

facility decontamination and decommissioning, remedial actions, and other activities of title II of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, and title X, subtitle A, of the Energy Policy Act of 1992, \$625,000,000, to be derived from the Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund, to remain available until expended, of which \$32,959,000 shall be available in accordance with title X, subtitle A, of the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

SCIENCE

For Department of Energy expenses including the purchase, construction, and acquisition of plant and capital equipment, and other expenses necessary for science activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), including the acquisition or condemnation of any real property or facility or for plant or facility acquisition, construction, or expansion, and purchase of not more than 17 passenger motor vehicles for replacement only, including one ambulance and one bus, \$5,100,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of such amount, \$181,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FLORES

Mr. FLORES. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 25, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,500,000)”.

Page 51, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$25,000,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. FLORES. Madam Chair, I rise to offer an important amendment that ensures that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is appropriately funded to meet its core mission. The NRC’s work is vital to the energy picture of our Nation, and safety remains and always will be the number one priority.

The NRC is funded in two ways: 10 percent of its budget comes from appropriated funds from the taxpayers; and, secondly, 90 percent of the fees are collected from the nuclear industry.

While I am a strong supporter of nuclear power and safety, the NRC budget has grown dramatically in the last decade from \$669 million per year in 2005 to the current level of over \$1 billion this year. Herein lies the problem.

This chart lays out the picture that we face today with the NRC. Under the NRC’s 2005 budget, there were 3,108 employees responsible for oversight on 104 reactors and the review of 1,500 licensing actions. In their fiscal year 2016 budget request of \$1.032 billion, the NRC called for 3,754 employees to oversee 100 reactors and review 900 licensing actions.

In summary, the number of reactors has gone down by 4 percent; the number of licensing actions has gone down by 40 percent; the number of employees has gone up by 21 percent, and the budget has grown by 54 percent.

Madam Chair, only in Washington does the staff and the cost grow while

the workload goes down. The historical increases in both funding and staff resources occurred in anticipation of new reactors being built under a nuclear renaissance for our country.

Unfortunately, due to increasing bureaucratic red tape and other market conditions, the work never materialized; thus, a shrinking nuclear industry has faced an ever-growing regulator over the past 10 years. Only in Washington, as I said before, does the bureaucracy grow while the workload shrinks.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission even admits that it needs to downsize. In its February 2015 report entitled, “Project Aim 2020,” they said the same thing. Additionally, the NRC has 60 rulemakings underway, and they are collecting additional fees from existing reactors to make up for lost licensing revenue. These fees are ultimately paid by hard-working American families in their electricity bills.

My amendment is simple. It reduces funding by \$25 million, or about 2.5 percent, and would right-size the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to meet its core mission and safely regulate our existing nuclear fleet.

The industry share of support, or 90 percent of that, would be reduced by \$22.5 million, and the Federal share of \$2.5 would be redirected to basic research in DOE’s Office of Science in order to develop future American energy solutions.

Madam Chair, in the last few minutes, I have had the opportunity to have great discussions with Chairman SIMPSON, and I am confident that he is aware of this issue and has taken steps to do this. He said he would work with me in the future to continue addressing this issue. I am raising this today, but I will be withdrawing my amendment.

I would like to thank Chairman SIMPSON for his efforts to address this issue and for agreeing to work with me on the issue.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chair, I claim time in opposition, although I am not opposed.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SIMPSON. I want to thank the gentleman for being dogged on this issue. We share his concern. We had a great hearing with all the commissioners of the NRC. They also understand this concern. It was the Aim Project 2020 that they put together that realized that they have too many staff and they need to reduce it. They want to do it in a responsible way.

In the full committee, we adopted an amendment to reduce their budget by \$25 million. That is in addition to the fact that they had carryover fund that they could have spent last year that they won’t have available this year.

Their budget is going down; whether it is the right amount or not, we don’t know yet, but we are going to keep on

this because we want them to reestablish their credibility in the world. They need to do that because they are a regulatory agency that is very important, and they do incredibly important work.

We are going to be holding hearings again on this next year when we do their budget to make sure they are following through on their commitment to reduce their size and scope, particularly the rulemaking authority that they have got out there. Many people believe they are writing far too many rules, and some believe it is because they have too many employees.

I appreciate the gentleman offering this amendment and the discussion and offering to withdraw the amendment.

Ms. KAPTUR. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. I would just say to the offerer of the amendment from Texas that I come from a part of the country where the Nuclear Regulatory Commission did not do its job for a long time.

I appreciate what you are attempting to do, and all I would say is, coming from a region where we have serious infractions that put human life at risk more than once, as you look at that budget and try to improve it, do not assume whatever levels of regulation existed in fact were appropriate because, in many cases, they were shortchanged and inadequate.

As you move forward in this important arena, I would urge you to look at the places in the country where mistakes happened and figure out why and then direct resources to where they are most important in this very important technology.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLORES. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROKITA) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FOSTER

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 25, line 5, after the dollar amount insert “(increased by \$239,749,000)”.

Page 29, line 2, after the dollar amount insert “(reduced by \$239,749,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Illinois and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment to address an imbalance in our efforts to promote the long-term economic security interests of the United States.

This appropriations bill would underfund the Office of Science by almost \$240 million below the President's request for the next fiscal year. My amendment would correct this by bringing the Office of Science account up to the President's request level.

Investments in the DOE Office of Science and its laboratories have supported American innovation and discovery science at the forefront of the physical sciences and engineering.

It is impossible and unwise to ignore the value of our national labs. They have helped answer fundamental questions on how the universe works, supported breakthroughs in fields as diverse as medicine and astronomy and developments in industry that drive our economy.

Investments in our labs have led to the construction of accelerators and detectors that enable our scientists to discover new particles, including quarks and the Higgs boson, to help explain the nature of the universe in matter, energy, space, and time. Physicists have used their fundamental research to develop new technologies, including the PET scan, which is used every day to treat patients diagnosed with cancerous tumors.

The Office of Science has also supported the training of scientists, mathematicians, and engineers for more than 60 years. We need to maintain a competitive advantage now more than ever.

While the U.S. is reducing investments in Federal R&D, Europe and Asia have been increasing investments. In 1968, we spent 9.1 percent of the budget on research and development. Today, we are spending only 3.6 percent. If this trend continues, it won't be long before China's investments in R&D will far outpace our own.

The Office of Science is not only an important investment in our future, it is a valuable investment in our economy. Our national labs and the major user facilities housed at those labs are some of the greatest tools we have to offer researchers and industry. They are also important contractors to the local economy. The economic impacts of Argonne and Fermilab in Illinois are estimated to be more than \$1.3 billion annually.

Those who seek to underfund and eliminate Federal programs often say that the private sector can do it better,

but, when it comes to fundamental scientific research, that simply is not an option. The Office of Science is responsible for building and maintaining research facilities, which many private companies rely on but are far too big for any single business or university to develop.

These user facilities, such as the Advanced Photon Source at Argonne National Laboratory, are a critical research tool to academics and industry alike. For example, Eli Lilly conducts nearly half of the research in their drug discovery portfolio at the Advanced Photon Source at Argonne, but the funding levels in this bill will threaten the Advanced Photon Source and other critical projects.

At a time of ongoing economic stress, we must continue to develop the next generation of the American technical workforce. As other world powers are growing and challenging our position as the global leader in science and innovation, we cannot let the number of American scientists and researchers or the quality of their research facilities diminish. Bringing the Office of Science budget up to the President's request is crucial to maintaining that quality.

I would also like to briefly discuss the offset, which is the NNSA weapons activities account. It is important for us to recognize that we need to strike the right balance between defending our country today and investing in scientific research for the future.

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I would argue that maintaining an advantage as the global leader in science and technology makes us much more secure than amassing and maintaining excessive numbers of nuclear weapons.

Madam Chairman, I rise today because we must continue to invest in American innovation and fully fund the research and development conducted through the DOE Office of Science.

I understand that the majority party has the power to block that funding and that there will be a point of order pending against this amendment.

Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL

For nuclear waste disposal activities to carry out the purposes of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-425), including the acquisition of real property or facility construction or expansion, \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended, and to be derived from the Nuclear Waste Fund: *Provided*, That of the amount provided under this heading, \$5,000,000 shall be made available to affected units of local government, as defined in section 2(31) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C.

10101(31)), to support the Yucca Mountain geologic repository, as authorized by such Act.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. TITUS

Ms. TITUS. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 25, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$150,000,000)”.

Page 57, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$150,000,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Nevada and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada.

Ms. TITUS. Madam Chairman, I come to the floor today on behalf of the people of Nevada to ask my colleagues to reject the failed policies of the past and concentrate our efforts on real solutions to the Nation's energy challenges.

The bill before us appropriates \$150 million for the failed Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste project. Taxpayer-funded junkets and photo ops cannot change the fact that this project has never been based on sound science but, instead, stems from targeted politics.

After decades squandered and \$15 billion wasted, we are no closer to a solution than when President Reagan signed the “Screw Nevada” bill in 1988. Yet, today, the House is set to consider legislation that will waste millions more on this failed project.

Now, I have heard my colleagues say this is the law of the land. Well, the ACA is the law of the land, and that hasn't stopped them from trying to overturn it 57 times. Furthermore, it appears that although this is the so-called law of the land, the interpretation of that law is pretty flexible.

I want to bring my colleagues' attention to a particular line in this bill that appropriates \$5 million for units of local government to support Yucca Mountain. This simply creates a slush fund to pay off local governments in return for their support of this failed project.

I don't anticipate that many of my colleagues are as familiar with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act as we are in Nevada, but the law clearly states that any benefits that the Federal Government may appropriate can only be provided through mutual agreement between the Federal Government and the State. Last time I checked, Republican Governor Brian Sandoval, not the House Appropriations Committee, is the chief executive of the State of Nevada, and he strongly opposes Yucca Mountain.

Madam Chairman, I will submit for the RECORD an op-ed written by Governor Sandoval and former Governor Richard Bryan, titled “Yucca Mountain: Unsafe site won't ever be safe for nuclear waste.”

[Special to the Review-Journal, Apr. 12, 2015]
 YUCCA MOUNTAIN: UNSAFE SITE WON'T EVER
 BE SAFE FOR NUCLEAR WASTE

(By Brian Sandoval and Richard Bryan)

Nevada Rep. Crescent Hardy, who joined a pro-Yucca Mountain congressional site visit this past week, recently asked the question, "Is there a scenario in which Nevadans would actually welcome nuclear waste storage at Yucca Mountain?" ("Time for Nevada to talk Yucca Mountain," March 22 Review-Journal).

The answer to that question is an emphatic "no" for one simple yet unavoidable reason: Because Yucca Mountain is an unsafe place for storing or disposing deadly nuclear waste and was selected for purely political reasons having nothing to do with science or suitability. There is nothing for state officials to negotiate. In fact, our leaders would be remiss in their duty to protect the public and the environment to entertain the notion that any amount of dollars could possibly compensate for likely grievous and lethal harm from siting a facility in such an unsafe location as Yucca Mountain.

From day one, science with respect to Yucca Mountain has taken a back seat to Washington, D.C., power politics.

In 1987, Congress ignored science completely and named Yucca Mountain as the only site to be studied as a potential repository in spite of its known serious flaws. Yucca was picked not because it was the best site or even a safe one. It was chosen solely because Nevada was the most politically vulnerable state at the time. Sites in Texas, Louisiana, Washington, and other states were dismissed out of hand because their states were protected by powerful Washington, D.C., politicians.

As site characterization at Yucca progressed, every time the science showed the site to be seriously flawed, the Energy Department merely invented another engineering fix—like the metal waste packages that will have to remain intact for 10,000 years or more, even though they've never been built or tested; more than 11,000 titanium drip shields that must be placed over the "corrosion-resistant" waste packages (DOE does not plan to install them for 100 years or more) in order to meet the radiation exposure criteria; and manipulating the site's boundaries so the aquifer below Yucca can be used to "dilute" the radiation that will inevitably escape from the repository.

And when even these "fixes" were not enough, the Energy Department simply abandoned its own siting criteria containing specific qualifying and disqualifying conditions (that Yucca couldn't meet) and created a black box-like assessment tool (called Total System Performance Assessment, or TSPA) that allows the site's many flaws to be camouflaged and rendered insignificant.

The way to fix the nuclear waste disposal problem is not to keep beating the dead horse that is Yucca Mountain, as Rep. John Shimkus, R-Ill., appeared to be doing with the promotional tour of the shut-down Yucca Mountain site last week. A more constructive and fruitful approach would be to move forward with new initiatives that rely on real science to identify safe and suitable storage and disposal sites and require states and local governments to give their consent to any future nuclear waste siting efforts.

Brian Sandoval, a Republican, is governor of Nevada. Richard Bryan, a Democrat, is a former Nevada governor and U.S. senator, and chairman of the Nevada Commission on Nuclear Projects.

Ms. TITUS. Also, the committee's report language sites that this hush money is provided for local govern-

ments that give "formal consent." This raises yet another question about the intent of this section. The law does not outline any process for giving formal consent, so how would the newly bribed localities be able to provide that consent?

If you are looking for consent, I urge you to support H.R. 1364, the Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act, which I introduced, along with my colleague Congressman HECK and Senators REID and HELLER. This bipartisan legislation sets out a formal consent process so that Nevada or Texas or New Mexico or any other State and affected local community or tribe that chooses to host a nuclear waste depository will have a process by which it can give consent for siting by the Federal Government. No community should have to face what we in Nevada have faced for the last few decades of having this pushed down our throat.

Madam Chairman, I will also submit for the RECORD two articles outlining nuclear waste storage proposals that are supported in the State of Texas and the State of New Mexico.

[West Texas Radio, Feb. 13, 2015]

COMPANY WANTS TO EXPAND NUCLEAR WASTE
 SITE IN TEXAS

(By Travis Bubenik)

A Dallas-based company is looking to expand its nuclear waste site in rural West Texas into a longer-term storage site for high-level radioactive waste.

Waste Control Specialists (WCS) is asking the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission to approve a new license to expand its above-ground storage facility in Andrews County to allow more radioactive types of waste.

The company already stores "low level" waste—contaminated rags, tools and other equipment that have come mostly from the national nuclear research lab in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

The site also served as a home for waste that was supposed to wind up at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico, until that site was shuttered after a leak contaminated workers there about a year ago.

WCS now wants to store used fuel rods from nuclear power plants across the country—a more radioactive form of waste.

In theory, the waste would stay in West Texas temporarily—until the federal government comes up with a long-term disposal plan—but it could be decades before that happens.

"Even though it is called an interim storage facility, that storage period is a long time," says WCS President Rod Baltzer. "We think that's somewhere between 60 to 100 years."

Baltzer was in Washington, D.C. Monday talking to reporters about the company's push to expand the facility.

"This wasn't initially something we intended to do when we got out there, but we've been out there a long time, and times have changed," he says.

Those changes have riled some environmentalists in Texas.

The Sierra Club has criticized the company for its track record of slowly expanding its intentions for the West Texas site. The environmental group says the company's misled lawmakers and the public as it's sought to store more radioactive types of waste through the years.

Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director for the Sierra Club's Lone Star Chapter, says he's

watched with concern while the company's plan for the site grew from storing low level waste to larger quantities of the same waste.

"Now it turns out we are to become the nation's dumping ground for all manner of dangerous highly toxic radioactive waste," he says.

WCS maintains it can store the waste safely, and that the community in Andrews County has welcomed the idea.

Baltzer says the company is fulfilling the Obama Administration's call in 2013 for a "consent-based" approach to transporting, storing and disposing of the nation's nuclear waste.

That strategy instructs the government to seek out communities willing to house nuclear waste "in expectation of the economy activity that would result from the siting, construction and operation of such a facility in their communities."

For now, Andrews County appears to be that kind of place. County Commissioners recently passed a resolution enthusiastically backing the plan.

If the Nuclear Regulatory Commission gives WCS the green light, the company says construction on the expanded facility could be complete by the end of 2020.

[From the Associated Press, Apr. 30, 2015]
 NEW MEXICO JOINS RACE TO BUILD STORAGE
 FOR NUCLEAR WASTE

(By Susan Montoya Bryan)

Two rural New Mexico counties announced Wednesday they're partnering with an international firm in the race to build an interim storage facility to house spent nuclear fuel that has been piling up at reactors around the nation.

Officials from Lea and Eddy counties and Holtec International gathered at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History in Albuquerque to outline their plans.

John Heaton, a former state lawmaker and chairman of the Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance, a consortium of city and county governments, said there's no better place in the U.S. than southeastern New Mexico to build such a facility since the region is already home to a multibillion-dollar uranium enrichment plant and the federal government's only underground nuclear waste repository.

Heaton acknowledged that in vetting the project, safety was the top priority.

The region is still rebounding from the indefinite closure of the government's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, where a chemical reaction inside a drum of waste resulted in a radiation release in February 2014. The U.S. Department of Energy has said it will take years and more than a half-billion dollars before the repository resumes full operations.

The proposed storage facility would be designed to handle spent nuclear fuel from power plants, not the kind of defense-related waste that was shipped to WIPP.

Holtec CEO and President Kris Singh said his company has spent more than a decade developing technology to ensure the safe storage of spent fuel inside triple-lined stainless steel casks that are capable of enduring the force of a freight train collision or an earthquake.

"We became convinced that this is an extraordinary, safe process that needs to occur in this country," Heaton said.

Federal officials acknowledged that the future of nuclear energy in the U.S. depends on the ability to manage and dispose of used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.

In March, the DOE announced it would begin siting interim storage sites as part of its plan to spur the use of nuclear power and develop the transportation and storage infrastructure needed to manage the waste.

Some members of Congress have shown renewed interest in the mothballed Yucca Mountain project in Nevada.

In West Texas, Waste Control Specialists announced plans earlier this year to build a temporary storage facility that would eventually be capable of holding up to 40,000 metric tons.

Yucca Mountain was designed with a cap of 70,000 metric tons. The proposed facility in southeastern New Mexico would hold even more.

The agreement between Holtec and the Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance addresses the design, licensing, construction and operation of an underground storage site on 32 acres between the communities of Carlsbad and Hobbs.

Holtec officials say the company expects to apply for a permit from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission within a year. State permits would also be required. Licensing could take three years.

"It's a tough road to get any nuclear project off the ground, otherwise we would have repositories and interim storage facilities all over the country," Heaton said. "We have great partners and the will to get it done."

Gov. Susana Martinez weighed in earlier this month. She sent a letter to Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz as a preliminary endorsement of the proposal.

Watchdogs have raised concerns, pointing to transportation issues and the possibility that New Mexico could become a permanent repository for such waste. Supporters said Wednesday they would have to work with communities along the transportation routes, just as they did when setting up the network for shipping waste to WIPP.

Holtec officials were reluctant to put a price tag on the venture, but Heaton said it could involve anywhere from \$200 million to \$400 million in capital costs.

The revenue the storage facility could bring in for the counties and the state would ultimately depend on how big of a share of the market Holtec could attract, Singh said.

Ms. TITUS. So I would say, Madam Chairman, instead of wasting tens of millions of dollars more on an unworkable solution, let's, instead, meet our fiduciary obligations to future generations. At the same time, let us commit to moving forward on a new policy to address the Nation's nuclear waste, one that relies on a consent-based system that doesn't force waste on communities like mine, which is the recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Commission.

So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and send a message that Congress will not continue to move backwards but will take serious action to address our Nation's nuclear waste policy.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chair, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chairman, I understand the lady's passion for this, but some of the rhetoric, quite frankly, isn't accurate.

When she calls it a failed policy, it is only a failed policy politically because this administration came into office on a promise of not doing Yucca Mountain because they needed electoral votes

from the State of Nevada. That is the reality.

The fact is we have spent over \$15 billion on this project, and the fact is it is the law of the land. Until you change that law of the land, it remains the law of the land.

Whether it is safe or not, I don't know. I am not a scientist. But what I do know is there has been 52—I think it is 52—National Academy of Sciences studies on all sorts of aspects. This is the most studied piece of earth on the Earth. In fact, I have suggested during a hearing with the Department that if we ultimately decide not to do Yucca Mountain, they shouldn't close that down because they are going to need a space that big to put all the papers from the studies that we have done on Yucca Mountain. That is the reality.

I think we all understand my colleague's opposition to Yucca Mountain. I don't blame her. I know she is from Nevada. But I can't support this amendment. This amendment would eliminate \$150 million in the bill for the Department of Energy to reorganize its adjudicatory response team and get the Yucca Mountain licensing process back up and running. Otherwise, more than \$15 billion which has been spent on this program will truly be wasted.

Once that application is finished, all Members of this body, all Members of this body and the Senate will have the opportunity to decide whether to move forward, to construct and use the facility. But killing the process at this point, I think, would be very shortsighted. I therefore urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. TITUS. Madam Chairman, I appreciate the comments made by my colleague, but he does not address the points I make about how this amendment looks at provisions of the bill that are contrary to the new proposal.

I urge a "no" vote. There is no point in throwing good money after bad. American taxpayers deserve a wiser expenditure of their dollars. Nevadans deserve to be heard on this issue, and those areas that want to have a site in their State or their community deserve a chance to be considered.

I thank you, and I urge, strongly, a "no" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), the vice chairman of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Madam Chairman, I would like to thank the Appropriations Committee and the chairman

for acting to impose greater discipline on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

We know that the future of nuclear power in the United States depends on having a credible nuclear safety regulator and depends on the industry continuing to perform at a high level of safety. We feel strongly that the agency must continue its core mission of protecting the public health and safety, but the NRC must do so in a manner that does not add to the economic headwinds that the industry faces.

Thanks to the scientific breakthroughs and renewed interest in nuclear energy, our Nation has an incredible opportunity to develop new sources of power that can provide affordable and reliable energy. I hope that the NRC can work with industry to seize these opportunities, while fulfilling its mission to ensure public safety.

I support the committee's direction to require the NRC's rulemaking process to be commission-driven in order to provide greater discipline, transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY—
ENERGY

For Department of Energy expenses necessary in carrying out the activities authorized by section 5012 of the America COMPETES Act (Public Law 110-69), \$280,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of such amount \$28,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SWALWELL OF
CALIFORNIA

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 25, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$20,000,000)".

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$20,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise to offer an amendment on behalf of Mr. SCHIFF of California and Mr. POLIS of Colorado, which would increase funding for the Advanced Research Project Agency-Energy, also known as ARPA-E. Mr. SCHIFF offered this same exact amendment last year, and it passed the House with bipartisan support. I hope the House will vote in support of it again.

Like the House's mark last year, the underlying bill this year provides \$280

million for ARPA-E, which is \$45 million below the President's request. This amendment would increase funding for ARPA-E by \$20 million, with the offset taken from the Department administration.

I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee for providing at least level funding for ARPA-E this year, which is a substantial improvement from last year, which cut the program by as much as 80 percent over previous years.

However, I think that rather than providing flat funding, we should be stepping up our commitment to a potentially game-changing research program, and that is exactly what this amendment does.

This is a very modest investment for an agency whose work is helping to reshape our economy. While the amendment would leave us still short of where the funding should be and where it is in the President's budget, passing it would send a strong signal that there is bipartisan support for this kind of research.

Started in 2009, ARPA-E is a revolutionary program that advances high-potential, high-impact energy technologies that are too early for private sector investment. ARPA-E projects have the potential to radically improve U.S. economic security, national security, and environmental well-being as well.

ARPA-E empowers America's energy researchers with funding, technical assistance, and market readiness. ARPA-E is modeled after the highly successful Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, which has produced groundbreaking inventions for the Department of Defense and the Nation, perhaps most notably the Internet itself. A key element of both Agencies is that managers are limited to fixed terms, so new blood continuously revitalizes this research portfolio.

As we cut spending to return the budget to balance, we must not weaken those programs that are vital to our economic future and national security, and ARPA-E is such an agency. Even if we can't make the investment that the President has called for in his budget, let's be sure that we don't hinder an agency that is pointing the way to a more energy-secure future.

Energy is a national security issue; it is an economic imperative; it is a health concern; and it is an environmental necessity. Investing wisely in this type of research going on at ARPA-E is exactly the direction we should be going as a nation.

We want to lead the energy revolution. We don't want to see this advantage go to China or anywhere else in the world. If we are serious about staying at the forefront of the energy revolution, we must continue to fully invest in the kind of cutting-edge work that ARPA-E performs. By providing the funding I am recommending today, we will send a clear signal of the seri-

ousness of our intent to remain world leaders in energy.

I urge the adoption of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chair, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chair, I claim time reluctantly. I happen to be one who thinks the ARPA-E does some good work. My biggest problem is that, as I said last night on either the first or second amendment that was offered to this bill, they took money out of departmental administration to fund something, and then another one to take money out of departmental administration. So far we have taken out about \$50 million out of a \$245 million budget for the departmental administration.

It is easy to vote that way because who wants to pay for the administrative costs? Yet we are going to have to deal with that when we get into conference to make sure that they have adequate funding in the Department for the administrative work.

□ 1600

So at some point in time, I have to say I can't support continuing to take money out of the departmental administration in order to fund a variety of programs, even though some of them may be very worthwhile.

And while I, myself, am not opposed to ARPA-E and think they do some good work, the reality is, you have to balance this bill.

We have got ARPA-E down \$266 million from what it was last year and substantially below what the President requested, but we had other priorities that we had to fund. And the other thing I had to consider is that the Science and Technology Committee—that is, the authorizing committee that does much of this work—has marked up a bill in their committee that substantially reduces the overall funding authorization for ARPA-E. So that causes me some concern.

While I may or may not agree with their markup—I don't know; we will see when that hits the floor—that is the reason that I am going to oppose this amendment.

Other than that, I understand what the gentleman is trying to do and the concern that many people have for the decrease in funding in ARPA-E.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further pro-

ceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE 17 INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM

Such sums as are derived from amounts received from borrowers pursuant to section 1702(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 under this heading in prior Acts, shall be collected in accordance with section 502(7) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided*, That, for necessary administrative expenses to carry out this Loan Guarantee program, \$42,000,000 is appropriated, to remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided further*, That \$25,000,000 of the fees collected pursuant to section 1702(h) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 shall be credited as offsetting collections to this account to cover administrative expenses and shall remain available until expended, so as to result in a final fiscal year 2016 appropriation from the general fund estimated at not more than \$17,000,000: *Provided further*, That fees collected under section 1702(h) in excess of the amount appropriated for administrative expenses shall not be available until appropriated: *Provided further*, That the Department of Energy shall not subordinate any loan obligation to other financing in violation of section 1702 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 or subordinate any Guaranteed Obligation to any loan or other debt obligations in violation of section 609.10 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY VEHICLES

MANUFACTURING LOAN PROGRAM

For Department of Energy administrative expenses necessary in carrying out the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program, \$6,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

For salaries and expenses of the Department of Energy necessary for departmental administration in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), \$247,420,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017, including the hire of passenger motor vehicles and official reception and representation expenses not to exceed \$30,000, plus such additional amounts as necessary to cover increases in the estimated amount of cost of work for others notwithstanding the provisions of the Anti-Deficiency Act (31 U.S.C. 1511 et seq.): *Provided*, That such increases in cost of work are offset by revenue increases of the same or greater amount: *Provided further*, That moneys received by the Department for miscellaneous revenues estimated to total \$117,171,000 in fiscal year 2016 may be retained and used for operating expenses within this account, as authorized by section 201 of Public Law 95-238, notwithstanding the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3302: *Provided further*, That the sum herein appropriated shall be reduced as collections are received during the fiscal year so as to result in a final fiscal year 2016 appropriation from the general fund estimated at not more than \$130,249,000: *Provided further*, That of the total amount made available under this heading, \$31,297,000 is for Energy Policy and Systems Analysis.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chair, let me begin by thanking Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for the work that they have done, a very challenging and popular appropriations when it comes to energy and water and also the issues of the environment.

I have a very simple amendment that reinforces our commitment to communities from rural America to urban America, from hamlets and villages to large urban centers. And it simply emphasizes a quality of life: for all Americans to have a good, clean environment; to reduce asthma in children; to help senior citizens; and to have a good quality of life in their sunset years, in their older homes, in older communities, of which I represent, is an important funding necessity for this Nation.

I want to emphasize the work that has been done and remind my colleagues—for those of us who had the privilege of being here—that President Clinton issued an executive order directing Federal agencies to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health environmental impacts on minority and low-income populations, which covered rural America, which oftentimes experienced the impact of the environment.

We have worked over the years to improve their quality of life, and today I ask that we continue to do so.

In particular, I want to refer to a project in Houston, Texas, called the CAS site. That site was attempted to be cleaned up. It is in an older neighborhood, Madam Chair. Senior citizens own their homes. They have been there for a long time.

There have been a lot of machinations about this entity that is espousing chemicals, leaking chemicals because it is old and closed down and abandoned. And we had to call upon the environmental justice sector in the Federal Government to provide the leverage to help these senior citizens, people who did not want to move from their homes.

I walked those streets, went into the backyards of senior citizens and saw the seepage coming out of the ground and, as well, coming in from the property on the back side.

Environmental justice is a good thing, and it is through those efforts that we are working with the EPA to give hope to these citizens that they can stay in their homes.

I live in the energy capital of the world. It is a job-creator. But on occasions, in the midst of our wetlands and our areas of pristine, if you will, environmental assets, we have some ups and downs.

Just recently, I flew over the Houston port at the time of a spillage that

was impacting some of our most environmentally important areas, including wetlands and areas that are protected or are important to the environment and to the quality of life.

So I am asking that the Jackson Lee amendment be accepted for the importance of providing for the continued support of environmental justice and equality for areas that are both urban and rural.

Let me finish by making this statement, Madam Chair.

This is an important cause because, as we look at the funds that are dealing with environmental justice, they increase youth involvement through science, technology, engineering, and math. They also help to promote clean energy, weatherization, cleanup, asset revitalization, and they help my constituents and the constituents of so many in this body whose older neighborhoods are sometimes impacted by older entities that are left behind in the neighborhood where seniors continue to live. I want to be able to walk those neighborhoods and make sure that my seniors can stay in their homes—small frame homes—and make sure that as they stay in their frame homes, that they will have the quality of life that all of us would like.

Again, I want to thank the chairman and ranking member. This is a tough job to do. And I would like to emphasize the importance of the funding for environmental justice and helping to continue, if you will, to put focus and emphasis on quality of life for homeowners, seniors, and people living in rural America and urban America.

Madam Chair, I want to thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for shepherding this legislation to the floor and for their commitment to preserving America's great natural environment and resources so that they can serve and be enjoyed by generations to come.

My amendment increases funding for DOE departmental administration by \$1,000,000 which should be used to enhance the Department's Environmental Justice Program activities.

Madam Chair, the Environmental Justice Program is an essential tool in the effort to improve the lives of low-income and minority communities as well as the environment at large.

Twenty years ago, on February 11, 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898, directing Federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations.

A healthy environment sustains a productive and healthy community which fosters personal and economic growth.

Maintaining funds for environmental justice that go to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges, and other organizations is imperative to protecting sustainability and growth of the community and environment.

The funding of these programs is vital to ensuring that minority groups are not placed at a disadvantage when it comes to the environ-

ment and the continued preservation of their homes.

Through education about the importance of environmental sustainability, we can promote a broader understanding of science and how citizens can improve their surroundings.

IMPORTANCE OF DOE'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Funds that would be awarded to this important cause would increase youth involvement in STEM fields and also promote clean energy, weatherization, clean-up, and asset revitalization. These improvements would provide protection to our most vulnerable groups.

This program provides better access to technology for underserved communities. Together, the Department of Energy and Department of Agriculture have distributed over 5,000 computers to low-income populations.

The Community Leaders Institute is another vital component of the Environmental Justice Program. It ensures that those in leadership positions understand what is happening in their communities and can therefore make informed decisions in regards to their communities.

In addition to promoting environmental sustainability, CLI also brings important factors including public health and economic development into the discussion for community leaders.

The CLI program has been expanded to better serve Native Americans and Alaska Natives, which is a prime example of how various other minority groups can be assisted as well.

Through community education efforts, teachers and students have also benefited by learning about radiation, radioactive waste management, and other related subjects.

The Department of Energy places interns and volunteers from minority institutions into energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. The DOE also works to increase low-income and minority access to STEM fields and help students attain graduate degrees as well as find employment.

Since 2002, the Tribal Energy Program has also funded 175 energy projects amounting to over \$41.8 million in order to help tribes invest in renewable sources of energy.

With the continuation of this kind of funding, we can provide clean energy options to our most underserved communities and help improve their environments, which will yield better health outcomes and greater public awareness.

In fiscal year 2013, the environmental justice program was not funded.

For fiscal year 2016, we ask that money be appropriated for the continuation of this vital initiative.

We must help our low-income and minority communities and ensure equality for those who are most vulnerable in our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me and support the Jackson Lee Amendment for the Environmental Justice Program.

I yield back the balance of my time. The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

For expenses necessary for the Office of the Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978,

\$46,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

ATOMIC ENERGY DEFENSE ACTIVITIES
NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION
WEAPONS ACTIVITIES

For Department of Energy expenses, including the purchase, construction, and acquisition of plant and capital equipment and other incidental expenses necessary for atomic energy defense weapons activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), including the acquisition or condemnation of any real property or any facility or for plant or facility acquisition, construction, or expansion, \$8,713,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That \$92,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chairwoman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YODER) having assumed the chair, Mrs. BLACK, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON.
RES. 11, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL
YEAR 2016

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 231, I call up the conference report on the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 231, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of April 29, 2015, at page H2516.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking everyone involved in getting us to this moment, where we have an agreement between the House and the Senate Budget conferees on a joint balanced budget proposal before the Congress.

All members of our committee and the conference committee and their

staffs should be commended for their hard work. And I want to commend specifically the staff directors on both sides of the aisle. Rick May on the Republican side and Tom Kahn on the Democratic side worked yeoman's service in making certain that their respective Members were prepared for the activity that we have gone through over the past 4 months.

We are set, Mr. Speaker, to adopt the first balanced budget of this kind in over a decade. That is important not only from an historical perspective but also for what it says about this Congress' commitment to doing the work that the American people sent us here to do, to get it done, to move forward with positive solutions for a healthier economy and a stronger, more secure nation.

□ 1615

What we have before us today, Mr. Speaker, is a budget that balances within 10 years without raising taxes and reduces spending over \$5 trillion over that period of time, which will not only get Washington's fiscal house in order, but pave the way for stronger economic growth, more jobs, and more opportunity.

It invests in our Nation's priorities, ensures a strong national defense, and saves, strengthens, and protects important programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I know our friends on the other side of the aisle, we will hear from them, and they may have a difference of opinion. If past is prologue, we are bound to hear from them a few items that they will talk about. They will say that our budget will, in their words, "hurt the middle class." That statement bears no resemblance to reality, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, what is hurting the middle class right now are the policies of our Democrat friends and President Obama that they have put in place, policies that have led to the worst economic recovery in the modern era, stagnant wages and underwhelming growth in our economy. We just heard today, Mr. Speaker, that the economy grew in the first quarter by 0.2 percent. There is a reason for that.

What we need to do is to get the economy rolling. The best thing we can do for the middle class—for hard-working American families—is to get our economy turned around so more jobs are being created and more dreams are being realized.

Guess what, Mr. Speaker. Our budget does just that through responsible reforms that make government more efficient, more effective, and more accountable by lifting the oppressive regulatory regime here in Washington off the backs of job creators and entrepreneurs and by fundamentally reforming our Tax Code so it is simpler, fairer, and American companies can better compete more effectively in the global economy.

By doing all of that, Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Budget Office tells us

that we will rein in deficits and lower government spending which will have a positive, long-term impact on the economy as well as the budget, benefits like increases in the pool of national savings and investment which would allow for more growth, job creation, and more economic security.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle are fond of attacking our efforts to save, strengthen, and protect programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. Why some folks here in Washington would be willing to let these programs go bankrupt is beyond me. Medicare and Social Security are going broke. That is not according to me. That is according to the trustees of the programs.

Medicaid is not working for patients or the doctors who would like to be able to serve them. The status quo is unsustainable, and doing nothing is indefensible. We can save these programs and improve them. We have to do so for the sake of their beneficiaries and for future generations, and our budget does just that.

Further, Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned before, our budget prioritizes the safety and security of the American people, channeling important resources to our men and women in uniform. We do so in a responsible way, in a manner consistent with current law, and without allowing further across-the-board cuts in defense spending.

There are those who criticize how we do that, and I respect that there are differences of opinion on this, but, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we can all agree that, when we are faced with hugely complex national security threats and growing unrest around the world, what we need to do is to find a way to move forward to ensure that those protecting our lives and our freedom have the support and the training that they need.

I look forward to an open and honest debate about the vision we have put forward to get our Nation's fiscal house in order, to strengthen our Nation's defenses, to protect our most vulnerable citizens, and to ensure a healthier economy for all Americans because that is exactly what this budget agreement does.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the agreement, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong opposition to this budget conference report.

I do agree with the gentleman on one issue, which is that the staff of the Budget Committee on both sides, Republican and Democrat, have worked very hard; but, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that the product that is brought before us today is the wrong direction for America.

We began with a House budget that was wrong for America, and we went to conference with a Senate budget that was wrong for America. It is not surprising, but it is still disappointing,