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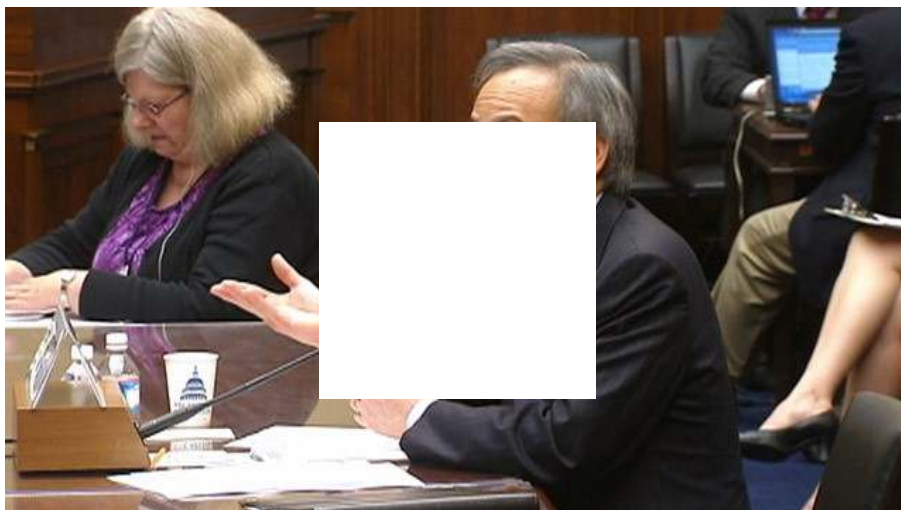
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Chu, GOP Trade Jobs Over Green Energy Funding



Energy Secretary Steven Chu testifies before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, March 20, 2012. (ABC News)



By MATTHEW LAROTONDA
March 20, 2012

Energy Secretary Steven Chu defended his agency today against allegations the Obama administration cut corners to get funding approved for a number of [alternative energy projects](#), including \$1.6 billion in loans for two massive solar installations.

As Chu testified before the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Republicans claimed their investigators found evidence the administration had ignored objections from within the department to approve risky ventures, and suggested companies with political ties to the White House had benefitted.

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, told Chu he believed many loan recipients had credit ratings that would classify them as "junk" investments. Alleging a culture of "cronyism," at the agency, Jordan claimed 23 of 27 businesses approved for federal loans had connections to campaign donors or administration officials, including former economic adviser Larry Summers.

Interrupting the secretary at times during his testimony, Jordan told Chu, "There's no other conclusion you can reach. You helped your friends or you guys were incompetent."

Chu defended the integrity of the loan process. "We've put in place an aggressive monitoring system to ensure that the department and its grantees spend recovery act funds wisely," he said. "The department takes any case of waste, fraud or abuse very seriously."

Chu said he wasn't aware of many of the alleged connections but said department guidelines would have prevented any of the individuals from participating in discussions that would have influenced the loan process. Further, Chu says the decision would have come from career agency employees, not political appointees who could be influenced by their party.



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