

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Energy
Ranking Member Kathy Castor

Markup of 8 Bills, Subcommittee on Energy

November 19, 2025

If Americans are looking for relief from high energy bills and the crushing cost of living, they shouldn't look to the GOP-controlled Congress. Republicans in this committee haven't offered a single bill that would lower costs. In fact, their policies have made it worse.

Despite the urging of advocates across the political spectrum, Republicans ended tax credits, rebates, and incentives to lower electricity costs while cheering the Trump Administration's sabotage of cleaner, cheaper energy.

Now, after shutting down the House of Representatives for almost two months to avoid addressing the health care crisis and dodge a vote to release the Epstein files, Republicans offer nothing substantive to tackle the crushing cost of living.

Meanwhile, household electricity prices are up 11% this year. 1 in 3 households is cutting back on basic necessities to afford their energy bills. At least 102 gas and electric utilities have either raised or proposed higher rates that will go into effect in the next year.

So what are Republicans offering today? Policies to lower costs? No, they are taking away important tools that help consumers save money like energy efficient appliances and code upgrades. Republicans argue that energy efficiency increases costs. Of course, that is not true. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) explicitly requires standards to result in significant energy conservation and be technologically feasible and economically justified.

This Committee should be doing more to encourage cost savings through energy efficiency. Studies show that household electric upgrades – like rooftop solar and storage, or heat pumps to replace electric resistance heating – could meet 100% of the projected electricity demand growth from data centers, while cutting bills for families and strengthening the grid.

Appliance standards save a household more than \$500 in energy bills each year. And it's projected that homeowners will save \$15,000 for homes built using the updated building codes, compared to old ones.

Efficiency standards reduce more energy waste than any other federal initiative. They work in tandem with programs like the Weatherization Assistance, which helps households save money on electric bills and makes homes more resilient to extreme weather. That's why Rep.

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Tonko's bill that would reauthorize and update this program is so important, and I urge the committee to advance it.

There are concrete ways we can reduce the cost of living and inflation right now especially relating to energy. Congress could address Trump's arbitrary and illegal tariffs that are increasing costs on products like steel and aluminum that underpin our energy system.

Republicans could join us in pushing back on the White House bailout of the coal industry as the Trump Administration funnels more than \$600 million to dying, uneconomic plants as they make it harder to build out the resilient grid we need to drive down costs and power growing data center demand. I'm not kidding: the Department of Energy cancelled a \$4.9 billion loan guarantee for the Grain Belt Express, a large transmission line across the Midwest designed to deliver low-cost power. Last month, the Grid Deployment Office cancelled 25 awards, including \$464 million in Grid resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) funding for transmission lines.

As our neighbors back home struggle with skyrocketing electric bills, this Committee should be working together to lower costs and solve problems. Our neighbors back home deserve so much better.

I yield back.