

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone

Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Materials Subcommittee Markup of Seven Bills

February 28, 2023

With today's back-to-back Subcommittee markups, Republicans are doing the bidding of big oil and gas companies and undermining our nation's bedrock environmental laws.

My Republican colleagues say these bills are needed to unleash American energy, but this could not be farther from the truth. The seven bills we are marking up today would keep us squarely in the past, stifle our progress towards a clean energy future, and endanger the health and safety of the communities we represent. It's regrettable the majority is attempting to rush these harmful policies out of Committee. The American people deserve better.

Several bills allow so-called critical energy sources to bypass commonsense environmental protections. H.R. 1155 would circumvent consideration of safer technologies to avoid chemical disasters under the Risk Management Program. H.R. 1158 seeks to amend the Toxics Substances Control Act (TSCA) and would undercut health protective policies that were developed and passed on a bipartisan basis by this Committee in the Frank Lautenberg Act in 2016. TSCA is absolutely critical to protecting our communities from exposure to toxic chemicals and it's extremely disappointing that Republicans are now looking to undermine the very law we all worked so hard to update six years ago.

Three bills would trade away public health protections to further subsidize polluting special interests. H.R. 1140 sets a dangerous precedent by allowing EPA to waive any Clean Air Act requirement, fee, or standard for a critical energy resource – an unconscionable decision. H.R. 1070 would grant Solid Waste Disposal Act permits to owners or operators of critical energy resource facilities without requiring them to meet basic and necessary public health and environmental safety standards. And H.R. 1131 would automatically grant a flexible air permit to every industrial facility linked to critical energy resources, even those with abysmal track records of Clean Air Act violations and unfettered pollution.

All of these bills would put workers and communities at increased risk of harm. We should not be putting polluters over people by waiving critical public health and environmental protections that keep Americans safe.

Today's markup also includes two bills to repeal programs enacted by the Inflation Reduction Act – programs that would reduce climate pollution, lower the deficit, and leverage private sector investment in clean energy projects across the nation.

H.R. 1023 would revoke the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program, which invests \$27 billion in nonprofit, state, and local climate finance institutions to rapidly deploy low- and zero-

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emission technologies. H.R. 1141 targets the Methane Emissions Reduction Program, which provides incentives to drive down excess methane pollution and remediate the effects of the pollution that does occur. At its core, this program ensures polluters pay for wasted methane, not customers.

These bills make clear Republicans refuse to hold polluters accountable for the damage they cause – to our air, our water, our communities, and our climate.

Democrats delivered historic wins for the American people by passing strong climate legislation that has already created more than 100,000 good-paying clean energy jobs, will cut costs for working families, and will ensure we lead the world in the transition to a clean energy economy. Republicans are actively working to undermine that progress and to do the bidding of their polluter friends.

It's unfortunate that Republicans have not made any attempt to work with us on real solutions that will actually address energy security and affordability, and that can actually be signed into law. We should be working together to build a better future for all by investing in clean energy and bolstering our environmental safeguards.

Instead, with these Republican bills, communities will be left behind and will be forced to continue to contend with the increasing harms from the climate crisis, toxic chemicals, and polluter malfeasance. This is a dangerous path, and I urge my colleagues to reverse course.

I oppose all seven of these bills and urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.