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**SENATE APPROVES KEY NOMINATIONS FOR NNSA, DOE**

On February 15, the Senate approved the nominations of Lisa Gordon-Hagerty to be the Undersecretary of Energy for Nuclear Security and Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), and Melissa Burnison to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Both received approval from the Senate by voice vote. Gordon-Hagerty was [sworn in](#) on February 22.

Burnison's confirmation hearing was held on January 18 alongside Anne White, the President's nominee to lead the Office of Environmental Management, and was covered on page 6 of the [January edition](#) of the *ECA Bulletin*.

*(Continued on page 2)*



**Congress Working Toward Omnibus**

Congress passed a [massive budget deal](#) to raise spending caps and end a brief overnight government shutdown on February 9. The deal, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 ([H.R. 1892](#)), lifts strict budget caps on defense and domestic spending; it is expected to increase defense and domestic spending by roughly \$300 billion over the next two years as well as lift the debt ceiling though the

election and include tens of billions of dollars in disaster aid. The deal also extended a continuing resolution (CR) through March 23.

Appropriators in the House and Senate are now hoping to wrap up negotiations on a fiscal year 2018 (FY18) omnibus spending package to fund all federal agencies through September 30. Leadership in both chambers aim to have the bill ready

*(Continued on page 2)*

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**For ECA's 2018  
Annual Conference**

**April 12, 2018  
Washington, DC**

**See pages 3 –5 for details**

*(Continued from page 1)*

## Senate approves key nominations for NNSA, DOE

While Burnison's nomination has already been approved by the Senate, White's has yet to receive any floor time. It has been [reported](#) that a hold has been placed on her nomination by Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) until DOE commits to ending its practice of re-selling excess uranium stores on the open market. Barrasso says the practice hurts his state's uranium mining industry.

Dispute the hold, ECA sources suggest Ann White nomination could be voted on by the Senate as early as the week of March 19.

Meanwhile, Gordon-Hagerty's [confirmation hearing](#) was held on February 8 by the Senate Armed Forces

Committee. During the hearing, Ranking Member Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) asked her what her priorities would be as head of NNSA. Gordon-Hagerty replied that her number one priority would be infrastructure modernization to "make sure we have a sustained capability to produce the number of war reserve [plutonium] pits as outlined by the Nuclear Weapons Council."

During the hearing, Gordon-Hagerty also stressed the importance of predictable funding for the modernization of the nuclear enterprise.

"In order for the United States to ensure that we have an effective nuclear deterrent, it depends on [NNSA] and DOE," said Gordon Hagerty. "We must be able to modernize and have a robust, modern, flexible, and appropriately-tailored system throughout the nuclear weapons complex. In order to do that, we need reliable and sustained funding."

*(Continued from page 1)*

## Legislative Update

for debate on the House and Senate floors by the week of March 19. Congress needs to pass the bill by no later than March 23 to stave off another government shutdown before a scheduled two-week congressional recess.

Ahead of the omnibus release, Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) has indicated that funding for the Yucca Mountain repository in the final spending bill is a "no go" after the Senate signaled it wouldn't support its inclusion. During a March 14 [hearing](#) by the Senate Commerce committee, Senator Dean Heller (R-NV)—one of the most vulnerable Republicans in this year's midterm elections—told Secretary Perry that language for Yucca Mountain included in the House spending bill "will also be removed" before the omnibus passes.

The omnibus bill could face roadblocks before the March 23 deadline. ECA sources speculate that some legislators, such as Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), may insist that the Senate proceed with the bill under regular order, potentially delaying an early passage. Complications may arise in the House too, as House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said there is still some disagreement over "policy riders"

in the bill, which are provisions inserted into the omnibus that are unrelated to the budget.

### *President Issues FY19 Budget Request*

On February 12, the [President's FY19 budget request](#) was released. The budget request outlines the President's funding priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Overall, the proposal calls for \$30.6 billion for the US Department of Energy.

The Administration requested \$15.1 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). Of that amount, the budget request included \$11 billion for weapons activities and \$1.8 billion for defense nuclear nonproliferation.

The FY19 request gave \$6.6 billion for the Office of Environmental Management (EM), \$182 million above FY17 enacted levels.

The FY19 request also provided for \$5.4 billion for the Office of Science, including \$2.1 billion to operate national labs and world-class scientific instruments for over 30,000 researchers. For the Office of Nuclear Energy, the President requested \$757 million, including \$54 million for advanced small modular reactor research and development. The Office of Legacy Management received \$159 million.

*(Continued on page 6)*



ECA is pleased to announce the...

## 2018 Annual Conference

April 12, 2018

The Liaison Capitol Hill Hotel

415 New Jersey Ave., NW; Washington, DC 20001

(There will be an ECA Board Meeting on April 11, 2018 at 12:00pm at ECA Headquarters)

This meeting will focus on the DOE Offices of Environmental Management, Nuclear Energy, and the National Nuclear Security Administration. Meeting attendees will have the unique opportunity to hear from DOE officials, key Members of Congress and Congressional staff, and other DC insiders.

### Registration

To register, visit [here](#). Registration is open until Friday, April 6, 2018. General Admission is \$550.00.

### Reception

All meeting registrants are welcome to join ECA for a reception following the conclusion of the conference on Thursday, April 12, 2018 from 5:00-6:30pm EST at The Dubliner Restaurant, 4 F Street NW, Washington, DC.

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**2018 ECA Annual Conference:  
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The Liaison Capitol Hill Hotel  
415 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington, DC

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2018	
5:30pm – 7:00pm	<b>House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus Event</b> Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2043-2044, Washington, DC
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018	
8:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast and Check-in
8:30am – 8:45am	<b>Opening Remarks: Focus on the New Administration</b> County Executive Ron Woody, Roane County, TN; Chair, Energy Communities Alliance (ECA)
8:45am – 9:15am	<b>A View from Capitol Hill: 2018 and 2019 Appropriations</b> Representative Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN), Chairman, House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus; Vice-Chair, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, House Appropriations Committee
9:15am – 10:00am	<b>Hot Topics for DOE and Local Communities</b>
10:00 am – 10:30am	Break
10:30am – 11:00am	<b>Update from the National Nuclear Security Administration</b>



11:00am – 11:30pm	<p><b>Update on Nuclear Energy and SMR Development</b></p> <p>Edward McGinnis, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Nuclear Energy, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) (invited)</p>
11:30am – 12:15pm	<p><b>A View from the Field: What to Expect at DOE Sites in 2018</b></p> <p>Dae Chung, Acting Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Field Operations, Office of Environmental Management (DOE-EM) (invited)</p> <p>Michael Nartker, Acting Director, Office of External Affairs, DOE-EM</p>
12:15pm – 1:30pm	<p><b>Lunch Presentation: Update from the Office of Environmental Management</b></p> <p>James Owendoff, Acting Assistant Secretary, DOE-EM</p>
1:30pm – 2:15pm	<p><b>Hot Topics in EM</b></p> <p>Mark Gilbertson, Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Regulatory and Policy Affairs, Office, DOE-EM</p> <p>Martin Schneider, Senior Vice President, Longenecker &amp; Associates</p>
2:15pm – 2:30pm	Break
2:30pm – 3:15pm	<p><b>DOE Administration Priorities in 2018</b></p> <p>Paul Dabbar, Under Secretary for Science, DOE</p>
3:15pm – 4:00pm	<p><b>Insights on the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress from Congressional Staff</b></p> <p>Christopher Hanson, Professional Staff Member, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, Senate Appropriations Committee</p>
5:00pm – 6:30pm	<p><b>Reception with the Energy Communities Alliance</b></p> <p>The Dubliner, 4 F Street NW, Washington, DC</p>

(Continued from page 2)

## Legislative Update

\$220 million was requested to “continue the orderly and safe closure of the Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility and \$59 million to pursue the proven dilute and dispose technology.” This proposal is consistent with the Administration’s statement of policy released in July 2017, which opposed the approval of funds for MOX construction outlined in the National Defense Authorization Act.

The budget request would eliminate the Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy (ARPA-E) program. The program was also at risk of elimination in the FY18 budget request, but Congress ultimately provided it with funding.

The Yucca Mountain and Interim Storage Program would receive \$120 million under the President’s budget request. A DOE [document](#) noted that this request demonstrates “the Administration’s commitment to nuclear waste management by restarting Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensing activities for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository and establishing a robust interim storage program to develop a capability for earlier acceptance of spent nuclear fuel.”

The release of the budget proposal came a week after Congress passed its budget deal which raised spending caps. Therefore, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released an [addendum](#) that modifies the FY19 budget request to account for the new cap levels. According to OMB, “The addendum would provide an additional \$1.533 billion for the Department of Energy. Of this amount: The addendum would provide \$1.213 billion to the Science account for fundamental scientific research [...] an additional \$200 million to the Fossil Energy Research and Development account for research and development (R&D) of clean coal technologies [...] an additional \$120 million to the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account for R&D of sustainable transportation, renewable energy, and energy efficiency technologies.”

The President’s budget request is not the final say in FY19 spending levels. Congress maintains the power of the purse and will begin preparing its own proposals for FY19 spending in the coming months.

A fact sheet of the President’s budget request for DOE can be found [here](#). A breakdown of budget request highlights compared to previous year’s spending levels can be found on page 7 of the Bulletin.

## *Congress Approves Nuclear Production Tax Credits*

Included in Congress’ bipartisan budget deal were several tax extenders for clean energy, including nuclear power.

According to [World Nuclear News](#), section 40501 of the new law allows reactors entering service after December 31, 2020 to qualify for a 1.8 cents per kilowatt-hour tax credit, and enables the DOE Secretary to allocate credits for up to 6000 MWe of new nuclear capacity which enters service after January 1, 2021. It also allows public entity partners in nuclear projects to transfer their credits to other credit partners.

The 2021 deadline means that the two reactors currently under construction at the Vogtle plant in Georgia will be eligible for the tax credits. Other projects such as the Utah Associated Municipal Power System’s (UAMPS) plan to build a NuScale small modular reactor at the Idaho National Laboratory by 2026 will also qualify.

## *Nuclear Research and Development Legislation Gaining Traction*

Many in Congress appear keen on advancing legislation that supports nuclear research and development (R&D), as evidenced by the number of bills introduced and passed in both the House and Senate.

The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017 ([S. 97](#)) recently passed the Senate. This bill emphasizes public-private partnerships between companies and DOE national laboratories to develop and demonstrate new reactor designs.

On March 8, the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee [advanced](#) the Advanced Nuclear Energy Technologies Act ([S. 1457](#)). This bill would direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out at least four demonstration projects relating to advanced nuclear reactor technologies to support domestic energy needs. The bill now moves to the Senate floor for a vote.

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## FY 2018/2019 Appropriations Highlights\*

(amounts in thousands of dollars)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY2018 House Bill (H.R. 3354)	FY2018 Senate Bill (S. 1609)	FY2019 Requested
<b>DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY</b>	<b>30,746,009</b>	<b>29,888,401</b>	<b>31,463,626</b>	<b>30,609,071</b>
<b>Environmental Management</b>	<b>6,420,000</b>	<b>6,395,400</b>	<b>6,633,968</b>	<b>6,601,366</b>
Defense Environmental Cleanup	5,405,000	5,405,000	5,579,968	5,630,217
Hanford/ Richland	839,760	837,553	826,192	747,097
Office of River Protection	1,499,965	1,518,311	1,590,000	1,438,513
Idaho National Laboratory	382,088	382,071	350,226	359,226
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	1,396	31,175	1,175	1,704
Separations Process Research Unit	3,685	1,800	1,800	15,000
Nevada NNSA Sites	62,176	60,136	60,136	60,136
Sandia National Laboratory	4,130	2,600	2,600	2,600
Los Alamos National Laboratory	194,000	194,000	217,529	191,629
Oak Ridge Reservation	263,219	283,721	275,219	408,526**
Savannah River Site	1,233,429	1,397,694	1,260,000	1,656,180
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	292,720	323,041	300,971	403,487
Non-Defense Environmental Cleanup	247,000	222,400	266,000	218,400
West Valley Demonstration Project	66,413	64,585	75,000	63,687
Gaseous Diffusion Plants	101,304	100,575	101,304	***
Uranium Enrichment Decontamination & Decommissioning Fund	768,000	768,000	788,000	752,749
Oak Ridge	194,673	158,018	194,673	408,526**
Paducah	205,530	202,958	205,530	270,224
Portsmouth	315,168	351,271	351,271	415,458
<b>Legacy Management</b>	<b>154,320</b>	<b>154,606</b>	<b>154,606</b>	<b>158,877</b>
<b>National Nuclear Security Administration</b>	<b>12,938,252</b>	<b>13,914,400</b>	<b>13,685,032</b>	<b>15,091,050</b>
Weapons Activities	9,245,567	10,239,344	10,000,071	11,017,078
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation	1,882,872	1,776,461	1,852,310	1,862,825
Naval Reactors	1,419,813	1,486,000	1,436,651	1,788,618
<b>Nuclear Energy</b>	<b>1,016,616</b>	<b>969,000</b>	<b>917,020</b>	<b>757,090</b>
<b>Yucca Mountain and Interim Storage</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>120,000</b>
Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	90,000	---	90,000
Defense Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	30,000	---	30,000
<b>OTHER AGENCIES</b>				
<b>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</b>	<b>112,505</b>	<b>161,612</b>	<b>108,525</b>	<b>970.7</b>
Yucca Mountain Licensing	---	30,000	---	48,000

\* These figures are compiled from different sources: the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Appropriations committee reports, and press releases. There are some discrepancies in how each calculates government spending.

\*\* Documents released by the Administration have not yet divided the appropriation for Oak Ridge by what is for Defense Environmental Cleanup and what is for the Uranium Enrichment Decontamination & Decommissioning Fund. \$408,526,000 is the total appropriation for Oak Ridge.

\*\*\* These figures are not yet available based on documents produced by the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Energy.

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## Legislative Update

On February 13, the House passed the Nuclear Energy Research Infrastructure Act of 2018 ([H.R. 4378](#)), which would direct the Secretary of Energy to “provide for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility. The Secretary shall consult with the private sector, universities, national laboratories, and relevant federal agencies to ensure that the versatile neutron source is capable of meeting federal research needs for neutron irradiation services.”

Lastly, the House has passed the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2017 ([H.R. 4675](#)), which calls for an amendment to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to provide for a low-dose radiation basic research program. It directs the Secretary of Energy to carry out such research to “enhance the scientific

understanding of, and reduce uncertainties associated with, the effects of exposure to low-dose radiation.” The research will “inform improved risk-assessment and risk-management methods with respect to such radiation.”

### *House Lawmakers Hold Special Order on Yucca Mountain Bill*

On March 5, a bipartisan group of House lawmakers, led by bill sponsor Representative John Shimkus (R-IL), occupied several hours on the House floor for a special order discussing the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017 ([H.R. 3053](#)). The bill, which passed through the House Energy & Commerce Committee last June on a 49-4 vote, has still not seen floor time.

Highlights from the special order session can be viewed [here](#). A summary of key provisions of H.R. 3053 can be read [here](#).

## SAVANNAH RIVER SITE SEES TURNOVER OF CLEANUP, LAB LEADERSHIP



Jack Craig, DOE Savannah River Operations Former Office Manager

DOE’s Office of Environmental Management (EM) has named Michael D. Budney as the new manager of the Savannah River Operations Office. The former manager, Jack Craig, retired on February 28 after 29 years of service in the environmental cleanup program.

ECA would like to extend our thanks to Jack Craig for his leadership throughout the years. Craig has always been a manager who communicated well with local government officials and spoke candidly about issues facing communities. He has been a real leader at his site and across the complex.

Budney brings to the Savannah River Site over 20 years of leadership experience, having served in the US Navy, the departments of Defense and Energy, and the private sector. Most recently, Budney was director of the Office of Business Operations in the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

“Mike is highly respected for his leadership,” said James Owendoff, EM Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. “Through those skills, he is well positioned to lead the Savannah River team, run operations, and manage the site.”

The Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) has also seen a change in leadership. Dr. Vahid Majidi has been appointed as SRNL Director, effective March 15, 2018. Vahid succeeds Dr. Terry Michalske who has served as Director of the lab for the past seven years.

## HOUSE HOLDS HEARING ON DOE MODERNIZATION AND NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE

This year, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy has continued its series of hearings on DOE Modernization. The purpose of the hearings, as explained by Subcommittee Chairman Greg Walden (R-OR), is to “focus on proposed legislation relating to a core energy security mission of the Department,” and to learn more about what is necessary for U.S. global leadership in nuclear technology to meet long-term economic and national security objectives.

On February 6, the Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) entitled, “Advancing the Economic and National Security Benefits of America’s Nuclear Infrastructure” and witnesses included James Owendoff, EM Acting Assistant Secretary; Ed McGinnis, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for DOE’s Office of Nuclear Energy (NE); and Art Atkins, Associate Deputy Administrator for Global Material Security for NNSA.

Mr. Owendoff listed numerous EM accomplishments in his opening statement. Questions for Owendoff centered around challenges GAO reports have outlined in regard to DOE meeting its EM responsibilities. When asked about the timeline for addressing GAO’s recommendations, Owendoff reminded members that half of EM’s budget goes to hotel costs across the complex. He noted that the balance then goes toward highest-risk areas such as high-level waste and spent nuclear fuel management, adding, “These projects are often one of a kind – one of those is the Waste Treatment Plant at Hanford which has been a challenge for us. But history shows we did Rocky Flats on time.”

During the hearing, Subcommittee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) stated, “all of us support an all-of-the-above strategy” noting the “enormous” need for trained personnel and consideration of smaller units as existing nuclear plants begin to go offline. Mr. McGinnis explained that NE is working on three issue areas: 1) the nation’s existing nuclear fleet; 2) advanced nuclear; and 3) advanced fuel cycles. NE is also focusing on how best to leverage public-private partnerships.

When asked when he thinks small modular reactors (SMRs) will come into the commercial sector,

McGinnis replied “we’re at a tipping point and our ability to bring in new reactors is key.” He noted that NuScale’s SMR license application is already in the pipeline at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Another panelist, Victor McCree, Executive Director of Operations for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), added that the review of the NuScale application is on schedule as is its review of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s (TVA) early-siting permit for an SMR near Oak Ridge, TN.

Support and funding for Yucca Mountain and consolidated interim storage were also addressed during the hearing. When asked whether DOE was aware that the subcommittee and the full committee had passed legislation ([H.R. 3053](#)) to allow for interim storage, permanent repository and licensing process to move forward for Yucca Mountain, McGinnis responded that DOE requested \$120 million for resuming the license application and initiation of a robust interim storage program. He concluded it is “very important that we stop kicking the can down the road.”

Noting another complication, Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) stated that even with the vote on H.R. 3053, it would be a fight with appropriators that do not want to commit to a long-term funding profile.

On March 14, the Energy Subcommittee hosted another [hearing](#) on DOE Modernization, entitled “Legislation Addressing Cybersecurity and Emergency Response.” DOE Undersecretary for Energy Mark Menezes was a witness. The hearing focused on legislation currently in the house, namely the Energy Emergency Leadership Act ([H.R. 5174](#)), the Pipeline and LNG Facility Cybersecurity Preparedness Act ([H.R. 5175](#)), Cyber Sense ([H.R. 5239](#)), and Enhancing Grid Security ([H.R. 5240](#)).

During the hearing, Menezes spoke about Secretary Perry’s recent announcement of his intent to establish an Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) at DOE. In his written testimony, Menezes stated, “The creation of the CESER office will build on all that we do today and elevate the Department’s focus

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## House holds hearing on DOE modernization and nuclear infrastructure

on energy infrastructure protection and will enable more coordinated preparedness and response to cyber and physical threats and natural disasters. This must include electricity delivery, oil and natural gas infrastructure, and all forms of generation.”

## SECRETARY PERRY TESTIFIES ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE FY 2019 ENERGY BUDGET REQUEST

On March 14, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry testified before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation during a [hearing](#) entitled, “Rebuilding Infrastructure in America: Administration Perspectives.” Perry was joined on the witness stand by the Secretary of Transportation Elain Chao, the Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, the Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta, and the Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.

In his testimony, Perry broadly spoke about supporting America’s energy infrastructure through modernization and focusing on its security from various threats, stating, “As the Secretary charged with supporting America’s energy sector infrastructure, I am intently focused on its strength, as well as its security.”

During the hearing, Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) questioned Perry about the Trump Administration’s request for funding to restart the licensing process for Yucca Mountain. Perry responded by stating, “It is the statutory responsibility for the Secretary of Energy to follow the law, and the law tells us that that’s what we’re going to do—to go through with that licensing process. That’s what those dollars are there for.” Perry also noted that the funding request for licensing will likely continue to appear in future budget proposals from the Administration.

Secretary Perry also [testified](#) on March 15 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water regarding the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. His testimony highlighted the Administration’s

funding requests for DOE’s nuclear security mission, grid resilience, nuclear waste management, and legacy cleanup.

Specifically, he mentioned DOE’s focus on projects such as \$54 million for a new Advanced Small Modular Reactor R&D subprogram, an increased EM budget of \$6.6 billion, an increased NNSA budget of \$15.1 billion, and \$120 million for Yucca Mountain licensing. Perry also repeated his support for grid security by asking the subcommittee, “Are we going to make sure and take the steps to ensure that our nuclear and coal industries in particular are going to be viable alternatives and part of an all-of-the-above mix in our energy portfolio?”



Secretary of Energy Rick Perry

During questioning, Perry responded to a question about interim storage, by stating “There may be some other sites in this country that may be appropriate.” Perry’s testimony also highlighted the \$10 million request to implement an interim storage program. When asked about the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act ([H.R. 3053](#)) authored by Chairman John Shimkus (R-IL), Perry declined to pro-actively endorse the legislation, stating, “I’ll leave that to those of you very talented at negotiating those bills.”

Secretary Perry was also asked about the Administration’s proposed cuts for ARPA-E. He clarified that while the program’s line item was reduced, he would “honor and follow instructions” from Congress on the future of the program.

## SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON DOE DEFENSE ACTIVITIES

On March 14, the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a [hearing](#) focused on “Department of Energy Atomic Energy Defense Activities and Programs.” Key witnesses at the hearing included newly-sworn NNSA Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, EM Acting Assistant Secretary James Owendoff, NNSA Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors Admiral James Caldwell Jr, USN, and Government Accountability Office Director of Natural Resources and Environment David Trimble.

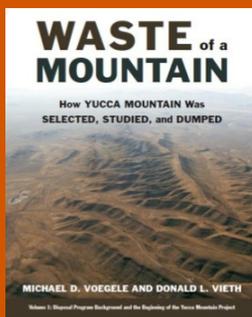
The purpose of the hearing was to receive testimony on DOE’s atomic energy defense activities and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for FY19.

During his opening statement, Mr. Owendoff noted that the President’s FY19 budget request for EM was the largest in over a decade and \$93 million above the FY18 budget request. Owendoff also

noted that the EM program, in its carrying out of core mission directives, valued safety “above production, budget, and schedule.” Owendoff also emphasized the importance and impact of timely decision making in cleaning up the nuclear legacy of the Cold War across the DOE complex.

During the hearing, Subcommittee Chair Senator Deb Fischer (R-NE) asked Gordon-Hagerty about NNSA’s ability to implement the Infrastructure Modernization Initiative to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance by 30% by 2025. Gordon-Hagerty replied that NNSA’s plan to carry out the initiative could be presented to Congress “by the end of the year.”

Senator Tom Cotton (R-AR) asked Gordon-Hagerty about the schedules of NNSA’s lifetime extension and modernization programs for the nuclear stockpile. Gordon-Hagerty replied that “Everything is on track and on budget.”



Yucca Mountain proponents and opponents are preparing for a fresh fight in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, but the politics of today are still greatly colored by the long history of the proposed repository. The book, *Waste of a Mountain*, tells the story of the 70-year-long effort to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain. The book, written by Michael Voegele and Donald Vieth, details the history of government action in the effort to locate and develop a site for the permanent disposition of the waste. The book is available on the Pahrump Valley Museum’s website [here](#).

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**SEPTEMBER 2018**

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<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/community-involvement-training-program-0>

## NRC SCHEDULES REVIEW OF INTERIM NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE FACILITY IN NEW MEXICO

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has [agreed](#) to review an application filed by Holtec Inc. to construct and operate a consolidated interim storage facility for spent nuclear fuel (SNF) from commercial nuclear power reactors. The application, which was filed by Holtec in March 2017, could be approved by the NRC by July 2020 or earlier.

Holtec is proposing to construct the interim storage facility in Lea County, NM—near Carlsbad, NM and DOE’s Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The facility could store up to 8,680 metric tons of uranium, using a canister storage system. The application is for a 40-year license term.

The construction of interim storage facilities for the nation’s SNF is seen by some as a path forward beyond the current standstill in Congress over the Yucca Mountain repository. Funding for Yucca Mountain is [unlikely to pass](#) the Senate for FY18, despite the President requesting \$120 million for the project. Meanwhile, SNF remains in temporary storage across the country and costs to store it continue to grow. DOE has estimated the government’s total liability will be \$29 billion by 2022.



Holtec is the second private company to file an application for an interim storage facility. Waste Control Specialists proposed a site in Texas, but subsequently put its application with the NRC on hold due to escalating costs.

According to an NRC [letter](#), Holtec’s application “provides sufficient information for docketing, and for staff to begin a detailed safety, security, and environmental review.” The first round of request for additional information could begin in March 2018 and end in August 2018. If necessary, a second round could be issued beginning in February 2019, reports [Power Magazine](#).

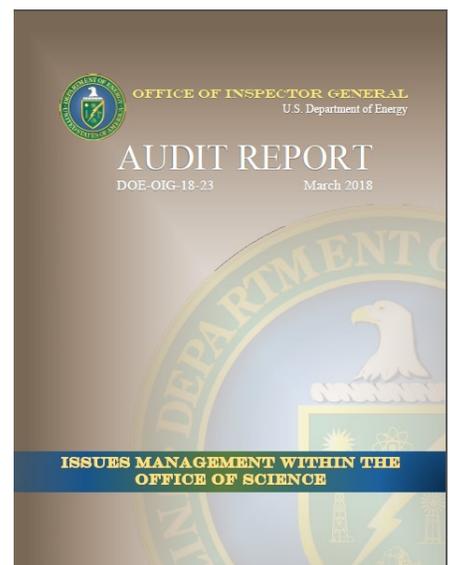
Holtec’s application and other documents related to the NRC’s review are available [here](#).

## DOE INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT REPORTS

### *Issues Management within the Office of Science*

A March 9 [audit report](#) by the DOE Office of Inspector General to determine if select Office of Science laboratories had effective issues management programs found that both SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and Argonne National Laboratory had effective issues management programs. The audit found that both laboratories had systems in place to track issues for corrective action purposes. It also found that both laboratories used a graded approach to evaluate and correct issues based on risk and priority. The audit did identify opportunities for improvement related to trending of issues and evaluating the effectivity of corrective actions, but noted that both laboratories had already made similar observations prior to the audit and were in the process of making enhancements to their issues management programs.

The Office of Inspector General concluded that actions being taken by SLAC and Argonne national laboratories should address the opportunities for improvement identified during the audit related to trending of issues and evaluating the effectivity of corrective actions. Therefore, DOE did not make any formal recommendations.



## GAO REPORTS

### *NNSA Should Adopt Additional Best Practices to Better Manage Risk for Life Extension Programs*

On January 30, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a [report](#) on the management of Life Extension Programs (LEP) conducted by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to refurbish or replace nuclear weapons' aging components.

The report found that NNSA has implemented the use of earned value management (EVM) in three LEPs as part of a revised management approach. However, NNSA has not adopted the best practice of having an independent team validate EVM systems against national standards, which could help the agency better manage risk. Without requiring validation of EVM systems, NNSA may not have assurance that its LEPs are obtaining reliable EVM data for managing their programs and reporting their status.

The report also found that NNSA has not established specific benchmarks for technology readiness at LEP decision points. Without such benchmarks, NNSA may not have assurance that its LEPs have taken appropriate risk mitigation steps to mature critical technologies to meet program cost and schedule commitments.

GAO recommended that NNSA 1) require an independent entity to validate that contractor EVM systems used for LEPs meet the EVM national standard; 2) require an independent entity to conduct surveillance reviews of contractor EVM systems used for LEPs to ensure that they maintain compliance with the EVM national standard through program completion; 3) require its programs to ensure that LEP critical technologies meet specific technology readiness level benchmarks at decision points; and 4) establish a requirement for NNSA management to document and justify key decisions based on a reconciliation of LEP cost estimates with the Office of Cost Estimating and Program Evaluation's independent cost estimates.



### *Continued Actions Needed to Modernize Nuclear Infrastructure and Address Management Challenges*

On February 6, GAO issued a [report](#) assessing the status of recommendations made to NNSA and DOE over the last few years. The report found that GAO had made recommendations to both NNSA and DOE that have not yet been implemented.

In April 2017, GAO found that NNSA's estimates of funding needed for its modernization programs sometimes exceeded the budgetary projections in the President's planned near-term and long-term modernization budgets by billions of dollars. GAO also found that the costs of some major modernization programs may also increase and further strain future modernization budgets. GAO recommended that NNSA include an assessment of the affordability of its modernization programs in future versions of its annual plan on stockpile stewardship. NNSA has yet to implement this recommendation.

GAO also found that DOE faces challenges with addressing its environmental liabilities. In February 2017, GAO found that DOE was responsible for over 80 percent (\$372 billion) of the US government's environmental liability. This estimate does not reflect all of the future cleanup responsibilities that DOE may face; full costs are likely to be billions of dollars more than DOE's reported environmental liabilities. GAO has made at least 28 recommendations to DOE and other federal agencies, which could reduce long-term

*(Continued on page 16)*

(Continued from page 15)

## GAO Reports

costs as well as environmental risks more quickly. Of these, 13 remain not implemented.

### *NNSA Should Clarify Long-Term Uranium Enrichment Mission Needs and Improve Technology Cost Estimates*

On February 16, GAO published a report that analyses NNSA's plans to take four actions to extend inventories of low-enriched uranium (LEU) until about 2038 to 2041. LEU fuels a nuclear reactor that produces tritium—a key isotope used in nuclear weapons. The US lost its only source of

unobligated LEU production in 2013, so the supply is finite. Two of NNSA's planned actions involve preserving supplies of LEU, and the other two involve diluting highly enriched uranium with lower enriched forms of uranium to produce LEU.

GAO recommends that NNSA 1) revise the scope of the mission need statement to clarify which mission need it seeks to achieve and, as appropriate, adjust the range of options considered in the analysis of alternatives process; and 2) ensure that the agency's cost estimates for whichever options it considers going forward are aligned with the scope of the mission need that the enrichment capability is intended to fulfill and that they are developed consistent with best practices.



## **SRS: GAO UPHOLDS AECOM-LED PETITION OF EM CONTRACT AWARD**

On February 8, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) [upheld](#) complaints issued by Savannah River Technology & Remediation, LLC, (SRTR) regarding the award of a \$4.7 billion, 10-year liquid waste services contract at the Savannah River Site.

The award was issued on October 12 to Savannah River EcoManagement, LLC (SRE), an entity made up of BWXT Technical Services Group Inc., Bechtel National, Inc., and Honeywell International, Inc. After the award was issued, SRTR (an AECOM-CH2M joint venture) and Fluor Westinghouse Liquid Waste Services, LLC (FW) protested the award of the contract to SRE, arguing that DOE misevaluated proposals and made an unreasonable source selection decision.

GAO denied FW's protest, but sustained SRTS's. The GAO now has 100 days to rule on the protest.

SREM's winning bid of \$4.7 billion was well below the government's cost estimate, which has raised concern over the incoming contractor's labor

practices—how many people would be out of a job, essentially. FW's and SRTR's bids were much higher, \$5.5 billion and \$6 billion respectively. According to the [Aiken Standard](#), DOE has stated that the number of jobs would stay approximately the same under SREM.

A statement issued by the GAO reads: "We recommend that, at a minimum, [DOE] reevaluate proposals in a manner consistent with this decision and make a new source selection decision based on that reevaluation. In the alternative, [DOE] may conclude that it is in the agency's interest to engage in further discussions with SRE in order to clarify its proposal. In that circumstance, we recommend that the agency engage in discussions with all offerors; solicit, obtain, and evaluate revised proposals; and make a new source selection decision. Finally, we recommend that [DOE] reimburse SRTR the costs associated with filing and pursuing its protest, including reasonable attorneys' fees."



# 2018 Congressional Calendar



■ Both chambers in session  
■ Senate only in session

## January

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	<b>1</b> New Year's Day	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> MLK Day	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> State of the Union	<b>31</b>			

## February

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Presidents Day	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>			

## March

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> St. Patrick's Day
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Good Fri. Passover (begins)	<b>31</b>

## April

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>1</b> Easter Sunday	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Orthodox Easter	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>					

## May

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> Mother's Day	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Ramadan (begins)	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Memorial Day	<b>29</b> Vesak	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		

## June

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Eid al-Fitr	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Father's Day	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

## July

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Independence Day	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

## August

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Eid al-Adha	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

## September

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Labor Day	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> Rosh Hashana (begins)	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Yom Kippur (begins)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>						

## October

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	<b>1</b> FY '19 (begins)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Columbus Day	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

## November

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Election Day	<b>7</b> Diwali	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Veterans' Day (observed)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Thanksgiving Day	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	

## December

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> Hanukkah (begins)	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Christmas Day	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					



# 2018 Upcoming Events

March 18-22	<b>2018 Waste Management Symposia</b> ; visit <a href="http://www.wmsym.org">www.wmsym.org</a> for more information.
March 23	<b>Current continuing resolution ends</b>
April 11	<b>ECA Board of Directors Meeting</b> (for ECA members only); contact <a href="mailto:meganc@energyca.org">meganc@energyca.org</a> for details.
April 11	<b>House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus Event</b> ; See page 4 or contact <a href="mailto:meganc@energyca.org">meganc@energyca.org</a> for details.
April 12	<b>2018 ECA Annual Conference</b> ; See pages 3-5 for details.
June 27	<b>ECA Peer Exchange: Manhattan Project National Historical Park</b> ; contact <a href="mailto:meganc@energyca.org">meganc@energyca.org</a> for details.
September 11-13	<b>2018 National Cleanup Workshop</b> ; See page 12 and visit <a href="http://www.cleanupworkshop.com">www.cleanupworkshop.com</a> for more information.

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