Transcript Highlights
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AMY LIU
Deputy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution

"Metropolitan areas are our economic engines, because the public and private sector leaders in them wake up every day leveraging the very assets that drive productivity and economic prosperity. Those assets are innovation, infrastructure, human capital, and building high-quality places to live and work.

This idea, then, to create energy discovery-innovation institutes embodies the real-time way that one of these assets, energy-innovation, will be deployed. The reality is that we will need a network of universities, of federal labs, industry, venture capitalists, work force developers, and others working together, albeit sometimes in little messy ways but working together to create and commercialize alternative sources of energy for the nation. So, if done right, this concept that we're going to talk about today will yield a three-pronged prosperity -- high productivity, energy and environmental sustainability, and an inclusive economy that engages and expands the skills and opportunities of our workers."

KEITH W. COOLEY
CEO, NextEnergy

"Now is the time for finding alternatives and making them work, not just as proofs of concept, not just as technologies in the lab, but in the broader landscape of the American energy industry, the transportation sector, our national infrastructure, our businesses, and our environmental values, and as a continuing driver of our economy as a whole."

"So, what would happen if we in this room pledged as we left to take the best of what DoE and the other federal agencies have to offer, the best of what the universities do, the best of what industry does and bring them together with a real sense of urgency and a real focus? That's how we as a nation have to move forward. We don't have the time, the money, or the resources for business as usual."

JAMES DUDERSTADT
President Emeritus, University of Michigan

"Large-scale deployment of sustainable energy technologies involves not only advanced scientific research and development of new technologies, but they also involve a very

complex array of other issues -- social, economic, legal, political, behavioral, consumer, and market issues -- and they're all characterized by complex interrelationships at the regional, national, and international levels. Existing federal policy simply is not adequate to deal with these complexities. This involves both the magnitude of current U.S. energy research, as well as the character and format of the U.S. energy research itself."

"The energy discovery-innovation institutes would combine the best qualities of a number of paradigms. Like agricultural experiment stations, they would be responsive to social priorities, with regional impact. Like academic medical centers, they would link research, education, and practice. And like corporate R&D labs, they would link discoveries with the applied research necessary to produce innovative products but would also educate the next generation of high-tech workers."

"Where would the funding come from? It might come from the diversion of existing energy-related subsidies. Over the last 30 to 40 years, the nation has invested almost a half-trillion dollars in energy, some of that in R&D, much of it in other kinds of support. It might come from general revenue, or it might come from the appearance of a carbon tax or a cap-and-trade scheme, but in the end we believe that the need to reinvigorate America's economy and place it on a more sustainable footing compels the transformation of U.S. energy policy."

E. GORDON GEE
President, The Ohio State University

"Now, I would ask the question is additional funding required? Well, of course. But, more importantly, we must form a new intellectual infrastructure, one with urgency of purpose and agility of unified action."

"The issue I think the three of us are trying to talk about is not about doing the same business in the same way, it's really about a word that I think we'd all agree with, it's about reinvention, it's maybe even about reformation or revolution, and that has to do with creating different kinds of structures that will not only create a culture of collaboration, but also that we will collaborate with many different partners, including our public."

MICHAEL M. CROW
President, Arizona State University

"We could find all the money that we could possibly print, which is what we do with money these days, and pour it into this problem and it wouldn't actually allow us to organize ourselves to move in the right direction. We would take the existing infrastructure and we would fail."

"So we need a change of mindset, and this report and this proposal outlines how this mindset can be shifted … The first thing that we have to start doing is stop measuring our scientific success by the amount of money we spend on science. We need to start thinking about, and focusing on, what is the outcome that we actually hope to achieve, regardless of what the outcome costs. So, for instance, if we're worried about our energy security, and if we're worried about our national security, if we're worried about our national sustainability, both economically and environmentally, let's set that as the objective.."

THE HONORABLE SHERROD BROWN (D-OH)
United States Senate

"By investing in green energy research, in policies that tackle climate change and reduce our dependence on foreign oil, we can put our nation on the path for renewed economic success. It's not just an environmental issue, as you know, it's not just an energy issue—it really is about American jobs and rebuilding this economy."

"Plain and simple, we'll work to build more fuel-efficient autos. We'll expand opportunities for new manufacturing jobs that become part of the green job supply chain. We'll literally grow our economy as we protect our environment."

"If every home were insulated at current energy department recommended levels, we'd need an additional 34 million tons of insulation, and that means jobs, and we would save nearly $13 billion a year in energy costs."

"Putting a price on carbon to create green energy demand is crucial, but it's not enough. We don't have the luxury to rely on one winning strategy, as you can see in this report; we need to pursue all of them. We must make a major investment in green energy research and development so we can achieve these – and that is why this report and the discussion it starts is so important to all of us and to our country right now."

WILLIAM BATES
Vice-President for Government Affairs, Council on Competitiveness

"We released a report last September called "Prioritize," which identified key steps that the pPresident and Congress need to take to put America on the path towards a secure and sustainable energy future. Two recommendations from that report: Tripling America's investment in energy research, and better leveraging federal research assets to drive energy innovation and economic development, are both echoed by the report that we're discussing here today on Energy Discovery-Innovation Institutes."

MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER
President, Breakthrough Institute

"We like to think that Silicon Valley was sort of invented by these great inventors, like Hewlett and Packard in their garages. And they were great inventors, no doubt about it. But Hewlett-Packard wouldn't exist if the Defense Department hadn't bought radios during World War I. Our point is that we didn't get the personal computer revolution by putting a cap-and-trade system on typewriters. You know, we didn't get the Internet by putting a tax on faxes and telegraphs. We got there through direct government procurement."

JOHN DENNISTON
Partner, Kleiner Perkins Caulfield & Byers

"This is not 50 years ago, where America is the leader in technology innovation across the board in every industry. Europeans, South Americans, Asians realize it's technology innovation that first and foremost explains the American standard of living, and we are now in a global race to lead the green-tech revolution, which I believe will be the second industrial revolution. And if we aren't creative, if we aren't bold, we will not lead, and, as Jim said before, we'll be importing a different kind of energy source. It may not be crude oil, but may be batteries and it may be solar panels. I don't think that's the path that we should set ourselves on."

HOWARD BERKE
Executive Chairman and Co-founder, Konarka Technologies, Inc.

"Since we're in the beltway, I feel compelled to say this: I'm a Republican from New Hampshire. And I was part of McCain's energy team. … This is not Republican. This is not Democrat. This is not liberal. This is not conservative, we all see it. All of us that know and are pushing for a new energy paradigm in the United States … No matter what your political flavor, we all see this change is necessary structurally to how we fund energy research deployment scale-up in America."

BILLY M. GLOVER
Managing Director -- Environmental Strategy, Boeing Commercial Airplanes

"We don't have that many opportunities to fundamentally change our source of energy. So this is something we've been working with federal labs, universities, public and private companies, to do. And this collaborative approach has enabled us to move very quickly, and so I think what's proposed here in terms of an approach to federal research, is right in line with what we have had recent experience on as being very beneficial."

WILLIAM HARRIS
President and CEO, Science Foundation Arizona

"First and foremost, our universities have a human capital talent pool that's second to none. We are probably not deploying it as well as we could. We probably don't have the incentives that are in place to allow these things to work as well as they could. It's not the university's fault; it's the incentive system that we've created. And I think when Dr. Crow talked about just counting publications or dollars, we created a system that doesn't talk about economic development and bettering the communities and bettering the states or bettering the region. We've got disincentives."

M. PETER McPHERSON
President, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

"I think there needs to be more research money. There is venture capital money if something is commercial-able, but we don't have much for the gap. And it seems to me that that's part of what we need to do here. There needs to be competitive grants money to be able to do it. "

JEFFREY WADSWORTH
President and COE, Battelle Memorial Institute

"I am fearful that we have not got a system's view, a system's integrated view to all of the energy generation and disposition and that we run the risk of looking at this week's favorite solution, and we have to grapple with our problem. We have the computers to do it, we have the talent to do it, and that's something we're investing in at Battelle, because I worry that if [we] go down just one path, you'll have unintended consequences and they'll be ramifications that are negative."

MARK MURO
Fellow and Policy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution

"It seems like one thing we've heard today very clearly is that we need to invest more, probably much more, in the energy sector transformation, but we also need to invest differently. We can't simply do more of the same, that's been repeated over and over. We need to do more, but do some of it in very new ways. In that sense, I think we're all agreed that a serious discussion of the work before us needs to start in earnest right away."