Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chair
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Fleischmann and Ranking Member Kaptur:

As you prepare to draft the FY25 House Energy and Water Appropriations bill, we write, as members of the House bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, to request strong funding for energy innovation and carbon storage programs at the Department of Energy (DOE). Investing in DOE will not only help build out vital, next-generation energy sources and technologies, but also stimulate economic growth, lower consumer costs, and deploy resilient climate solutions.

Meeting the U.S. clean energy and national security goals will require increased access to large quanities of critical minerals that we currently and primarily source from abroad, often from adversarial nations including as China. **We ask for strong funding levels for the DOE Critical Minerals Crosscutting Initiative to ensure the Agency can carry out research and development (R&D) and support workforce development for secure critical mineral supply chains.** In particular, we request strong funding for DOE's Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM). These funds are needed to bolster R&D and commercialization of new critical mineral recovery techniques that offer enormous potential to increase domestic U.S. sourcing capacity and boost economic opportunity in fossil energy communities. By harnessing resources such as copper, nickel, cobalt, rare earth elements, and others found in mine waste, the U.S. can unlock sustainable sources of domestic critical minerals. Additionally, these projects could increase investment in regions impacted by mining closures, offering economic growth, alongside employment and environmental remediation opportunities. Financial backing from FECM is crucial to bring new critical mineral technologies online, including catalyzing the growth of mine tailing recovery.

While building out clean energy generation sources with these critical minerals we must also reduce emissions in hard-to-abate sectors. The industrial sector contributes nearly 30% of total U.S. emissions. Viable solutions that can lower energy costs, increase manufacturing jobs, and curb emissions exist but are currently under-deployed and require increased and consistent investment in research and innovation. Decreasing industrial emissions domestically will ensure that U.S. manufacturers can thrive in global markets around that are demanding cleaner products. **We request robust funding for DOE's Industrial Decarbonization Crosscutting Initiative to help reduce emissions in industrial industries to provide a competitive advantage for American manufacturers.** The Department should ensure coordination across industrial-decarbonization-related research, development, demonstration and deployment activities in DOE's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, Nuclear Energy, the Office of Science, and the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations programs.

In addition to curbing emissions, it is widely recognized that carbon storage solutions will be needed to combat change and decarbonize the U.S. economy. Permanent underground carbon injection and storage represents a readily available option for permanent carbon storage while other advanced Carbon Capture, Utilization, and

Sequestration (CCUS) technologies develop and work towards commercialization. The U.S. has the capacity to lead the world in the permanent underground storage of carbon, boasting potential for thousands of gigatons of onshore storage. However, it is vital that regulatory programs for carbon storage are designed and implemented to ensure environmental integrity and local community safety by including adequate demonstration of secure carbon storage and emergency response provisions. Only four Class VI permits have been issued to inject carbon dioxide underground in the U.S., despite over 120 applications pending review at the EPA. Tackling this backlog requires greater resources to hire and train staff and increase program efficiency. **Accordingly, we write to request report language calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to coordinate with the Department of Energy (DOE) to optimize its permit review process for Class VI wells, so that the U.S. can fulfill its potential as a global leader in underground carbon storage.** While the EPA has primary ownership over Class VI well permitting, DOE has expertise in the execution and characterization of Class VI wells through the National Energy Technology Lab and their decades-long Carbon SAFE initiative that supports creation and development of new wells. The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides $2.5 billion through FY26 for DOE to expand its carbon storage validation and testing program, including Carbon SAFE. While this funding allows Carbon SAFE to boost its demonstration and scale-up efforts, report language should be provided to clarify that DOE can use IIJA funding to support efficient technical Class VI permit reviews, in addition to carbon storage research purposes. **We request the following report language:**

> *The Committee supports the use of resources provided by P.L 117-58 for DOE carbon storage validation and testing to support the processing of Class VI permits for Geologic Sequestration of Carbon Dioxide by the Environmental Protection Agency and by states with primary enforcement authority.*

Thank you for your leadership. We commend you for your long-standing support of programs that underpin American prosperity, energy security, and climate resilience. The Climate Solutions Caucus looks forward to continuing to work with you to bolster such efforts.

Sincerely,

Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress

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