



COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRATS
ENERGY & COMMERCE
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Statement of Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., as prepared for delivery
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Full Committee Markup of
H.R. 8, Reconciliation Instructions, and H.R. 3242**

Mr. Chairman, today's meeting marks a major departure from the broadly bipartisan path that we had followed since the beginning of my tenure as Ranking Member of this Committee. I had hoped that this moment would not come given our great work and the successful passage of 21st Century Cures, TSCA Reform and other legislation through the House of Representatives.

In July, you and I reached agreement on a few key points regarding energy legislation. First, all provisions needed to be agreed upon by both sides. We agreed that was the only way for us to move forward, both at subcommittee and full committee. We also agreed that we would need to find funding for infrastructure programs, in order to repair, replace and upgrade our nation's aging energy infrastructure. We agreed that deteriorating, leaky natural gas pipelines are a public safety and environmental hazard and so we committed to include funding for a grant program to help accelerate pipeline replacement and offset rate increases for vulnerable households. In addition, we also agreed to fund a competitive grant program to help states and local government upgrade outdated electricity infrastructure in ways that enhance its reliability and resiliency.

Unfortunately, you seem to have abandoned that agreement and instead have introduced a substitute amendment that inserts significant and controversial changes. This bill only aims to help polluters. Meanwhile, it continues to ignore the impacts of climate change, which remain the biggest threat to our energy security and way of life.

At the end of the day, we are now faced with a contentious markup on a bill that could have been a bipartisan consensus product.

Democrats are committed to energy legislation that works to ensure a sustainable, clean energy future that provides well-paying jobs and affordable power to consumers. These priorities are based on science and the technologies of today and tomorrow. And, they reflect a confidence in the American innovative spirit that helped make us into the nation we are today. This bill falls well short, and I am strongly opposed.

Mr. Chairman, today we are also marking up reconciliation legislation, which amounts to a futile 61st attempt at repealing the Affordable Care Act, and as a last ditch effort to win votes from recalcitrant Republicans for a clean Continuing Resolution.

During our recent hearing to defund Planned Parenthood, I expressed my disappointment that our Committee was using false videos and deception as an excuse to harm women's access to health care. So I'm sure you can imagine my outrage that, now, this Committee has become the epicenter of the Republican assault on women's rights. The Reconciliation instructions defunding Planned Parenthood and the announcement that our Committee will be forming a new Subcommittee to continue a fraudulent investigation into Planned Parenthood is appalling.

This investigation is nothing more than a radical assault on women's health. Extremist Republicans want to take away a woman's right to choose what is best for her and her family as well as her right to choose the health care provider that best meets her health care needs. This isn't just an attack on Planned Parenthood, this is an attack on all women across this country.

I am also disappointed that the Reconciliation instructions would repeal the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Less than 4 months ago when our Committee was celebrating the work we did on the 21st Century Cures Act, we all agreed on the importance of making investments to spur innovation to develop new treatment and cures – investments that could reduce the human toll of disease and reduce the financial strain that disease places on public and private health care payers.

Just like we know that investments in developing new cures and treatments matter – we know that investments in prevention pay off. According to the Trust for America's Health, every dollar spent on community-based interventions generates a return of \$5.60. Not only does investing in prevention have economic benefits, such investments can potentially prevent the human suffering that results from disease. I don't see how anyone could be against that goal.

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose the Reconciliation instructions.

I yield back.

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