The Rundown

By: CLEARPATH ACTION

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ClearPath Action Rundown
June 26th, 2026

Happy Friday!

Congratulations to Travis Kavulla on his **appointment** as the Administrator and CEO of the Bonneville Power Administration!

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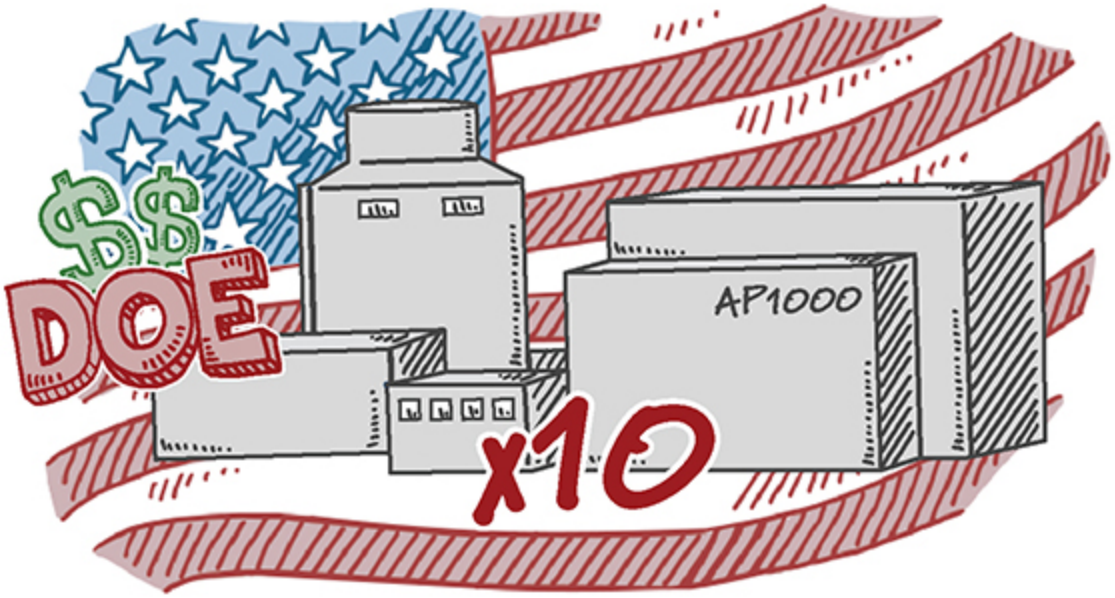
1. DOE plans to offer $17.5B to kick-start fleet-scale nuclear



The Department of Energy offered conditional, low-interest loans of up to **$17.5 billion** to support long-lead component procurements for 10 Westinghouse AP1000 reactors across five two-reactor projects. Seven utilities have signed letters of intent, with first units targeted for 2035. By funding long-lead components early, the program aims to shorten project timelines and reduce construction risk.

The loans will:

- Allow early orders of long-lead components, over 90% of which can be made domestically;
- Standardize components, making equipment interchangeable across projects; and
- Support projects at sites with existing reactors or prior NRC licensing work.

What's clear: Getting capital into the supply chain early accelerates domestic manufacturing, lowers costs and lets America build.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Energy Dominance Financing 101** for a breakdown of how DOE's loan programs work and why they matter for scaling innovative American energy.

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2. Senate panel advances Energy Security Pacts Act

U.S. energy diplomacy is gaining ground on Capitol Hill. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee advanced the bipartisan **Energy Security Pacts Act** introduced by Senators Ricketts (R-NE) and Coons (D-DE). A companion House bill, the **DOMINANCE Act**, passed the House of Representatives on June 8th, 2026.

The Energy Security Pacts Act:

- Authorizes 10-year energy and mineral supply chain agreements with partner countries outside China's influence;
- Establishes a Director of Energy Security Pacts within the State Department to serve as a central hub for strategy, engagement and policy coordination across federal agencies and international partners to develop bilateral energy pacts; and
- Calls on the president to appoint a council to oversee the creation and implementation of those pacts.

What's clear: These bills build the whole-of-government structure the U.S. needs to sell American energy technology globally and counter adversary influence in strategic markets.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Put Energy Security at the Center of U.S. Foreign Policy** for the case behind Energy Security Pacts.

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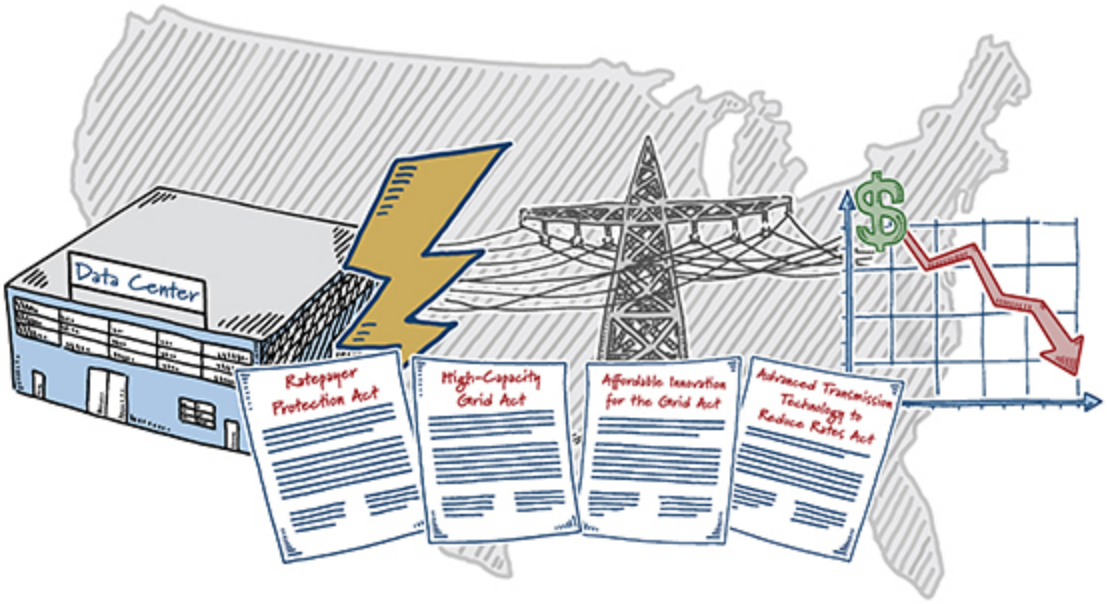
3. House advances grid, ratepayer and pipeline safety bills this week



The **House Energy and Commerce Energy Subcommittee**, led by Chair Bob Latta (R-OH), advanced a suite of bipartisan grid, pipeline safety and data center bills on Wednesday.

The markup included bipartisan votes for the:

- **Ratepayer Protection Act**, codifying the principle behind President Trump's pledge with leading tech and AI companies to protect ratepayer bills from data center energy costs;
- **Advanced Transmission Technology to Reduce Rates Act**, directing DOE to support education on and deployment of advanced electricity transmission technologies;
- **High-Capacity Grid Act**, directing FERC to set a best-available conductor standard to promote affordable grid growth;
- **Affordable Innovation for the Grid Act**, directing DOE to study how AI and high-performance computing can enhance bulk-power system capacity and reliability; and
- **Pipeline Safety Authorization Act of 2026**, reauthorizing PHMSA and supporting critical energy infrastructure safety programs.

What's clear: Keeping energy affordable while meeting surging demand requires modernizing the grid and pipeline network. Bipartisan action on both this week moves Congress in the right direction.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Interconnection 101** for a breakdown of the grid reforms needed to bring more power online faster.

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4. Alex Fitzsimmons on winning the AI race while keeping rates affordable

In a recent episode of Political Climate, DOE Associate Deputy Secretary Alex Fitzsimmons outlined how the administration plans to meet rising power demand from AI and advanced manufacturing without shifting costs to residential customers.

Key points:

- Large energy users are expected to fund their own generation and grid upgrades, helping utilities such as Georgia Power, Alabama Power and DTE Energy limit rate impacts on households.
- DOE's $26.5 billion financing package supports six gigawatts of nuclear upgrades, five gigawatts of new natural gas capacity and an estimated $7 billion in customer savings.
- Nuclear deployment is accelerating, with two advanced reactor designs already criticality and a goal of 10 large reactors beginning construction by 2030.

What's clear: Over the past five years, states with the fastest demand growth experienced **average price declines**. Adding demand spreads fixed costs across more customers and kilowatt-hours, driving rates down. When paired with policies that shield existing ratepayers from the infrastructure costs of new large-load customers, energy demand growth becomes an affordability strategy.

Plug in: Listen to Alex's full episode **here**.

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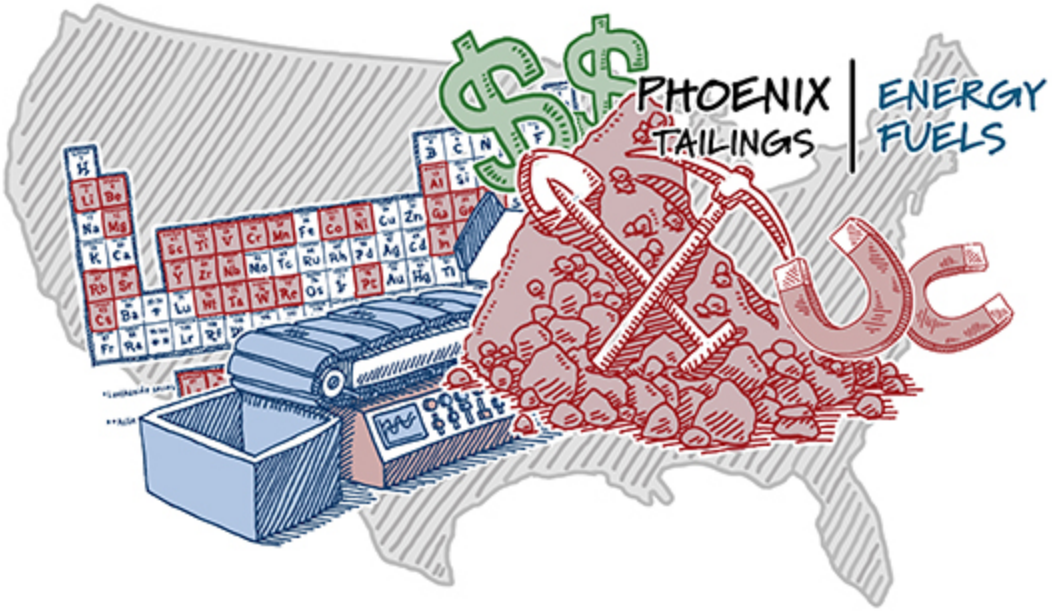
5. Pentagon backs $1.2B in conditional loans to scale rare earths processing



The Department of War's Office of Strategic Capital (OSC) issued conditional loans to **Phoenix Tailings** and **Energy Fuels** to expand U.S. rare earth processing capacity. Rare earths are essential for permanent magnets used in energy and defense technologies, and the U.S. currently depends heavily on imports from China.

The funding will:

- Expand Phoenix Tailings' production and build its Freedom Facility, leveraging $500 million in private investment.
- Support Energy Fuels' expansion into rare earth separation and metallization, including development of a U.S.-based facility.

What's clear: The Trump administration is investing in the domestic rare earth supply chain, particularly the processing stage needed to turn raw materials into manufacturing-ready metals. Strengthening this supply chain supports U.S. energy, economic, and national security.

Plug in: See ClearPath CEO Jeremy Harrell's **testimony** before Congress on the need for resilient domestic critical mineral supply chains.

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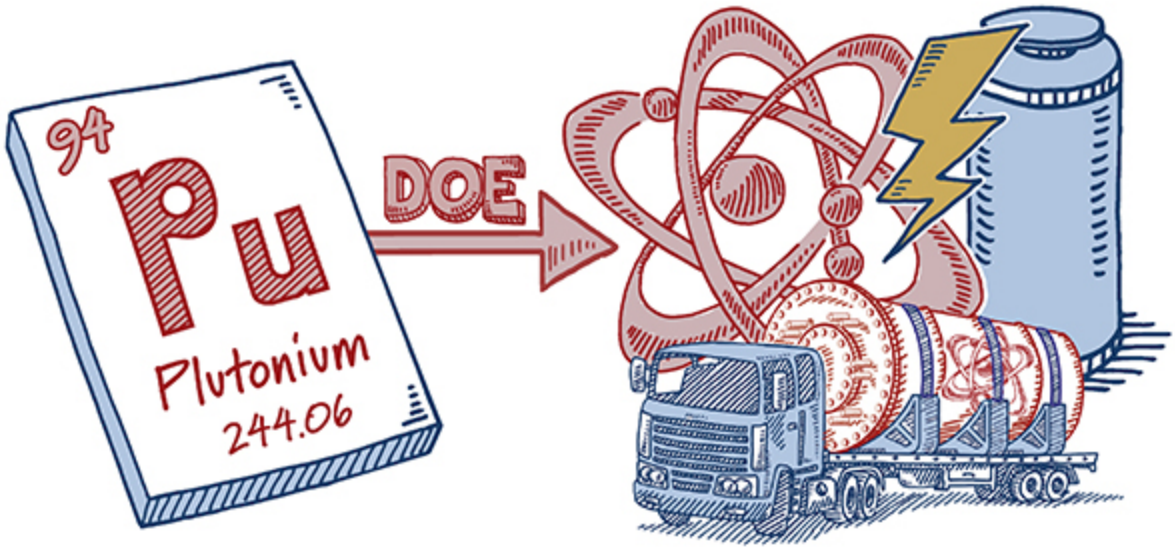
6. DOE moves to turn cold war plutonium into advanced nuclear fuel



The DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy **launched advanced negotiations** with five companies to convert nearly 20 metric tons of surplus Cold War-era plutonium into fuel for advanced reactors and research programs. Selected companies – Exodys Energy, Flibe Energy, Oklo, SHINE Technologies and Standard Nuclear – will fully self-fund efforts to design, build, operate and decommission a DOE-authorized recycling facility.

This program will:

- Implement a 2025 **executive order** that turns a multi-billion-dollar taxpayer liability into a domestic energy asset;
- Expand domestic fuel supplies for advanced reactors and reduce reliance on foreign supply chains; and
- Advance American recycling technologies as part of the broader nuclear renaissance.

What's clear: Converting Cold War plutonium into a fuel supply asset is a smart example of innovation-driven energy policy. Having private companies fund recycling infrastructure is a strong model for building a competitive domestic nuclear fuel supply chain.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Advanced Nuclear Fuel 201** for a breakdown of how plutonium recycling and advanced fuel technologies work.

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7. $125M annually to modernize America's agricultural research facilities

Land-grant universities have driven American agricultural innovation for more than 160 years, but aging facilities are limiting what they can do next. President Trump's Working Families Tax Cuts provided $125 million annually for the **Research Facilities Act program** to renovate, expand and build research infrastructure at land-grant universities across the country. Additionally, Secretary Rollins and the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture will initiate the program, which will:

- Scale projects from early-stage planning grants up to large-scale research complexes;
- Cover everything from lab modernization to entirely new specialized facilities; and
- Require a dollar-for-dollar non-federal cash match to ensure local investment and accountability.

What's clear: American agriculture depends on having the infrastructure to sustain it. This investment gets American researchers back to work in labs equipped to compete.

Plug in: Read ClearPath CEO Jeremy Harrell's op-ed, **U.S. agriculture built the 20th century. Innovation will decide the 21st.**

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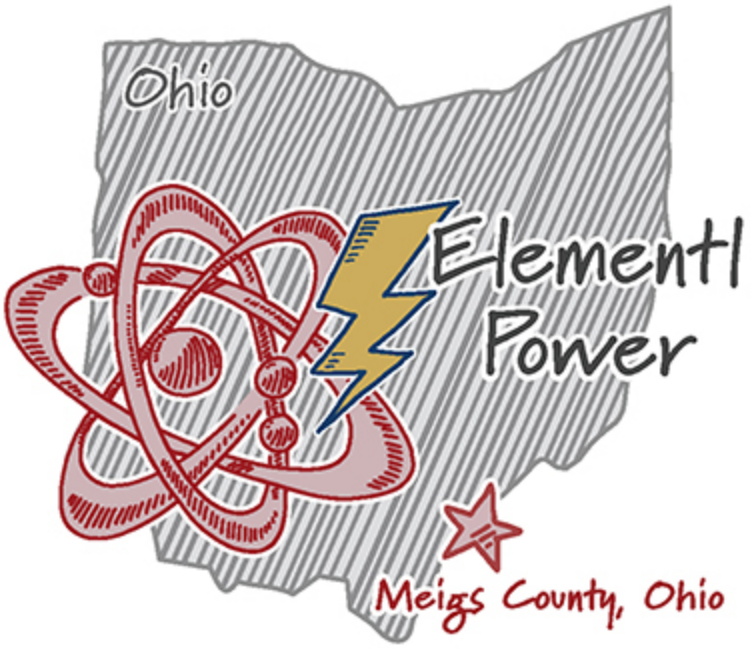
8. Elementl Power brings utility-scale advanced nuclear to southeast Ohio



Private capital is moving new nuclear energy forward. **Elementl Power** announced plans to build up to 1.5 gigawatts of nuclear capacity in Meigs County, Ohio using GE Vernova Hitachi's BWRX-300 small modular reactor. The project will be one of the first utility-scale SMR projects in the country.

What to know:

- Construction is targeted to begin in 2030, with commercial operation in 2034;
- Elementl filed with PJM Interconnection to connect the first 600 megawatts onto the regional grid; and
- Ratepayers won't foot the bill as the project is privately financed.

What's clear: Private capital is stepping up and providing a model for what a mature advanced nuclear market could look like, all while driving toward America's nuclear future.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Five States to Watch for New Nuclear** for a breakdown of how state-level action is moving advanced nuclear from concept to construction.

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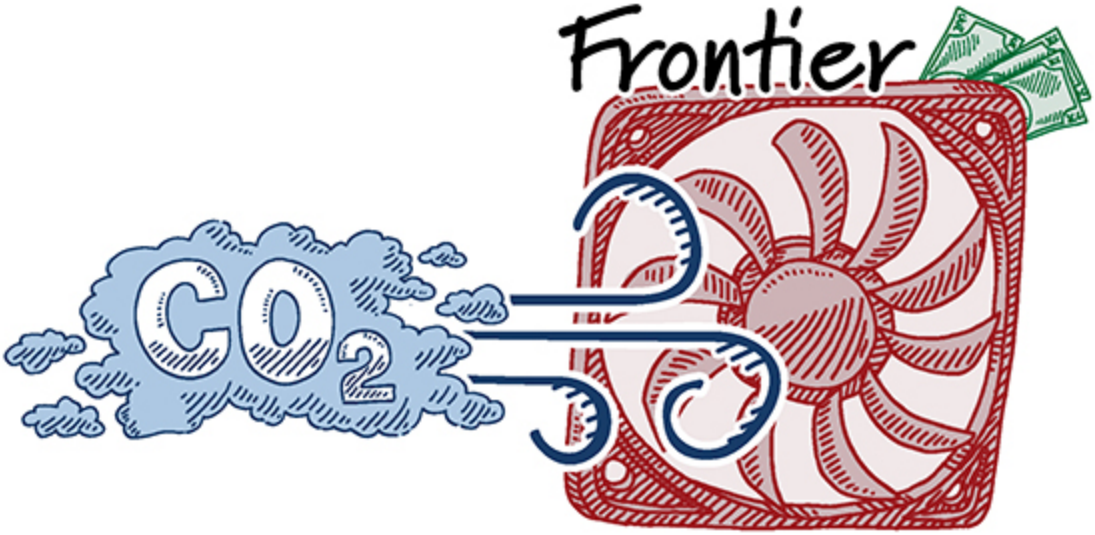
9. Frontier adds $915M to drive carbon removal growth



Frontier, a coalition of corporate buyers backed by Stripe, Google, Shopify, Salesforce, H&M Group and Anthropic, added $915 million to its pledge to accelerate high-quality carbon removal solutions, bringing its total pledge to $1.8 billion.

The new commitment will:

- Place larger bets on the most competitive technologies with gigaton-scale potential;
- Build off Frontier's strong 2025 momentum, including 23,000 tons of carbon removal delivered and 1.4 million tons of new annual removal capacity; and
- Include Anthropic, the first pure AI company to join the group, reflecting a growing commitment from AI companies to decarbonize.

What's clear: Industry is leading the decarbonization charge. Frontier's buyers have nearly doubled their original $1 billion pledge from 2022, betting that carbon removal can scale. Smart innovation policy can drive down costs and bring these technologies to commercial scale, ensuring they're built domestically and sold worldwide.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Carbon Dioxide Removal 101** for a breakdown of how CDR technologies work and why they matter.

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10. Brimstone signs MOU with Century Aluminum for Mine-to-Metal Supply Chain

U.S. materials innovator Brimstone **announced** a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Century Aluminum, the largest U.S. producer of primary aluminum, to establish a domestic 'mine to metal' supply chain. Brimstone will provide Century with significant volumes of alumina, the main precursor to aluminum.

Through this MOU:

- Brimstone will utilize co-production, adapted from the oil and gas industry, to refine a single rock into industry-standard, domestically produced alumina.
- Century can test a production process for domestically-sourced alumina that relies on U.S-based feedstock and could help the U.S. diversify away from a single source of alumina that uses imported raw materials.
- Brimstone could prove a revenue stream for its commercial-scale demonstration plant being developed in Reno (NV) and slated to be operational by 2028.

What's clear: The MOU underscores the importance of federal RD&D for innovative technologies. Brimstone has received multiple DOE grants to commercialize its technology and is now positioned to provide supply chain resilience for a metal that is key to U.S. national and economic security.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's **Driving American Innovation in the Highway Bill** for more on how Brimstone's technology can close the U.S. alumina supply chain gap.

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11. 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.

Quick history lesson – Critical minerals

- **1840s** – James Marshall's **gold discovery** at Sutter's Mill triggers the California Gold Rush and launches the modern American mining industry
- **Early 1900's** – Daniel Jackling proves **open-pit mining** can profitably recover copper from low-grade ore, making large-scale open-pit mining more efficient and profitable.
- **1960s** – American miners and metallurgists transform mineral processing through innovations like **SX-EW** which enable high-purity copper production without traditional smelting, and **heap leaching** which unlocks low-grade gold once considered uneconomic
- **2010s –** The Department of Energy's Critical Materials Innovation Hub **pioneers** membrane solvent extraction technology, a faster, cleaner way to recover rare earth metals
- **2020s** – **Direct lithium extraction** (DLE) scales with modular plants that extract lithium from brine in hours instead of months, reducing water use and boosting recovery to support resilient battery supply chains

What's clear: America's mineral security depends on innovation. Restoring U.S. leadership requires prioritizing domestic mining innovation and strengthening long-term research across every stage of production, from extraction to processing.

Plug in: Read ClearPath Action's **resource independence plan** for a breakdown of how permitting reform, targeted incentives and stronger trade policy can restore U.S. leadership in critical minerals.

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12. The Circuit

ClearPath Head of Policy **Lisa Epifani** spoke about the need to enact a durable permitting reform bill this Congress and the importance of modernizing America's grid at the 2026 Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy.

Lisa Epifani moderated a discussion on the growing intersection of AI and energy infrastructure at Energy Council New York, highlighting the need for faster permitting, expanded transmission, and reliable energy to support America's AI leadership.

13. ICYMI

- **Critical Energy** raised $19 million in seed funding while **Endurance Energy** closed $54 million to develop offshore geothermal plants along the Ring of Fire, targeting an estimated six terawatts of untapped baseload capacity.
- G7 leaders released a **declaration** committing to advance critical minerals projects and diversify supply chains by aggregating demand and mobilizing public and private financial capacity.
- **Helion** became the first company in the world to secure regulatory licenses for a fusion power plant, receiving two permits from the Washington State Department of Health for its Orion facility.
- **DOE added Thailand** to its list of generally authorized civil nuclear export destinations under Part 810, bringing the total to 51 countries and paving the way for future American exports.
- **Valar Atomics' Ward 250** became the second advanced reactor to achieve criticality under DOE's Reactor Pilot Program, and the first DOE-authorized reactor to do so outside the national laboratory system.
- **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Fervo Energy and NVIDIA** are partnering to build an AI-powered geothermal digital twin modeling platform that replicates real reservoir behavior in real time, giving plant operators the tools to maximize electricity generation.

ClearPath believes America must lead the world in innovation over regulation… markets over mandates…providing affordable, reliable, clean energy.

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

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