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Appropriations Committee Releases Fiscal Year 2019 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill

Bill prioritizes safeguarding national security and the U.S. nuclear arsenal, and improving critical infrastructure

Washington, May 6 -

The House Appropriations Committee today released the fiscal year 2019 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The legislation provides annual funding for national defense nuclear weapons activities, the Army Corps of Engineers, various programs under the Department of Energy (DOE), and other related agencies.

The bill totals \$44.7 billion – \$1.5 billion above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level and \$8.17 billion above the President’s budget request. Funding is targeted toward national security efforts – including nuclear weapons activities – and energy and water infrastructure investments. This level is in line with the overall discretionary caps put in place through the two-year budget cap agreement.

“This legislation will provide the resources to ensure America has the strongest possible nuclear deterrent, which is critically important during this time of rapidly changing global dynamics and emerging threats,” House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen said. “This bill also makes important investments in our water and power infrastructure that will help our economy continue to grow and provide a platform on which our businesses, industries, and communities can thrive.”

Energy and Water Subcommittee Chairman Mike Simpson also commented on the importance of the bill:

“This is a well-balanced bill that places emphasis where it is needed most: meeting critical national security needs and investing in our nation's infrastructure,” Chairman Simpson said. “It prioritizes the maintenance and security of our nuclear weapons stockpile, while also supporting infrastructure projects and strategic research and development that will increase U.S. economic growth and competitiveness.”

Bill Highlights:

Nuclear Security – To address our national security needs and meet emerging threats from around the globe, the bill provides a total of \$15.3 billion for DOE’s nuclear weapons security programs, including Weapons Activities, Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation, and Naval Reactors – a \$644 million increase above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level and \$222 million above the President’s budget request. This funding will uphold the nation’s nuclear deterrence posture, maintain the safety and readiness of our weapons stockpile, and allow the U.S. to meet any nuclear threat. This includes:

- \$11.2 billion for Weapons Activities – \$558 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level – to maintain a strong nuclear deterrence posture and address aging infrastructure;
- \$1.79 billion for Naval Nuclear Reactors – \$169 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level – including funds for the Columbia-Class Ballistic Missile Submarine and for the nuclear spent fuel infrastructure needed to defuel the Navy’s aircraft carriers; and
- \$1.9 billion for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation – \$97 million below the fiscal year 2018 enacted level.

Energy Infrastructure Security – The bill makes targeted investments to protect our nation’s energy infrastructure against cyber and other attacks. Within this funding, \$117 million – \$41 million above the fiscal year 2018

level – is directed to research and development activities to strengthen the security of our electric grid. To support these activities further, the bill adopts the Administration’s budget proposal to create a new account, “Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response”.

Yucca Mountain – The bill continues congressional efforts to support the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository, providing a total of \$267.7 million, an increase of \$100 million above the budget request. Funding above the budget request will be used to accelerate progress toward meeting the federal government’s legal obligation to take responsibility for storing the nation’s nuclear waste.

Army Corps of Engineers – The Army Corps of Engineers is funded at \$7.28 billion, an increase of \$451 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level, which will provide a much needed influx of funds into the nation’s water resources infrastructure. The bill focuses funding on activities that will have an immediate impact on public safety, job creation, and economic growth, including those that help increase the functionality of our ports and waterways. For example, the bill provides:

- \$3.3 billion for navigation projects and studies, including \$1.6 billion in funding from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and full use of estimated annual revenues from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, to help advance American competitiveness and export ability; and
- \$2.1 billion to support public health and safety by funding flood and storm damage reduction activities, an increase of \$190 million above fiscal year 2018 and \$647 million above the budget request.

Environmental Cleanup – Included in the legislation is \$6.9 billion for environmental management activities, \$257 million below the fiscal year 2018 enacted level and \$268 million above the President’s budget request. This includes \$5.8 billion for Defense Environmental Cleanup to safely cleanup sites contaminated by previous nuclear weapons production at Hanford, Savannah River, Oak Ridge, Idaho, and other DOE sites.

Energy Programs – Funding for energy programs within DOE is \$13.4 billion – an increase of \$504 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level. This funding is targeted to encourage U.S. economic competitiveness and help advance the nation’s goal of an “all-of-the-above” solution to energy independence.

Research and development to advance coal, natural gas, oil, and other fossil energy technologies, which will help the country make greater use of our rich natural energy resources and help keep down energy costs, are funded at \$785 million – an increase of \$58 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level.

In addition, to promote innovation and growth in nuclear energy, research, development, and demonstration activities are funded at \$1.2 billion – \$128 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level.

Energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, which have already received significant investments in recent years, are cut by \$243 million compared to fiscal year 2018.

Science Research – The bill includes \$6.6 billion for science research – an increase of \$340 million above the 2018 enacted level. This funding supports basic energy research, the development of high-performance computing systems, and research into the next generation of energy sources. These investments lay the groundwork for a more secure energy future, helping to reduce the nation’s dependence on foreign oil and ensuring continued economic growth.

Bureau of Reclamation – The legislation contains \$1.56 billion – \$75 million above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level – for the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation to help manage, develop, and protect the water resources of Western states. The bill includes \$134 million for water storage projects authorized in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act.

Other policy items:

- The bill repeals the Waters of the United States rule.
- The bill restricts the application of the Clean Water Act in certain agricultural areas, including farm ponds and irrigation ditches.
- The bill includes language prohibiting new nuclear nonproliferation projects in Russia without certain notifications from the Secretary of Energy.
- The bill includes language allowing the possession of firearms on Corps of Engineers lands.
- The bill includes language regarding operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System hydroelectric dams.

For the complete text of the subcommittee draft of the FY 2019 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, please visit:

<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP10/20180507/108254/BILLS-115HR-SC-AP-FY2019-EnergyWater-SubcommitteeDraft.pdf>

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