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CHAIRMAN FRANK PALLONE, JR. | 116TH CONGRESS

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Pallone Remarks at Subcommittee Markup of Nine Energy Bills

Washington, D.C. – *Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks today at an Energy Subcommittee Markup of nine bills to reduce carbon pollution, create jobs and modernize infrastructure:*

Today we will be marking up nine bills to improve energy efficiency, promote clean energy, increase energy sector jobs and modernize our energy infrastructure. Collectively, these bills take another step forward in promoting clean and efficient energy for all Americans. It is part of our ongoing work to combat climate change, strengthen our economy and provide some much-needed relief to consumers on their energy bills.

Rebuilding our aging energy infrastructure creates jobs in communities across the country, while increasing safety and helping to address the climate crisis. H.R. 5527, the 21st Century Power Grid Act, which was introduced by Representative Sarbanes, establishes a grant program at the Department of Energy to fund projects to improve the resiliency and efficiency of the electric grid. As we work to address the climate crisis, it is critical to ensure our country has a modern and reliable electric grid to transport that power. A modern grid will also protect against cyberattacks, an increasing vulnerability in our electric system.

H.R. 1426, the Timely Review of Infrastructure Act, will ensure that FERC has the resources and personnel it needs to review and analyze energy infrastructure projects. It is important that these projects receive thorough review in a timely manner, and I commend Representatives Olson and Doyle for introducing this bipartisan legislation.

Our nation's natural gas distribution pipeline system also needs upgrades, particularly in the Northeast and my home state of New Jersey, where pipeline infrastructure can be more than 100 years old. To address this critical issue, Representatives Sherrill and Blunt Rochester introduced H.R. 5542, which establishes a grant program to incentivize the replacement of aging natural gas distribution pipelines. Quickly replacing this aging, leaky infrastructure will reduce methane emissions – a climate super-pollutant – and increase public safety. We have seen the tragic consequences of pipeline explosions across the country in recent

years. Modernizing this infrastructure will ensure it is safe and environmentally sound, all while creating jobs and protecting low income ratepayers.

Several other bills under consideration today will reduce fossil fuel consumption in the transportation sector by making our nation's cars, trucks and buses much cleaner and more fuel efficient.

School buses are a large source of emissions, since they are largely powered by dirty diesel engines. H.R. 2906, the Clean Commute for Kids Act, introduced by Representative Cardenas, will reauthorize the important Clean School Bus Program to include electric vehicles in the grant criteria.

H.R. 5518, introduced by Representative McEachin, formally authorizes the Clean Cities Coalition Program, which works to reduce dependence on petroleum fuels and increase alternative fuel and electric vehicles use. This program is important because the transportation sector is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

And we will consider Chairman Rush's NO EXHAUST Act of 2020. This bill will help accelerate the deployment of electric vehicle charging stations by supporting state planning and EV network development, and encouraging more purchases of alternative fueled vehicles for use by the federal government to reduce emissions and fuel consumption. Chairman Rush's bill incorporates the work of several other members, including Representatives Tonko, Clarke, and Dingell.

We will also consider H.R. 3079, the Energy Savings Through Public-Private Partnerships Act of 2019, introduced by Representatives Welch and Kinzinger. This bipartisan bill will leverage private investment in federal building energy efficiency improvements that will save the government money and reduce carbon pollution.

And, H.R. 5541, a bipartisan bill introduced by Representatives O'Halleran and Mullin, to reauthorize the Department of Energy's Office of Indian Energy will be considered as well. We must work with tribal governments to ensure the members of tribal nations have access to affordable, reliable energy.

Lastly, H.R. 3361, the RIVER Act, introduced by Representatives McKinley, Tonko and Loeb sack, reauthorizes important hydropower incentive programs initiated in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Hydropower continues to make a vital contribution to our clean energy portfolio and this bill supports that on-going effort.

These are nine important bills and I urge all my colleagues to support them today.

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