

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 11, 2021

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm,

Congratulations on your confirmation to lead the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). On December 27, 2020, the Better Energy Storage Technology Act, or BEST Act, legislation we sponsored, was signed into law. We are writing to request an update on the implementation steps and timeline for the BEST Act, as well as to request that the Department of Energy support the BEST Act programs in its fiscal year 2022 budget request to Congress.

Energy storage systems provide a range of benefits, from grid reliability to decreased energy costs and increased use of renewable resources. Energy storage also holds great promise in the fight against climate change, as advancing next-generation energy storage technology will allow us to more efficiently integrate renewables, such as wind and solar, which in turn will help to reduce emissions.

One of the biggest hurdles to developing energy storage technology is cost. To address this obstacle, the BEST Act specifically directs DOE to create a strategic plan and develop cost targets, similar to DOE's SunShot Initiative that decreased the price of solar by approximately 75 percent in less than a decade. Furthermore, energy storage systems are technology neutral, meaning the BEST Act will foster innovation and enhance deployment of these innovative technologies without picking winners or losers.

Specifically, the BEST Act includes the following provisions:

- **Research and Development:** Requires DOE to establish a cross-cutting energy storage system research and development program with the goal of reducing the cost and extending the duration of energy storage systems.
- **Demonstration Projects:** Requires DOE to undertake three energy storage system demonstration projects, including a minimum of one project designed to address seasonal variations in supply and demand.
- **Technical and Planning Assistance:** Establishes a program at DOE to assist electric utilities with identifying, evaluating, planning, designing, and developing processes to procure energy storage systems.
- **Joint Long-Duration Demonstration Initiative:** Establishes a joint program between DOE and the Department of Defense to demonstrate long-duration storage technologies.

- **Recycling Program:** Establishes a program at DOE to advance the recycling of critical energy storage materials such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, and graphite.

We look forward to receiving an update from you on implementing the BEST Act, as well as working with you to fund this new initiative at DOE. Thank you again for your interest in pursuing energy storage, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator