Dear Dr. Koonin,

With much interest I read the framing document for the upcoming DoE-QTR. I would like to offer a few comments which reflect my own opinion and views – not those of the company I work for (Philips).

On the topic of (US) Innovation

I do not see any clear mechanism which will result in DOE funded programs to have a strong incentive to stay in the USA. The innovation of new technologies and their location of mass production do not seem strongly linked.

Q1: Mission

I think there is a lot of focus on technological solutions and perhaps not enough focus on people. How can energy savings, using renewables, etc become more fun to be involved in, to want to help and make this happen other than by regulations and mandates? (Gaming, contests etc. integrated in daily lives?)

Q2: DoE support US leadership…?

The DOD would not entertain international joint advanced weapons development. The DOD would want to keep an edge of surprise. We frequently view energy as a weapon, specially in the context of national security. Perhaps we need some key programs which are kept close to our chest.

Q3: Principles for allocating resources…

There needs to be a range of technologies – short, medium and long term with good balance. There need to be one or two big plays/bets which could have tremendous impact if successful. Another consideration, again is, will people adopt it – is the technology easy to use, interact with and will the results of it make a noticeable difference to the end-user early on?

Q4:

DOD ultimately might purchase what they develop via R&D so it is a first (large) customer which helps to move new technological solutions past the early high cost hurdles. The only way I can see to not compromise competitive advantage is by allowing sole source contracts for a period of time (advantage never lasts more than a few years at best).

Q5: Demonstration projects

The closer demonstration projects are to market the larger the cost share should be for participants to also have substantial skin in the game. The reward mechanism for demonstration projects needs to be business which the performers can capture after successful demonstrations. A successful demonstration project would be one that delivers on its promises and leads to sustainable business and economic development.

Six strategies etc:

Should there be programs which aim at significantly improving the efficiencies from raw energy resources to primary conversion into usable form? I agree that building efficiency programs make a lot of sense and should be promoted significantly. I cannot comment as much on the other topics other than that they make a lot of sense – perhaps the timing and the alignment of electrifying the fleet and modernizing the grid is somewhat in conflict?

Needless to say – all the challenges are huge and potential ways to tackle them are easily open to issues etc. but I comment the DOE to forcefully drive all these major challenges.

Regards,

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