

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of**

Subcommittee on Environment Ranking Member Paul Tonko

***Hearing on “Rules of the Road: Examining Legislation to Modernize the Clean Air Act's
Mobile Source Requirements”***

June 3, 2026

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The transportation sector is a major source of air pollution. It is often cited as the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in this country, and even despite progress over the past 50 years to reduce traditional pollutants, our vehicles continue to spew particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and other toxic emissions. More than 150 million Americans live in areas that fail to achieve federal air quality standards, and that pollution imposes tremendous costs on them, including \$150 billion in annual health care costs and lost productivity.

The Clean Air Act exists to protect Americans from this life threatening and economy burdening pollution. And when the law has been allowed to work— to provide long-term regulatory certainty and drive technology innovation— Americans have benefitted tremendously.

Investments in research have enabled the development of pollution control technologies, including selective catalytic reduction, that have improved fuel economy and allowed liquid fuels to become less polluting. Zero-emission vehicles have also seen major improvements in performance and cost reductions in recent years, which has also reduced pollution and lowered Americans’ dependence on fossil fuels.

Today, thanks to President Trump’s unnecessary war with Iran, American drivers are feeling pain at the pump. Gasoline is over \$4.25 per gallon, and diesel is over \$5. Americans have already spent \$51 billion more on gasoline and diesel since the beginning of Trump’s war, and many of those costs are being passed onto people— regardless of whether or not they drive— through higher grocery prices and other increases to their cost of living.

Reducing Americans’ dependence on volatile fuel markets is exactly why a steady, long-term transition away from polluting vehicles is so economically beneficial. EPA’s own analysis of its repeal of clean vehicle standards confirms this. By keeping Americans dependent on fossil fuels, it will cost us \$1 trillion more in gasoline by 2055.

Unfortunately, over the past 18 months, we have seen a very concerning trend at EPA, and among Republicans in Congress, to upend the Clean Air Act’s proven track record of delivering cost effective public health improvements and economic benefits.

June 3, 2026

Page 2

In February, EPA rescinded the Endangerment Finding and repealed all greenhouse gas emissions standards for vehicles. EPA has also announced a reconsideration of 2024 standards for traditional pollutants. These, and other, recent vehicle standards have reduced fuel consumption and enhanced efforts to grow a competitive domestic industry to build advanced vehicles, batteries, and emission control technologies.

This regulatory upheaval is on top of Republicans' enactment of last year's Big Ugly Bill, which repealed incentives for zero-emission vehicles, making it harder for Americans to afford new and used clean cars and insulate themselves from oil price spikes. Electric vehicles have 60 percent lower fuel costs and significantly lower maintenance costs. And yet, the majority seems committed to making it more difficult for people to buy affordable, American-made EVs.

Undermining Clean Air Act protections is not the answer, especially at this time of Trump's gas hike. Americans' wallets are under pressure, and efforts to double down on proposals that undermine fuel economy and pollution standards— like many of the bills before us today— will all but ensure Americans continue to purchase unnecessary amounts of fuel at over \$4 per gallon while also needing to access more healthcare for the additional air pollution they will breathe.

While I have concerns with most of the bills being considered today, I would like to express my support for H.R. 2140, Congresswoman Matsui's bill to reauthorize EPA's DERA program. DERA has a long track record of success using incentives to take the most polluting vehicles off the roads and lower costs for Americans. This is an example of the type of bipartisan bill we should be advancing to reduce air pollution and deploy new, innovative technologies.

Thank you again. I look forward to today's discussion, and I yield back.