

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement
of
Subcommittee on Energy Ranking Member Bobby Rush

State of the Nation's Energy Infrastructure

February 27, 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing today on energy infrastructure.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, investing in the nation's aging infrastructure is a top priority for Members on both sides of the aisle and it is my hope that we can address this issue in a bipartisan manner.

Unfortunately, the proposal put forth by the Trump Administration leaves a lot to be desired and is a poor starting point from my perspective.

Mr. Chairman, the President's infrastructure plan fails to provide adequate federal investment in the nation's antiquated energy infrastructure.

But rather it attempts to short-circuit environmental regulations and it places the vast majority of the funding burden on cash-strapped states and local municipalities.

In fact, under the Administration's proposal, states would be prohibited from receiving more than ten percent of total grant funds, and 80 percent of new investment must come from non-federal sources.

Mr. Chairman, this proposal resembles less of a national infrastructure plan, and instead would simply pick winners and losers, where only a limited number of states, localities and affluent communities would actually benefit.

Instead Mr. Chairman, I would urge this Subcommittee to look at the more serious alternative outlined in HR 2479, the Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow's America, or LIFT America Act, introduced by Ranking Member Pallone, myself, and the rest of the minority Members of the Energy and Commerce Committee in May 2017.

This bill offers thoughtful recommendations that would truly benefit all Americans, including provisions that would invest in drinking water infrastructure, clean energy infrastructure, more resilient broadband, brownfields redevelopment, and healthcare infrastructure.

Additionally, Mr. Chairman, I have also sponsored a bill that would strengthen the nation's workforce by investing in initiatives to train minorities, women, veterans, and

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unemployed coal workers to compete for good-paying energy and manufacturing jobs and careers.

Mr. Chairman, it is not enough to simply curtail environmental protections and pass the funding burden on to the states.

So I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses and working with the majority to enact a comprehensive infrastructure bill that would actually benefit all Americans.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and with that I yield the balance of my time to my friend from Texas, Mr. Green...