the same report by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Foundation for American Innovation titled "America on Hold," 87% of manufacturers said they would expand operations, hire more workers or increase wages and benefits if the permitting process were more streamlined. These facts are a warning sign with dangerous implications for the future of our economy and a threat to our nation's continued ability to build, innovate and prosper.

It's not just manufacturers and industry paying the price and feeling the burden. According to the National Association of Home Builders, permitting regulations at all levels of government account for almost 24% of the final price of a new single-family home. At the time of the study, that was $93,870 of the final house price. Federal permitting reform can provide meaningful cost reductions that allow Americans to keep more of their hard-earned dollars, lower their cost of living and invest in their family's future.

The costs of our broken permitting process are embedded in every facet of American life, not just housing. From roads and pipelines to mines and airports, to the energy needed to light, heat and cool our homes, permitting bureaucracy raises the cost of living in America.

Reforming federal permitting processes will reduce the costs of building, manufacturing and transporting nearly everything in our economy. Permitting reform will help Americans spend less time on bureaucratic paperwork and more time building, innovating and maintaining the United States' global leadership across sectors. American industries are prepared to start projects and create jobs in every state; to proceed, they need a streamlined permitting process that provides certainty.

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From roads and pipelines to mines and airports, to the energy needed to light, heat and cool our homes, permitting bureaucracy raises the cost of living in America.

This is why I partnered with Rep. Jared Golden, D-Maine, to lead the passage of the *Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act* out of the House of Representatives on a bipartisan vote and with the support of more than 400 diverse stakeholders from across the country. This bill will create certainty in the federal permitting process and spur American investment in critical infrastructure, energy and industry. In short, the SPEED Act will let America build.

With some NEPA documents topping 1,000 pages, duplicative analysis and the constant risk of litigation are roadblocks to critical infrastructure projects. The SPEED Act limits the scope of federal permitting reviews and clarifies when a review must be done. Current roadblocks increase project costs, disincentivize investment, kill American economic completion and drag out project completion. According to a McKinsey and Company report titled "Unlocking US Federal Permitting: A Sustainable Growth Imperative," reducing the federal permitting timeline by even a single year would generate at least $22 billion in returns on invested capital for projects seeking approvals, putting money back into the economy to hire more workers and build more facilities in the United States. Building more in America, manufacturing more in America and increasing opportunities to buy and export more American products will create new economic opportunities and reduce the cost of living for hard-working Americans.

Now is the time to make this a reality. It's time for the Senate to pass permitting reform to return certainty and clarity to the process and lower costs for hard-working Americans. This broken process is not beyond fixing, but changes must be made now. America's ability to build, innovate and prosper depends on it.

Rep. Bruce Westerman represents Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and as chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources.

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Cleaner skies through American leadership

By Kevin Welsh

For U.S. airlines, protecting the environment is a longstanding commitment, alongside our mission to provide safe, secure air travel for millions of Americans every day. For decades, America's airlines have worked to reduce their environmental footprint by investing in more fuel-efficient aircraft, modern engines and smarter operations. As a result, airlines today are highly efficient, carrying far more passengers and cargo while using less fuel per passenger or package than in the past. These gains are not accidental; they reflect continuous investment and a recognition that reducing the fuel we use achieves both economic and environmental benefits.

Building on this foundation, U.S. airlines are embracing the opportunity for further progress through the production and use of sustainable aviation fuel, or SAF. SAF is jet fuel produced from renewable or wastebased resources such as used cooking oil, agricultural products and others. SAF is not just a concept; it is being produced and used throughout the United States and globally. In fact, in 2025, U.S. airlines purchased nearly 100 million gallons of SAF worldwide.

What is most important about SAF, however, is that the opportunity extends far beyond aviation. The United States is uniquely positioned to lead the world in SAF production and deployment. SAF can be made from American feedstocks, refined with American expertise, and consumed by American airlines — supporting farmers, creating domestic jobs and strengthening U.S. energy security in the process. Last year, U.S. companies produced over 240 million gallons of SAF for domestic and export markets.

Yet despite growing demand, SAF production remains a small fraction of the total jet fuel market. The barrier is not airline demand or commitment.

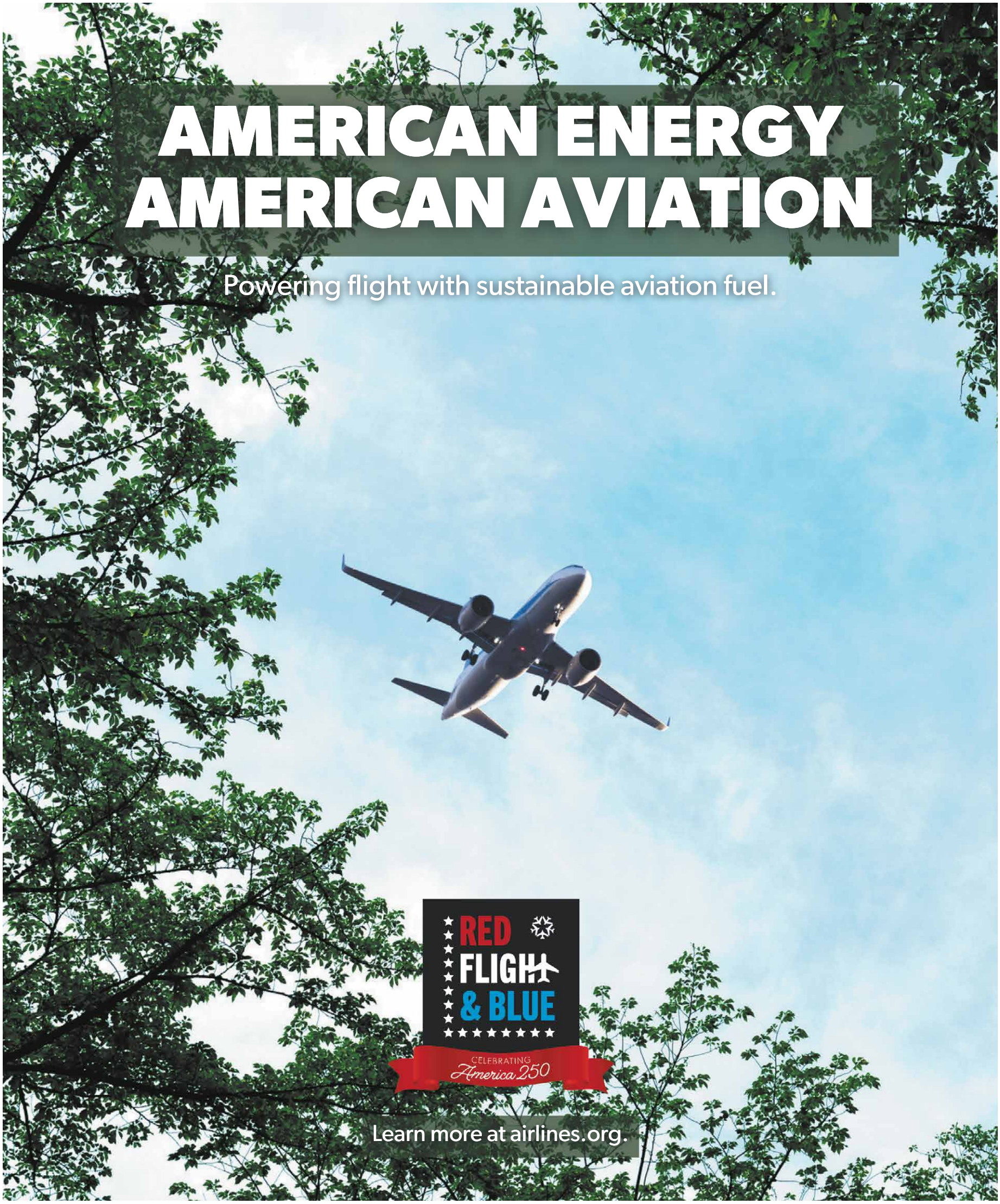
Building new fuel supply chains requires investment certainty. That depends on policies that are durable, predictable and performance-based.

The barrier is being able to create a level playing field across markets and building supply chains to leverage the strength of America's unmatched innovation and resources. Building new fuel supply chains requires investment certainty. That depends on policies that are durable, predictable and performance-based, which can unlock the private capital that is waiting to invest in this new growth market. We are grateful that Congress recognized the opportunity offered by SAF and other clean fuels and preserved the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit in last year's One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

To further enhance the 45Z credit, bipartisan legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate that would reinstate the bonus credit for SAF to $1.75 and extend 45Z through 2033. These bills, both referred to as the Securing America's Fuels (SAF) Act, would strengthen the 45Z credit and provide the necessary policy signal to further scale SAF in the United States. The introduction of this bipartisan legislation reflects the importance of further strengthening incentives for SAF, and the recognition among members of Congress of the opportunity for SAF to support farmers, create jobs, strengthen U.S. energy security, ensure American leadership in export markets, and reduce the aviation sector's environmental impact. We applaud and welcome this leadership.

U.S. airlines are not waiting for the future to act. We are delivering results today and building on a strong foundation for even greater progress tomorrow. With continued collaboration and sensible policy, SAF can help ensure that America leads the world in cleaner skies and strong, competitive aviation for generations to come.

Kevin Welsh is vice president for environmental affairs and chief sustainability officer at Airlines for America.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America's new nuclear era starts in Idaho

By U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho

America has finally decided to get serious about nuclear energy again.

President Donald Trump's executive orders launching a nuclear energy emergency and directing federal agencies to dramatically accelerate advanced reactor deployment signal a turning point. After decades of hesitation, America is once again treating nuclear power as the strategic asset it has always been — essential to energy security, economic strength and global leadership. We are at the beginning of a new nuclear era, and Idaho is at its center.

This moment has not emerged from executive orders alone. It is built on years of investment and legislative action that created the foundation for what we are now able to do. As a former chairman and current senior member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, I have had direct responsibility for funding the Department of Energy's nuclear programs. Year after year, that meant fighting to protect and grow investments in nuclear research, development, and demonstration at a time when support was far from guaranteed.

As we enter what I refer to as a nuclear renaissance, largely thanks to support from the Trump administration, I've been able to secure several priorities for the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) during the past fiscal year. These priorities will enhance the Lab's infrastructure and operations, provide funding for advanced reactor construction and demonstrations and support the Demonstration of Microreactor Experiments (DOME) Test Bed, which I discuss further below. Securing these priorities would not have been possible without the appropriations process.

We are at the beginning of a new nuclear era, and Idaho is at its center.

The appropriations I fought for throughout the years restored critical federal investment in advanced reactor programs. Sustained funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy kept the science alive during the lean years. These victories required continuous effort, coalition building and an unwavering conviction that nuclear energy's best days were still ahead. I believe they are.

Nowhere is that more evident than at Idaho National Laboratory, America's one-of-a-kind nuclear energy laboratory. For more than 70 years, INL has been the heart of nuclear innovation. The Laboratory conducted the world's first usable nuclear-generated electricity in 1951. It developed the reactors that power our Navy. It established the safety standards and testing protocols that underpin the entire commercial nuclear industry. Fifty-two reactors have operated on the desert plain east of Idaho Falls.

INL's mission has never been more urgent. The Laboratory is now home to the most advanced nuclear research capabilities in the world, and it is deploying them in service of the national interest. One of the most significant examples is the DOME reactor test bed. DOME is the original containment structure from EBR-II, the Experimental Breeder Reactor that operated at INL for more than 30 years and pioneered the liquid metal fast reactor technology that influenced advanced reactor concepts still being developed today.

Not long ago, DOME was slated for demolition as part of INL's legacy cleanup work. In a visionary decision, Department of Energy leadership made the call to save it. Repurposed as a modern microreactor test bed, DOME gives American developers the ability to take new reactor concepts from design to demonstration at the pace the new nuclear era demands. Retrofitting DOME for its new use completed just at the beginning of this month, and now this structure that nearly disappeared is one of the most strategically valuable test facilities in the world.

The stakes are high. China and Russia are aggressively exporting their reactor technology, financing nuclear plants across the developing world, and positioning themselves as the partners of choice for nations seeking to grow their energy capacity. The United States cannot cede that ground. The nations that build the world's reactors write the rules for how nuclear technology is governed, operated, and safeguarded for generations.

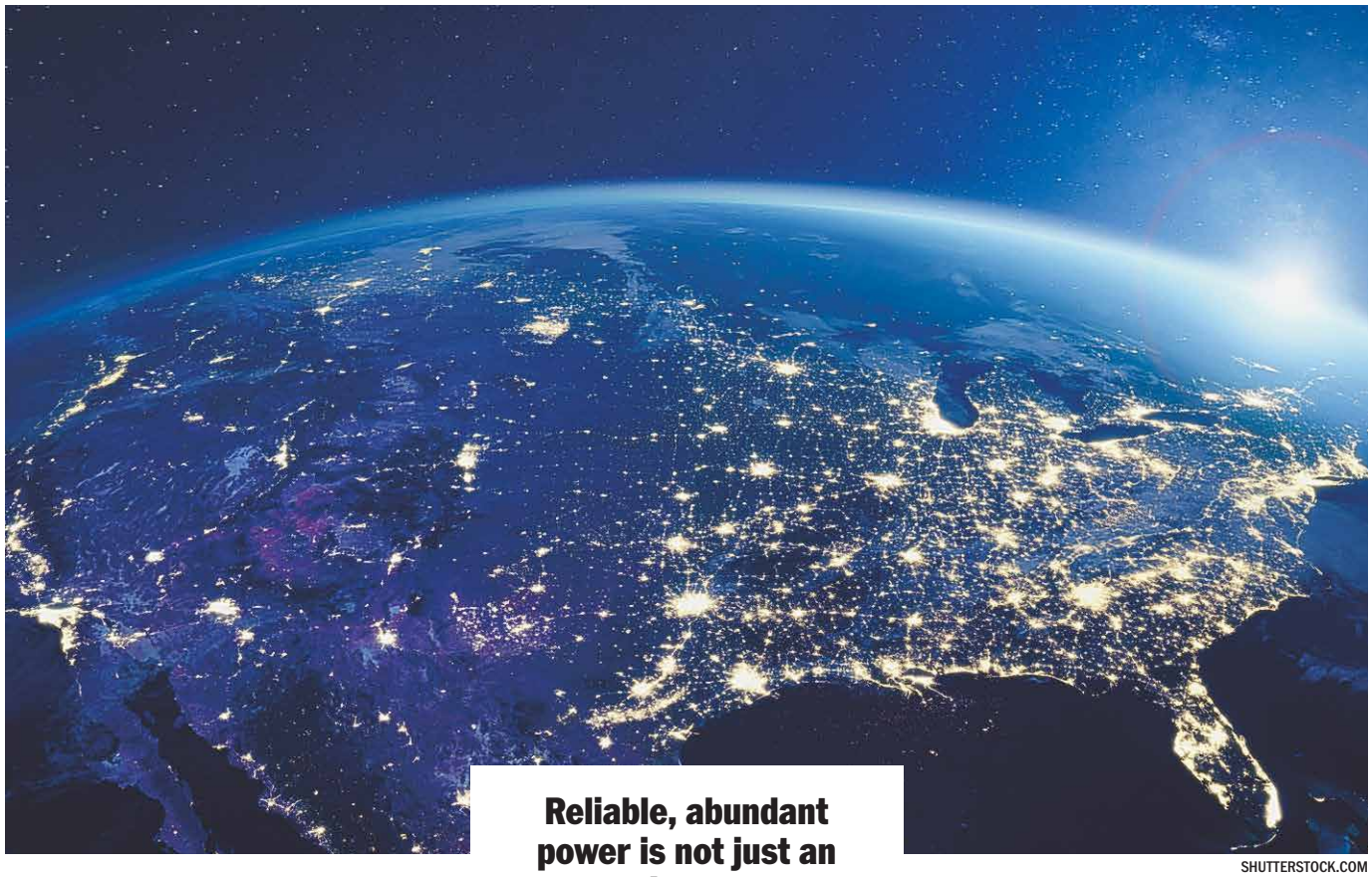
America has the science, engineering talent, safety culture and institutions it takes to lead the nuclear energy sector. What we needed was the will and the investment to act. That investment has been made. Now, with the right policy environment and the full capabilities of Idaho National Laboratory engaged, America is ready to reclaim its place as the world's premier nuclear energy nation.

The new nuclear era is here. And it starts in Idaho.

A lifelong Idahoan, Rep. Mike Simpson's political career began in 1980 when he was elected to the Blackfoot City Council. In 1984, he was elected to the Idaho Legislature, serving until 1998, including the last six years as speaker of the house. Mike was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1998. He serves on three powerful House Appropriations Committee subcommittees, including as the chair of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies subcommittee.

To meet energy demand, we need everything we've got

By U.S. Rep. Julie Fedorchak, R-N.D.



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The United States is entering a new era of electricity demand — and it's arriving faster than many expected.

From advanced manufacturing to data centers powering artificial intelligence, the need for reliable, affordable electricity is growing at a pace we have never seen.

At the same time, the reliability margins that keep our grid stable are tightening. According to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), large portions of the country face elevated risk of electricity shortfalls during periods of high demand. That's not an abstract warning; it's happening now. And it's a clear signal that we need to act with urgency.

And the stakes go beyond reliability alone. China is moving aggressively to build the energy infrastructure needed to power advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, and next-generation technologies. If the United States wants to stay ahead of China on the development and deployment of this powerful technology, we must have the electricity to match our ambitions. Reliable, abundant power is not just an economic advantage — it's a national security imperative.

The good news: we know what to do.

Affordable power, a secure grid and the energy needed to support economic growth requires a strategy rooted in three steps: stabilize, optimize and grow.

First, we must stabilize the grid.

That starts with recognizing a simple reality: we need everything we've got.

Reliable, dispatchable energy sources — like coal, natural gas, and nuclear — remain the backbone of our electric system. They provide consistent power, regardless of weather conditions, and they are essential to maintaining grid stability as demand rises.

But today, in too many parts of the country, these critical resources are being retired faster than they can be replaced, and often without a clear plan to maintain reliability. Once a dispatchable plant is taken offline, that capacity is difficult, if not impossible, to bring back quickly.

I introduced the Baseload Reliability Protection Act to prevent the premature retirement of dispatchable power plants in regions already identified by NERC as facing reliability risks. Stabilizing the grid means protecting the resources we depend on today while preparing for tomorrow.

Second, we must optimize the infrastructure we already have.

Today, much of our transmission infrastructure is built with inefficient legacy technologies, leaving significant capacity on the table. By deploying advanced conductors — capable of carrying substantially more electricity on the same transmission poles — we can unlock significantly more transmission capacity without the cost, delay and permitting challenges of building entirely new lines.

That's the idea behind my High-Capacity Grid Act. It's a practical reform that helps utilities move more power through existing corridors — faster, more affordably and with less disruption to communities.

This approach matters because speed is not a luxury; it's a necessity. Upgrading existing lines can be done in a fraction of the time required to build new lines.

Reliable, abundant power is not just an economic advantage – it's a national security imperative.

Leaders in the technology and industrial sectors are rallying behind this approach. Companies investing billions in AI, advanced manufacturing and data infrastructure understand that power availability is now a gating factor for growth. They need solutions that can be deployed quickly and at scale — and they recognize that modernizing existing transmission is one of the fastest ways to deliver results.

Finally, we must grow.

Even with better use of existing resources, we must build more. More generation, more transmission and more pipelines to support our growing economy. The House has already passed major permitting reform bills including the SPEED Act and PERMIT Act to provide certainty, reduce delays and allow projects of all types to advance more efficiently. These bills and others involving cost allocation and Clean Air Act reforms will provide a menu of options for the Senate to design a comprehensive, bipartisan package for permitting reform. I might be an optimistic freshman, but this issue goes far beyond the partisan divides that split Washington. This is an American issue. Members in both chambers from both parties must recognize that when it comes to permitting reform, it's now or never. The speed of change doesn't allow us to push off permitting reform to the next Congress.

And why would we? Why would we make the American people wait for all the benefits that come from an America that is able to build again?

We have the resources, the innovation, and the workforce to meet this moment. The path forward is clear: stabilize, optimize and grow. With this approach, we can strengthen our grid, support economic growth and ensure American energy, technology and manufacturing leadership for decades to come.

Rep. Julie Fedorchak, a fourth-generation North Dakotan, proudly represents her entire state in Washington, D.C. and serves on the Committee on Energy and Commerce. She served as president of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) in 2024, advocating for responsible energy development essential to economic growth and national security. Julie and her husband Mike, a Navy veteran, have been married for 25 years and have three adult children.

Long-duration energy storage is key for energy dominance and grid modernization

By Jon Norman

Washington's focus on energy security, AI leadership and grid resilience comes at a key turning point for America's energy landscape. Electricity demand is rising faster than anticipated, driven by data centers, artificial intelligence and the re-shoring of advanced manufacturing.

At the same time, current power infrastructure is aging, and supply chain disruptions are causing shortages of key equipment, like gas turbines. As a result, the power system is entering a new investment cycle.

These developments are increasingly interconnected and demonstrate the importance of delivering reliable power — and not just any infrastructure will do the trick. The energy dominance agenda is taking on this unprecedented challenge and expanding the power conversation toward critical grid infrastructure like energy storage, which enables affordable reliability of the grid, maximizing its existing assets.

But as electricity demand peaks grow longer and more pronounced, utilities and grid operators don't need just any energy storage assets. They need ones that provide firm, utility-scale capacity lasting eight, 12, or even 24 hours. In other words, they need long-duration energy storage (LDES). That capability exists today, but it requires thoughtful investment and policies to make it a reality.

Hydrostor's Advanced Compressed Air Energy Storage (A-CAES) is one such asset. It builds on decades of experience with traditional compressed air energy storage technology. Hydrostor has been able to bring forward improvements in efficiency, scale and flexibility so the entire country can benefit from these grid-scale storage infrastructure projects. A-CAES projects are infrastructure projects, leveraging standard industrial equipment, proven thermodynamic processes and underground storage caverns that can be purpose-built where needed on the grid, while supporting thousands of jobs and investing hundreds of millions of dollars in American communities. This is an evolution of a known technology, not a speculative leap. As a result, A-CAES is being viewed by grid operators as one of the key pathways to deploy tens of gigawatts of LDES capability across the country.

Other countries are already deploying compressed air storage at gigawatt scale as part of their national grid strategies. China has more than 7 GW of traditional CAES plants already grid-connected or in development. The potential for these technologies in the United States is even greater, and the U.S. has an opportunity to lead the world by deploying a more advanced compressed air technology at home that strengthens reliability while rebuilding domestic industrial and workforce capabilities.

Each large-scale A-CAES project supports thousands of jobs, many of them suited to skilled workers from oil, gas, mining and heavy construction backgrounds. These projects use American supply-chains and domestic manufacturing capacity. They generate local tax revenue and provide long-life infrastructure that communities can plan around with confidence. Projects like Hydrostor's 500 MW Willow Rock Energy Storage Center also create hundreds of millions of dollars of investment into local communities.

The U.S. has an opportunity to lead the world by deploying a more advanced compressed air technology at home that strengthens reliability while rebuilding domestic industrial and workforce capabilities.

For data centers and AI clusters, long-duration storage is already becoming essential. These facilities require large amounts of power that is predictable over long periods of time. A-CAES can integrate with existing generation, support grid-connected or behind-the-meter configurations and reduce system-wide costs by easing peak stress. Projects already under development demonstrate how LDES can support rapid demand growth without compromising grid stability or consumer energy prices.

Cost matters just as much as readiness. Independent analyses show that at durations beyond eight hours, long-duration storage solutions like A-CAES outperform lithium-ion batteries and even gas turbines on cost over its lifecycle. Storage systems designed for extended continuous runtimes from the outset do not face the same escalations in cost, which translates directly into affordability for customers.

The U.S. energy dominance agenda has already moved our federal and state institutions in this direction. Thoughtful engagement from utilities, regulators and capital providers are helping to bring long-duration solutions into the mainstream. Continued alignment across the value chain, coupled with supportive policies at all levels of government to provide regulatory certainty for financing these projects, will ensure that proven technologies like A-CAES can move from late-stage development into broad deployment.

Long-duration energy storage fits squarely within America's energy dominance goals. With the right focus and continued collaboration, LDES technologies like A-CAES can play a foundational role in supporting reliable power, economic growth and U.S. leadership for decades to come.

Jon Norman is president of Hydrostor.

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American Energy Dominance Needs Long Duration Energy Storage

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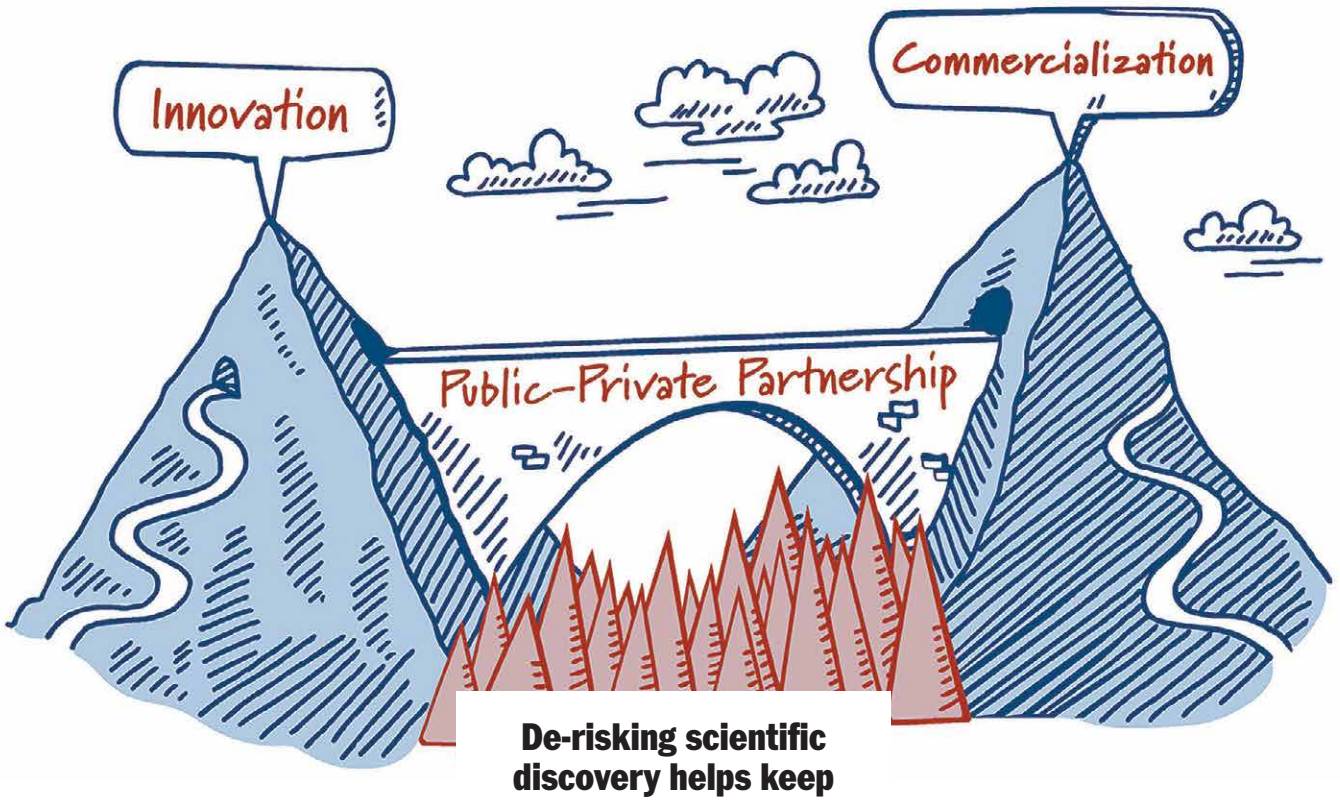
An innovation strategy to win the global energy race

By Lisa Epifani



America's energy landscape is undergoing a major transformation. Demand is rising from data centers, advanced manufacturing and new domestic industrial activity. At the same time, global competition and geopolitical pressures are intensifying. Countries like China are investing across the full energy and technology landscape, from early-stage research through large-scale deployment, and doing so with a coordinated national strategy. In fact, recent analyses show that China has surpassed the U.S. in total R&D spend.

To compete, the United States will need a more integrated approach to innovation policy. The 119th Congress has an opportunity to strengthen energy and technology leadership by structuring federal policy to treat basic research and applied energy programs as parts of the same innovation system.

De-risking scientific discovery helps keep American inventors ahead, while de-risking commercialization ensures U.S. companies can lead in global markets. Without a strategy that connects these stages, the U.S. risks losing its innovation advantage.

Congress can begin addressing this gap by providing updated guidance and support for key federal research agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Fundamental research programs, particularly within DOE's Office of Science – the largest federal sponsor of basic research in the physical sciences – are essential to maintaining leadership in areas like quantum, artificial intelligence and advanced computing. These investments enable long-term work that is unlikely to be funded by the private sector and provide access to national laboratory infrastructure that no single company could replicate.

Applied energy programs serve a distinct but equally critical role. Technologies such as advanced nuclear, fusion, next-generation geothermal, critical minerals and grid modernization require demonstration and early deployment support before they can compete in the market. Fusion, for example, depends on decades of basic plasma physics research and requires sustained demonstration support to reach commercial viability. These programs address practical constraints such as cost, reliability and integration into existing systems.

With multiple authorizations for DOE research and applied energy programs set to expire, the 119th Congress has a practical opportunity to advance them as part of a unified innovation strategy. Reauthorizing the National Quantum Initiative and increasing investments in national laboratory infrastructure would strengthen foundational research in areas critical to long-term competitiveness. Updating and extending key applied energy programs from the Energy Act of 2020 would support technologies ready to scale. Advancing these authorizations together would improve coordination across programs, reduce gaps between discovery and deployment, and provide a more coherent signal to the private sector than separate legislative efforts.

When research and deployment move on separate tracks, promising technologies often die in the valley of death between the two – too advanced for basic research funding, but not yet ready for commercial investment. Closing this gap requires intentional policy design. Co-designing basic and applied programs means setting research priorities with deployment in mind and structuring applied programs to incorporate new scientific advances. It also requires steady support across a range of technologies and risk levels. A portfolio that spans early research through demonstration increases the likelihood that multiple technologies can succeed.

De-risking scientific discovery helps keep American inventors ahead, while de-risking commercialization ensures U.S. companies can lead in global markets. Without a strategy that connects these stages, the U.S. risks losing its innovation advantage.

This approach reflects how innovation works in the U.S. economy. The U.S. spends nearly $1 trillion annually on research and development, with the majority of that funding coming from the private sector. Federal funding plays a more targeted role, supporting early-stage research and first-of-a-kind deployment that markets alone do not sustain. Federal funding across the full energy innovation system is critical to support progress, especially as global competitors scale investment and more tightly connect research to commercialization.

For example, China has increased overall research spending by nearly 10% annually, triple the U.S. growth rate of 3.4% in 2024. In 1960, the U.S. share of global research and development was 69%, compared to 29% in 2023% in 2023, while China has rapidly increased its share from 5 percent in 2000 to 26% in 2023. China's 15th Five-Year Plan lists building a "modern industrial system" as the first key objective, with over 100 specific projects that place energy technology at the core of its industrial strategy. Competitors are not just investing more in research; they are investing with a clear focus on moving critical technologies from research into commercial deployment.

The U.S. has significant advantages to leverage: a world-class research system, deep capital markets and a dynamic private sector. Achieving energy dominance in the long term starts with innovation dominance today. In 2026, advancing DOE research and applied energy authorizations together would send a strong signal to researchers, industry and investors that federal policy supports the full innovation lifecycle, not just isolated segments of it.

Lisa Epifani is the Head of Policy at ClearPath, a conservative clean energy advocacy organization that works to accelerate American innovation to reduce global energy emissions.

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Rising utility costs? Blame green energy policies

By U.S. Rep. Craig Goldman, R-Texas

If at first you don't succeed, blame the other team. After years of implementing expensive green energy projects, Democrats seem surprised that utility costs have increased for Americans. Rather than changing their policies, Democrats are attempting to blame Republicans for rising utility prices.

So, what is driving utility prices higher? One major factor is costly red tape. For example, the Biden administration spent $5.7 billion in taxpayer money subsidizing the installation of electric appliances in new homes.

But green energy mandates on new homes failed to lower utility costs. In fact, they increased the cost of utilities, strained the electric grid and inflated the cost of homes. Industry experts found that electric appliance mandates pushed consumers toward products that are both more expensive and less efficient. Home builders estimate that energy regulations have added as much as $31,000 to the price of a new home.

Subsidizing the installation of green energy appliances will not lower the cost of energy. Removing costly federal red tape will lower utility bills, improve home affordability and restore consumer choice.

Reversing green energy regulations takes time. Years of federal overreach have embedded these costs into both housing and energy markets. Lowering the cost of utilities will require repealing every single unnecessary energy regulation.

That's why I'm leading the Homeowner Energy Freedom Act, which would repeal costly green energy mandates on homes. This bill would undo the red tape that effectively banned the installation of gas-powered stoves and water heaters in new homes.

Before this bill passed the House earlier this year, my colleagues across the aisle argued that green energy mandates actually lower costs for consumers. But if electric appliances are more cost-effective, why does the federal government need to spend billions of dollars mandating their installation?

Green energy regulations on homes prioritize radical climate policies over affordable utilities for families.

The costs of these policies are even more visible at the state level. Analysis of U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) data reveals Hawaii and California have the nation's highest typical monthly electric bills, at $375 and $312, respectively. Hawaii, California, and Massachusetts have the most expensive average residential electricity rates, all exceeding 30 cents per kilowatt-hour.

By comparison, my home state of Texas has a typical electric bill of $142 per month and an average residential electricity rate of 15.87 cents per kilowatt-hour — roughly half the cost of the leading Democrat-run states.

Most Republican-led states are even more affordable. North Dakota's typical monthly electricity bill is $99, with an average residential electricity rate of 11.02 cents per kilowatt-hour.

The same pattern holds for natural gas. On average, residents of Democrat-run states pay more for gas utilities than those in Republican-led states. Once again, Hawaii, Massachusetts and California rank among the most expensive residential natural gas prices, according to data from the EIA.

This is not a coincidence. Democrat-led states have intentionally restricted affordable energy sources, like oil and natural gas, while subsidizing less reliable energy, like solar and wind alternatives. Democrats in Congress have implemented the same playbook on the national level, handing out billions of taxpayer dollars to green energy companies while Americans pay the price.

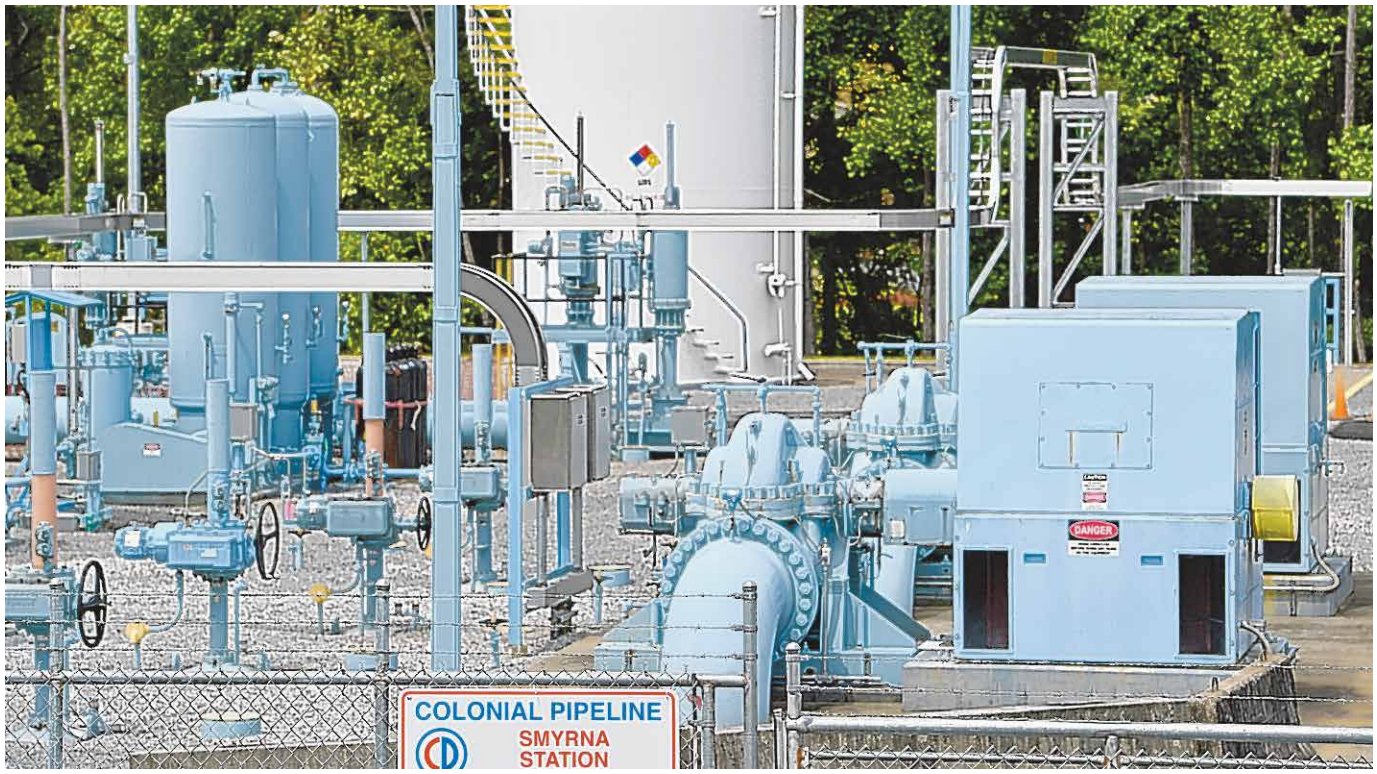
Subsidizing the installation of green energy appliances will not lower the cost of energy. Removing costly federal red tape will lower utility bills, improve home affordability and restore consumer choice.

Americans can have abundant energy that powers homes, fuels industries and supports economic growth. Improving energy affordability requires less government intervention, not more. The evidence from both federal and state governments is crystal clear: when the government implements green energy regulations, Americans pay more.

Rep. Craig Goldman represents Texas' 12th Congressional District. He serves on the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee and the following subcommittees: Subcommittee on Energy; Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade; and Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

In the face of growing cyber threats, pipeline security must be a priority

By U.S. Rep. Randy Weber, R-Texas



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A Colonial Pipeline station in Smyrna, Ga., near Atlanta.

In May 2021, Americans received a stark reminder that the infrastructure powering our country is not immune to attack.

A ransomware group known as DarkSide infiltrated the computer systems of the Colonial Pipeline, the largest refined fuel pipeline in the United States. Out of caution, the company shut down operations across its entire system while it worked to contain the breach.

The consequences were felt almost immediately.

Colonial Pipeline operates a 5,500-mile network stretching from Texas to New Jersey, carrying gasoline, diesel and jet fuel to markets across the eastern United States. Every day, the system moves roughly 2.5 million barrels of fuel, supplying nearly 45% of the gasoline and diesel consumed along the East Coast.

When that system stopped moving fuel, even temporarily, the effects rippled across more than 12,000 gas stations and impacted tens of millions of Americans.

Within days of the shutdown, drivers lined up for miles to fill their tanks, and panic-buying spread across several states. The national average gasoline price climbed to levels not seen since 2014, while some states saw increases of more than 20 cents in a single week.

For many Americans, it was the first time they realized just how much their daily lives depend on energy infrastructure that operates quietly in the background.

But what made the Colonial Pipeline attack particularly alarming was not just the disruption itself; it was how it happened.

The attackers never physically touched the pipeline.

Cybercriminals believed to be operating out of Russia gained access to Colonial's computer network using a compromised password and deployed ransomware designed to lock the company out of its own systems until a ransom payment was made.

In other words, criminals thousands of miles away disrupted one of the most critical energy systems in the United States using nothing more than a laptop and malicious code.

That reality should concern every American. The Colonial Pipeline attack revealed that the systems we depend on every day are no longer threatened solely by physical sabotage or traditional acts of war; They are also vulnerable in cyberspace.

Energy infrastructure has always been vital to the strength of our economy, but the 2021 Colonial Pipeline attack showed just how equally important it is to our national security. Pipelines move the fuel that powers our cars, trucks, airplanes, farms and factories. Refineries turn crude oil into the gasoline and diesel that keep commerce moving. Ports and terminals carry that energy to communities across the country and markets around the world.

The Colonial Pipeline attack revealed what happens when one link in that chain is disrupted. Brief interruptions to a single system can spread quickly across the country. When fuel deliveries slow, transportation costs rise. When prices increase, families feel it at the pump. And when uncertainty spreads across energy markets, the effects are felt throughout the broader economy.

The Colonial Pipeline attack revealed that the systems we depend on every day are no longer threatened solely by physical sabotage or traditional acts of war; They are also vulnerable in cyberspace.

Nearly five years later, the lesson learned from the Colonial Pipeline attack is undeniable: cybersecurity is inseparable from energy and national security.

President Donald Trump's Cyber Strategy for America recognizes this reality and places securing critical infrastructure at the center of our national cyber posture. One of the strategy's key priorities is Pillar Four: Secure Critical Infrastructure. This pillar focuses on identifying, prioritizing, and hardening the systems that power our country, including pipelines, energy grids and the digital networks that support them.

That same mission is driving action in Congress.

My Pipeline Cybersecurity Preparedness Act, a bipartisan effort with Rep. Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., designates the Department of Energy to lead pipeline cybersecurity preparedness and response, strengthen coordination and improve information-sharing, all without adding new regulatory burdens.

Because what we saw in 2021 cannot happen again.

The United States possesses one of the most advanced and productive energy systems in the world. From the energy fields of Texas and the refining complexes along the Gulf Coast to the pipelines that move fuel to communities across the country, this network remains a pillar of American strength.

But if we are going to retain that strength, we must remain vigilant in cyberspace.

The infrastructure that powers America must be protected with the same seriousness we devote to protecting the nation itself.

That means strengthening cybersecurity across our energy infrastructure now. Not tomorrow. Today.

Rep. Randy Weber is a public servant, proven conservative, former small business owner, and third-generation Texan representing the 14th District of Texas. In Congress, he serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has the broadest jurisdiction of any legislative committee in Congress. Weber also serves on the Science, Space and Technology Committee.

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South Carolina is an energy leader

By U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C.

In the first 15 months of President Donald Trump's second term, he has skillfully pursued the policy of Peace Through Strength, rightfully recognizing that our energy infrastructure is the backbone of America both at home and abroad. I am grateful that South Carolina is uniquely positioned to lead the next chapter of America's energy future, an industry critical to economic growth, national security, American competitiveness, and jobs.

With a strong commitment to nuclear energy, which harnesses the power of atom-splitting to generate massive amounts of reliable, carbon-free electricity, South Carolina is committed to providing the steady baseload power that modern economies depend on.

Nuclear power supplies 60% of the Palmetto State's electricity, reflecting decades of investment in highly skilled workers, a robust safety culture and long-term planning to ensure reliable, affordable power for homes and businesses.

Last year, state-owned utility company Santee Cooper approved a proposal to move forward to complete power reactors at V.C. Summer sites in Jenkinsville, bringing roughly 2,200 megawatts of energy, strengthening grid resilience, and supporting long-term economic growth.

With a strong commitment to nuclear energy, which harnesses the power of atom-splitting to generate massive amounts of reliable, carbon-free electricity, South Carolina is committed to providing the steady baseload power that modern economies depend on.

With Brookfield Asset Management as a private-sector partner and Westinghouse's proven technology at the core, South Carolina has assembled the support and expertise needed to deliver this increased source of power.

The future of nuclear energy is also being shaped by advanced technologies such as small modular reactors (SMRs) and microreactors. These next-generation systems offer the promise of greater flexibility, lower upfront costs and faster deployment. SMRs can be built in factories and assembled on-site, reducing construction risk and improving efficiency. Microreactors, smaller still, can provide resilient power for military installations, rural communities and critical infrastructure.

In Aiken, South Carolina, the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative is a critical hub for innovation. Situated near the Savannah River Site — a longstanding center of nuclear expertise — the Collaborative is bringing together industry, academia and government to accelerate the development and deployment of advanced reactors.

Few places in America can match the Savannah River Site's combination of available land, highly skilled talent and existing infrastructure, making it a natural home for the development of small modular reactors. As the only member of Congress to have worked at the Savannah River Site, I am grateful for the positive impact the Site has had and will have on local communities in South Carolina and Georgia, and on American national security.

Gov. Henry McMaster and the South Carolina General Assembly are committed to building the workforce, strengthening supply chains and ensuring that the next generation of energy technologies are designed, manufactured and deployed right in South Carolina.

The South Carolina Energy Security Act passed last year. It streamlines permitting processes for new power generation, paving the way for affordable, reliable electricity produced in the state. State utilities responded quickly with two planned large natural gas projects — one involving Duke Energy and another featuring a joint venture between Santee Cooper and Dominion Energy — that are now advancing swiftly through the approval process.

Successful apprenticeship programs across the state are building a highly skilled workforce that will be essential for supporting large-scale projects. By investing in advanced manufacturing today, South Carolina is creating a strong foundation for long-term economic growth tomorrow.

President Trump, Energy Secretary Chris Wright, Commissioner of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission David Wright — a South Carolinian — and] National Nuclear Security Administration Administrator Brandon Williams, are working alongside House and Senate Republicans to make American energy independent, reliable and secure. With the passage of the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, Republicans have continued their efforts to reduce regulations, expand freedom, and promote pro-growth policies, creating jobs.

As adversaries like war criminal Vladimir Putin, the Chinese Communist Party and the Iranian Regime seek opportunities to undermine our electric grid, policies that maintain system reliability are rightfully prioritized at both the state and federal level.

Irresponsible Obama and Biden era mandates caused America to lose its edge in the energy industry, but President Trump knows that energy independence protects American families while also creating jobs.

Joe Wilson is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives serving South Carolina's 2nd District.