July 8, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chair
Subcomm. on Energy & Water Dev. et al.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairs Cole and Fleischmann,

I write on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (“NRDC”), a national, non-profit environmental organization with more than three million members and activists, along with an array of lawyers, scientists, and other environmental specialists who have worked since 1970 to protect the world’s natural resources, public health, and environment. We strongly object to the House’s bill making appropriations for Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies (“Energy and Water bill”) for fiscal year 2025 (“FY25”), the full committee markup for which is scheduled for tomorrow.¹

Energy and Water bills ought to be talismans of America’s ambition to reduce energy costs, drive energy technology breakthroughs, and build American energy independence. Unfortunately, the House majority has produced a measure that would stymie such efforts. First, the bill contains an astonishing 5.4 percent reduction in topline nondefense funding from FY24—a cut that is accomplished, in part, by once again attempting to ax the hugely successful Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Despite the innumerable benefits conferred by these legislative achievements to communities across the country, the House majority would rather see their benefits slashed than admit to their undisputed benefits. It is galling. Included in these misguided cuts is:

(i) a staggering 43% slashing of the Department of Energy’s (“DOE’s”) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (“EERE”), which plays a pivotal role in accelerating research, development, and demonstration of technologies and solutions that boost American economic competitiveness and job creation;² and

¹ H. COMM. ON APPROPRIATIONS, 118TH CONG., MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES (Comm. Print, as reported by H. Subcomm. on Energy & Water Dev., et al., June 28, 2024) (hereinafter “House E&W Bill”).

² Id. at 29:10–29:21. See generally ABOUT THE OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, U.S. DEP’T OF ENERGY, https://www.energy.gov/eere/about-office-energy-efficiency-and-renewable-energy (last visited July 8, 2024) (“EERE’s mission is to accelerate the research, development, demonstration, and deployment of technologies and solutions to equitably transition America to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050, and ensure the clean energy economy benefits all Americans, creating good paying jobs for the American people—especially workers and communities impacted by the energy transition and those historically underserved by the energy system and overburdened by pollution.”).
In summary, the House Energy and Water bill, as drafted, represents yet another dreadful pratfall by the flailing House Appropriations Committee majority. It is time to return to the serious business of lawmaking and produce a measure that encourages technological development and American energy security while protecting the future of our planet.

Sincerely,

Kyle T. Jones
Director, Federal Affairs

cc: The Hon. Rosa DeLauro, Committee on Appropriations, Ranking Member; The Hon. Marcy Kaptur, Subcomm. on Energy & Water Dev., et al., Ranking Member

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3 House E&W Bill, supra note 1, § 317. See generally OVERVIEW, LOAN PROGRAMS OFF., U.S. DEP’T OF ENERGY, https://www.energy.gov/lpo/overview (last visited July 8, 2024) (setting out the LPO’s mission as “the premier public financing partner that accelerates high-impact energy and manufacturing investments to advance America’s economic future”).

4 House E&W Bill, supra note 1, § 315.

5 Id. § 312.

6 Id. § 511.

7 Id. § 112.