Murkowski: Implementation of DOE Loan Programs Requires Reform

By Office of Senator Murkowski 5 hours 3 minutes ago

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, today expressed a willingness to reform the Department of Energy's loan programs but said that if she had to grade DOE's handling of the programs it would "not receive a passing grade."

Her comments came during the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's long-awaited oversight hearing, which was scheduled only after completion of an audit by former Fannie Mae CEO Herb Allison. Murkowski had been calling for a hearing on DOE loan programs since last September.

"I believe it is vital for our committee to conduct regular and intensive oversight of the programs and

agencies under our jurisdiction, especially when serious or unexpected problems begin to surface," Murkowski said. "This is one of the more complicated topics that our committee will tackle. These loan-related authorities – and the Energy Department's use of them – span different administrations, different congresses and include three separate programs, each with their own unique attributes."

At Tuesday's hearing, Murkowski asked Allison and Energy Secretary Steven Chu about the structure and implementation of DOE's loan programs, including warning signs that were missed before a loan guarantee was granted to Solyndra and the merits of having applicants pay their own credit subsidy costs.

Murkowski believes DOE's loan programs have a place in federal energy policy, but only if implemented in a way that better protects taxpayers from losses associated with unwise or poorly-structured investments. Today's hearing marked a first step in that effort.

"We didn't expect every single project to be a roaring success, but we also didn't expect an accumulation of failures so quickly. There are clearly problems that need to be sorted through and worked out," Murkowski said.

Senator Murkowski's opening statement.

Like

Add New Comment

Login

Type your comment here.

Showing 0 comments

Sort by popular now

M Subscribe by email   S RSS

Reactions