

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

***Markup of 10 Bills, Full Committee***

**September 2, 2026**

I'm pleased today that we're marking up six bipartisan bills from the energy subcommittee, working to advance American leadership in nuclear energy. This continues this Committee's work to carefully balance safety, transparency, and efficiency, building off investments in the ADVANCE Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

While nuclear energy can help meet rising electricity demand in the future, it will not address the immediate challenges that our neighbors face right now with soul-crushing electric bills.

That's why I'm disappointed that House Republicans have failed to bring the Ratepayer Protection Act to the floor – despite it unanimously passing out of this committee over a month ago. And, as was reported last week, they're allegedly considering not bringing it to the floor at all this month.

The Ratepayer Protection Act is a bipartisan, common-sense solution to ensure that data centers pay the full costs of their energy demand. It makes sure that hardworking families aren't left footing the bill, while allowing us to keep advancing American innovation in artificial intelligence.

It helps state energy regulators require data centers to cover the full cost of any grid upgrades necessary to serve them. It empowers local communities to make decisions on the siting and building of data centers. It allows for robust community input, while holding developers to the highest environmental standards.

These are all policies that we agree on. So, I urge the Chairman and Republican leadership to bring the Ratepayer Protection Act to the floor, so we can stand up for the working families and small business across America who are looking to Congress for leadership.

This Committee has shown we can do bipartisan work on nuclear energy. We can take bipartisan action to protect against energy costs. And I believe we can also take bipartisan action to build transmission and interconnect new energy resources to the grid.

We need Congressional action, in this Committee, to make the targeted policy reforms to how we plan, permit, and pay for transmission that can unlock the energy growth that our country needs.

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We have bills, like my Expediting Generator Interconnection Procedures Act, which this Committee should advance to fix our broken system and quickly bring all types of energy resource onto the grid.

And there's still low-hanging fruit to improve grid utilization and deploy advanced solutions like virtual power plants to quickly get more energy out of the grid we already have.

Today's bills are an important step forward, but they are not enough. I urge my Republican colleagues to work with us in a bipartisan way to build a 21st century power system and lower costs for our neighbors back home.

I yield back.