



## **AMERICAN SOLAR ENERGY SOCIETY**

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**For Immediate Release**  
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### **US RENEWABLE ENERGY RD&D PROGRAMS GET PRUNED**

The American Solar Energy Society's Policy Committee is calling on Congressional policymakers and the U.S. Department of Energy to sustain RD&D core programs and researchers in federal renewable energy programs.

ASES, a national membership organization dedicating to fostering education on renewable energy technologies and applications, is reacting to seven (unannounced) permanent employee layoffs from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's Biomass RD&D program staff. While US Department of Energy leadership attributed the layoffs to Congressional earmarks, ASES believes the action is unwarranted and represents a policy failure at the national level.

While Congress has significantly increased appropriations earmarks, particularly in the Biomass and Hydrogen RD&D programs, Congressional Committees historically have been willing to compromise to protect core capabilities of programs, if requested by members.

The issue, maintains Tom Starrs, Chairman of the ASES Board of Directors, is that Congress should recognize that the core research, development and deployment programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy must grow and be enhanced in order to meet our country's energy needs without sacrificing critical environmental, economic, and security needs. Cuts in core research capabilities, such as the ones proposed, are clearly counterproductive. ASES also maintains that the US Department of Energy should increase its dialogue with Congress to forestall layoffs and develop new approaches to have the efficiency and renewables programs that address state and regional needs beyond the traditional DOE RFP and planning process.

ASES is urging federal policymakers and implementers to focus on the undeniable reality that US oil and gas production is in decline, energy imports continue to increase, our national and economic security is seriously threatened, and air pollution (particularly with respect to greenhouse gas emissions) continues to worsen. Because renewable energy options positively affect all of these challenges, renewable energy RD&D must be enhanced, nurtured, and protected

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