

# The Rundown

By: CLEARPATH  
ACTION



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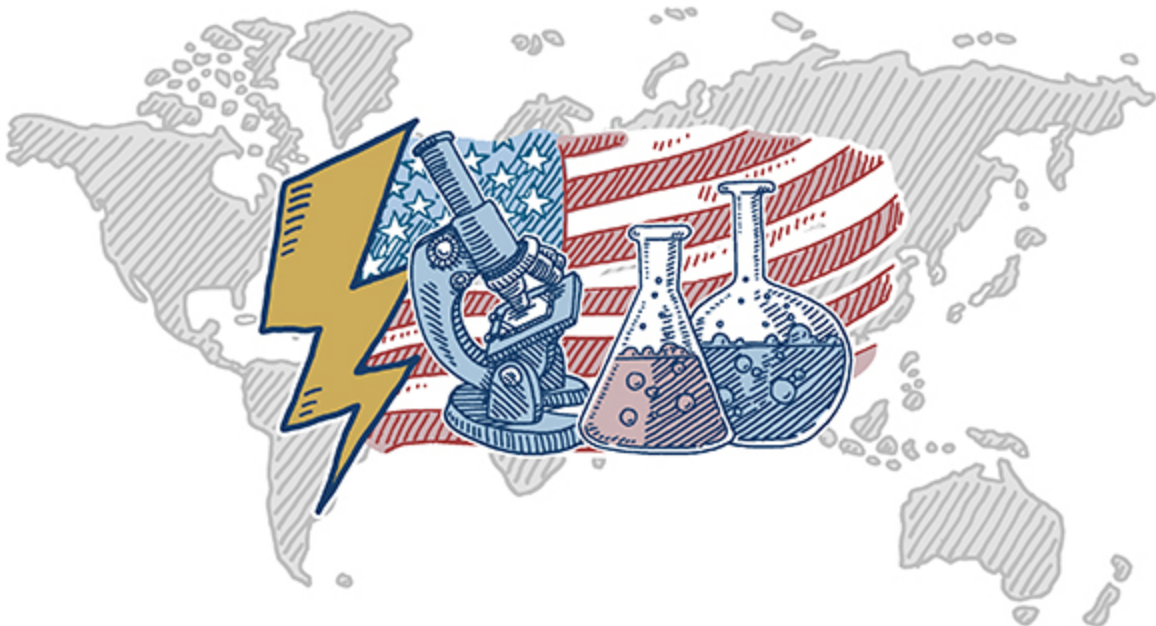
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## ClearPath Action Rundown April 24th, 2026

**Happy Friday!** Great seeing so many of you at our spring happy hour last night.

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### 1. America's energy dominance starts with innovation



ClearPath's [Lisa Epifani](#) writes in the Washington Times that the 119th Congress has an opportunity to strengthen U.S. energy technology leadership. That starts by treating basic research and applied programs as one connected innovation system.

### What Congress can do:

- Reauthorize the National Quantum Initiative and invest in national lab infrastructure to strengthen foundational research;
- Update and extend key applied energy programs from the Energy Act of 2020 to support technologies ready to scale; and
- Align efforts to bridge the “valley of death” between discovery and deployment.

**What's clear:** China is increasing research spending by nearly 10 percent annually, which is triple the U.S. rate. Long-term energy dominance starts with innovation today, and that requires connecting research to deployment. The 119th Congress has a clear opportunity to act.

**Plug in:** Read [Lisa Epifani's](#) Washington Times piece [here](#).

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## 2. America's energy strategy for global competition



Energy security is no longer just about how much energy is produced domestically. The world needs more power for the industries of the future. The nation that builds the next generation of energy technologies, finances the infrastructure and secures the supply chains will win in those **global markets** and wield long-term strategic leverage.

ClearPath CEO [Jeremy Harrell](#) writes in the Ripon Forum that since 2015, China has outpaced the U.S. nearly ten-to-one in financing global energy projects and now controls roughly 70 percent of manufacturing across key clean energy technologies.

### Three priorities will determine whether the U.S. leads:

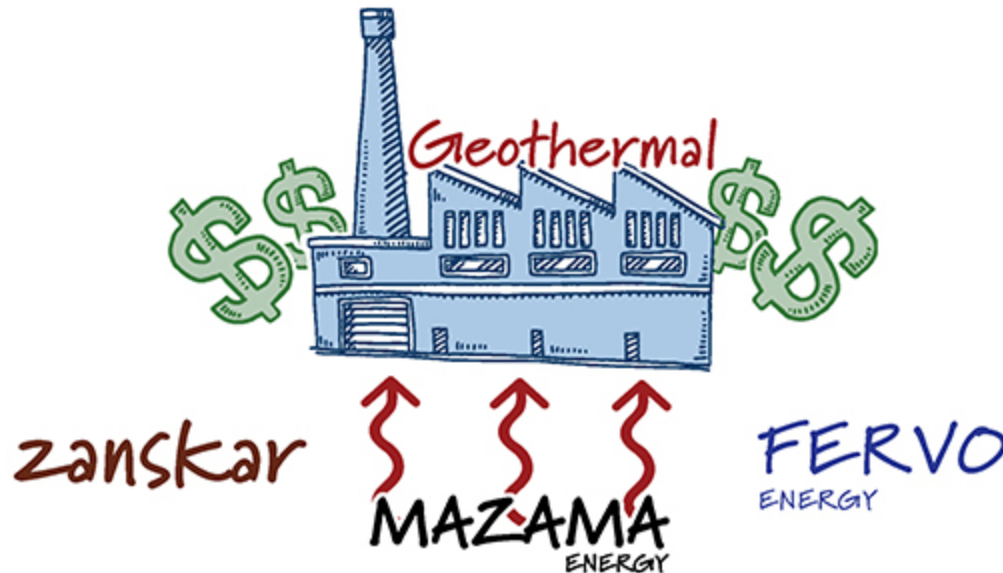
- **Innovate fast;**
- **Build here; and**
- **Sell globally.**

**What's clear:** Energy leadership is not just about domestic supply. The countries that build, finance and export next-generation energy will shape global markets, strengthen alliances and secure long-term advantage.

**Plug in:** Read [Jeremy Harrell's](#) Ripon Forum [article](#) on how the U.S. can compete and win in global energy markets.

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### 3. Geothermal gains funding momentum...



Geothermal capital is accelerating. Three new capital announcements signal growing investor confidence in next-generation geothermal as a source of firm, always-on power.

#### What to know:

- Zanskar **closed** a \$40 million development capital facility, structured to scale to \$100 million, targeting early-stage project work;
- Mazama Energy is **raising** \$100 million to develop superhot geothermal resources, which could lower costs and improve competitiveness by accessing higher temperatures; and
- Fervo Energy **filed** with the Securities and Exchange Commission for an initial public offering.

**What's clear:** Early-stage financing has long been a bottleneck for geothermal. New capital and financing models are beginning to unlock projects, helping move the sector from exploration to deployment.

**Plug in:** Read ClearPath's [blog](#) on why geothermal is at an inflection point and what it will take to scale it.

**Dive deeper:** ClearPath's [geothermal report](#) breaks down how federal permitting reform can unlock next-generation geothermal.

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## 4. ... and bipartisan traction



This week, the **HEATS Act** passed the House with bipartisan support on a 231-186 vote. ClearPath's **Matthew Mailloux** highlights in the Ripon Forum that geothermal's eligibility for tax credits was included in both the IRA and President Trump's Working Families Tax Cuts.

### Three policy priorities will drive geothermal scale-up:

- Federal R&D funding parity with other emerging energy technologies;
- A more efficient permitting process; and
- Predictable tax incentives.

**What's clear:** The U.S. already leads the world in installed geothermal capacity. With sustained federal support and permitting reform, next-generation geothermal could unlock an additional 90 gigawatts. The window to lead is open, but not indefinitely.

**Plug in:** Read **Matthew Mailloux's** Ripon Forum piece [here](#).

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## 5. ClearPath welcomes Lauren Fookes and Ashley Hill



**Lauren Fookes**



**Ashley Hill**

The ClearPath team is growing with two new hires.

**Lauren Fookes** has joined the External Affairs team as Senior Events Manager. In her new role, Lauren will lead the planning and execution of events and external engagements, supporting stakeholder outreach and policy-focused programming.

Before joining ClearPath, Lauren led event operations at Consero Group, where she managed a portfolio of in-person and virtual programs.

**Ashley Hill** serves as an Advisor for the ClearPath Conservative Leadership Program, leading recruitment, operations and participant experience. She develops emerging talent in clean energy and climate policy.

Ashley previously worked across Capitol Hill, membership organizations and large-scale events, focusing on stakeholder engagement and program execution.

Welcome, **Lauren** and **Ashley**!

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## 6. Ten NRC rulemakings to watch



A sweeping modernization effort is now underway at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

## What's in motion:

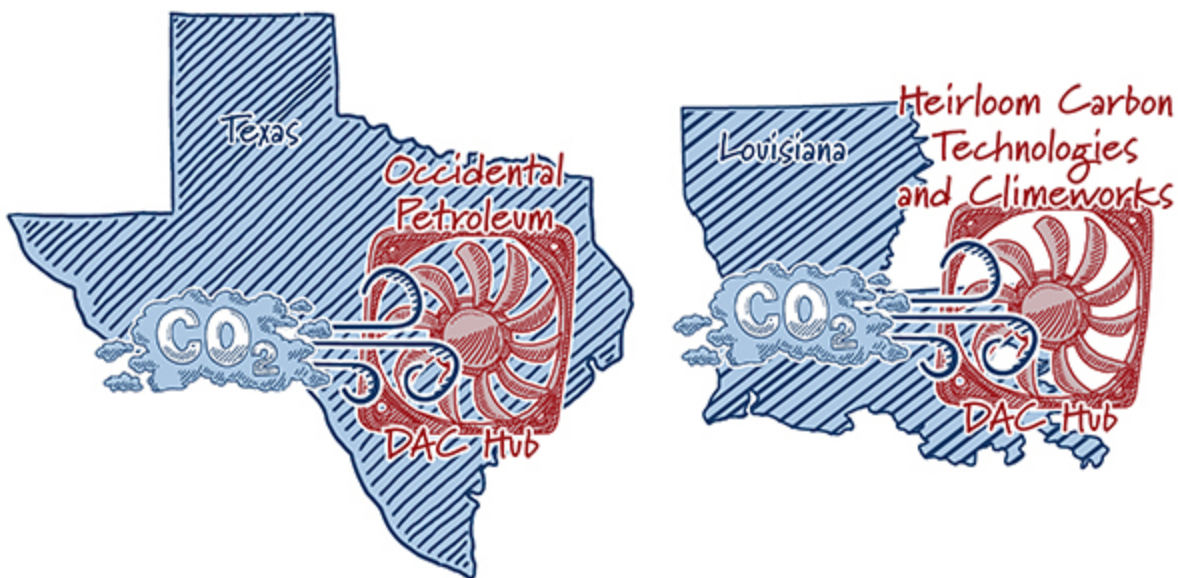
- Rulemakings are moving forward, driven by years of bipartisan legislation, recent executive action and internal modernization efforts;
- Many focus on creating clearer, more flexible pathways for advanced reactors, fusion and microreactors; and
- Reforms to environmental reviews, hearings and radiation standards aim to improve timelines, reduce costs and increase predictability.

**What's clear:** This is more than regulatory housekeeping. It is a test of whether the U.S. can turn years of policy momentum into a licensing system that enables faster, more predictable nuclear deployment.

**Plug in:** Focus on what's important using ClearPath's top 10 NRC rulemakings to watch in this [blog](#) by [Niko McMurray](#) and [Natalie Houghtalen](#).

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## 7. DAC Hubs move forward



Two direct air capture (DAC) hubs – Heirloom's [Project Cypress](#) and Oxy's South Texas DAC Hub – will move forward after the DOE [confirmed](#) it will retain funding eligibility for the Louisiana and Texas projects, following a review of federally funded clean energy projects.

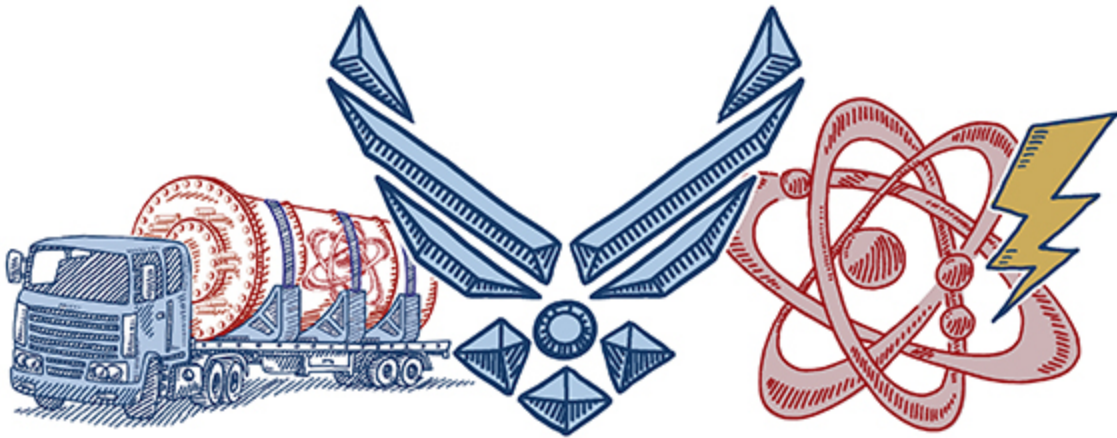
### Key details:

- Heirloom Carbon Technologies and Climeworks – Project Cypress is designed to remove up to 1 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually across two Louisiana sites, with carbon stored through the CapturePoint CENLA Hub; and
- 1PointFive (Oxy) – The South Texas DAC Hub is designed to remove up to 30 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually to be stored in geologic formations at the South Texas Hub in Kleberg County.

**What's clear:** Project Cypress and the South Texas DAC Hub reflect federal support for commercial deployment of carbon removal projects alongside private sector investment.

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## 8. Air Force picks nuclear microreactor partners



Nuclear power is coming to U.S. military bases. The Department of the Air Force and Defense Innovation Unit **selected** three companies to develop and operate microreactors on Air Force installations as part of the Advanced Nuclear Power for Installations initiative.

### **Three companies have been paired with installations:**

- Radiant Industries at Buckley Space Force Base, Colorado;
- Westinghouse Government Services at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana; and
- Antares Nuclear at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas.

**What's clear:** Energy resilience is national security. This initiative is in line with President Trump's **May 2025 executive order** tasking the Department of War with demonstrating at least one advanced nuclear reactor on a military installation by September 30, 2028. Deploying microreactors on military bases ensures critical missions are never held at risk by a power outage.

**Plug in:** Check out ClearPath's **blog** on what this means for energy resilience and national security.

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## 9. 250 years of American energy innovation



As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, ClearPath is **highlighting** America's innovation story. From the earliest discoveries in electricity and steam power to modern nuclear, natural gas, advanced grid technologies and agriculture, American innovators have consistently pushed the boundaries of what's possible.

### Great American Energy Innovators: Charles G. Curtis

- **1896 – Shrinking the steam engine:** Developed a turbine 1/8th the weight and 1/10th the size of existing models while maintaining the same power output;
- **1896 – Scaling power systems:** Applied compact turbine designs to central power plants and marine propulsion, enabling more efficient electricity generation and faster maritime transport; and
- **1899 – Pioneering the gas turbine:** Invented the first U.S. gas turbine, selling the patent to General Electric (GE). His foundational innovations were so robust that GE built on them for over 100 years to maintain global leadership.

**What's clear:** Since the days of the first turbines, America's grid has grown to become the world's largest machine. Today, we need to expand the grid to connect new technology and move American energy.

**Plug in:** For a full history of breakthrough technologies, click [here](#).

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## 10. The Circuit



ClearPath CEO **Jeremy Harrell** moderated a House Fusion Caucus briefing on scaling domestic fusion manufacturing, strengthening supply chains and competing with China.

ClearPath's **Jake Kincer** spoke on a panel at the Build America Caucus Staff Briefing on nuclear energy, discussing policy solutions to accelerate nuclear deployment and meet rising electricity demand.



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## 11. ICYMI

- **USNIC reelects Jeffrey Merrifield as Chairman** – The United States Nuclear Industry Council **reelected** Jeffrey Merrifield, ClearPath Advisory Board member, Partner at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman and former NRC Commissioner, as Board Chairman for the coming term. ClearPath CEO **Jeremy Harrell** remains on the Board of Directors.
  - **Montana steps up on critical minerals** – Gov. Gianforte (R-MT) **hosted** a roundtable with state officials, mining industry partners and Montana Tech University focused on permitting reform and unlocking the state's critical mineral potential.
  - **Blue Energy raises \$380M for prefabricated nuclear plant** – Blue Energy **announced** \$380 million led by VXI Capital, with backing from Engine Ventures, At One Ventures and Tamarack Global. Their prefabricated nuclear plants are designed for faster deployment. Work on its first Texas project is expected in 2026, with a final investment decision targeted for 2027.
  - **Congress sends hydropower licensing bill to Trump** – The House **passed** S. 1020, championed by Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) and Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), which authorizes FERC to extend construction deadlines for hydropower projects licensed before March 2020 by up to six years. The bill now heads to President Trump's desk.
  - **U.S. increases LNG export capacity again** – The U.S. **added** its 10th LNG export terminal as Golden Pass shipped its first cargo.
  - **Colorado shows why permitting reform matters** – E&C Chairman Guthrie (R-KY) and Rep. Evans (R-CO) penned an **op-ed** in the Washington Times stating, "We cannot afford to delay meaningful permitting reform that will support innovation, lower energy costs, and create good-paying jobs across the country."
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*ClearPath believes America must lead the world in innovation over regulation...  
markets over mandates...providing affordable, reliable, clean energy.*

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That's all from us. Thanks for reading and have a great weekend!

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ClearPath · 300 New Jersey Ave NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20001, United States

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