



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

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## **Pallone Opening Remarks at DOE Cybersecurity Hearing**

*“Before we get to cybersecurity, I’d like to talk for a minute about the security of our nation’s children.”*

**Washington, DC** – *Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks today at a Subcommittee on Energy hearing on “DOE Modernization: Legislation Addressing Cybersecurity and Emergency Response.”*

Today’s hearing revolves around a quartet of bipartisan bills designed to enhance the security of our nation’s energy infrastructure.

However, before we get to cybersecurity, I’d like to talk for a minute about the security of our nation’s children. Today, one month has passed since the tragic shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that took the lives of 17 children and educators. As we sit here, students all across the nation have just completed a 17-minute walkout in memory of those killed in that attack, as well as to protest this body’s refusal to take action on the gun violence epidemic. Students and their families are justifiably frustrated with the inaction here in Washington. They are sick and tired of a President who says one thing in front of the cameras, and then works behind the scenes to push the NRA agenda as soon as he thinks the cameras are focused somewhere else. They are sick and tired of a Republican Congress that won’t move forward on any commonsense legislation --- some of which has strong bipartisan support.

Americans have legitimate questions about the ever-increasing capacity of guns to kill in large numbers and the ease with which people who are a danger to themselves and others can obtain them in the marketplace. Those questions at least deserve to be explored through hearings in this committee.

Every Democrat on this Committee has asked, in two separate letters to the Chairman, for a series of five hearings on the gun violence epidemic. We have not received a response, and no hearing has yet been scheduled.

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I hope that the Chairman and my Republican colleagues will finally see the need to schedule the five hearings we requested. We don't expect them to necessarily agree with us -- or those participating in today's walkout -- on all the solutions to the gun violence epidemic. However, we do hope they finally acknowledge the legitimate need to explore the questions we are asking and for this committee to take action.

Now, with regard to cybersecurity, I appreciate the Majority taking these small, but important, bipartisan steps to enhance the Department of Energy's authorities with regard to our nation's energy infrastructure. These four bills build upon the good work done by this Committee in the FAST Act under Chairman Upton's leadership. I think it makes sense from both a security and business standpoint to have the department with the best knowledge of the energy industry taking the primary role in coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to cyber-attacks on these facilities.

In general, I am supportive of each of these bills. H.R. 5174, the Energy Emergency Leadership Act, sponsored by Rep. Wahlberg and Ranking Member Rush, would create a new DOE Assistant Secretary position with jurisdiction over all energy emergency and security functions related to energy supply, infrastructure, and cybersecurity. H.R. 5175, the Pipeline and LNG Facility Cybersecurity Preparedness Act, was introduced by Chairman Upton and Mr. Loeb sack. It would require the Secretary of Energy to carry out a program to establish policies and procedures that would improve the physical and cyber security of natural gas transmission and distribution pipelines, hazardous liquid pipelines, and liquefied natural gas facilities. Rep. Latta and Rep. McNerney's bill H.R. 5239, the Cyber Sense Act of 2018, is based on Mr. McNerney's language included in last congress' energy bill. It would require the Secretary to establish a voluntary program to identify cyber-secure products that could be used in the bulk-power system. Mr. McNerney and Mr. Latta also introduced H.R. 5240, the Enhancing Grid Security through Public-Private Partnerships Act, which directs the Secretary to create and implement a program to enhance the physical and cyber security of electric utilities.

In addition to these bills, I also want to direct the committee's attention to the LIFT America Act, the infrastructure bill that Committee Democrats introduced last year. A number of the bill's provisions would enhance the security and resiliency of the grid through new grant programs and by requiring certain projects receiving DOE assistance include a cybersecurity plan written in accordance with guidelines developed by the Secretary. The bill would also establish a Strategic Transformer Reserve Program to reduce electric grid vulnerability to physical and cyber-attacks, natural disasters, and climate change. These are provisions that will better assure the security of our energy infrastructure, and I hope the committee will consider them as we move forward.

Thank you, I yield back.

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