

## Message from the incoming DOE Chief of Staff, Tarak Shah

Team DOE:

On behalf of the team of new colleagues joining you today and in the coming weeks, let me say thank you! Some of us rejoining you today left Forrestal four years ago to the day. Over those past four years, as citizens, we have watched you perform your work in service to the Nation with professionalism and integrity, especially these past months during the ongoing COVID-19 and economic crises. We look forward to working together to build back better over the next four years.

President Biden and Vice President Harris have a bold science-based agenda for restoring American leadership and rebuilding our country to address the great challenges of our time. DOE is a critical part of that agenda. We will lead the way to keep our country safe by maintaining the nation's nuclear deterrent as a cornerstone of our national defense and security. We will perform our cleanup mission to restore the lands and communities that have shouldered the burden to keep our nation safe.

And we will develop and deploy technologies to tackle the climate crisis and build an equitable clean energy future. To achieve these clean energy goals, we must better integrate basic science, applied research, and technology demonstration. To facilitate this, we will be updating the Department's organization structure so that the applied energy programs report to the same Under Secretary as the Office of Science and renaming that office to the Under Secretary for Science and Energy.

I know you have the knowledge, expertise, and commitment to realize this ambitious vision. I also know that to do so you need leaders who empower you, provide the resources to do your jobs, prioritize health and safety in the workplace, and support a fair and equitable work environment. The leadership team we are building will partner with the career leaders, federal workforce, and contractors to make this a reality. To fill critical hiring needs across DOE, we will streamline hiring processes to recruit and promote talented people from within our agency and from coast to coast. Diversity and inclusion, which is the bedrock of American success, will be central to that effort and will enable us to deliver results for all Americans.

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the stress and uncertainty it has created, your health and safety will be a priority for me. I recognize that many of our vital missions require some of you to work on site. That's why we are immediately reviewing the current health and safety measures in place across DOE to determine what changes may be necessary to increase your safety. One such change is that mask usage is mandatory in all DOE-occupied office buildings, effective immediately. For employees who telework, we will review the technology and tools available to you to ensure you can be as productive as possible while remote.

I also thank NNSA's [David Huizenga](#) for answering the call to be Acting Secretary until a Secretary is confirmed by the Senate. Dave's decades of service in EM and NNSA mean that

DOE is in good hands. In addition, many thanks to [Ingrid Kolb](#), and the MA, HC, CIO, GC, AU and other teams who are working to support a smooth transition.

On a personal note, I am thrilled to rejoin your ranks. It's an opportunity to build on a decades long affection for DOE, starting in high school as a participant of [Fermilab's Saturday Morning Physics](#) program. During my time at DOE from 2014-2017, I gained a deep admiration for our Department's unparalleled capacity to develop innovative solutions to address climate change. Over the coming days, months, and years we'll be relying on each of you to use your potential and talent to help transform our country. Let's get to work together.