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The Energy Midterms and the All-Of-The-Above Democrats



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The midterm elections are one week away. For the first time in years, voters, policymakers, and the media are paying serious attention to energy issues. Soaring electricity demand is crashing into an aging grid in need of maintenance, new capacity,

and efficiency improvements. At the same moment, the war in Iran has caused major disruptions in the oil, gasoline, and diesel markets. Higher prices for driving, farming, grocery shopping, and running businesses are crushing voters' budgets.

To solve these problems, we need a different kind of Democrat. For all the articles about the rise of Left-wing candidates this year, the races that will determine control of Congress and Governors' mansions are more blue-collar, rural, and geographically diverse than Democratic strongholds. I see Democratic candidates focusing on affordability, building and producing more energy, paying for infrastructure, and reigning in utilities. Gone are the finger-wagging calls for regulations, standards, or carbon pricing. We're even seeing Democrats comfortable talking about oil and gas with oil and gas workers in energy-producing states.

This isn't a climate change surrender. An all-of-the-above energy strategy means a lot more clean energy—wind, solar, geothermal, batteries, nuclear, and transmission—will get built.

The Energy Races We're Watching

The Senate Races

In the Senate, we're watching for how many Democratic challengers join pragmatic former governor Roy Cooper, who is the heavy favorite to win in North Carolina, as new Senators. Wins by James Talarico (TX), Mary Peltola (AK), and Sherrod Brown (OH), who are running very competitive races in conservative states, as well as Josh Turek (IA) and Adam Hamilton (KS), would mark the first time since 2008 Democrats elected a substantial number of Senators from rural and energy states.

The House Races

In the House, Democrats are forecasted to win the majority, and there are more than 40 competitive seats across the country. We're watching a handful of races with pragmatic Democrats who share our approach to bold, pragmatic energy policy, including Rebecca Bennett in NJ-7, Rebecca Cooke in WI-3, Bobby Pulido in TX-15, Janelle Stelson in PA-10,

Christina Bohannon in IA-01, and Paige Coggnetti in PA-08. The larger the majority, the more Democratic members there will be who share the views of the campaigns we're tracking. This would give Hakeem Jeffries more latitude on an energy agenda in 2027, centered on affordability and appealing to the broadest possible set of Americans across economic and geographic lines.

The Governors' Races

In governors' races, a number of candidates are following the lead of Josh Shapiro, who is likely to get re-elected in Pennsylvania by a historic margin. New candidates like Amy Acton in Ohio, Rob Sand in Iowa, and David Crowley in Wisconsin are focused on expanding electricity capacity, removing barriers to building, and some version of utility reform. Acton, Shapiro, and Crowley, along with incumbents Katie Hobbs in Arizona, Kathy Hochul in New York, and Maura Healey in Massachusetts, all explicitly back nuclear, along with renewables and geothermal, as key to meeting new electricity demand.

Beyond The Midterms

What this means for 2027 and beyond is a focus on delivering tangible results. There's a hard-nosed focus by almost all of these campaigns on both securing short-term wins to provide their constituents with some relief from costs and fixing the underlying structural failures in the energy sector. That includes a lot: permitting reform, backing all-of-the-above energy, upgrading the grid, requiring data centers to pay for new energy generation and infrastructure, utility reform, and real ratepayer protections.

Democrats' shift toward pragmatism can only broaden the party's appeal to the working class. As importantly, even if the policies and rhetoric are not directly centered on or addressing climate change or emissions reduction, they will leverage clean energy as the cheapest, fastest option, which will ultimately have a substantial impact on climate and emissions reduction as well.

Centrist Democrats can lead on what matters most to Americans—energy affordability, reliability, and security—in a way that will reduce carbon emissions and deploy a lot more clean energy. A pragmatic, all-of-the-above clean energy strategy can give us

more ability to overcome the fractured political environment that is polarizing energy policy. Our approach is focused on adding much more clean, firm power, leveraging industrial strategy to make the United States more competitive in key energy supply chains and trade, and championing commercialization-focused innovation.

What to prioritize in 2027

If our approach works, Americans will start to see relief from ever-increasing energy costs, as well as a fairer, more durable, modern electricity system. To that end, our 2027 objectives are:

- **Reform how electricity projects are permitted and how markets are regulated** so that transmission, clean generation, and distribution are deployed more quickly and affordably and are paid for in a way that is fair to and reduces the cost-burden on the public.
- **Focus American industrial strategy on domestic and allied supply chains for clean energy technologies**, including turbines, transformers, grid resources, batteries, and electric vehicles that are critical to national security, and sustained, reliable economic growth.
- **Establish a pathway to significantly reform federal government policy** so that new clean energy technologies developed in the National Labs and at the Department of Energy are commercialized and deployed quickly.
- **Transform how the federal government supports the private sector's deployment of advanced nuclear technologies in the US and abroad** so that American companies have access to the public and private capital, supply chains, partnerships, and other resources needed to compete fairly and build reactors faster.
- **Educate policymakers, the media, and other advocacy groups on fusion energy's advancement** towards commercialization and the critical role federal support can play in fusion innovation, associated technologies, novel supply chains, and competitiveness in the global race to fusion deployment.



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