

OPENING STATEMENT
The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
Office of Science
Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request
March 20, 2012

Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this hearing to order. We have before us today Dr. Bill Brinkman, Director of the Office of Science, to discuss the Department's fiscal year 2013 request. Dr. Brinkman, welcome to the subcommittee.

Dr. Brinkman, although most of our constituents may not be aware that the Department of Energy is one of the major governmental supporters of basic science, I'm well aware of the importance of your work. The scientists and technicians under your direction are responsible for world-leading advances in technology, science, and intellectual property, and I thank you and all of them for your work.

Last year we fought hard, given the limited funds we had available, to ensure that your office was fully supported. The final Act provided \$4.9 billion, a \$46 million increase – no small change when every dollar is carefully allocated among competing priorities.

That \$4.9 billion, however, was \$500 million below the President's request last year. I know the request was based upon a desire to double funding for basic science research across the government, but this plan is simply not achievable under our current budget constraints.

Your current budget request seems to begin to recognize this reality. At \$5 billion, it is a \$103 million increase over last year. And you make some hard choices within this request. I likely will not agree with every choice you made – and we will be exploring these during our discussions today – but I appreciate that you are now making them.

Unfortunately, even though your budget request is more reasonable, it still includes investments which were only supportable under the “doubling” path – not under a more realistic “flat” funding outlook. We need to understand how the Administration is going to shift its longer-term planning, which is why in the conference agreement last year we directed you to provide the Committee with a “flat” budget scenario by February 10th. This report has not been submitted, and you can be sure that we will ask why it has not.

Dr. Brinkman, please ensure that the hearing record, the questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the subcommittee are delivered in final form to the subcommittee no later than four weeks from the time you receive them. Members who have additional questions for the record will have until close of business tomorrow to provide them to the Subcommittee office.

####