



To: WSW Clients
FROM: WSW Team
DATE: January 19, 2017

On January 19, 2017, Governor Rick Perry appeared before the Senate Energy Committee for his confirmation hearing to serve as Secretary of Energy. Below please find a brief review of the hearing.

HIGHLIGHTS/KEY POINTS:

- Press reports the morning of the hearing indicated the potential for massive cuts to DOE by the incoming administration. Some indicated that the DOE transition team are considering wholesale elimination of the EERE. All Democratic Senators expressed concern about these reports. Perry discounted the reports and pledged to maintain programs that help R & D and maintain US competitiveness. He even joked that "perhaps they'll forget about it" making light of his past inability to recall DOE during past presidential debates.

NOMINEE INFORMATION & LINK TO TESTIMONY

Chairman Lisa Murkowski's opening statement

Ranking Member Maria Cantwell's opening statement

Rick Perry's testimony

MEMBER INTERESTS/TOPICS RAISED

- Murkowski (Chair) mentioned several times the acute challenges and costs associated with power delivery and energy use in the rural communities of her state.
- Portman (R-OH) pressed Perry for a commitment to assist with passage of Energy Efficiency legislation in the new Congress.
- Sen. Hirono (D-HI) pressed for continued support of State Energy offices and highlighted the challenges of power distribution in her state.
- Sanders (Bernie) pressed for the department to reorient itself away from fossil fuels and towards EE to combat climate change.
- Both Cantwell (Ranking), Franken, and Heinrich, pressed for a recognition that human activity was causing climate change, a point that Perry reluctantly yet expeditiously agreed to.

- Perry also defaulted a number of times, to the fine scientific work being done at the national labs. Most Senators used their time to promote the work at the labs in their home states. Gardner (R-CO) asked Perry to visit NREL, which he committed to doing.
- Of note, Senator Manchin (D-WV) took the biggest swipe at DOE current spending formulas. He talked about the mix of energy production that goes into the concept of "base load" he was critical of the spending devoted to EERE and renewables, stating that renewables make up just 16% of the overall national base load, yet the Obama administration was devoting billions per year to renewables. He advocated that future DOE spending be in proportion to the percentage of use in the base load. Manchin also was one of the Senators who introduced Perry during opening statements, which is a sign of strong personal ties between the two.
- Perry made great use of burning the clock by talking about his past experience as Governor of Texas. He talked about his management skills and ability to hire talented people to promote job growth. He even talked about using the DOE labs as a way to bring products to market, and reduce energy costs to encourage domestic manufacturing.
- There were many parochial issues raised regarding nuclear fuel storage, regional power production issues, high tech batteries, etc.
- Cantwell cited EE as a job creator and something that has saved billions of dollars through smart buildings. She stated that 1.5 million US jobs are tied to EE technology.