April 25, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 21502

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
2306 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Members Leahy and Granger:

We write to express our strong support for the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), Advanced Research Programs Agency - Energy (ARPA-E), and National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and encourage you to continue, at a minimum, current funding levels in FY 2020. Their vital programs support and foster the global leadership of the United States in cutting-edge energy research, innovation and competitiveness, creating trillions of dollars in business opportunities for American industry. We oppose the Administration's proposed deep cuts in funding as outlined in its FY 2020 budget.

At a time when global competitors are dramatically increasing research and development for renewable energy technologies, the Administration has proposed cutting more than $2.4 billion from programs supporting energy innovation and deployment, an 88 percent decrease from current funding levels. The proposed budget includes a $2.04 billion (86 percent) cut to EERE and the elimination of ARPA-E. We believe that these cuts would jeopardize America's leadership in cutting-edge research on clean energy technologies and harm our country's overall competitiveness in a rapidly growing global industry that presents a multi-trillion-dollar business opportunity.

The Department of Energy - through EERE, ARPA-E, NREL and other national labs - has been instrumental in the research, development and deployment of many important electric power innovations. Investments made through EERE have contributed to increased clean energy output, improved grid reliability and resiliency, decreased deployment barriers, and reduced costs, among other benefits. ARPA-E has provided critical financial support to early-stage projects in the energy sector. This model has proven successful. Since 2009, 145 ARPA-E projects spanning an array of technologies (e.g. energy storage, wind, solar, hydropower and marine energy, and carbon capture and sequestration) have secured more than $2.9 billion in private sector investment. Finally, NREL has conducted authoritative assessments and analyses, secured more than 100 patents, and been the source of game-changing breakthroughs across multiple renewable energy technologies. NREL's work has improved productivity and reduced the cost of wind turbines, solar panels, geothermal systems, hydropower and pumped storage, marine energy and hydrokinetics, biofuels, electric vehicles and energy storage systems. NREL has also been a critical partner for the private-sector through hundreds of technology partnerships.

The work done by EERE, ARPA-E and NREL fills a critical gap in research and development at a time when the United States is desperately in need of grid modernization, and at risk of falling behind other countries, like China, that are racing to develop the next generation of energy technologies. We respectfully urge you to continue, at a minimum, current funding levels for these important clean energy innovation programs, and to oppose the Administration's proposed cuts to the Department of Energy's FY 2020 Budget.

Please feel free to contact us for additional information, or if we can be of help in any way.

Sincerely,

American Council on Renewable Energy
American Wind Energy Association
Biomass Power Association
Energy Storage Association
Geothermal Resources Council
National Hydropower Association
Solar Energy Industries Association