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GRIFFITH AND GIL NOMINATIONS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

TO

CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF PRESTON WELLS GRIFFITH III TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND DR. DARIO GIL TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY FOR SCIENCE

APRIL 10, 2025

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GRIFFITH AND GIL NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room SD–366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mike Lee, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE LEE, U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will come to order.

Welcome to the Committee's fourth nomination hearing in the 119th Congress. Today, we will receive testimony from two distinguished Americans who have been nominated by President Trump for senior offices within our Committee's jurisdiction, and we have a lot to cover in today's discussions. So first will be Preston Wells Griffith III, nominated to be Under Secretary of Energy, and second will be Dr. Dario Gil, nominated to be Under Secretary of the Department of Energy for Science. And finally, I have been informed this morning that Ms. Kathleen Sgamma has withdrawn her consideration to be the Director of the Bureau of Land Management at the Department of the Interior. These nominees deserve to be confirmed, and each has my strong support. I thank President Trump for nominating them and giving us the chance to review them.

As I mentioned a moment ago, I was informed by the White House earlier today that one of the nominees scheduled for consideration at today's hearing, Kathleen Sgamma, nominated to serve as the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, is withdrawn from consideration. That leaves us with two nominees before the Committee, Preston Wells Griffith III, again, nominated to be Under Secretary of Energy, and Dr. Dario Gil, nominated to serve as Under Secretary of Energy for Science. Each of these positions carries significant responsibility and each nominee will, if confirmed, help shape the future of American energy policy and scientific innovation.

Mr. Griffith is well known to many of us. He served at the Department of Energy, at the Office of Management and Budget, and at the White House during the first Trump Administration. If confirmed, he will be tasked with overseeing some of the Department of Energy's most consequential applied energy programs at a time when our nation's electric power grid is being stressed by a combination of reckless regulatory mandates, rapid retirements of

baseload capacity, and overreliance on intermittent sources of power. I look forward to hearing how Mr. Griffith plans to course correct and ensure that DOE policies serve energy affordability, reliability, and national security interests.

Dr. Gil would lead the Department of Energy's sprawling science portfolio, which includes the 17 critical national laboratories. These labs are home to some of the most advanced research on earth, but they have also become vulnerable to infiltration by hostile foreign interests. I look forward to hearing about how Dr. Gil will defend the labs from espionage, protect taxpayer investment, and refocus the Department of Energy's science mission on basic energy research that strengthens the U.S. economy.

These nominees bring unique perspective and valuable experience to their respective positions, and I look forward to hearing how they intend to fulfill the responsibilities of their respective roles and how they will bring accountability, transparency, and balance to the agencies that they have been asked to head.

With that, I now recognize our Ranking Member, Senator Heinrich.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARTIN HEINRICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Chairman Lee, and welcome Mr. Griffith and Dr. Gil.

The Committee meets this morning to consider the nominations of Mr. Griffith to be Under Secretary of Energy and Dr. Gil to be Under Secretary of Science. I understand that Ms. Sgamma will not be appearing before this Committee today.

The Office of Under Secretary of Energy was established in 1977 to perform functions and duties assigned by the Secretary, and the Office of Under Secretary for Science was added in 2005 to serve as the Secretary's science and technology advisor, to oversee the Department's research and development programs, and to carry out additional duties assigned by the Secretary. The flexibility built into these two offices has enabled different Secretaries to shift functions and programs between the two Under Secretaries. Most recently, Secretary Granholm combined both the Science and Energy offices under the Under Secretary for Science, and she consolidated the Department's Loan and Infrastructure programs under the Under Secretary of Energy, renaming the office as the Under Secretary for Infrastructure. I am told that Secretary Wright has kept Secretary Granholm's organizational structure, at least for now, but I am most interested to hear from Dr. Gil and Mr. Griffith what issues they believe will be in their portfolios, whether there are any plans or if there have been discussions about reorganizing these offices.

Overhanging our hearing this morning are, of course, the reductions in the Department's workforce, the grant and loan funding freezes, the contract uncertainties, and the so-called hit list of programs targeted for termination, all of which threaten the important work of the Department.

I will be particularly interested to hear from the two Under Secretary nominees how they will balance their competing obligations to the President who has nominated them and the statutory re-

quirements enacted by Congress governing the Department's programs.

Thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

The rules of the Committee require that all nominees appearing before this Committee be sworn in in connection with their testimony. So, if you would both please stand and raise your right hands, I will administer the oath.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to provide to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

[Witness panel sworn.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Now, you may be seated. I will have each of you begin your opening statements in a moment, but there are just three questions that are typically posed by the Committee before we begin this process for nominees.

First, will you be available to appear before the Committee and other Congressional Committees to represent departmental positions and respond to issues of concern to Congress, should you be confirmed?

Mr. Griffith.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Gil.

Dr. GIL. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Second, are you aware of any personal holdings, investments, or interests that could constitute a conflict of interest or create the appearance of such a conflict, should you be confirmed and assume the office to which you have been nominated by the President?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No, Chairman.

Dr. GIL. No.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And third, are you involved in or do you have any assets in a blind trust?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No.

Dr. GIL. I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

With that, we will have you give your opening introductory remarks.

Mr. Griffith, we'll start with you, and please feel free to introduce any family you may have brought with you. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF PRESTON WELLS GRIFFITH III, NOMINATED TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of this Committee, it is a true honor to appear before this Committee today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Under Secretary of Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. I want to thank President Trump for nominating me to this important position. I am grateful for the confidence that he and Energy Secretary Wright have placed in me.

Before I begin my formal remarks, I would like to introduce the most important part of my life—my family. Joining me today is my wife, Catherine. In fact, today marks our 10th wedding anniversary, and she is thrilled to be celebrating here in the Senate hearing room.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. You are under oath, sir.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRIFFITH. I am also proud to have our eight-year-old son, Wells, here with us as well. Their unwavering love, support, and patience have made this moment possible. I would also like to recognize my mother, Donata, and my father, Preston, who is courageously battling ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, a horrible and progressive neurodegenerative disease. Since I was a boy, his strength has inspired me every day and does even more so today. Lastly, I am joined by many dear friends in the audience, and I want to acknowledge my brother and three sisters and their families. They are all watching from home down in Alabama, probably texting me trying to figure out how to get the link to work.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRIFFITH. But I wouldn't be here without their support.

Like President Trump and Secretary Wright, I have a deep passion for public service and an appreciation for the role that energy plays in our daily lives. My first impressions about energy came as a young boy at our family-owned full-service gas station in Mobile, Alabama. My grandfather started working there after returning from the Korean War and eventually bought it. My father began working there when he was 13, and worked there until around 2020, when he was officially diagnosed with ALS and retired. Growing up, I spent my summers and holidays working alongside him pumping gas, changing tires, and washing windows in the Alabama heat. It was there that I first understood the real-world impact of energy—not in theory, but in practice. I remember helping my dad change the gas price sign and learning about OPEC before I knew what the letters stood for. And when gas prices were high, I saw, firsthand, customers having to choose between putting five or ten dollars in the tank or buying groceries. When energy costs were high, Americans felt it immediately. Energy wasn't just a commodity, it was a lifeline.

Above the three-bay garage doors at the station was a sign that read: "Service Is Our Business." That motto stuck with me, and in many ways, it shaped my life's path. It's what brought me to public service. Since leaving our family gas station, I had the privilege of serving the American people in multiple roles in the Federal Government. In President Trump's first administration, I had the opportunity to work at the Department of Energy in the Secretary's office and later as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs. I then served at the White House as a Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Energy and Environment at the National Security Council, and later at the U.S. Development Finance Corporation. In each of these roles, I worked alongside many career public servants, scientists, engineers, and professionals who are among the best in government. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I look forward to returning

to work with them and to serve with the same spirit of excellence and humility.

I have seen firsthand the role that the Department of Energy and its 17 National Labs play in securing America's energy future—through research and innovation to unlocking our vast natural resources and technologies to scientific advancement. From fueling our economy to powering AI data centers to securing our national defense, energy is foundational to America's future. America must lead, not follow, in this next era of energy transformation. If confirmed, I will work every day to advance the Department's mission efficiently and effectively and deliver on the President's priorities, winning the AI arms race, lowering energy costs for Americans, advancing U.S. leadership in innovation, and ensuring Americans have access to affordable, reliable, and secure energy.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Griffith follows:]

Testimony of Preston "Wells" Griffith
Nominee for the Position of Under Secretary of Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 10, 2025

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and distinguished members of the Committee:

It is a true honor to appear before this committee today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Under Secretary of Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. I want to thank President Trump for nominating me to this important position, and I am grateful for the confidence he and Energy Secretary Wright have placed in me.

Before I begin my formal remarks, I would like to introduce the most important people in my life — my family. Joining me today is my wife, Catherine. In fact, today marks our 10th wedding anniversary and she's thrilled we are celebrating with a Senate hearing. I'm also proud to have our 8-year-old son, Wells, here with us. Their unwavering love, patience, and support have made this moment possible.

I would also like to recognize my mother, Donata, and my father, Preston, who is courageously battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease), a horrible and progressive neurodegenerative disease. Since I was a boy, his strength has inspired me every day – and does even more so today. Lastly, I am joined by many dear friends in the audience, and I want to acknowledge my brother, sisters, and their families, who couldn't be here in person but are watching from home. I would not be here without their support.

Like President Trump and Secretary Wright, I have a deep passion for public service and an appreciation for the role that energy plays in our lives. My first impressions about energy came as a young boy at our family-owned full-service gas station in Mobile, Alabama.

My grandfather started working at the station after returning from the Korean War and eventually bought it. My father began working there when he was 13 years old, and worked there until 2020, after he was officially diagnosed with ALS and had to retire.

Growing up, I spent my summers and holidays working alongside him — pumping gas, changing tires, washing windows in the Alabama heat. It was there that I first understood the real-world impact of energy — not in theory, but in practice.

I remember helping my dad change the gas price sign – learning about OPEC before I even knew what those letters stood for. And when gas prices were high, seeing firsthand customers choose between putting five or ten dollars in their tanks or buying groceries. When energy costs were high, Americans felt it immediately.

Energy wasn't just a commodity — it was a lifeline.

Above the three-bay garage doors at our station was a sign that read: *"Service is Our Business."* That motto stuck with me, and in many ways, it shaped my life's path. It's what brought me to public service.

Since leaving our family's gas station, I've had the privilege of serving the American people in multiple roles within the federal government. In President Trump's first administration, I had the opportunity to work in the Secretary's office at the Department of Energy and later as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs. I then served at the White House as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Energy and Environment at the National Security Council, and also at the U.S. Development Finance Corporation.

In each of these roles, I worked alongside many career public servants, scientists, engineers, and professionals who are among the best in government. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I look forward to returning to work with them — and to serve with the same spirit of excellence and humility.

I have seen firsthand the role that the Department of Energy and its 17 National Labs play in securing America's energy future — through research and innovation to unlocking our vast energy resources and technologies to scientific advancements. From fueling our economy to powering AI data centers to securing our national defense, energy is foundational to America's future. America must lead — not follow — in this next era of energy transformation.

If confirmed, I will work every day to advance the Department's mission efficiently and effectively and deliver on the President's priorities: winning the AI arms race, lowering energy costs, advancing U.S. leadership in innovation, and ensuring Americans have access to affordable, reliable, and secure energy.

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee — thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Dr. Gil.

STATEMENT OF DR. DARIO GIL, NOMINATED TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY FOR SCIENCE

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of the Committee. It is an honor to be here, and I want to thank President Trump and Secretary Wright for the trust that they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I look forward to working with all the members of this Committee and to seek your guidance.

I would like to recognize the members of my family who have joined me today. My lovely wife of 25 years, Amanda; my daughters, Sofía and Elena; my parents-in-law, Steve and Heidi Godsoe, who have traveled from Maine; my brother Román, who has done so from Spain, and many extended friends and colleagues.

As you may tell from my accent, I am an immigrant. It is an experience and an identity that has greatly shaped me, and it will be the honor of my life to have the opportunity to serve the United States, which has given me more than I could have dreamed. I have been passionate about science and engineering since I was a teenager, when I first came to the U.S. as an exchange student from Spain. I became fascinated and ultimately became an expert in nanotechnology, a world measured in distances that are 100,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. As Feynman stated, it is a world that has "plenty of room at the bottom." And plenty indeed, as by the end of this decade, we will be fabricating chips that will have one trillion transistors, each engineered with atomic precision.

During my grad-school years at MIT, I was captivated by the beauty of quantum mechanics. It was a necessity to understand the nanoworld, and it was then that I was first exposed to the idea of quantum information. A little over a decade later, I had the great privilege to work with my IBM Research team to create, in May 2016, the world's first cloud-accessible quantum computer. That seminal event, along with the 80 quantum computers we have built since, were instrumental in creating the nascent, yet vibrant, quantum computing industry. This industry of the future is one that the U.S. must dominate, as it has profound scientific, economic, and national security implications. It is time to mobilize the nation's best teams to achieve the final frontier of building an error-corrected quantum supercomputer before the end of this decade.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to ensure that America wins this great race. Which brings me to the core of our current revolution in computing—AI. The field is going through a renaissance, with a pace of progress unlike anything I have witnessed in my 25-plus year career. Dario Amodei, CEO of Anthropic, has evocatively referred to the potential of AI as having "a country of geniuses in a datacenter." Discoveries that would have taken us decades will become possible in years.

The combination of inspiring missions, broad and deep scientific expertise, singular infrastructure, and nation-scale resources make the U.S. National Labs the world's greatest platform of scientific

discovery in the physical sciences. The powerful aspect of this new era of accelerated discovery—powered by what I like to summarize as the world of "bits + neurons + qubits"—has the potential to help the entire science, national security, and energy portfolio of the National Lab complex, much like secure, reliable, and affordable energy can improve the lives of all our citizens and accelerate the growth of the entire American economy. Imagine a future in which fusion, the grand goal of building a star on earth, becomes the first technology fully driven by the AI revolution. Using the combined power of AI and supercomputers to develop a system model to steer fusion innovation, we can shave decades off development timelines. Imagine a portfolio of similar grand challenges, from novel catalysts to new fertilizers, and beyond. We can usher a new era of sustainable abundance and American dynamism.

If confirmed, I will bring to this role 22 years of private industry experience, having served as director of one of the world's largest and most influential corporate research laboratories. I will bring my commitment to work across sectors, having served on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, as a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and for the last five years, as a member of the National Science Board, of which I am currently the Chairman. And I hope that in your consideration of this nomination that I will have the privilege to learn from and to work with all of you.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Heinrich, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Gil follows:]

Testimony of Dr. Darío Gil
Nominee for the Position of Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 10, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to be here, and I want to thank President Trump and Energy Secretary Wright for the trust they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I look forward to working with all the members of this committee and to seek your guidance.

I would like to recognize the members of my family who have joined me today. My lovely wife of 25 years, Amanda; my daughters Sofía and Elena; my parents-in-law, Steve and Heidi Godsoe, who have traveled from Maine; my brother Román, who has done so from Spain, and many extended friends and colleagues.

As you may tell from my accent, I am an immigrant. It is an experience and an identity that has greatly shaped me, and it will be the honor of my life to have the opportunity to serve the United States, which has given me more than I could have dreamed.

I have been passionate about science and engineering since I was a teenager, when I first came to the U.S. as an exchange student from Spain. I became fascinated and ultimately became an expert in nanotechnology, a world measured in distances that are 100,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. As Feynman stated, it is a world that has "plenty of room at the bottom". And plenty indeed, as by the end of this decade we will be fabricating chips that will have one trillion transistors, each engineered with atomic precision.

During my grad-school years at MIT, I was captivated by the beauty of quantum mechanics. It was a necessity to understand the nanoworld, and it was then that I was first exposed to the idea of quantum information. A little over a decade later, I had the great privilege to work with my IBM Research team to create, in May 2016, the world's first cloud-accessible quantum computer. That seminal event, along with the 80 quantum computers we built since, were instrumental in creating the nascent, yet vibrant, quantum computing industry. This industry of the future is one that the U.S. must dominate, as it has profound scientific, economic, and national security implications. It is time to mobilize the Nation's best teams to achieve the final frontier of building an error-corrected quantum supercomputer before the end of this decade. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to ensure that America wins this great race.

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having “a country of geniuses in a datacenter”. Discoveries that would have taken us decades will become possible in years.

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If confirmed, I will bring to this role 22 years of private industry experience, having served as director of one of the world’s largest and most influential corporate research laboratories. I will bring my commitment to work across sectors, having served on the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, as a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and for the last 5 years, as a member of the National Science Board, of which I am currently the Chairman.

And I hope that in your consideration of this nomination I will have the privilege to learn from, and to work with, all of you. Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

We will now begin five-minute rounds, alternating between Republicans and Democrats in order of seniority, as modified by the earlybird rule. By the way, I really am glad that Catherine is here on your tenth anniversary, and so grateful that she is able to put on a happy face because still, a lot of people wouldn't want to necessarily celebrate their tenth anniversary this way. So Catherine, we will try to make it as pleasant as possible. And we look forward to one day holding a nomination hearing for Preston Wells Griffith IV, when he is nominated to a position like this.

Mr. Griffith, we will start with you. If you are confirmed as Under Secretary of Energy, you will oversee the R&D that goes into funding a lot of innovation related to our electric power generation sector. Nuclear, coal, oil, natural gas, geothermal, all these will play a critical role in meeting the demand challenge that we are facing due to growth in AI, looking specifically at dispatchable and baseload sources of power. If confirmed, what role do you think the offices that will be under your purview in that position should play in meeting that challenge, and how important do you think innovations, particularly in the field of nuclear and natural gas might be to meeting demand growth?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator, for your question, and thank you for spending time with us in your office. I really enjoyed our visit. That's the exciting thing about this opportunity, if I am confirmed. You know, I have mentioned growing up in a gas station as a boy—it almost tracks with the history of the Department of Energy, where we went from energy-scarce to energy-abundant. In the 70s, or even in the Manhattan Project, we faced a lot of energy challenges, and now I think we are hitting that next energy challenge with powering AI, keeping energy affordable, reliable, and secure for all Americans, and ensuring that we remain competitive.

For me, I think, in this role, should I be confirmed, it will be to leverage all the resources, the expertise, and the funding across the program offices to deliver on the President's agenda to accomplish the shared goals and ensure that America remains at the top of the global energy systems and unleashes that abundance here at home and also abroad. Especially with nuclear and natural gas, we have seen the benefits of that since the shale revolution. A lot of that technology came out of the Department, but to continue to double down, using the expertise of the great Department of Energy engineers and scientists to leverage these energy technologies and sources for America, and again, for our partners and allies, especially with nuclear, and making sure the Generation IV reactors and the next generation of reactors come to market and we ensure that our supply chains are abundant and secure, from uranium production, enrichment, and fuel.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. Gil, throughout your career in the private sector, including and especially during your tenure at IBM, you have undoubtedly become aware of the lengths to which China has gone to steal intellectual property and technological advances in one way or another. Given the cutting-edge research that is conducted at U.S. national labs, which will be under your supervision in this position, if you are confirmed, how do you plan to ensure that these sensitive inno-

vations are protected from foreign espionage and from theft, especially from China?

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question, and again, I greatly appreciated the time that you spent with us prior to the hearing. This topic is, I know, one that you are very passionate about, as are many members of the Committee. It is of the utmost importance. There is no doubt that these technologies in AI, quantum, and fusion, and so on, are some of the most consequential technologies in the world, and we have to do everything in our power to protect it. I am keenly aware that theft of intellectual property—China has been a very bad actor in this space. And I am very much committed to working with you and all the members of the Committee to implement ways and improvements with which we can protect our most sensitive technology that we develop in the nation.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you perceived there being lapses from outside the Department? Are there things you have been able to observe that cause you concern about China's ability to infiltrate, spy, and steal some of that intellectual property?

Dr. GIL. Mr. Chairman, yes, I have been aware, and unfortunately, been not only sensitized but have had to deal with consequences of, you know, dealing with theft from China in the area of semiconductors, in the area of quantum, and so on. Through my career, you know, we have been enormously aware of the need to protect technology. I have done so in my role at IBM, and if confirmed, I look forward to doing so, to learn from all the good actions that are happening in the Department, but I know in this area there is a lot more to be done, and I look forward to working with you to achieve it.

The CHAIRMAN. Great.

My time is expired. So we will follow up more on that later. We will turn it over to Senator Heinrich.

In just a moment, I have to run to cast a vote in another committee. Don't be alarmed, I will be right back.

Senator HEINRICH [presiding]. Thank you, Chairman.

The strength of our national labs lies in the diversity of their science and engineering programs. And even at nuclear weapons facilities, like Los Alamos and Sandia, a key factor in attracting and retaining top talent is the opportunity for scientists to collaborate with leading experts across a wide range of fields. I want to know if I have your commitments that you will not use your positions to reduce the research capabilities and staffing for open science at our DOE national labs?

We will start with you, Mr. Griffith and then go to Dr. Gil.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your time. I enjoyed visiting with you before this hearing.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you.

Mr. GRIFFITH. You know, you nailed it. The Department and the labs have some of the most talented scientists, engineers, and employees in the entire Federal Government. Obviously, we are not in the Department yet, but should we be confirmed, I am committed to working with the Secretary and you and this Committee to make sure that we deliver the efficient use of government resources and

maintain American leadership in research innovation, largely driven by the employees or the civil servants at the Department.

Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Gil.

Dr. GIL. Senator, again, thank you. I really enjoyed the conversation we had. And on this topic, I could not agree with you more on the importance of the open science component in the laboratory complex. So I will say two comments around that. One, I was sensitized to the importance of this topic while discussing with the Director of Sandia National Laboratory the observation that while the open science element that is funded under the Office of Science may be a small fraction of the budget of Sandia National Lab, in his words, it was almost the most important part. And the reason for that was because it allows us to attract and retain the talent necessary to fulfill the mission, even in the context of the nuclear weapons laboratories. And that is something that I have keenly been aware of throughout my career, that you have to allow scientists an element of that flexibility to keep their intellectual curiosity, to keep growing, to think of out-of-the-box ideas.

So you have my total commitment of the appreciation and the importance of open science through the entire national laboratory complex.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Dr. Gil.

Mr. Griffith, not an easy one for you, I suspect, but I will be curious what your answer is. You have sworn under oath today that you will make yourself available to testify to Congress, but when the House of Representatives subpoenaed you to testify six years ago, you didn't comply with their subpoena. You didn't appear before the House. So to be clear, when you swore to appear, was your commitment to testify unconditionally?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, Senator, thank you for that question. As you know, that subpoena was related to the President's impeachment. The subpoena did not allow for White House counsel to be present, and thus the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel deemed it invalid and instructed us not to appear because it did not protect executive privilege for the President. So I am committed to following the law, showing up before this Committee without subpoena, voluntarily, and working with you and the members of this Committee to execute the mission of the Department of Energy.

Senator HEINRICH. For both of you—the power to rescind obligated funds rests with Congress. It doesn't rest with the executive, the Department, or the Department of Government Efficiency, whatever that is. Do you both agree that the power to rescind obligated funds rests with the legislative branch?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator.

Obviously, Congress has the power of the purse. Should I be confirmed, I will, first and foremost, follow the law on executing the laws of this body in disbursing government funds, making decisions around disbursement in the most efficient and effective way possible while being a good steward of American taxpayer dollars.

Senator HEINRICH. Dr. Gil.

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

I am absolutely committed to follow the law and follow Congressional direction on appropriated funds.

Senator HEINRICH. Great.

Mr. Griffith, would you agree that in order to keep energy prices affordable for consumers, that we need an energy strategy right now focused on rapidly expanding production from basically all available sources, including from things like renewables and storage?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator.

Absolutely, we need all electrons and we need them in a fast rate to meet the growing demand from AI, to meet the reshoring of American manufacturing, and to keep prices low for American consumers, and I think it's imperative that we, as the Department's history has shown, bring all those resources to bear for all energy sources that are secure, reliable, and affordable.

Senator HEINRICH. My time is expired.

Senator Hyde-Smith.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you very much, and I just want to congratulate all of you for being here today. These families are so proud of you and it's so obvious. And I want to tell you how much I appreciate your character and your trust and the confidence we can certainly have in you to do everything you are supposed to be doing, legally and binding, to this Congress. I appreciate that.

Dr. Gil, the United States has the opportunity to be a leader in integrating new technologies, whether it's traditional drilling, nuclear reactors, or hydrogen. These innovations could help meet growing demands for high-tech tools, such as artificial intelligence, that you have talked about, that can be applied in virtually every sector of our society, from energy production, to agriculture, to manufacturing. During our meeting, you discussed that the United States has the opportunity to be bolder and inspire new generations. It is no secret that we are falling behind China in nuclear and hydrogen technologies.

So what do you see as the Department's biggest challenges to fostering bolder innovations, and what steps need to be taken for the United States to become more of a world leader in energy and technology development?

Dr. GIL. Well, thank you, Senator. Meeting with you was such a great pleasure, and I really valued the conversation. And you ask such an important question because we are, indeed, in a great race in leading the energies of the future and the science and technology portfolio of the future. So the stakes could not be higher. The positive message that I want to send is that we also have, within our nation, the capability to do what it takes to succeed. But to do that, we have to be very clear in our ambitions in energy, on making sure that we unleash all forms of American energy, and to make sure that we have a secure and reliable and affordable portfolio of energy sources, including the ones that you listed.

I think the science and technology domain, simply put—we just have to succeed in winning the AI race, quantum, in biotechnology, fusion technology. But I will leave you with this thought—what we are going to witness in the next four or five years are some of the most consequential advancements in technology, not just in the last 100 years, but probably that have ever been achieved. And you have my commitment to make sure that we, if confirmed, that we are going to marshal every resource that we have on working col-

laboratively with Wells and Secretary Wright and the entire team to make sure we succeed in this great race.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you so much.

And Mr. Griffith, I am actually going to ask you the same question on the challenges, but I want you to know how much I appreciate our Mississippi connections, and the service that you did our state that we are still benefiting from, and we are very proud that we had the opportunity to have you then and we are very proud of where you are now.

So what are the challenges, do you think, that you are facing based on that same line of questioning?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, Senator, thank you for the question. It was great visiting with you, and thanks for all you do for the State of Mississippi. I enjoyed my time there, early in my career, and for law school.

I think, you know, we have a big energy gap to fill in the future. Electricity demand is skyrocketing. We have to bring a lot more electrons to the grid. We have to feed the rising demand for AI, for the reshoring of manufacturing in the United States, and keeping our prices low, as well as sharing that abundance with our partners and allies. So I see this as, you know, just like the Manhattan Project or when the Department of Energy started with the Arab oil embargo. This is a pivotal time for us to meet the challenges of energy—in the present and the future. And with all the technologies and science that have come out of the Department over the last 30 to 40 years, we look forward to taking those to market and deploying them commercially to fuel America's future and keep prices low and execute the President's agenda.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you very much, and I certainly enjoyed your stories about the gas station, because Mississippi is a rural state, and especially with so much timber industry—when you are filling up a 200-gallon tank because you are a log truck about to go to harvest in the woods, that is such—it makes such a difference, and the future is so bright with people like you, and I certainly appreciate that.

Both of you discussed with me that you viewed these roles together as a team, and that is very evident today, the way you are answering things. Should the Department continue partnering with universities and private companies that are willing to make investments in research and our energy and high-tech future, and how do you see the continued partnerships benefiting our country?

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

It's an indispensable strategy to succeed. The United States spends about $850 billion a year in R&D—$600 billion of that is in the private sector doing R&D. So we have to do everything in our power to team, as you correctly pointed out, and work collaboratively in ways that achieve the national mission, and the university ecosystem has an indispensable role for that, as does the private sector that conducts R&D.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Did you want to address that at all, Mr. Griffith?

Mr. GRIFFITH. So Mr. Gil and I, I think, hopefully will be a good team, should we be confirmed. We look forward to working together and executing our mission.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. So the team speaks as one.
[Laughter.]
Senator HYDE-SMITH. We will go to Senator King.
Senator HEINRICH. So, what he said.
[Laughter.]
Senator HEINRICH. Senator King.
Senator KING. Thank you very much, and thanks to our witnesses. You are both going into critical jobs, and as you mentioned, Dr. Gil, the next few years could be incredibly important in terms of to the development of technology.
One of the technologies I am most interested in is storage. We are talking about development of the grid and stabilization of the grid, and I hope that both of you will remain committed to research and deployment of storage capacity on the grid, because I think that is part of the solution. Do you agree, Dr. Gil?
Dr. GIL. Thank you, Senator, for the question.
Let me also just say that, you know, since you are representing Maine, that I have had a long connection with Maine. My wife and Steve and Heidi Godsoe are here from Maine. So I have been going for many decades.
Senator KING. Wonderful.
Dr. GIL. So it's a pleasure.
Senator KING. Tell her to tell her in-laws they saw me working.
[Laughter.]
Dr. GIL. Will do so.
Senator KING. Thank you.
Dr. GIL. Will do so.
And yes, I completely agree on the importance of storage technology. It's an essential part, not only already, you know, in present electricity systems, but also in the future. I will also point out that within the science portfolio of the Department, we also have a lot of opportunity to accelerate the opportunity for discovery of novel and more safe and efficient storage technologies. So the commitment is two-fold—both on the recognition of the importance that storage plays in our energy system, but also that we have to do a lot of discovery to make sure that we can take, you know, a very significant leap forward, which we can do by harnessing these capabilities on AI and in the future of quantum computing as well.
Senator KING. Thank you.
Mr. Griffith, I presume you believe that storage is part of all of the above?
Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, Senator, absolutely. Thank you for your question. It's the holy grail. We need all energy sources, technology, and we need to bring them all to bear to meet this growing demand.
Senator KING. Thank you.
Mr. Griffith, I want to talk about three offices in the Department of Energy. The elephant in the room here is staffing cuts, and I just worry about these particular offices because of the important role they play. First is the Grid Deployment Office. As you have already pointed out, we are headed into a time of dramatically increased electricity demand, but you can have all the production in the world, but if you don't have the grid capacity, it isn't going get to where it needs to go. So I hope that you look on the Grid Deployment Office as an important function of the Department of Energy

in terms of the research necessary, but also just the support of the technology throughout the country.

Is that a fair statement?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, Senator, I worked in the Department in President Trump's first Administration, and the work that the Department does on grid reliability and deployment is very important, and especially will be in the years ahead. And obviously, I am not in the building presently, I haven't been confirmed, but should I be confirmed, I look forward to learning more about all the activity in bringing that to bear.

Senator KING. And part of that activity and part of that research is what we call GETs—grid enhancement technologies. I hope that is part of the research, because we don't have to build all new towers. We can reconductor and use that technology.

Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response—I have been working for four or five years on cyber, and our grid is a critical infrastructure and is also under attack. I have a friend in the utility industry who tells me that his company—his electric company—is attacked three million times a day in cyber. So tell me about your thoughts about what they call CESER.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir. Thank you, Senator. CESER is a very important tool for the Department and for industry and its stakeholders to prevent against the threat from state and non-state actors, but also weather events and other vulnerabilities to the grid. I think the mission is important, and should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with that and prioritizing the mission of CESER to make sure that America's grids are protected, secure, and reliable.

Senator KING. I think that is an absolutely critical mission. Thank you.

And then, the final office is the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, and this is required by law—Section 41201 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law—and I think you have testified that your intention is to follow the law. So I hope that includes maintaining the vital programs under this Office of Clean Energy Demonstration.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator.

I am absolutely committed to following the law, first and foremost. Again, I am not in the building, not working at the Department yet, but I look forward to—I have read the reports about OCED and the work that it's doing, but I look forward to learning more and making sure we are effectively and efficiently deploying those resources.

Senator KING. Well, I get a weekly report on energy costs, which include electricity costs, from a variety of sources. I would point out that the cheapest forms of energy today are solar and onshore wind, and they can also be deployed the fastest. If you wanted to build a gas turbine plant, a gas generation plant today, it would be five years before you could even get a turbine because of the backlog. So I hope that, as I say, all of the above includes renewables. Does it?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Senator, yes. For me, it includes all energy sources and technologies that are secure, reliable, and affordable. And we

need them all because we need more electrons. Electrons don't know how they are generated. So——

Senator KING. Thank you. Thank you very much. Congratulations on your nomination, gentlemen.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Senator Justice.

Senator JUSTICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just say just this, you know, to all of you, and especially to this little fellow, you know, and he is just as beautiful as ever, as anybody could ever be, but we have got a lot at stake, and at the end of the day, we have got him at stake. We have got all of you at stake, but I think your roles are going to be so unbelievable and so challenging and so wonderful going forward, it will be off the chart. It is important beyond belief.

Now, if I could just tell you just this—I am from West Virginia, and we, forevermore, have been an energy state. And we know energy, you know, like Bo Jackson, you know, would have said—Bo knows. Well, I know, as far as energy, and I love the fact that both of you seem to be stuck on "on." I love that too, because enthusiasm is contagious. And so, I congratulate you on lots and lots and lots of different levels.

We all know just one thing that is so simple, and that is just this—we are going to spin around in a year and a half from today, maybe as far as three years from today, and we are going to have a demand for electricity that is double—double what it is today. What are we going to do? What are we going to do? At that point in time are we going to decide? Are we really going to decide between homes and industry? Are we going to combat one against the other, because we can't do them both.

Oh, my gosh.

[The Senator's bulldog arrives. Laughter ensues.]

Senator JUSTICE. Babydog is here. Okay, well, I will hold Babydog in just one second. Let me halfway finish now. That just threw me way off base. Baby, calm down. Okay, all right, forget that.

No, let me just say just this—I embraced all the energy forms and I would continue to do exactly just that. Now, just stay with me just one second. If it is a level playing field for all energy forms, we cannot subsidize certain things and disadvantage other things, because we are going to awaken to a bad day. I hope to goodness that you will always do just this, you will always know how hard our coal miners have worked, and coal should play a really important role. So with all that being said, let me just ask a couple of questions real quick.

The first question is just this—please tell me your thoughts, because the President did something the other day that was off the chart. You see, what he did the other day that I think was off the chart was just this: My mom and dad loved the coal business and loved all the people. That's what they loved—the people that worked every single day. Now, just imagine this, if you are a coal miner and you got up early in the morning every day, you went to work, you took a lot of risk by going to work. In many seams in West Virginia, you were in coal all day long that you couldn't possibly stand up in, you could only sit up in. With that you provided so much either power or metallurgical coal, which goes to make

steel that absolutely fueled us in our world wars, and on, and on, and on. And every day people kicked you. Every single day people said, "We don't like coal. We don't like what you are doing," absolutely over, and over, and over. My mom and dad would have had big tears running down their face the other day when President Trump stood up for them—for those people—because honest-to-goodness, they have given us so much, it's off the chart.

So tell me this: where does coal play that role?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator, for your question.

I think all energy sources and technologies are vitally important for our energy present and future, and coal, especially, in our past and future as well. But a lot of the gains we have had that got us to the moment here to have all this—to unleash the abundance of all energy sources and technologies was through coal. And I think it's got an important future, just like all the other resources that we have in the United States, and technologies that have been developed here as well.

Senator JUSTICE. Well, thank you so much.

And before we go any further, I am going to hold Babydog here.

[Laughter.]

Senator JUSTICE. And Baby, you can't be drinking, and then let me—all right. Now, let me just say, just this—this little rascal has done something that I think is really important to all of us, all of us on this Committee—all of you, all of us in these wonderful, wonderful buildings that are all across this wonderful city. She humanizes us. She makes us absolutely get off our pedestals. Absolutely, she makes us know that just this—here is her message: She makes you smile. I can see it all over the place right now. But you know what else she does? She loves everybody. She truly does. I found this in COVID. I didn't intend in any way to be hauling a bulldog around. No way on earth. We had never owned a bulldog before. She is not supposed to like everybody, but she does.

And with that being said, how can a message be any better? It really and truly—if we have made others smile and we loved everybody, it would be one hell of a lot better world. That's all there is to it.

So she would say just this—if you are rich or poor, or a kid or an adult, or God forbid, a Republican or a Democrat, she still loves you. And so, let's just celebrate just this little thing as she humanizes all of us, and Chairman, thank you so much and Ranking Member, thank you for letting her come. Okay, now, we are out of here because she is heavy.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Justice. Babydog's testimony will be admitted into the record without objection.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Cortez Masto.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Yes, I did notice Babydog got five minutes as well. I appreciate that.

Senator JUSTICE. There you go.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Let me say congratulations on your nominations. Welcome to your families. What an incredible day. I appreciate your willingness to serve. Thank you for that.

Mr. Griffith, let me start with you. Four years ago, this body—and specifically, this Committee, came together in a bipartisan way to pass legislation that helps create jobs to solidify our energy sector and strengthen our states, tribes, and local communities. I have seen—and I think my colleagues have all seen—the value of these investments in critical sectors for national securities. I know in my state I have seen it in the battery manufacturing and in critical mineral extraction that we are focused on in Nevada. But now, there are concerns that I see in public, hearing about Elon Musk and DOGE, the new leadership at Energy, what is happening. I am hearing from my state, some of the funding that we fought for in a bipartisan way is not getting to where it needs to go for these energy projects.

So, if confirmed, what is your plan to implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure and Energy programs that were actually enacted by Congress as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator.

If confirmed—I am obviously not in the building—so I don't know, I have just read the same reports, I guess, in the press. I think, you know, the President's rein on being efficient—running government more efficiently and being a good steward of taxpayer dollars—I think, should I be confirmed, I would prioritize being briefed on this. This is, obviously, and other program offices on the spending, the situation there, and making sure that we deploy those resources in a way that is in the best stewardship of American taxpayer dollars while also executing at the same time, which I believe we can do the Department's mission in bringing these new projects online and bringing this electricity and power and energy back to unleash American energy dominance and fulfill the President's priorities.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. So do you commit to upholding the implementation of awards that were funded or contractually obligated in recent years under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator. I am fully committed, first and foremost, to following the law. So should I be confirmed, I would prioritize understanding the different projects, and the details, and the specifics, and working with you and this Committee to alleviate any concerns or address any questions that you may have.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Dr. Gil, your written testimony noted that the U.S. must dominate in quantum computing—I agree with you—in order to uncover profound scientific, economic, and national security implications. In your professional opinion, how can the U.S. further solidify itself in both the discovery and commercialization of new technologies?

Dr. GIL. Senator, thank you so much for the question.

We have to succeed on that effort, so let me touch on the quantum computing effort, for example. This is a most extraordinary time and the most exciting time in computing, probably since the 1940s. You know, during that decade the transistor was invented. The first programmable computers were invented. Seminal advances in the theory of information processing were developed. And we witnessed the implication of that decade for decades to come.

We are in a similar moment right now. And what it requires is that not only we support the basic science and research in all of those fields, but that we seek and we demand of ourselves the objective of building and leading a capability for the nation that we did not have before. And that is what I was alluding to in my testimony, that it is time to build a quantum-centric supercomputer. It is time to elevate the capability of AI to advance scientific discovery and do problem solving in ways we couldn't do. It is time now, in fusion, to shave off decades of development time cycles. And if we do all of that together, as a team, if we achieve that objective, I think we will have a portfolio of technologies in the nation that would serve us for decades to come, and frankly, even the whole world, our allies, and our partners on that.

On the downside, if we do not succeed on those, and we have rival nations like China get ahead of us on that, the consequences will be terrible. So we have no choice but to succeed, and you have my full commitment to work with all of you to make sure we do.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

I will submit the rest of my questions for the record. Again, congratulations on your nominations.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here this morning. I appreciated our conversations last week. And Mr. Chairman, I just want to note for the record, I am disappointed that we are not going to have the opportunity to advance Kathleen Sgamma for the Congress. Looking at her background and working with her over the years on the Committee, she is, I think, very well qualified, and we were really counting on her to be able to unlock some of the things that had been stalled out in the previous Administration, but we are not going to have that opportunity, but we do with the two of you to advance to the Department of Energy.

I mentioned in our discussion the situation with Cook Inlet gas and the looming shortage that we are facing and the desire to move forward, as the President has expressed as well, to figure out a way to move Alaska's gas. So I just want you to nod your head accordingly and let the record reflect that we are all on board in helping to advance Alaska's opportunities there, pursuant to that executive order.

I do want to reinforce what Senator Cortez Masto just asked you, Mr. Griffith, with regards to the funding awarded through grants and programs that has already been obligated. Know that this is a bipartisan request to make sure that we follow through with those priorities. Again, we passed the law—the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act is law, and I think about the many, many benefits that we have seen through energy innovation and the projects that have really made a difference on the ground. So you have indicated that you intend to follow that law, but I would hope that you could look expeditiously at how we might be able to release those funds that have already been obligated.

I also raised an issue with you in my meeting, and this relates to the Office of Indian Energy. As you know, I am Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and we had really looked to

the Office of Indian Energy as an area where we could make some significant advancements in places where we just have met all kinds of barriers that were unnecessary. Unfortunately, that program didn't do as much as we had hoped in the last Administration, as the focus was almost entirely on solar projects, but as much as solar might help us in Alaska, there are also so many other pressing needs. Right now, most of my communities in the rural areas are powered by diesel generation. They don't necessarily want to be, but that's our reality, but we have bulk fuel storage issues that are heartbreaking in understanding how we can address some of the infrastructure vulnerabilities. The Tribal Energy Financing Program closed its first tribal loan guarantee this past September—the first one. It took them as many years as they have. So I would just ask both of you, again, to confirm here before the Committee that you will work to identify some opportunities to better leverage the resources that are within the office to make real progress, not just to stand up an office and say it exists and then tell the tribes go out and take a look at this, but have no deliverable. So we just ask for your support on that.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, thank you, Senator. It was very nice spending time with you prior to the hearing last week. I can commit, if confirmed, I will work—will prioritize both getting up to speed on the OCED and the spending and being responsive to this Committee and yourself, Senator, but also working with the office, obviously, prioritizing the Office of Indian Energy, which has played a pivotal role for the—or can play a pivotal role for 574 tribes and Native American tribes in America and the Alaska Natives, to make sure that we are executing on the mission and delivering results to support the Alaska Natives.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Great.

And our American Indians around the country.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Absolutely, absolutely, thank you, Senator.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Yes, thank you for that.

Dr. Gil.

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Senator. Yes, following the same lines, one of the things that was very vivid in the meetings that we had with you is just the unique opportunities that Alaska brings, like the unique environment and how that can be also a testbed to not only solve problems in the context of Alaska, but also to inspire us to solve problems for the rest of the nation and beyond. So that was very clear, and yes, you have my commitment to work with you and your staff to make sure we prioritize those areas.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. Well, know that we are working already on developing an itinerary for the two of you when you come to Alaska.

Dr. GIL. That's right.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I was just reading a great article on my walk in this morning about our little fishing community of Cordova that is an energy innovator with hydro and battery storage, and the national labs already have it on its map. And so, an opportunity for you to see that as well as our extraordinary geothermal potential, in addition to all the other things that you know. So look forward to that. And I am excited about your confirmation here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hickenlooper.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you both for your public service so far and your intention to continue that.

Mr. Griffith, talk a little bit about our grid, because I look at AI and the projected growth of the need for electricity—almost exponential. And we have looked at the Grid Deployment Office, the Loan Programs Office, and Transmission Facilitation Program as helping us meet that demand. What are your thoughts on probably the most important priorities we can take to really make sure we have the grid that we need in time for when we need it?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir. Thank you, Senator.

You know, with this growing demand, that skyrocketing demand as a result of the AI demand coming on and reshoring of manufacturing, we have to bring up our energy generation and production, but it's not going to do us any good if we don't have a secure, modern, and strong grid. And I think there are a lot of tools at the Department that we need to, in tandem with increasing production and generation, use that this Committee has and this Congress has passed into law to do just that—strengthen, modernize, and secure our grid for our energy future.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. I appreciate that, and I think it's going to have to be all-hands-on-deck to make sure we pull that out.

Obviously, there is a large office of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado that we are, I think, justifiably proud of, but with all the budget cuts, do you think we'll be able to protect, you know, the lion's share of the budget, the work that is being done out there, because so much of it is in midstream? We are getting there, but we are not quite there yet.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir, and a lot to be proud of with NREL. It's an important lab that is doing cutting-edge research, and I think that we can be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars and run government effectively and efficiently, and if confirmed, to continue to execute on the mission that NREL has delivered on all these years.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. I appreciate that.

And Dr. Gil, I could ask you the same thing, except I am more familiar with your answers. I did want to ask you a little bit—in 2024, at a National Science Board meeting, you talked about the need to get more young people engaged in STEM. I have a son who is just graduating with an electrical engineering degree and a minor in computer science, but there are not very many of his friends coming along for that ride. What are some of your ideas that you could put in place or begin to prioritize to get more young people at an earlier age engaged in STEM?

Dr. GIL. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I will start also by highlighting my oldest daughter, Sofía, who is here, just graduating in computer science this spring from Cornell. So like, you know, we are trying to do it in the family to keep that going.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Ted is out at Stanford. They are a long way apart, but I am sure there is a place to meet in the middle.

Dr. GIL. Yes. Let me address that point. Actually, if you were to ask me what are the areas that you are most concerned with in the competitiveness of the nation, I would say it's this area. And you

know, in some ways, the National Science Board, we have been discussing a lot as a board the need for an NDEA 2.0, like a National Defense Education Act 2.0, and you know, there was a seminal moment in the 1950s where there was a need to mobilize all the resources of the country to educate teachers, to support teachers, to foment Americans entering into STEM, and at the time, foreign languages and so on. And we really believe that the moment has come to do something equivalent right now. And if you look at scores in math, for example, for eighth grade, what little progress we have made as a nation, we have reversed 20 years of progress after the pandemic.

When you look at STEM graduation rates in China, as an example, compared to what we do, we have a lot to be concerned about. So I just want to highlight that, you know, if you were to ask me what is the single most important thing that we should focus on is to do exactly that. And I would love to work with you and with Members of Congress to really take serious action, that requires local, state, and federal coordination to achieve.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. I assume, Mr. Griffith, you agree with that as well? I mean, that's the need and that is pretty clear.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Absolutely. I am just a history major with a law degree but my son is a big math—99th percentile in math. So hopefully, he will be following in the STEM, in the mechanical engineering, like your son.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Well, it's hard work, but I think the reward is out there, and actually, my son is looking at getting—as he begins working—getting a master's in history as well. So they do go well together.

Let me ask you also about geothermal energy, which I share with Secretary Wright, the importance and the potential of geothermal. How do you think DOE can support this next generation, you know, these geothermal technologies that are really just rolling out so rapidly?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir, thank you, Senator.

Yes, I share your enthusiasm and Secretary Wright's enthusiasm around geothermal. It's at a pivotal moment. I think a lot of the techniques and research that came out of the Department of Energy in support of the oil and gas industry can also be applied. And I think it has a promising future, and I look forward to, if confirmed, getting in the building and working to unleash all the tools and expertise at the Department to bring that to bear.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great, I appreciate that.

I think I am out of time—way out of time—but thank you both, again. I yield back to the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you.

Dr. Gil, I represent Bill Nye, the Science Guy, but I am more than happy to say "Dr. Gil, the DOE Science Guy," and make sure that we keep our investments. One of those investments is in the area of AI and quantum. Both the Pacific Northwest Lab and Microsoft are using quantum computing and AI high-performance for all sorts of different issues already—battery research, computer approaches, simulating turbulence, superconductors. So do you sup-

port the National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization, and if confirmed, would you work with my staff and members of this Committee to advance it?

Dr. GIL. Senator, thank you for your question and for your support on this topic for so many years. I really appreciate your leadership on that. You are not going to find a more enthusiastic person on supporting the National Quantum Initiative, and my challenge would be how do we become even bolder on what we achieve on that. And the way I frame that thinking is not only do we need to support the centers that the National Quantum Initiative created and the fundamental science, but we must now combine that aspiration with delivering a capability for the nation.

So just like in the past, we built CPU-centric supercomputers, like recently, we built GPU-centric supercomputers. We have to build a quantum-centric supercomputer. And that will mobilize and activate the National Quantum Initiative Centers toward a goal, and we have to deliver on that goal. So I am a huge supporter of that effort.

Senator CANTWELL. So that's about testbedding?

Dr. GIL. Testbedding is an element, but it's also to use all of those things, the scientific research, the testbeds, but to give it a goal is—build a capability with this performance at this cost, just like when we would build in the past, El Capitan, or any other supercomputers. There is a definitive timeline and definitive set of dollars to deliver a capability that leads the world. I think we need to do the same thing in quantum.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that answer.

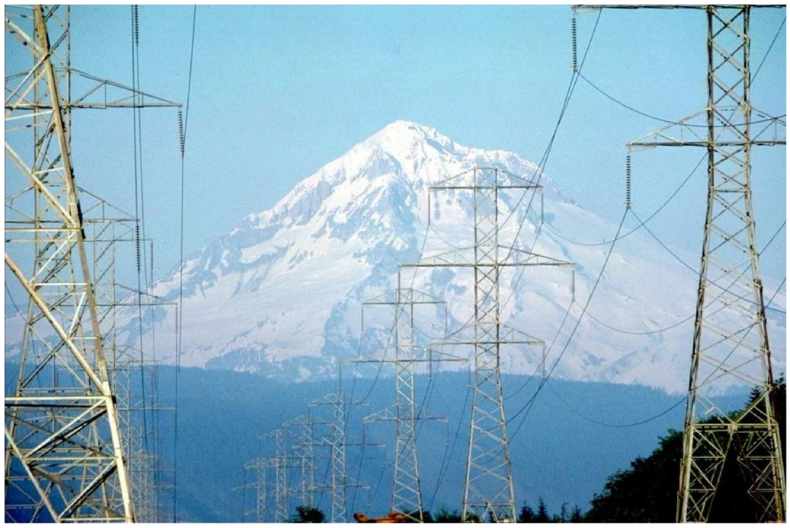
Mr. Griffith, obviously, I am a big supporter of BPA and what it delivers in cost-based power. I think we need to get BPA more support, not less. They have committed to $5 billion in grid upgrades using borrowing authority this Committee approved as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act. I want to submit an article for the record written by two former BPA leaders, Randy Hardy and Steve Wright, and I want to quote—they say, "we can say with confidence that the level of risk now with the existing workforce reductions is unacceptable, and at some point, further reductions would make outages practically inevitable."

[The article referred to follows:]

https://www.newsdata.com/clearing_up/opinion_and_perspectives/guest-letter-to-bpa-utility-customers-and-northwest-consumers/article_ccf4cbcc-eb05-11ef-8d08-dff2d828788e.html

Guest: Letter to BPA Utility Customers and Northwest Consumers

by Randy Hardy and Steve Wright
Feb 14, 2025



Bonneville Power Administration transmission towers and lines with Mount Hood in the background.

U.S. Department of Energy/Flickr

The following letter was submitted to NewsData by Randy Hardy and Steve Wright, both former administrators at the Bonneville Power Administration.

As two ex-CEOs with nearly 20 years of experience leading the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), we are writing to express our deep concern about likely impacts of recent BPA work force reductions being implemented and considered on the reliability of electricity service to Pacific Northwest consumers.

We understand and encourage efforts to increase efficiency. But the manner in which efficiency is pursued can have real world and near-term impacts on the people who live in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. These actions are being taken in response to recent Presidential executive orders. But those orders also allow consideration of impacts to public safety which we believe are appropriate to consider in this situation.

(1) Public Health and Safety Impacts

BPA supplies one-third of Northwest electricity and owns/manages 75 percent of the region's high voltage transmission system, which ensures reliable delivery of regional power to Northwest residents. Furthermore, BPA is self-funded through the rates charged to all its utility customers. Staff reductions, therefore, will not create reductions in the federal deficit.

Electricity outages create significant risk to human health and safety as well as the economic health of the region. The "early out" program offered to BPA employees, along with parallel efforts to offer early retirement and possible elimination of most recently hired federal/BPA staff, will seriously degrade BPA's ability to maintain reliable power service.

This impact is particularly unfortunate given that the reductions are across the board and do not fence off certain positions, such as operations personnel who manage the system 24x365. Electricity input and output has to be managed every 4 seconds to maintain reliability. BPA personnel are ultimately responsible for assuring generation input and service to load is balanced across large parts of the Northwest. Key positions at the agency cannot go unmanned. The people with these skills are essential to "keeping the lights on."

While BPA officials are not confirming specific impacts, we estimate that the combined effect of the reductions could reduce BPA's overall staffing levels by 10-20 percent from its current 3100-person workforce within a roughly one month period.

The reliability (i.e. keeping the lights on) impacts of these specific reductions are especially significant. Normally BPA power is delivered with an outage probability of well less than one percent. These changes will increase that probability dramatically. We cannot predict how great of an impact these reductions will create as specific details as to affected positions are not yet publicly available, but we are confident it would beyond the level of risk to the public we would have been willing to accept.

(2) Serving Economic Development

These reductions risk also producing significant consequences for economic growth. Among other impacts if such a release was mandated for BPA it would eliminate most of their newly hired transmission planners and project designers – a group which BPA focused on to decrease its 5-6 year processing time for current generation interconnection requests. Such an action would probably add to the already too long timeframe to connect new resources to meet growing electric loads, particularly large data centers seeking to locate in the Northwest for artificial intelligence and other purposes.

(3) Economic Lost Opportunity

These employee reductions would undercut BPA's ability to become a real economic development success story. With its hydro and nuclear power resource base, by simply expanding its current transmission system BPA could both better support load growth and help better coordinate dispatch of existing generating resources across the Western States. BPA could use its considerable transmission capability to lower customer rates by accessing the cheapest generation available most anywhere in the Western United States.

In summary, these series of BPA staffing reductions create significant risk for increased outages, reduced ability to serve economic development and reduced opportunity to create cost reductions. We hope their implementation can be adjusted to minimize such impacts while still pursuing efficiency gains.

Senator CANTWELL. So that concerns me when two former BPA administrators make those kinds of statements. I appreciate that DOGE has already allowed the BPA to rehire some of those probationary employees, but I want to ask you, do you believe BPA's workforce should be exempt from the current hiring freeze and future forced reductions?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you, Senator, for your question.

I obviously have not been confirmed and don't know—I have read similar reports and I don't think I saw that one that you submitted for the record, but should I be confirmed, I look forward to getting up to speed, prioritizing it. I worked in the last Trump Administration, the first one, and understand the important role that BPA and the Power Marketing Administrations—other PMAs—have in delivering affordable, reliable energy from our hydroelectric resources, and I am committed to working with you and your office and this Committee to do that, should I be confirmed.

Senator CANTWELL. Do you commit to articulate BPA's safety and reliability role when considering any RIF proposals?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Senator, again, I don't know exactly what is happening in the Department, or any discussions, but I will prioritize working with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the rest of the team on this issue, if confirmed, to——

Senator CANTWELL. I am just asking you whether you will erase safety and reliability roles. That is a pretty easy——

Mr. GRIFFITH. Oh, safety and reliability are obviously very important to the grid at BPA and all of the utilities and PMAs, and I think we will continue to prioritize the reliability, the security, and the resilience of our grid, including at the PMAs.

Senator CANTWELL. Do you commit to oppose any proposal to auction off PMA assets, including those owned by BPA?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Sorry, could you repeat the question?

Senator CANTWELL. Yes.

Do you commit to oppose any proposals to auction off PMA assets, including those owned by BPA?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Senator, I think BPA is a very important piece of the Department and plays an important role. I am not aware of any discussions or conversations about selling it off, but I think we—so, I really can't commit.

Senator CANTWELL. I think if Senator Risch were here, he would be backing me up at this moment, and he'd be encouraging you to say that you don't believe in selling off BPA, but——

Mr. GRIFFITH. I don't know what—if there is—not being confirmed, I don't know any conversations that are happening in the building. I wouldn't see—it's not something that I would be a proponent of.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

I want to thank our witnesses for their testimony today. We sometimes have a chance for a second round. We don't have that today. We have votes being called. So any additional questions will be submitted in writing for the record.

Questions for the record for the hearing are due by 6:00 p.m. today. The record of the hearing will remain open for statements until 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 17.

The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:12 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 10, 2025 Hearing: *The Griffith & Gil Nominations*
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Preston Wells Griffith III

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Agrivoltaics, or the co-location of solar energy generation with agricultural production, such as crop or livestock production or pollinator habitats, underneath solar panels or adjacent to solar panels, is providing U.S. farmers and ranchers a new opportunity to diversify their farming operations while contributing to domestic energy production. An essential part of the current scaling of agrivoltaics continues to be public/private research partnerships supported by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), including partnerships with U.S. Land-grant Universities and private sector organizations across the country. Through DOE programs, like the Foundational Agrivoltaic Research for Megawatt Scale (FARMS) funding program and work through our National Labs, federally supported research has helped the solar industry work with farmers and ranchers to determine optimal mutually beneficial siting, best management practices, and crop selection that allows for the complete integration of a number of agricultural crops such as corn, soybeans, small grains, and specialty crops, as well as sheep, cattle and other livestock to be co-produced with energy production under solar arrays.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory reports that agrivoltaics projects on nearly 600 sites across the country, including New Mexico, encompassing roughly 60,000 acres produce 10 GW of solar energy. These agrivoltaics projects are contributing to US energy security while also keeping farm families on bpthe land and securing our food systems.

- How can the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee work more closely with the Department of Energy (DOE) to enhance federal policies and research to benefit farmers who are voluntarily choosing to deploy agrivoltaics on their farming and livestock operations?
- If confirmed, how will you ensure DOE is continuing to support these farms and partnerships that are conducting research to identify the most financially viable agrivoltaic models, best practices, and guidance for the integration of agrivoltaics into existing farm operations?

Response: I am aware that the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) explores the co-location of solar energy systems with agricultural land to understand optimal use for energy production with livestock and farming practices. I am not familiar with the status of specific programs or research at NREL in this issue area, but if confirmed, I will request a briefing so I can evaluate current and future research opportunities and how best to work with you and the Committee on shared goals to maximizing productivity of American energy and agriculture.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Mr. Griffith, if confirmed to this position, you will play a key role in advancing U.S. energy dominance to support growing power needs from AI, quantum, and advanced technology. Will you commit to working together with Dr. Gil to ensure we have the power and the resources to be world leaders in high-tech innovation and energy production?

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Response: If Dr. Gil and I are fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will absolutely commit to work with him and others at the Department to help ensure we have the power and resources available to be remain the world leader in high-tech innovation and energy production.

Question 2: Mr. Griffith, as you know, President Trump issued several executive orders supporting Montana coal. We need to expand electricity generation, not replace it. With the new executive orders issued by President Trump, will you commit to working with me and Montana producers to support our coal mines and our coal power plants like Colstrip?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to working with you and other stakeholders in Montana to fulfill the directives in President Trump's executive orders to support the American coal industry which provides good paying jobs and reliable power for America.

Question 3: Mr. Griffith, hydropower delivers a reliable energy source for many Montanans and is the second largest share of electricity generation in the state. Countless hydropower projects face delays because of supply chain shortages. It is crucial to revive our hydropower projects that support American jobs, increase our domestic energy production and keep energy costs low for families. Will you commit to advancing the expansion of our hydropower fleet, including via next generation technology, such as hydrokinetic energy, to enhance baseload power and deliver affordable energy to Americans?

Response: As Secretary Wright has stated, to meet the ever-growing global energy needs of tomorrow, we need energy addition, not energy subtraction. We must increase all forms of affordable, reliable and secure energy sources and technologies. Hydropower is a critical part of our energy mix, providing low-cost power to millions of Americans every day, particularly in areas like Montana which is served by both the Western Area Power Administration and the Bonneville Power Administration. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other members of the Committee on these important issues.

Question 4: Mr. Griffith, as our energy demand continues to rise, expanding energy production is necessary. The only way to achieve this is and maintain grid stability is by increasing baseload power, which will require an expansion of our transmission system. Will you commit to working with Congress to strengthen partnerships with states, communities and energy companies to expand energy production and ensure a reliable, secure, and affordable supply of baseload power?

Response: Maintaining and increasing the resilience of our nation's electrical grid is a top priority. We have an incredible amount of existing and future power demands placed upon our nation's aging infrastructure. To meet energy demands, we must prioritize efforts to build out our energy infrastructure, including transmission delivery systems. If confirmed, I will work with Congress, states, and stakeholders to strengthen, modernize and increase the capacity of our nation's energy production and power systems.

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Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: The DOE is currently facing pressure to significantly cut its Office of Clean Energy Demonstration (OCED), a key office that bridges the gap between clean energy technology research, development, and deployment and covers a portfolio from nuclear energy and energy storage to innovative and energy efficient manufacturing. As the Undersecretary, how do you plan to protect and advance America's leadership in clean energy?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will request a briefing on the Office of Clean Energy Demonstration (OCED) to learn about the status of the program. As the Department works to advance technologies, I believe we should balance those interests with energy demands, available resources and the need to provide affordable, reliable, and secure energy. Advancing American energy leadership means investing in next-generation technologies – from expanding nuclear energy to accelerating breakthroughs in energy storage and innovation. If confirmed, I will be an advocate for the Department's role to advance building a resilient, secure and energy future that powers our economy and strengthens national security.

Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell

Question 1: Bonneville Power Administration
Mr. Griffith, the Bonneville Power Administration delivers cost-effective and reliable electricity to rural and urban communities throughout the West, at no cost to the federal budget. Past administrations have proposed selling Power Marketing Administration's assets, including BPA's transmission. They have also proposed an end to cost-based rates which could increase costs to ratepayers.

As a result of recent personnel actions driven by the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, BPA lost an estimated 356 employees or 11 percent of its workforce through a combination of deferred resignation and the firing of probationary workers. Some of these employees were able to return to work – but BPA was already facing workforce shortages. BPA's headquarters was also included on a GSA list of facilities to be put up for sale. There are reports that DOE is considering reducing PMA workforces by as much as 10 percent, impacting over 500 essential positions.

- Given BPA's unique grid safety and reliability role, which is funded by ratepayers and not taxpayers, do you commit to support exempting their workforce from the current hiring freeze and future reductions in force?
- Can you confirm for the record that, since BPA is funded by ratepayers and not the federal government, any budget or staff cuts will only hurt the region and not reduce the federal deficit?
- Do you commit to articulate BPA's safety and reliability role when considering any RIF proposals?
- Do you commit to oppose any proposal to auction off PMA assets, including those owned by Bonneville?

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- Do you commit to protecting Bonneville Power Administration's decision-making independence as a Power Marketing Administration?
- Do you commit to working with Congress and customers to ensure the PMAs, including BPA, can continue their statutory mission unencumbered from interference?
- Do you commit to oppose any proposal to eliminate BPA's cost-based rates?

Response: I appreciate that Bonneville Power Authority's (BPA) cost-based model allows it to offer affordable power and transmission services to its coverage area. I am not aware of any active proposals by the Department of Energy to sell or auction off BPA or other Power Marketing Authority (PMA) assets. In terms of the BPA workforce, I am unaware of any specific plan to cut or reduce the numbers of employees, but any effort would need to incorporate reliability and safety elements of the grid system. If confirmed, I am committed to being an advocate for the Department and working with you and the Committee on issues related to BPA and the PMAs.

Question 2: Hydrogen Hubs
Mr. Griffith, one of the most widely supported energy investments by Congress has been figuring out how we can accelerate the use of hydrogen.

DOE selected the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub - which was a joint application from entities in Washington, Oregon, and Montana –to serve as a national model of how an integrated, emission free hydrogen network.

- Will you work with Congress to continue the strong bipartisan support for scaling up clean and affordable hydrogen, including championing DOE's hydrogen hub program?

Response: Hydrogen is a promising fuel of the future and one of several important tools in our energy toolkit. As we work to deliver affordable, reliable and secure energy to power our economy and national security, we must prioritize a strategy that leverages all our energy sources and technologies including nuclear, fossil fuels, renewables, storage and hydrogen. Our focus should be on practical deployment, private-sector readiness, near-term deliverability and ensuring every energy source is contributing meaningfully to U.S. energy security and economic growth.

Recently, there have been concerning reports about so called "hit lists" for different DOE clean energy grants that have been awarded but not fully disbursed. One of the projects on that list is the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub.

- Do you commit to honoring pre-existing grant agreements, when the project terms and technical milestones have been and continue to be met?
- Do you commit that any review of projects be based on merit and meeting the terms of the grant agreement, and in no way based on a political screen that rewards and punishes projects based on hub locations and their political representation?

Response: I am not aware of any details to cut funding for specific projects. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the status of program funding and to following the law .

DOE's input to Treasury and the White House will continue to play a major role in implementing the hydrogen 45V production tax credit.

- Do you support the hydrogen tax credit that the hubs have said is necessary for their success and for standing up the overall national hydrogen economy?

Response: As previously mentioned, I believe hydrogen is a promising fuel for the future and an important part of our energy toolkit. We must prioritize an energy strategy that drives investments forward and deliver affordable, reliable and secure energy sources to meet current and future energy demands.

Question 3: Battery Supply Chains
Mr. Griffith, we need to continue to onshore and diversify American energy and ensure are we not dependent on unstable or adversarial nations. The Washington state battery industry, including companies like Group14 and Sila, have worked with DOE and PNNL for the past decade to do just that, while also providing economic opportunities in our rural communities by building advanced silicon battery material factories in Central Washington. Unfortunately, the vast majority of lithium-ion batteries and energy storage technologies depend on graphite, and 95% of the world's battery-grade graphite is controlled by China. As China further restricts exports to the U.S., the urgency to strengthen domestic battery supply chains, including through these key Washington state factories, only grows.

- Given the rapidly increasing demand for energy storage solutions to support the grid, data centers, and other critical infrastructure, what steps would you take to continue fostering growth and resilience for U.S. battery supply chains, particularly for raw materials and silicon battery manufacturing, that can help end our dependence on Chinese graphite?

Response: Battery storage is critical to building a more resilient and responsive energy grid – especially as we integrate diverse energy sources. The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory is leading the cutting-edge work to advance grid-scale storage, improve battery chemistry, and extend the life and safety of energy storage systems. This research is helping unlock the next generation of energy reliability and flexibility, ensuring we can meet surging demand while maintaining affordability and security. If confirmed, I will be committed to strengthening U.S. energy supply chains and reducing dependence on foreign sources of resources needed to meet our energy demands.

Industries working on battery recycling are also vital to securing our supply chain, as well as being big job creators and more sustainable than primary extraction. DOE has been essential to battery recycling and creating more efficient and sustainable batteries.

- Do you support continuing investments and work at DOE on battery recycling and alternative battery chemistries?

Response: I support battery recycling, which is important for economic, environmental, and strategic reasons. I look forward to learning more about alternative battery chemistries and I commit to reviewing the status of DOE investments in this space if I am confirmed.

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The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included funding for the Department of Energy to bolster domestic battery supply chains and manufacturing and recycling capacity. Since it was signed into law, many grants have been awarded for new domestic battery manufacturing facilities to shore up the supply chain. Many companies are in the midst of construction.

- Do you commit to honoring legal agreements for these grants and ensuring projects that have already broken ground will continue to be able to access their grants and receive reimbursements through completion of the projects?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to following the law and I will review the status of program funding for domestic battery supply chains, manufacturing, and recycling capacity.

Question 4: Transmission
Mr. Griffith, as you well know, FERC estimates that electricity demand will grow by 128 GW nationwide in the next five years, more than 15% from today's levels from a variety of sectors including manufacturing, data centers, and electrification. In Washington State we are expecting demand growth of 30% over the next decade.

Even if we built enough generation tomorrow to meet this new demand, we don't have sufficient transmission to transport moving the power. It currently takes at least 7-11 years to build new large transmission in the United States.

- How will DOE help address the urgent transmission bottlenecks today that are inhibiting economic growth and American leadership on AI?

Response: Meeting rising energy demand requires a comprehensive, pragmatic approach that modernizes our grid, expands generation capacity, and invests in resilience. I am aware the DOE is focused on accelerating permitting for critical infrastructure, supporting a diverse mix of energy sources – including nuclear, natural gas, renewables and advanced storage – and strengthening transmission networks to move power where it's needed most. I believe there is also an opportunity to leverage innovation from our national labs, empowering state and private-sector partners and aligning investments with reliability and affordability to ensure America's energy supply keeps pace with our economic growth and security needs.

Lack of electric transmission capacity is one of the biggest barriers to economic growth led by manufacturing and AI, and yet the United States is largely incapable of building new large scale transmission projects: only 55 miles of new high-voltage transmission were built in 2023. Permitting bureaucracy and red tape, myopic electricity system planning processes, and interstate disagreements on how to calculate who benefits from (and thus who pays for) a transmission line have ground new construction largely to a halt.

- How can DOE help address these market barriers to getting new steel in the ground to drive economic growth?

Response: Strengthening, modernizing and securing our electric grid is critical to meeting our nation's energy demands. I believe there needs to be a whole-of-government approach, and the

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DOE must partner with other executive branch departments and agencies as well as state authorities to streamline the permitting process, increase certainty, and speed the deployment and construction of grid improvements to drive economic growth.

Question 5: Smart Grid Grants
Mr. Griffith, this Committee authored provisions in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to make the U.S. power grid more resilient, adaptive, and efficient. So far, DOE has invested more than $14 billion of the dollars Congress provided to boost the U.S. power grid. Funding that has been matched many times over by the private sector in all 50 states.

Many states have received support through important programs like the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (or GRIP program) that I originally authored back in 2007.
These investments will have tangible benefits and cost savings of nearly $100 million for electric ratepayers in my State.

- Will you commit to seeing these important grid investments through to completion?
- Will you work to ensure that all remaining funding in these important grid-enhancing programs from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are deployed by the Department of Energy?

Response: If confirmed, I will follow the law and I commit to review the status of program funding for grid enhancements.

Question 6: Transmission Facilitation Program
Mr. Griffith, Congress created the DOE's Transmission Facilitation Program (TFP) in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help build out new interregional transmission lines across the country. The TFP is a revolving fund program to provide Federal support to overcome the financial hurdles in the development of large-scale new transmission lines and upgrading existing transmission, which ultimately results in no federal ownership or cost to the taxpayer.

- Do you think the bipartisan Transmission Facilitation Program has been a success?
- Will you commit to supporting it as a tool to facilitate investment in major new transmission lines all across the U.S. at no additional cost to taxpayers?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the Transmission Facilitation Program (TFP). My understanding is that TFP allows targeted federal support to catalyze private investment, the program helps build out high-capacity, long-distance lines that connect energy sources with high-demand areas, which is an important part of meeting demand growth. I support the approach to accelerate timelines and build out grid capacity where it is needed most in order to deliver affordable, reliable and secure power to consumers and drive our economy forward.

Question 7: Advanced Nuclear & Fuel Supply
Mr. Griffith, my home state of Washington is a key epicenter of advanced nuclear energy in the United States.

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TerraPower, based in Bellevue, WA, is leading the way with Natrium, an advanced reactor being built in Wyoming as part of a public-private partnership with the Department of Energy under the Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program, or ARDP. X-Energy, the other ARDP demonstration awardee, is also looking to build a future reactor in Washington.

- Do you agree that we should continue to fully fund ARDP and ensure that the U.S. leads the way on advanced nuclear reactor technology?

Response: I believe the Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program (ARDP) is essential to restoring American leadership in nuclear energy and delivering the next generation of safe, reliable nuclear energy. By supporting early-stage deployment through public-private partnerships, we can move these technologies from concept to reality. If confirmed, I commit to having a full review of the program and the status of funding opportunities.

High-assay, low-enriched uranium, or HALEU, is set to power the future fleet of advanced Generation 4 reactors. I understand the advanced nuclear energy community is anxiously waiting for the Department of Energy to advance its plan to establish a domestic uranium enrichment supply chain right here in the United States and move away from dependence on countries like Russia and China.

- Will you commit to continue to support DOE's HALEU availability program?

Response: I am aware that the DOE announced commitments to provide high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) to five U.S. nuclear developers for near-term fuel needs. I commit to having a full review of the program and further evaluating HALEU needs, and to supporting efforts to strengthen America's nuclear fuel supply chain.

Question 8: National Laboratories
Our National laboratories bring tremendous capabilities and intellectual horsepower in key areas of energy and national security including grid reliability, energy storage and cybersecurity.

Grid reliability and resiliency continue to be a top issue.

- How do you plan to ensure the Department will engage regional stakeholders and national laboratories to improve the grid reliability, security and affordability of our country's energy system?

Response: I believe grid reliability, security, and affordability are key priorities. I commit to working with you, the Committee, regional stakeholders and DOE national labs to deliver on our energy system's needs.

As you may know, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory has the new Grid Storage Launchpad (GSL) facility in my State of Washington. GSL is a grid energy storage research and development facility that will help accelerate development of next-generation grid energy storage technologies.

- How will you utilize GSL to advance America's energy storage competitiveness to eliminate/reduce our reliance on foreign owned critical minerals and foreign supply chain risks?

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Response: I am aware that the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) brings together researchers, industry partners and grid operators to test and validate new storage technologies in real-world conditions which helps deliver durable, cost-effective energy solutions. The U.S. must develop our own critical resources at home and reduce reliance on foreign sources. If confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on PNNL's Grid Storage Launchpad and opportunities to strengthen domestic supply chains.

Question 9: Wind Power
Mr. Griffith, all domestic energy sources, including wind, will be key to meeting upcoming rising energy demand needs.

- Will you support a timely conclusion of the review of Federal wind leasing and permitting directed by the Presidential Memo that halts all Federal permitting of wind energy, even on private land, until that review is finished?

Response: If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the status of these issues and following the law.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: The Department of Energy (DOE) provides essential programs and research across all corners of the Silver State – including critical defense measures at the Nevada National Security Site (or NNSS), workforce and cybersecurity collaboration with utilities or Nevada colleges and Universities, and public-private partnerships to create new, innovative energy technologies.

If confirmed, would you commit to upholding efforts in research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) projects that support our national defense and strengthen our global competitiveness?

Response: The DOE plays a vital role in advancing research and development to strengthen our national defense and global competitiveness. The Nevada National Security Site is at the intersection of innovation and security, supporting critical missions like stockpile stewardship, nuclear nonproliferation and high-hazard experimentation. If confirmed, I commit to having a review of all related research and development programs to understand how best to support our defense and global competitiveness capabilities.

Question 2: If confirmed – how would you work to convene and coordinate with energy utilities on today's grid challenges, such as growing energy demand, cybersecurity, and supply chain or transmission needs?

Response: Addressing grid challenges like demand growth, cyber security threats, grid resilience and expansion requires close coordination between DOE and energy utilities. These partnerships are essential to building a grid that is secure, flexible and capable of meeting America's current

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and future energy needs. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the Committee on these important issues.

Questions for the Record from Senator John W. Hickenlooper

Question 1: The degree to which transmission is increasingly being recognized on a bipartisan basis as an indispensable part of our nation's critical energy infrastructure is encouraging. Secretary Wright made strengthening the transmission system Action Item #8 on his first Secretarial Order. With that in mind, can you share your thoughts on the most important steps the Department can take to achieve the transmission build we're going to need to meet the significant load growth in front of us?

Response: Meeting rising energy demand requires a comprehensive, pragmatic approach that modernizes our grid, expands generation capacity, and invests in resilience. I am aware the DOE is focused on accelerating permitting for critical infrastructure, supporting a diverse mix of energy sources – including nuclear, natural gas, renewables and advanced storage – and strengthening transmission networks to move power where it's needed most. I believe there is also an opportunity to leverage innovation from our national labs, empowering state and private-sector partners and aligning investments with reliability and affordability to ensure America's energy supply keeps pace with our economic growth and security needs. If confirmed, I am committed to evaluating all the Department's tools and resources that can be leveraged to strengthen, modernize, and secure our transmission grid to meet the rising demand growth.

Question 2: Ensuring reliable and affordable power in an era of surging load growth is going to take a lot more energy generation - but it's also going to take a lot more transmission to get that generation from where it's produced to where it's ultimately consumed. The Department of Energy has a lot of proven tools at its disposal to get needed new transmission built - from the Loan Program Office to the Transmission Facilitation Program to the grant funding at the Grid Deployment Office. As you think through the Department's FY26 budget, future organizational structure, and staffing levels, can we expect your full support for these important policy tools to help ensure we're able to get the transmission build we know we're going to need?

Response: Building on my previous answer, I agree we need to actively work on how best to meet the needs of our grid. If confirmed, I commit to having a full review of the activity and tools in the Grid Deployment Office as well as the funding and resources across the Department's program offices that are currently committed to improve the resilience and expansion of the grid.

Question 3: We are increasingly dependent on China for critical minerals essential to our economy, energy security, and national defense. I believe that addressing critical mineral supply chains is a bipartisan opportunity in this Congress.

Do you agree that China is engaging in market manipulation to maintain its dominance in critical minerals, and that substantial federal investment and support are essential to boost domestic critical materials processing?

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Response: I agree that China is engaging in market manipulation and that we should take every effort to secure and develop critical minerals to strengthen our domestic supply chains so we can unleash America's energy dominance. We should not rely on foreign state actors or adversaries for key resources that are required to drive and power our economic and national security.

Question 4: We both agree that innovation will lead us to a cleaner and more reliable energy future. DOE is making great strides in researching new mining, processing, and recycling technologies through its "Mine of the Future" initiative – partnering with best in class academic institutions like Colorado School of Mines. Will you work with me to make sure this program is maintained and ideally expanded?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the initiative and hearing your perspectives about research for new mining, processing and recycling opportunities, and working with you and the Committee on this important issue.

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Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Martin Heinrich

Question 1: A primary role of the federal government is to do the high-risk, high-reward research that industry may not do. Should we, as a nation, be making more bets on foundational AI technologies, and how can we do that in a way that improves competition, respects individual privacy, and protects intellectual property?

Response: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) must be a catalyst for innovation and global leadership in Artificial Intelligence (AI). By advancing competition around foundational AI technologies – through research and development, open infrastructure and strategic partnerships – we can unlock transformative breakthroughs while protecting against consolidation and foreign exploitation. As adversaries invest heavily in AI for strategic advantage, the DOE's leadership is vital to ensure secure, U.S.-led innovation that strengthens our economic competitiveness, safeguards national security, and keeps America at the forefront of global technological leadership.

Question 2: The Under Secretary for Science will have a major role to play in ensuring the continued success of the National Quantum Initiative. If confirmed, what would your strategic plan be for ensuring that the Department of Energy is using quantum computing and classical computing technologies in concert to solve DOE mission problems? How would you ensure that DOE's quantum computing efforts are appropriately considering all technological modalities?

Response: To ensure success of America's quantum computing efforts, the DOE must continue leading across the landscape of quantum modalities. It is also time to mobilize the nation's best teams to achieve the final frontier of building an error-corrected quantum supercomputer before the end of this decade. By leveraging the unique strengths of our national labs and fostering collaboration with industry and academia, the DOE can accelerate breakthroughs, scale quantum infrastructure and safeguard U.S. leadership in this critical frontier of technology and security.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: Dr. Gil, the United States must continue to be a leader in advanced computing. China is already graduating ten times more STEM graduates than the United States. The surprise announcement of DeepSeek AI shows that China will continue to innovate even with the U.S. export restrictions. This means the U.S. needs to run faster. Will you commit to working with congress and the administration to ensure the U.S. maintains leadership in quantum computing and semiconductor design and manufacturing?

Response: To maintain innovation and our competitive advantage over foreign adversaries like China, the U.S. must double down on foundational research, domestic computing capacity, and workforce development. The DOE plays a pivotal role in this effort by mobilizing the national labs, securing advanced semiconductor supply chains and ensuring trusted AI systems are developed on American soil. We cannot afford to cede leadership in AI innovation to regimes that do not share our values or commitment to openness, security and responsible use. This also

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true for quantum computing, an industry of the future that the U.S. must dominate, as it has profound scientific, economic, and national security implications.

Question 2: Dr. Gil, if confirmed to this position, you will play a key role in supporting and advancing U.S. in innovation and working with industry to address the increasing need for power to support innovation. Will you commit to working together with Mr. Griffith to ensure we have the power and the resources to be world leaders in high-tech innovation?

Response: If Mr. Griffith and I are confirmed, I will absolutely commit to working with him and others at the Department to ensure we have the necessary energy to drive high-tech innovation. The DOE must take the lead to ensure our energy infrastructure can meet the growing demands of high-tech innovation like AI data centers, quantum computing and advanced manufacturing. This means accelerating grid modernization, transmission capacity and generating more baseload power.

Question 3: Dr. Gil, my bipartisan *Department of Energy Quantum Leadership Act* would reauthorize DOE's portion of the National Quantum Initiative Act. Will you commit to working with me and my colleagues to reauthorize and prioritize the National Quantum Initiative programs at DOE?

Response: I am aware of the Act and its efforts to expand DOE's quantum research and development efforts. I also know that the DOE's five National Quantum Information Science Research Centers are designed to accelerate quantum research and technology by delivering novel platforms and major scientific breakthroughs. If confirmed, I look forward to hearing your perspectives and priorities for reauthorization. In so doing, I would like to encourage us to not only support the field of quantum information science, but to also challenge the nation to deliver an entirely new capability, namely, to build the world's first error-corrected quantum supercomputer before the end of this decade.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: Will you work with Congress to drive American innovation that is essential for maintaining US global leadership, national competitiveness, and national security? What do you think the role of DOE research is to ensure the US maintains our global leadership on innovation and energy security for the future? How can the DOE Office of Science leverage inter-governmental collaborations to better streamline the US research development pipeline to maintain and secure leadership in emerging industries? What is needed to do so?

Response: To maintain U.S. leadership in innovation and energy security, the DOE must continue driving world-class research and invest in the next generation of scientists and engineers. By advancing breakthroughs in material science, fusion energy, quantum technology, the Office of Science can enable the discovery-to-development pipeline that fuels economic competitiveness and national security. By defining ambitious technological goals and road maps on our most important priorities, we have the opportunity to align directions across agencies, reduce unnecessary duplication, and allow resources to be utilized to drive success.

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Question 2: Multiple National Labs have been affected by Trump's spending freeze. For example, $37 million of research activities was suspended at Argonne National Lab and a $7 million grid resiliency project was defunded at Lawrence Livermore National Lab. As the Undersecretary of Science, how will you protect critical research activities in National Labs, especially those related to clean and renewable energy and/or authorized through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act?

Response: I am not aware of any specific plans to freeze or suspend funding. I do believe that the DOE national laboratories have some of the world's premier engines of scientific discovery and innovation. We should strengthen lab capabilities and foster collaboration with industry and academia to accelerate technology breakthroughs and secure America's global leadership in science and innovation.

Question 3: Diverse energy sources will be key to meeting growing energy demand, particularly with the rise of data centers and artificial intelligence. With grid complications, co-location is one way for data centers to ensure energy supply. Within DOE's jurisdiction, how will you support innovative co-location strategies, e.g. hydrokinetic-powered data centers? Do you see potential for the development and commercialization of offshore data centers?

Response: I believe the most critical challenge for powering AI data centers is ensuring high-capacity, reliable electricity that can scale quickly without compromising grid stability. This requires investments in transmission infrastructure, siting coordination and access to dispatchable power sources like nuclear, natural gas and advanced storage.

Question 4: The US has a multi-agency and cross-sector approach to our scientific research and data sharing ecosystem. For instance, the DOE has a longstanding partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF) on large physics experiments, quantum information sciences, and artificial intelligence. The National Labs also share their cutting-edge facilities with academic institutions to support research in areas such as bioscience and advanced materials. Do you plan to continue and strengthen collaboration with federal science agencies such as the NSF and with academic institutions? As undersecretary, how do you plan to support this collaboration?

Response: I believe DOE's partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF) should continue and be strengthened. To meet the scale of today's energy and technology challenges, the DOE must expand strategic collaborations with other federal agencies, private industry, national laboratories and academia.

Question 5: The National Labs are home to world-class research facilities and develop critical and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and semiconductors. How will you protect the security of the American research enterprise not only from malign foreign actors but also from individuals within the federal government who have financial ties to foreign powers?

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Response: To maintain a competitive and innovation advantage over foreign adversaries like China, the U.S. must double down on foundational research, domestic computing capacity, and workforce development. The DOE plays a pivotal role in this effort by mobilizing the national labs, securing advanced semiconductor supply chains and ensuring trusted AI systems are developed on American soil. We cannot afford to cede leadership in AI innovation to regimes that do not share our values or commitment to openness, security and responsible use.

Question 6: The National Labs have provided crucial support to the pilot of the National AI Research Resource (NAIRR) by providing access to their supercomputers for researchers advancing the state of the art in trustworthy AI. Will you advocate for continuing to invest in research that keeps the United States at the forefront of developing AI that is reliable and broadly beneficial? Will you advocate that the discoveries of taxpayer-funded AI research should be publicly available, in order to promote innovation, competition, and access to its benefits?

Response: National lab research should continue to be broadly available to the public where it drives innovation, spurs private-sector competition, and maximizes taxpayer investment. Open science has been a powerful engine of American leadership in technology and discovery. However, we must also be clear-eyed about national security. Research tied to critical technologies must be protected from exploitation by adversaries like China. The DOE must safeguard sensitive data, enforce export controls and work closely with the intelligence community to prevent the misuse of federally funded research.

Questions for the Record from Senator Maria Cantwell

Question 1: **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory**
Dr. Gil, the National laboratories bring tremendous capabilities and intellectual horsepower in key areas of energy and national security including grid reliability, energy storage and cybersecurity.

- Will you advocate for robust resources for our national labs and continued investments in improving the capabilities and infrastructure of our national labs?

Response: I believe the DOE national laboratories have some of the world's premier engines of scientific discovery and innovation. We should strengthen lab capabilities and foster collaboration with industry and academia to accelerate technology breakthroughs and secure America's global leadership in science and innovation.

Last year I attended the dedication of the Grid Storage Launchpad (GSL) at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. As you may know, GSL is a grid energy storage research and development facility that will help accelerate development of next-generation grid energy storage technologies.

- How will you as the leader of the Department utilize GSL to advance America's energy storage competitiveness to eliminate/reduce our reliance on foreign owned critical minerals and foreign supply chain risks?

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Response: I am aware that the Grid Storage Launchpad at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is a key part of our national effort to advance energy storage innovation. The facility brings together grid operators, industry partners and researchers to validate new storage technologies under real-world conditions. By accelerating the transition from research to deployment, the Launchpad strengthens scalable energy storage solutions. I look forward to learning more about the Grid Storage Launchpad and opportunities to strengthen domestic supply chains.

Starting in the first Trump Administration, DOE has invested in advancing the role of energy innovation in the blue economy—ports, maritime, marine energy and ocean observation—and advancing our nation's energy security. Some of those key investments have been made at the Department's Marine and Coastal Research Laboratory at PNNL-Sequim.

- Will you commit to continuing DOE's support for these investments, and visit PNNL-Sequim?

Response: I know DOE's PNNL Marine and Coastal Research Laboratory in Sequim offers unique capabilities to advance our interests in the blue economy. I am not aware of their current funding or future plans for investments. If confirmed, I will review the status of opportunities at Sequim and a possible visit to the lab.

As you know, DOE has a key role to play in AI. In my home state for example, PNNL is a leader in applying AI to grid modernization, advancing scientific discovery in chemistry, and national security. It is critical that DOE is properly included as the Trump Administration approaches AI, including utilizing national laboratory assets.

- How will you ensure that DOE's capabilities are brought to bear in AI, across the Trump Administration and for the nation? How will you ensure that DOE and its national labs can continue advancing AI work?
- As artificial intelligence continues to transform our world, including at our national labs, what role do you see for national labs and the Department of Energy in driving innovation in, and application of, AI technologies?
- Where are the most critical areas for the national labs to advance the development and application of AI to DOE's mission?

Response: To maintain innovation and our competitive advantage over foreign adversaries like China, the U.S. must double down on foundational research, domestic compute capacity, and workforce development. The DOE and the PNNL play a pivotal role in this effort by mobilizing the national labs, securing advanced semiconductor supply chains and ensuring trusted AI systems are developed on American soil. We cannot afford to cede leadership in AI innovation to regimes that do not share our values or commitment to openness, security and responsible use.

The national labs contribute to U.S. national security in many ways; the Pacific Northwest National Lab is the lab of choice for the Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation program and supports the nuclear deterrent.

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- Given the strategic contributions of the labs beyond the traditional weapons labs to national security, what is your view on ensuring that all national labs continue to advance both scientific innovation and national security?
- What role will the Department continue to play in supporting nuclear nonproliferation?

Response: The DOE national labs are pillars of the U.S. national security apparatus. The PNNL plays a critical role in that mission by developing advanced technologies for nuclear material detection to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and monitor compliance with international agreements. Through its deep scientific expertise and close coordination with NNSA, the Department of Defense and intelligence agencies, the PNNL help ensure the United States remains secure and prepared against nuclear threats.

The national labs play a pivotal role in advancing a wide range of scientific disciplines, from quantum computing to developing the world's most sensitive instruments.

- What is your view on the importance of continued investment in these research areas at the national labs to maintain U.S. leadership in technological innovation and national security?
- Where do you see the biggest opportunity for continued biological research in addressing our nation's energy abundance and resilience? What role do you see for the national labs here?
- How will you use your position to elevate the STEM workforce to develop the next generation of scientists and engineers?

Response: The DOE national laboratories offer unmatched opportunities to advance quantum science and instrumentation, like foundational research in qubit technologies and precise measurement systems. To sustain advancements, we need a highly skilled workforce. I believe we should partner with universities and industry to serve as a development pipeline for talent.

<u>Question 2</u>: Fusion Energy
Dr. Gil, one of the great energy successes we have had in recent years is in fostering public-private partnerships. These partnerships are especially critical for supporting the rapid expansion of newer energy technologies.

- Can explain how you believe the Department of Energy can continue to support the development of public-private partnerships to help the commercial deployment of emerging technologies such as fusion energy.

Response: Fusion energy presents a transformative energy goal, and it will require collaboration between public and private sectors. The DOE should leverage public-private partnerships to accelerate the translation of scientific progress into commercial fusion systems. By aligning federal assets with private-sector agility, we can make fusion energy a reality.

As the US looks to lead on the development of next generation power technologies, like fusion, but also advanced nuclear, and enhanced geothermal, what role do you envision for the DOE in helping bring these new technologies to the market?

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- In particular, what role do you see the DOE Loan Programs Office (LPO) in helping financially support new generation technologies not yet at commercial scale?
- What other actions do you believe the Department of Energy should take to ensure the U.S. remains the world leader in fusion technology?

Response: I believe DOE should focus on investments in next-generation power technologies like fusion, advanced nuclear and geothermal where we have the greatest return in national benefit and the strongest path to near-term success. We should concentrate efforts on scalable, high-impact demonstrations, supporting public-private partnerships that can rapidly deploy viable technologies, aligning resources with commercial readiness.

Fusion energy is an inherently safe and predictable, geographically unconstrained baseload power source that could contribute to the resilience and reliability of America's energy grid right as domestic power demands are increasing rapidly. We are in a global race to develop fusion energy, and in order to maintain energy dominance and global leadership, the U.S. needs to win that race.

As co-chair of the Commission on the Scaling of Fusion Energy, I want to point you to the commission's recently released preliminary report that recommends "the United States should establish an explicit National Fusion Goal of starting construction on the world's first commercial fusion power plant this decade. Achieving this goal would solidify the United States as the world's leader in fusion energy, and catalyze a thriving and ultimately self-sustaining commercial fusion industry."

- Will you commit to reviewing this report that lays out the case for fusion energy and steps we need to take now to ensure the United States is in position to win this race?

Response: If confirmed, I will review the report and I look forward to learning more about your perspectives from your work on the Commission.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: If confirmed as Under Secretary of the Office of Science, how will you collaborate with other offices, agencies, and private companies to leverage investments made in basic research?

Response: The US spends annually over $850 billion in R&D, with the Federal government providing slightly less than $200B. Securing U.S. scientific leadership requires that we optimize cross-agency and cross-sectoral collaboration to draw on the strengths of all parts of our S&T ecosystem. If confirmed, this will be a top priority of my tenure.

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Question 2: The Office of Science interacts with a variety of firms, including Fortune 500 companies. If confirmed, how would you work to support small businesses as the overseer of the Department of Energy's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) funding programs?

Response: DOE public-private partnerships offer many benefits and collaboration opportunities. By aligning national lab capabilities with small business innovation, DOE can maximize the use of funds and support regional economic developing while supporting scientific breakthroughs.

Question 3: The Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science Mission Statement features the following – the Office of Science is "the lead federal agency supporting fundamental scientific research related to energy." Do you support continued federal support of research projects to enhance energy efficiency and develop new energy sources and storage systems for the grid?

In recent decades, would you agree there have been continued improvements in energy efficiency, producing more efficient homes and appliances, and that these innovations have benefited from government research funding?

Response: I believe the DOE should prioritize energy efficiency research that delivers measurable results across different sectors, including next-generation semiconductors as well as cross-cutting technologies that benefit grid and transmission objectives. By aligning fundamental science with practical outcomes, we can ensure investments advance long-term innovation and deliver tangible savings in the near-term.

Question 4: Dr. Gil, you previously served as the Chair of the National Science Board (NSB), which oversees the National Science Foundation (NSF). What is your understanding of the current relationship between NSF and the Office of Science?

If confirmed, would you commit to fostering this relationship in order to leverage federal investments and partnerships to accelerate discovery and innovation?

Response: I am aware of the partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the opportunities ahead to strengthen the collaboration. To truly meet the scale of today's energy and technology challenges, I believe the DOE must expand strategic collaborations with other federal agencies, private industry, national laboratories and academia in addition to the existing work with the NSF.

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A. Paul Alivisatos

Dear Members of the Senate,

I write to you in strong support of Darío Gil's nomination to the role of undersecretary for science and innovation at the Department of Energy (DOE). You may be aware that the University of Chicago is well-known for its policy of institutional neutrality; this letter serves as an endorsement not derived from my standing as university president but as a practicing scientist of many decades who has also founded technology companies following early support by the DOE Office of Science for new ideas in my labs. As someone who has partnered with the DOE complex for much of that time, including leading Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory for a period, I know the importance of basic science and the extensive benefits its study offers American society–as well as the vital role the federal government plays in enabling it. In my view, Darío is a truly eminent scientist and creative organizational thinker. Brilliant scientists in our National Labs, leading science and technology companies, and the academic science community will immediately see him as highly credible and indeed, an innovative figure.

Personally, I have known Darío for more than four years. This period has been one in which developments in quantum science and technology have been progressing at a remarkable rate. Few areas hold as much potential to reshape our world as those in the quantum sphere. Advances made possible by quantum technologies in fields as diverse as medicine, materials science, and global security hold the promise to solve problems previously thought unsolvable. At the heart of this advancement is deep cooperation between universities and leading companies. Darío has been a singular figure and thinker in this regard. He has been a crucial force in forging fruitful partnerships that well-position the United States to lead in this emerging domain, and I am confident that as undersecretary he will drive the rate of progress to even greater heights.

Darío combines intellectual brilliance with a rare ability to make complex ideas accessible, keep ambitious initiatives on track, and inspire creative thinking in those around him. I have seen him build partnerships that break new ground to advance key technologies. I have seen him give a clear and technically insightful introduction to quantum information science and technology to a group of business executives in a way that helped them see the opportunities. These qualities are invaluable in any leader—and indispensable in one tasked with advancing American excellence in science and technology.

I urge you to confirm his nomination. He has both the experience and the insight to make a profound and lasting contribution.

All the best,
Paul Alivisatos

Northeastern University

March 25, 2025

The Honorable Michael S. "Mike" Lee (R-UT)
Chairman
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin T. Heinrich (D-NM)
Ranking Member
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I am writing in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy. Over the past several years, I have had the privilege of witnessing Dr. Gil's extraordinary contributions to the scientific and business fields as a world-renowned science leader, innovator, and visionary. In addition to guiding U.S. science policy as Chair of the National Science Board, he has shaped the innovation and intellectual property strategy of one of the world's largest corporate research entities in IBM Research. A committed advocate of collaborative models between private and public science for the benefit of industry and society, he excels at building bridges between government, business, and university researchers. I believe there is no one better suited to fulfil the Department of Energy's mandate to harness science for the advancement of U.S. prosperity and security.

While IBM Research's many triumphs under Dr. Gil are too numerous to recount, he has led historic breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, next-generation cloud technologies, and quantum computing—a technology of pivotal national importance in which he is one of the world's foremost authorities. This made him a uniquely qualified choice to serve on President Trump's Council of Advisors for Science and Technology, where he mapped a path forward for U.S. global leadership in the industries of the future. Furthermore, he has a profound understanding of the imperative to secure this lead by fostering the workforce of the future—a goal he has helped achieve through his advocacy of a national science and technology strategy and his superlative management of IBM Research's cadre of thousands of highly-skilled scientists.

Office of the President
Suite 801 EXP
360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
617.373.2101
northeastern.edu

On a personal note, last year Dr. Gil graciously agreed to speak at the Northeastern University Doctor of Philosophy Commencement ceremonies. His message on the value of interdisciplinary collaboration inspired and energized our doctoral candidates to strive for excellence in their careers. As president of an R1 research institution, I view an emphasis on cultivating the next generation of innovators as a paramount qualification for national science leadership—a quality that Dr. Gil exemplifies.

There are few scientists who can justly claim the highest laurels of leadership in both industry and public service. Dr. Gil is such a singular figure, possessing the scientific brilliance, organizational acumen, and strategic vision to successfully lead the Department of Energy's applied R&D programs and Office of Science. I am sure his tenure will greatly advance U.S. leadership in energy, science, and technology and ensure a safe and prosperous future for the nation.

For these reasons, Dr. Darío Gil has my unwavering support to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy. Should you need any more information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Aoun
President
Northeastern University

March 31, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I write to you on behalf of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) to express AAAI's enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). As the preeminent scientific society focused on advancing understanding of the mechanisms underlying thought and intelligent behavior and their embodiment in machines, AAAI recognizes that the Under Secretary oversees a substantial research and development portfolio that is critical both to the DOE mission and to the nation's continued leadership in important emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). AAAI believes it is essential to fill this position quickly, and with someone who understands the importance and potential of AI technologies to America's future.

In this regard, Darío Gil is the perfect candidate for this position. As head of IBM research, he combines a fundamental belief that science and technology play a crucial role in improving people's lives with the understanding that responsible use of powerful new technologies such as AI presents significant challenges. His leadership has established IBM as a key voice in the emerging subfield of AI ethics and continues to keep IBM at the forefront of AI research. For the past 5 years, Dr. Gil has also served more broadly as an advisor for the National Academy of Sciences on the importance, potential, and challenges of new AI technologies. Additionally, he has a deep understanding of the government scientific enterprise from his service as Chair of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation and as a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

AAAI was founded in 1979 and currently represents a membership of over 8000 academic and industrial researchers working in the field of AI. Its overarching mission is to promote the importance to society of broad-based fundamental

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org

Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

research in AI, and its responsible use in different application areas for the benefit of humankind. We see Darío Gil's nomination for DOE Under Secretary as directly aligned with our mission and strongly urge his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephen F. Smith
President
Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chair, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
363 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

My name is Chris Barnard, President of the American Conservation Coalition (ACC), the nation's largest conservative environmental organization with 75,000 grassroots members nationwide. I'm writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Mr. Preston Wells Griffith III to serve as Under Secretary of Energy at the Department of Energy (DOE).

At a time when the United States faces rising energy demand alongside the need for continued environmental progress, we need pragmatic, forward-thinking leaders at the helm. Mr. Griffith is exactly that. In his role on ACC's Board of Advisors, I've seen firsthand his ability to tackle complex energy challenges with a clear commitment to innovation and an all-of-the-above approach that champions American energy. I've been especially impressed by his dedication to solving the energy trilemma: delivering energy that is affordable, reliable, and increasingly clean. His leadership reflects exactly what this moment demands.

Should Mr. Griffith be confirmed by the Senate, we will be sad to miss him on ACC's Board of Advisors, but excited to work with him in his new capacity. I trust that he will serve this nation with integrity, creativity, and curiosity – as he has demonstrated in his dedication to ACC's mission over the years.

On behalf of ACC and our tens of thousands of members across the country, I strongly urge the Committee to confirm Mr. Griffith's nomination. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or to discuss further.

Sincerely,
Chris Barnard
President
American Conservation Coalition

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC & LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

March 28, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

As president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), I am pleased to express my support for President Trump's nomination of Darío Gil as Undersecretary for Science and Innovation at the Department of Energy (DOE). I urge the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and U.S. Senate to advance the nominee.

APLU is a membership organization that fosters a community of university leaders collectively working to advance the mission of public research universities. The association's U.S membership consists of more than 230 public research universities and systems across all 50 states. The association and its members collectively focus on student success and workforce readiness; promoting pathbreaking scientific research; and bolstering economic and community engagement.

DOE is an important partner in supporting fundamental research at public universities that is needed to stay ahead of international competition and create American jobs of the future in key energy sectors as well as innovative technology areas such as quantum information science, artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, biotechnology, and microelectronics. As the current chair of the National Science Board and the director of IBM Research, Mr. Gil has championed U.S. leadership in energy, science, and technology. Through his work at IBM, Mr. Gil has promoted innovation in key technologies such as hybrid cloud computing, AI, semiconductors, and quantum computing. Mr. Gil also served on the President's Council of Advisors for Science and Technology during President Trump's first term, where he led a subcommittee on American global leadership in industries of the future. Mr. Gil's expertise in the public and private research sectors will serve as an asset to DOE, where he will oversee the government's largest federal sponsor of basic research in the physical sciences and the network of National Laboratories.

Mr. Gil's leadership will ensure strong DOE research and development programs that maintain U.S. prosperity and security at a moment of intense global competition. I hope Mr. Gil will be able to build bridges between the private sector, federal research agencies, and the academic research community as we collectively strive toward the goal of maintaining U.S. scientific leadership. I urge the Committee and U.S. Senate to confirm Mr. Gil as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Mark Becker, President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

1220 L St, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005-4018 | 202.478.6040 | www.aplu.org

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Building 1
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

April 1, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I write to you to express my strongest possible support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy. As Dean of the School of Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Dr. Gil, who serves on my Dean's Advisory Council. For many years, I have witnessed firsthand his exceptional leadership, technical depth, and enduring commitment to advancing science and technology.

Dr. Gil is one of the world's foremost leaders in quantum computing and artificial intelligence. As Director of IBM Research, he has been instrumental in developing and demonstrating several generations of quantum computers. These systems—and the software platforms supporting them—are now widely used around the globe. By making quantum computing accessible via the cloud, Dr. Gil has enabled over 600,000 users worldwide to explore quantum research and its applications. His work has not only shaped the direction of the field, but also resulted in a remarkable body of scientific publications. He is a true pioneer in the field.

In February 2020, I had the privilege of attending Dr. Gil's brilliant plenary talk, *"The Future of Computing: Bits + Neurons + Qubits,"* at the IEEE International Solid-State Circuits Conference. It was a compelling articulation of the future of intelligent systems and a clear reflection of his keen insights and tremendous vision.

Beyond his technical accomplishments, Dr. Gil has demonstrated extraordinary public service. He has participated in several high-impact national initiatives, including the White House Summit on Advancing American Leadership in Quantum Information Science. His service on the President's Council of Science and Technology Advisors (PCAST), as well as his leadership as Chairman of the National Science Board (NSB)—which oversees the National Science Foundation—reflects his deep dedication to national science policy and strategic investment in research.

Dr. Gil has held several senior leadership positions at IBM, including Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research. In these roles, he has guided IBM's strategic agenda in areas critical

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Building 1
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

to U.S. competitiveness—quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and fundamental science. His leadership has translated into impact not just within IBM, but across academia, industry, and government.

It was an honor to have Dr. Gil announced as the inaugural MIT School of Engineering and Schwarzman College of Computing Advanced Degree Ceremony Speaker. His speech was inspiring to the next generation of technology leaders.

It has been an honor to serve alongside Dr. Gil as co-chair of the MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab, a unique research partnership focused on fundamental AI that has pioneered a collaborative model between academia and industry. Dr. Gil's vision and commitment have been instrumental to the Lab's success and broad impact.

Dr. Gil's insights and guidance as a member of my Dean's Advisory Council have been invaluable as I work to advance the School of Engineering's mission to educate the next generation of engineering leaders and support groundbreaking research in key strategic areas.

Throughout his career, Dr. Gil has demonstrated tremendous leadership and a commitment to advancing cutting-edge research. I can think of no one better suited to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy.

Please feel free to contact me should you require any additional information or insight.

Sincerely,

Anantha P. Chandrakasan

Anantha P. Chandrakasan
MIT Chief Innovation and Strategy Officer
Dean, MIT School of Engineering
Vannevar Bush Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

PURDUE UNIVERSITY | Office of the President

March 27, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee

Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

304 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich

Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

304 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

As you prepare for the confirmation hearing for role of Undersecretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy, I am writing to add my most enthusiastic endorsement of Dr. Dario Gil to what I am sure are the many expressions of support you have already received.

Dr. Gil's strong combination of academic achievement at MIT, private sector leadership at IBM, prior service as Chair of the National Science Board, and demonstrated thought leadership on cutting edge issues give him the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience to benefit our nation in this key role. Not only will he advance our national interests, but he is also respected across sectors and will be a key asset in bringing our like-minded partners together on these vital emerging technologies.

While I was serving as the Science and Technology Adviser to the U.S. Secretary of State in 2019-2020, and since then in my capacities at Purdue, I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Gil and I deeply appreciate his intellect and conviction for American national security and economic security. Through the collaboration between IBM and Purdue on AI, quantum, and semiconductor research, I have also seen how insightfully knowledgeable he is in these critical areas of science and technology in the portfolio of the nominated Under Secretary position.

I strongly believe that his skill, thoughtful demeanor, and proven leadership will be an invaluable asset for our country. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of his nomination.

Sincerely,

Mung Chiang
President

Office of the President
Hovde Hall, Room 200
610 Purdue Mall, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2040
Office: 765-494-9708

April 7, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I write this letter in support of the nomination of Dario Gil as Undersecretary for Science at DOE.

I worked closely with Dario when I was Director of the National Science Foundation (2014-2020). He is a true leader, thoughtfully pursuing the goal of positioning science and technology to have a leadership role in the U.S. He has great expertise in quantum science, which is an important asset for DOE leadership in science. And he is an outstanding communicator about science's leading role in national and economic security.

In his recent interview in *Issues in Science and Technology* (titled, "The Currency of Power is Increasingly Becoming Science and Technology") Dario stressed the need for all of us to work together "to accomplish big things." He is a vigorous engine that can make that happen.

Dario Gil is a leader for our times. He will work hard to ensure the U.S. is a global leader in science and technology. I enthusiastically support his nomination.

Sincerely,

France A. Cordova
Member, National Academy of Sciences
Former President of Purdue University
Former Director of the National Science Foundation
Former member, National Science Board
Former NASA Chief Scientist
Former Deputy Group Leader at Los Alamos National Laboratory
Resident of the State of New Mexico

Former Under Secretaries
U.S. Department of Energy

To: U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Russell Senate Office Building
2 Constitution Ave NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Attn: The Honorable Michael S. Lee
U.S. Senator, Utah
Chairman

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
U.S. Senator, New Mexico
Ranking Member

Subject: Recommendation for National Science Board Chair **Dario Gil**'s nomination for Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy

Dear Members of the Committee,

It is our honor to recommend Dario Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy. Throughout his distinguished career, Dario has demonstrated an extraordinary ability to navigate the intersection of science & technology with academia, public service and the private sector—a strong combination of expertise that positions him to help lead the Department of Energy in today's rapidly evolving global energy, science and technology sectors.

As Senior Vice President and Director of Research at IBM, he has been at the forefront of semiconductors, high performance computing, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing. He has also significantly been involved in science and technology public policy, as the Chairman of the National Science Board, the governing body of the National Science Foundation, and has been a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. And he has forged significant university endeavors, including with MIT, the University of Chicago and the University of Tokyo.

As the former holders of the office for which he has been nominated, we believe we have a good perspective of the proper skillsets needed for success. We have full confidence that Dario Gil will bring extraordinary leadership, integrity, and transformative thinking to the Department of Energy, and we urge you to support his nomination and confirm him for this critical position.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Dabbar
Former Under Secretary for Science
U.S. Department of Energy

Steven E. Koonin
Former Under Secretary for Science
U.S. Department of Energy

Ray Orbach

Raymond Lee Orbach
Former Under Secretary for Science
U.S. Department of Energy

Lynn Orr

Frankin "Lynn" Orr
Former Under Secretary for Science and Energy
U.S. Department of Energy

The New York Academy of Sciences

March 23, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-5150

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-5150

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I write to express my strong and enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy. Darío is the first person I personally recruited five years ago to serve as a member of the Board of Governors of the venerable New York Academy of Sciences, given both his prominent role heading research at IBM and his visionary leadership mobilizing multiple stakeholders to participate in creating a national computational consortium to develop novel scientific approaches to combatting the pandemic. He has been a great partner for the Academy as we developed and launched the International Science Reserve, a broad network of scientists committed to mobilizing the resources of science to prepare for future catastrophes.

Over the past five years, Dr. Gil has been a wise and helpful advisor as the Academy has launched programs related to the role of Artificial Intelligence, both for science and for multiple other endeavors, focusing on the extraordinary power of AI as also the challenges it raises for issues ranging from privacy to security. He is a leading figure in the development of quantum computing and has given compelling lectures and talks about new breakthroughs in this critical field. He has also been an impassioned and brilliant public spokesperson for the importance of diversifying the sources and the structures for supporting and advancing scientific research and innovation, in programs put on by the Academy as well as in many other venues and contexts.

Dr. Gil has been able to do all this while not only leading IBM research, but serving on other important boards for organizations promoting the cause of science, as well as chairing the National Science Board, which oversees – among other things – the National Science Foundation.

I can think of no one better for the important role of Under Secretary for Science in the Department of Energy. Please do not hesitate to contact me should I be able to be of any further help in the critical work you do to support our nation's pre-eminence in the fields of Energy and National Resources.

Sincerely,

Nicholas B. Dirks
President and Chief Executive Officer
The New York Academy of Sciences
ndirks@nyas.org

Office of the President
University of Maine
University of Maine at Machias

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

5703 Alumni Hall
Orono, Maine 04469-5703
Tel: 207.581.1512
umaine.edu
machias.edu

March 27, 2025

Chairman Mike Lee
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Martin Heinrich
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Endorsement of Darío Gil, Ph.D. for Undersecretary for Science and Innovation, US Department of Energy

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I am writing to offer my strong endorsement of the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as our nation's next Undersecretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy.

As a leader in science, industry, academia, and government Dr. Gil exhibits extraordinary distinction and insightful vision. He is an internationally recognized scholar in quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and hybrid cloud technologies. His groundbreaking research in quantum computing has fundamentally revolutionized the field with applications for material science, manufacturing, drug discovery, machine learning, and finance. In the energy sector, Dr Gil's work is proving critical for next-generation energy and manufacturing technologies, including optimization of power grids and identifying new materials to capture carbon more efficiently.

In his role as senior vice president and director of research at IBM Research, Dr. Gil oversees one of the world's largest corporate research laboratories, with over 3,000 researchers. IBM became the first company to build programmable quantum computers and make them universally available through the cloud under his leadership. A strong supporter of collaborative research models, Dr. Gil also serves as IBM chair of the MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he is deeply committed to advancing AI research for the overall benefit of industry and society and preparing the next generation of computer scientists.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Dr. Gil as a member of the National Science Board, which he chairs. His understanding of the strengths and trajectories of the U.S. science and technology enterprise is impressive and his ideas for leading innovation investments to shape our nation's future are bold and exciting. This comes from his deep understanding of the dynamic among the academic, industry, and government sectors in advancing both fundamental science and experimental development. As NSB chair he catalyzes commitment to competitiveness in science and technology and to stimulating new interests and career pathways for young people to ensure future U.S. leadership.

In closing, let me reiterate my unreserved endorsement of Dr Darío Gil. His strategic vision, brilliant insights, and deep scientific expertise will be vital assets to the Department of Energy in harnessing and expanding the power of science and technology to address the nation's most pressing challenges.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy

Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Ph.D.
President, University of Maine
Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, University of Maine System
Member, National Science Board Class of 2024 - 2030

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Office of the President

March 27th, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

It is an honor to support the nomination of **Dr. Dario Gil** for the position of Under Secretary for Science at the U. S. Department of Energy.

I am the President of the University of Arizona, and I have known Dr. Gil as a professional colleague for over a decade, including from our joint service on the National Science Board, which he now chairs. During our work together, I found him to be one of the most incisive and strategic thinkers in technology today. Dr. Gil has a sweeping knowledge and appreciation of some of the most vital areas of research and development, including semiconductors, artificial intelligence (Al) and quantum computing, and is a much sought after speaker on these topics. He is amazingly effective at messaging the importance of fundamental science and engineering advances and their importance to the nation's competitiveness to broad audiences, whether they are subject-matter experts or the general public. He will make an excellent scientific advisor to Secretary Chris Wright and leader for the Department of Energy's efforts in fundamental research and its vital contributions to both our nation's energy security and our national security.

In Secretary Wright's welcoming remarks to the Department of Energy staff, he notes that "we're going to see the fusion of scalable quantum computing and Al, and we're going to have a different world with different possibilities." In his recent keynote remarks at CERAWeek 2025, he again focused on the transformative power of Al and how "the excitement is palpable to apply Al specifically for scientific advancement," including the impact on national defense. I can think of no one better suited to further the nation's advancement in Al and quantum

computing than Dr. Gil, who is a globally recognized leader in the quantum computing industry and has made considerable advancements into Al research.

A fellow member of the National Academy of Engineering, Dr. Gil's leadership and service on a global scale - particularly in Al, quantum, and their applications - demonstrate his commitment to working at the highest level as a champion of fundamental science and its impacts on U.S. competitiveness, energy technologies, and national security.

I give him my most enthusiastic recommendation, and hope that he will be given full consideration for this important role for our nation. If I can provide further comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Suresh Garimella

Dr. Suresh Garimella
President of the University of Arizona
University Distinguished Professor

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

April 2, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee, Chairman
The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lee and Senator Heinrich,

I am writing personally to endorse the nomination of Dr. Dario Gil, who has been nominated to be the Under Secretary of Energy for Science. Dr. Gil has been a member of the CSIS Board of Trustees, but I am writing in my private capacity.

CSIS is an authentically non-partisan research institute. We are scrupulous to work on a bipartisan basis. And because of our tax status, CSIS cannot "lobby" the Congress. So I am writing only in my private capacity.

I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Gil during the past three years. He is a recognized leader in the high technology research community and in the science public policy world. Last year Dr. Gil was elected to be the chair of the National Science Board. He has been a tireless advocate for strengthening the research and development foundations of America's economy and creative research community.

Last year I personally moderated a webinar featuring Dr. Gil and Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan, who is head of the National Science Foundation. Dr. Panchanathan wss appointed to the position by President Trump in his first term, but served through the tenure of President Biden. The two of them are great champions for strengthening the computational foundation for America's research community, and thereby for the American economy.

WWW.CSIS.ORG

1616 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

TEL: (202) 887.0200
FAX: (202) 775.3199

Dr. Gil was born in Spain, but came to the US to secure a Ph.D. from MIT. He has devoted his professional career to advancing science and engineering here in the United States. He is deeply committed to America, seen by his numerous roles in public policy—a member of the National Academy of Engineering, Service on the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology, and most recently as President of the National Science Board.

Dr. Gil is gifted and committed. He will be the leader that the Department of Energy's science activities need and deserve. I strongly commend him for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

John J. Hamre
President and CEO, and Langone
Chair in American Leadership

ITI Promoting Innovation Worldwide

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

On behalf of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), the premier global technology trade association, I am writing to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. Dr Gil's visionary leadership and deep expertise in technology and innovation make him exceptionally well-qualified for this role. ITI is proud to endorse a leader of his caliber, whose commitment to scientific advancement and technological excellence aligns with our mission to promote policies that drive innovation.

Dr. Gil is a highly respected technology leader with extensive experience in pioneering scientific research and innovation. As Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research, Dr. Gil has led a global research team dedicated to advancing cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, hybrid cloud, semiconductors, and exploratory science. As Chair of the National Science Board, he has provided strategic oversight and guidance to advance U.S. scientific research and innovation. His commitment to technological progress and his ability to navigate complex policy environments make him an outstanding candidate for this role.

During the first Administration of President Trump, Dr. Gil also served as a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), where he contributed to significant technology initiatives, including efforts to advance quantum computing and artificial intelligence. His leadership in these areas has demonstrated his capacity to drive impactful initiatives that strengthen the nation's technological competitiveness.

At this critical moment for U.S. leadership in technology and energy, the need for visionary and capable leadership is important to drive innovation, enhance energy security, and maintain our nation's global competitiveness. Dr Gil's distinguished record, expertise and vision make him exceptionally well-suited for the role of Under Secretary for Science. We respectfully urge the Committee to move forward swiftly with his review and confirmation to ensure the Department of Energy benefits from his expertise and leadership.

Sincerely,

Jason Oxman
President and CEO
Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)

Global Headquarters
700 K Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20001, USA
+1 202-737-8888

Europe Office
Rue de la Loi 227
Brussels - 1040, Belgium
+32 (0)2-321-10-90

info@itic.org
www.itic.org
@iti_techtweets

RICE UNIVERSITY'S
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FOR PUBLIC POLICY

April 3, 2025

Sen. Mike Lee, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I am a member of the Science and Technology Acton Committee (STAC), and I join the STAC co-chairs in endorsing the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil for the position of Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the Department of Energy. I respectfully urge the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to confirm his nomination expeditiously.

I am a former federal official, having served in the Clinton Administration, as Director of the National Science Foundation, from 1993-98, and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, from 1998 to January 2001.

I have worked with Dr. Gil on STAC and recently hosted his visit to Rice University, where he engaged students and scholars in discussions of the vital important of science in addressing the nation's needs. He has a keen understanding of public policy and is an outstanding ambassador for science.

Dr. Gil's long list of qualifications includes earning a Ph.D. in electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as his experience as a senior vice president and director of research at IBM. As the leader of one of the world's largest corporate research labs, Dr. Gil leads development of innovative strategies in AI, semiconductors, quantum computing, hybrid cloud, and more. His deep understanding of the intersection of business and government will be a major asset to the Department of Energy. Dr. Gil also has significant experience in the public sector as a former member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and as the current president of the National Science Board. In addition, he is a board member of the Semiconductor Industry Alliance and CSIS, and he serves as a Governor of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Darío Gil is well known and well respected in the scientific community, business community, academia, and the public sector. Our nation will benefit from his leadership at the Department of Energy, and it is in our best interest for the committee and the Senate to advance his nomination expeditiously.

Sincerely,

Neal Lane

Neal Lane, Ph.D.
Senior Fellow, Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy
Malcolm Gillis University Professor Emeritus
Professor of Physics and Astronomy Emeritus
Rice University
https://www.bakerinstitute.org/experts/neal-f-lane/
mailto:neal@rice.edu

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PROFESSOR TSU-JAE KING LIU
DEAN AND ROY W. CARLSON PROFESSOR OF ENGINEERING
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
BERKELEY, CA 94720-1700

PHONE: (510) 642-5771
FAX: (510) 643-7846
E-MAIL: tjkliu@berkeley.edu
WEBSITE:http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~tking

March 23, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: DOE Under Secretary for Science and Innovation nominee Darío Gil

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I write to you to express my enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the United States (U.S.) Department of Energy.

By way of introduction, I am a natural-born citizen of the U.S. and Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences at the University of California, Berkeley where I have conducted research in semiconductor devices and technology for almost 30 years. I am most well known in the field for co-developing the "FinFET" – a transistor design used in all leading-edge computer chips today. I am a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and of the National Academy of Inventors, as well as an elected member of the National Academy of Engineering (NAE). My awards include the IEEE Founder's Medal "for leadership in the advancement and commercialization of nanometer semiconductor technologies and the promotion of microelectronics workforce development." I have served the nation as a member of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Directorate for Engineering Advisory Committee and also as a member of the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) Industrial Advisory Committee. I am also a Director of two U.S. semiconductor companies, namely Intel Corporation and MaxLinear, Inc.

In today's increasingly competitive geopolitical landscape, the U.S. must maintain technological leadership in order to secure its long-term economic prosperity and national security. Science and innovation continually advance technology, and hence are key to the nation's future. This is especially true for the energy industry, which powers every aspect of modern society. Furthermore, a growing and more reliable and secure supply of electricity is needed to support growth in applications of artificial intelligence (AI) across all sectors, to give the U.S. a competitive advantage. It is critical, therefore, to have a leader of Dr. Gil's high caliber (evidenced by his election to the NAE) and dedication to the welfare of our nation to oversee its research and development programs in nuclear, fossil, and renewable energy, as well as in energy system integrity.

As Senior Vice President and Director of Research at International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), Dr. Gil is responsible for one of the world's largest and most influential corporate research labs, comprising over 3,000 researchers. Under his leadership, IBM's research organization has advanced scientific discovery and made innovations in semiconductors, cloud computing, AI, and quantum computing. It is particularly noteworthy that IBM was the first company in the world to build programmable quantum computers and make them broadly accessible through the cloud. An advocate for collaborative research, Dr. Gil co-chairs the MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab, which advances fundamental AI research to benefit industry and society. He also co-chairs the Executive Board of the International Science Reserve, a global network of scientists from over 100 countries, fostering international collaboration for solutions to global crises.

Dr. Gil also has been a leader in service to the profession, most notably as a board member of the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA). For the country he has served on the President's Council of Science and Technology Advisors (PCAST) and is a member of the National Science Board (NSB), which he has chaired since May 2024. I have had multiple occasions to interact with Dr. Gil in his role as Chair of the NSB, which advises our nation's leaders on policy matters related to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) research and education. Most recently I spoke as a panelist at the NSB's December 2024 meeting, on the topic of the STEM talent needs. Through this experience I learned of the NSB's vision for a new multi-sectoral (industry, government, philanthropy) nationwide initiative to meet short-term workforce needs and build the STEM talent engine of the future to ensure U.S. leadership in science and technology.

Dr. Gil's expertise and track record of accomplishments as a leader in technology will be invaluable for the Under Secretary role. His demonstrated ability to work across sectors, building bridges between academia, industry, and government is a strategic advantage for driving productive collaborations to ensure our national and economic security.

Thank you very much for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Tsu-Jae King Liu
Dean and Roy W. Carlson Professor of Engineering
University of California, Berkeley

March 31, 2025

William Flynn Martin
4109 Rosemary Street
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
William.f.martin@me.com

US Senator Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I would like to strongly endorse the nomination of Wells Griffith to be Under Secretary of Energy. I had the honor of working with Wells during the first term of Donald Trump. He has the experience and the wisdom to lead the Department of Energy into an exciting new era of energy security. Thank you for considering my views.

Respectfully,

William Flynn Martin

Former United States Deputy Secretary of Energy
Former Executive Secretary of the National Security Council
Administration of Ronald Reagan

March 16, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 511
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 363
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 709
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune, Senator Lee and Senator Heinrich:

I write in strong support of the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil as Department of Energy (DOE) Under Secretary for Science and Innovation. The Under Secretary oversees a substantial research and development portfolio that is critical to the DOE mission and also to the nation's competitiveness in areas such as quantum technology. The United States is in a "quantum race" with China among others, and filling the position of DOE Under Secretary for Science and Innovation is a matter that is timely and even urgent.

Dr. Gil is eminently qualified for the position to which he has been nominated. As Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research, he leads a storied corporate research organization that is a world leader in discovery and innovation. In addition, he has a deep understanding of the government scientific enterprise through his service as Chair of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation and as a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

As Executive Director of the Quantum Economic Development Consortium (QED-C), it has been my pleasure to work with Dr. Gil and his team to advance the U.S. quantum economy. QED-C was established by the National Quantum Initiative Act, which was passed with bipartisan support and signed by President Trump in 2018. Our mission is to grow the U.S. quantum industry. Today, QED-C is the premier quantum industry consortium with approximately 260 members, including nine of the DOE national labs. QED-C works closely with DOE and other government stakeholders to accelerate progress and ensure U.S. leadership in the critical and emerging area of quantum technology.

On behalf of the quantum community, I look forward to working with Darío Gil upon his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Celia Merzbacher
QED-C Executive Director
SRI International

1100 Wilson Blvd, Suite 2800 • Arlington, VA 22209 • USA +1(703) 524-2053

Cleveland Clinic

Tomislav Mihaljevic, MD
Chief Executive Officer and President
Morton L. Mandel CEO Chair

March 24, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy. Dr. Gil's extensive experience and visionary leadership in scientific research and technological innovation make him an outstanding candidate for this critical role.

As the Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research, Dr. Gil has demonstrated a deep commitment to advancing scientific discovery and driving transformative innovation. Under his leadership, IBM Research has spearheaded advancements in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and materials science, directly contributing to the technological competitiveness of the United States. His ability to bridge the gap between academic research and industrial application underscores his capability to lead the Department's scientific initiatives.

Dr. Gil's dedication to fostering collaboration across public, private, and academic sectors has amplified the impact of scientific endeavors, promoting research that addresses global challenges such as climate change, clean energy development, and sustainable technologies. His leadership in quantum computing, in particular, positions him to guide the Department of Energy's efforts to maintain American leadership in emerging technologies.

Furthermore, Dr. Gil's commitment to nurturing the next generation of scientists and engineers through educational and workforce development programs demonstrates his comprehensive understanding of the scientific ecosystem. His inclusive approach will ensure that scientific advancements benefit all Americans.

I am confident that Dr. Darío Gil will bring exceptional dedication and expertise to the role of Under Secretary for Science. I respectfully urge the committee to advance his nomination and support his confirmation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Tomislav Mihaljevic, MD

The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
9500 Euclid Avenue / NA4
Cleveland, Ohio 44195
Tel 216 444-6734
mihaljt@ccf.org

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
ACTION COMMITTEE

April 1, 2025

Sen. Mike Lee, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

As members of the Science and Technology Acton Committee (STAC), we heartily endorse the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil for the position of Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the Department of Energy and respectfully urge the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to confirm his nomination expeditiously. We have all worked with Dr. Gil, who is an emeritus member of STAC, so we have seen firsthand his exceptional mastery of science and technology policy and his skill at advancing policy objectives.

Dr. Gil's long list of qualifications includes earning a Ph.D. in electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as his experience as a senior vice president and director of research at IBM. As the leader of one of the world's largest corporate research labs, Dr. Gil leads development of innovative strategies in AI, semiconductors, quantum computing, hybrid cloud, and more. His deep understanding of the intersection of business and government will be a major asset to the Department of Energy.

Dr. Gil also has significant experience in the public sector as a former member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and as the current president of the National Science Board. In addition, he is a board member of the Semiconductor Industry Alliance and CSIS, and he serves as a Governor of the New York Academy of Sciences.

We have worked with Dr. Gil on developing and executing on ideas to ensure that the U.S. remains a leader in scientific innovation and technology, and we personally attest that he is both practical in his ideas to improve the enterprise and that he always follows through to ensure that a project is completed.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ACTION COMMITTEE

Darío Gil is well known and well respected in the scientific community, business community, academia, and the public sector. Our nation will benefit from his leadership at the Department of Energy, and it is in our best interest for the committee and the Senate to advance his nomination expeditiously.

Sincerely,

STAC co-chairs

Bill Novelli
Professor & Founder, Business For Impact Center, Georgetown's McDonough School of Business

Sudip Parikh
CEO, The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Mary Woolley
President & CEO, Research!America

Keith Yamamoto
Vice Chancellor for Science Policy & Strategy, UCSF

Vincenzo Paglia

April 4th, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I would like to express my support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The Under Secretary oversees a substantial research and development portfolio. It is essential to fill this position with someone who understands the crucial role of science and the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies on business, individuals, and society.

This is why I think that Darío Gil is the ideal candidate for this position. As head of IBM research, he combines a deep technical understanding of science and technology, ranging from AI, cloud, and quantum computing. Also, he has shown a fundamental belief that science and technology play a crucial role in improving people's lives as well as business growth. He also has a profound understanding that the responsible use of powerful technologies such as AI presents amazing opportunities as well as significant challenges, and that addressing these challenges is not slowing down innovation but rather improving it.

I have known Dario Gil for several years, since he has been very involved in supporting the Rome Call for AI Ethics, an initiative I led since 2020, when it was published. This document offers an ethical vision of AI and it has been signed by dozens of tech companies, universities in the world, the leaders of all the religion in the world. More info on www.romecall.org.

Dario had been representing IBM in the Rome Call initiatives for several years, providing both thought leadership and concrete actions to expand its reach to many stakeholders, including academic institutions all over the world. Dario Gil's attitude towards science, AI, and society is very aligned with the principles of our vision, which prioritizes a human-centric approach where

Vincenzo Paglia

technology is at the service of human intelligence and augments human capabilities with dignity, responsibility, fairness, and inclusion.

For all these reasons we strongly support Darío Gil's nomination for DOE Under Secretary for Science and we strongly urge his confirmation.

Sincerely,

+ Vincenzo Paglia

PONTIFICIA ACCADEMIA PER LA VITA * IL PRESIDENTE *

AAAS

April 2, 2025

Sudip S. Parikh, PhD
Chief Executive Officer and
Executive Publisher, *Science* Journals

Sen. Mike Lee, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I am pleased to endorse the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil for the position of Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the Department of Energy. I have had the honor of working with Dr. Gil, during his time serving on the Science and Technology Action Committee (STAC). As I noted when the President announced his nomination, Dario's creativity, technical savvy, and endless energy will serve the nation well.

Our nation is on the cusp of reenergizing critical technologies in emerging areas and harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to advance science and technological discovery; opportunities that require advancements in energy technologies. The Department of Energy requires a strong and talented leader to guide DOE's science and innovation portfolio. Dario Gil is uniquely qualified to take on this role.

His education background in electrical engineering, his years leading IBM's research lab, his advisory role serving on the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), and serving as chair of the National Science Board demonstrates Darío's understanding of the critical, complementary, role that the government and the private-sector play in advancing research and innovation to serve the nation. These are some of the very reasons that AAAS awarded Dario the 2024 William D. Carey Lecture award where he spoke eloquently on the future promise of AI.

I look forward to his nomination hearing and respectfully encourage the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to confirm his nomination.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE
1200 New York Avenue, NW ▪ Washington, DC 20005 USA ▪ Tel: 202 326 6640 ▪ E-mail: sparikh@aaas.org ▪ aaas.org

Martin A. Schmidt, Ph.D.
President

March 28, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Dario Gil to serve as the Undersecretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy. I have known Dario for over 25 years, first during my tenure as a Professor at MIT when Dario was pursuing his PhD, and subsequently during my time at MIT and RPI as we worked on partnerships with IBM Research. In addition, Dario serves on the RPI Board of Trustees. As a fellow PhD in engineering and science, I can share with you that Dario is a brilliant scientist and exceptional leader with the experience needed to succeed. I cannot think of a better person for this important DOE role at this time.

Dario has the skills needed for this position – engagement in cutting edge science, experience managing large institutions and collaborating – to maintain America as a leader in science and technology.

Dr. Gil is responsible for IBM Research, one of the world's largest and most influential corporate research labs, with over 3,000 researchers. His work in fields such as quantum computing, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and advanced materials aligns directly with the DOE's mission to foster cutting-edge research and development to drive America's competitiveness in science and innovation. His ability to collaborate with the private sector, universities and government agencies has fostered a dynamic environment for scientific advancement.

Dr. Gil is a globally recognized leader of the quantum computing industry and was instrumental in bringing the first university -based quantum computer to RPI.

Dario's experience with managing large institutions gives him the skills needed to manage DOE's critical seventeen national laboratories, ensuring they contribute to U.S. scientific leadership and technological advancement.

As a seasoned leader with a deep understanding of both the scientific and policy landscapes, he will be instrumental in advancing the DOE's critical priorities, including ensuring America's global leadership in science and technology.

For all these reasons, I fully support Dr. Dario Gil's nomination as Undersecretary for Science at the Department of Energy. I am confident that he will serve with distinction and make significant contributions to the advancement of science and technology in the United States.

Thank you for considering this important nomination. Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Schmidt
President
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute/110 8th Street/Troy, NY USA 12180/www.rpi.edu
(518) 276-6211/ E-mail: president@rpi.edu

Association of American Universities
America's Leading Research Universities

April 2, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chair
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I write to you to express my enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. Darío Gil to serve as Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy. The Department is an important lynchpin for strategic American science, and Darío will provide strong, effective, and visionary leadership to advance the Department's research programs for progress and competitiveness.

Appointed by President Trump to the National Science Board in 2020, Dr. Gil has served as a dynamic and energetic member of that group; he was elevated to Chair in 2024. In this role, he has been a forceful voice for American science and innovation. He brings a well-informed perspective on the needs of advanced industry, earned via more than two decades with IBM Research – itself a jewel of U.S. innovation. I particularly appreciate his views on the value of collaborations among industry, national labs, and academia, as demonstrated by his leadership of such projects as the MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab, a critical bridge between basic academic science and industry applications. Dr. Gil also served as a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) during President Trump's first term.

The nation faces an exciting, but demanding, time for science and energy. The Energy Information Administration predicts continued growth in U.S. energy consumption in the years ahead due in part to growth in data centers and manufacturing. We face intensifying global competition in energy and other emerging science-based fields. Achieving the Administration's vision for technology leadership and energy abundance will take advances in a broad array of areas like fusion, electrochemistry, and quantum science, and this in turn requires collaboration among our labs, our companies, and our universities. As Secretary Wright has said, "Technology doesn't happen in isolation."

To that end, I strongly support Darío's nomination and encourage the Committee to advance it expeditiously.

Sincerely,

Barbara R. Snyder

Barbara R. Snyder
President

SIMONS FOUNDATION p 646.654.0066 f 646.654.0220
160 FIFTH AVENUE. NEW YORK. NY 10010

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

April 1, 2025

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

I am writing to express my strongest possible support for the nomination of Dr. Dario Gil to serve as the Under Secretary for Science at the U.S. Department of Energy. Dr. Gil is an outstanding scientist and a science leader with tremendous vision and a broad understanding of the frontier of science.

Over the past several years, I have had the opportunity to interact with Dario in many different roles. He is a deep thinker and an outstanding leader. He is deeply committed to strengthening US science. He has all of the skills need to take on this challenging and important role leading the scientific program at the Department of Energy.

I am President of the Simons Foundation, a leading philanthropic funder of basic research in science and mathematics. I am the Charles Young Professor of Astronomy Emeritus at Princeton University and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Science, the National Academy of Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society. My work has been recognized by a MacArthur Fellowship and the Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics. These positions have enabled me to meet many of the leaders in our scientific community. I can think of no one more qualified to lead the Office of Science at the Department of Energy.

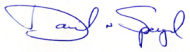
Dario Gil is an internationally recognized leader in Quantum Computing. He is well known and respected for his own scientific contributions to this dynamic field. He has been a visionary leader at IBM that has laid out a path for the development of quantum computing and has delivered on his plans to progress along this path. I have been inspired by hearing many of his talks on the subject and impressed to see his team at IBM deliver on the promises made in previous talks.

Dario Gil is an outstanding scientific leader with a broad vision of the field. He has served as chair of the National Science Board and is an active member of the Board of Governors of the New York Academy of Sciences. Working with Nicholas Dirks,

the NYAS President, he has helped revive the organization. In this role, he created the International Science Reserve, a strategic network to organize the international scientific community. Dario also made important intellectual contributions to the recent Vision for American Science and Technology (VAST) study.

Dario is a superb candidate for this important leadership position in the US scientific community. I strongly urge you to confirm him.

Sincerely,



David Spergel
President, Simons Foundation
Charles Young Professor of Astronomy Emeritus, Princeton University

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

March 19, 2025

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich,

I write to you to express my strong support for Dr. Darío Gil's nomination to serve as Under Secretary for Science and Innovation at the U.S. Department of Energy. As the former Secretary of the Air Force and a Former Member of Congress, I was both surprised and very pleased that someone of Dario's caliber would be willing to leave the private sector to serve the country in this way.

I have served with Dr. Gil on the National Science Board, where he is currently chair. He has a combination of vision and leadership skills that will serve the Department of Energy well.

As IBM's Senior Vice President and Director of Research, he oversees quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and next-generation energy solutions. His ability to bring together interdisciplinary teams to address some of the world's most pressing challenges speaks to his leadership skills and understanding of how to drive transformative change.

I fully support his nomination and look forward to the positive contributions he will undoubtedly make to our nation's future.

Sincerely,

Heather Wilson
President, The University of Texas at El Paso
24th Secretary of the Air Force
Member of Congress (NM-01) 1998-2009

Office of the President
500 West University Avenue
El Paso, Texas 79968-0500
915.747.5555