

Durbin Says Energy Bill Must Address Scientific Research and Climate Change

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today, in a speech on the Senate floor, urged his colleagues to support an amendment he has introduced to the *American Energy Innovation Act* that would provide more than \$43 billion over five years for basic research in energy technology. The bill is being considered by the Senate this week.

“We need more robust support for basic science research, the kind of research that costs too much and takes too long for private companies to undertake on their own. Time and again, whether it is new medicine, new medical devices, or new energy policy, the federal government has shown the real leadership in basic research. We're at risk of no longer leading the world in cutting-edge research because we are not adequately -- our generation – is not adequately funding basic science,” Durbin said.

Durbin also criticized the bill for not seriously addressing the impacts of climate change, citing how extreme weather events have hurt Illinois agriculture and farming, and damaged Chicago's shoreline and threatened coastal communities.

“Last year, increased precipitation between April and June literally crippled our farmers when it came to planting and left them many times with fields that were not productive. We've seen in the City of Chicago. In January, there were waves as high as 20 feet pummeling the Lake Michigan shoreline of Chicago and flooding our coastal communities,” Durbin said. “Climate change makes the normal disasters in America that much worse. It increases their frequency and their intensity, and it's devastating to most vulnerable people and businesses in America...I support efforts, like the bill before us, the *American Energy Innovation Act*, that takes small steps toward addressing climate change, but this problem calls for a much larger commitment.”

Video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

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Footage of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#) for TV Stations.

Durbin’s amendment would increase funding for the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Science by five percent real growth each year for five years. The amendment will provide more than \$43 billion over five years for basic research in energy technology and close a funding gap that has stunted some of DOE’s most important projects.