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Opening Statement Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight and Government Spending Hearing on "The Green Energy Debacle: Where Has All the Taxpayer Money Gone?"

November 2, 2011

The Recovery Act provided \$49 billion to a variety of green energy projects, and that funding has been used to develop crucial new technologies, train workers for 21st century jobs, and improve our national security. The Departments of Energy, Defense, and Labor, and the General Services Administration have been instrumental in this effort. However, only the Inspectors General from the Departments of Labor and Energy are here today.

The title of today's hearing is "Where Has All the Taxpayer Money Gone?" One of the largest recipients of federal dollars for green energy programs is the Department of Defense. In a 2010 Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Energy, the Defense Department stated:

Energy efficiency can serve as a force multiplier, increasing the range and endurance of forces in the field while reducing the number of combat forces diverted to protect energy supply lines, as well as reducing long-term energy costs.

In addition, we are developing green jobs here at home. The Brookings Institution estimates that in my home state, for example, green jobs employ 43,207 residents and pay out an average of \$44,790 per year, which is higher than the median salary in Maryland. At a time when the middle class of nearly every state is shrinking, these figures are good news.

Finally, if we are going to remain competitive in the global economy, we must be willing to make investments going forward. According to a report released by the Pew Charitable Trusts in March, China and Germany are leading in green energy investments, and other countries like Italy, Mexico, and Argentina are rapidly increasing their investments. The United States, on the other hand, is falling behind. If we are not willing to make long-term investments, we risk limiting our competitiveness in the years to come – something we simply cannot afford.

I thank the witnesses for appearing before us today and I yield back.

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