

Testimony of Senator Susan M. Collins
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee Hearing on Energy Legislation
July 9, 2019

Good morning, Chairman Cassidy and Ranking Member Heinrich. I want to begin by thanking you for holding this hearing to examine new energy proposals that have been referred to your subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on the *Better Energy Storage Technology Act*, or BEST Act, that I have sponsored with the distinguished Subcommittee Ranking Member, Senator Heinrich. I would also like to thank Senators Gardner, Smith, McSally, Coons, and King, who have joined us as original cosponsors.

Energy storage systems provide a wide range of benefits, including improving the reliability of our grid, decreasing energy costs, and allowing increased use of renewable resources. Developing these new technologies is critical. Our bipartisan legislation will support the next generation of energy storage technologies at the Department of Energy (DOE).

Energy storage technology holds such great promise in the fight against climate change. Advancing next-generation energy storage technology will allow us to integrate more renewables, such as wind and solar, which in turn will help to reduce emissions. Solutions to the challenges posed by energy storage are, in fact, key to expanding our reliance on renewable sources of energy.

Specifically, our bill would support energy storage research on highly flexible, longer duration, and seasonal storage systems; those are the three areas that the bill specifically concentrates on.

Second, it would authorize up to five demonstration projects.

Third, it would direct the DOE to establish a strategic plan and allow the Department to develop cost targets. We've seen what the Department can do when working with the private sector to, for example, lower the costs of solar technology.

Another provision of the bill would support coordination of research across government, so the left hand knows what the right is doing.

And finally, the bill would authorize \$60 million annually for five years.

The BEST Act would help advance energy storage technologies to improve the efficiency of the nation's electricity grid, while helping to promote wider use of clean, renewable energy. I want to thank you again for holding this important hearing. I know you have a long agenda before you so I would ask unanimous consent that my full statement be included in the record.

Let me just end by saying that I think energy storage bills are so important and exciting. They really represent the new frontier, and I hope that this subcommittee will favorably report the BEST Act. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and my colleagues.

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