

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.**

Markup of 7 Bills, Subcommittee on Environment

December 10, 2025

Today we are marking up seven Republican bills that once again put corporate polluters over people and will make the American people sicker. Republicans are eroding the foundation of the Clean Air Act and threatening our ability to ensure Americans have clean and healthy air to breathe.

We know air pollution is dangerous and already poses serious and significant health risks to our communities every day. It is linked to cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and over 100,000 premature deaths every single year.

Unfortunately, we are not here to consider any practical, bipartisan solutions to address this problem. Instead, the majority is trying to rehash and rebrand the same tired, failed pro-corporate polluter ideas that they push every Congress. The result is that we are once again wasting time on these pro-polluter bills instead of tackling the real problems facing Americans, like the affordability crisis and skyrocketing health care costs resulting from Republicans' refusal to extend enhanced premium tax credits that make health care more affordable for millions of Americans.

The Clean Air Act has a long history of working to drive economic development, while protecting the health of our communities. In fact, under the Clean Air Act, air pollution has fallen over 78 percent since 1970, while at the same time, our Gross Domestic Product has nearly quadrupled. Any potential changes to the law should continue to have those goals in mind – we cannot and should not sacrifice one in pursuit of the other. Unfortunately, that is exactly what these Republican bills would do.

What my colleagues continuously ignore is that cleaner air results in healthier Americans. And a healthier American workforce means fewer missed workdays, fewer health care costs and, in turn, a stronger economy. So there is no economic argument for tearing down the Clean Air Act.

Four of the bills we are considering today will undermine the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, or NAAQS – a suite of health-based air quality standards that let us know what level of pollution is safe to breathe.

H.R. 4218 would gut these protections by requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to consider the economic impact and feasibility of implementing the standard. In other words, weakening public health protections in favor of industry profits. It also removes critical

incentives for states and contains problematic exemptions that will artificially reduce reporting while leaving communities exposed to unsafe air. Republicans like these provisions so much, they are duplicated in the FIRE and the FENCES Acts.

H.R. 4214 gives new sources of pollution “amnesty” from new air quality standards, allowing new industrial facilities to emit more pollution with reckless abandon. This would raise the costs of cleaning up pollution and worsen air quality overall.

Committee Republicans are also targeting the New Source Review program. H.R. 161 would allow polluters to cook the books on how they measure cancer-causing emissions and allow more pollution in communities already impacted by poor air quality. On top of that, H.R. 6398 removes EPA’s ability to review the public health and environmental impacts of major projects.

Finally, H.R. 6373 gives the President the ability to waive Clean Air Act permit requirements, while simultaneously creating a pay-to-pollute scheme that lets large industrial sources of pollution off the hook for the harm they cause by simply paying their way into compliance.

Instead of addressing deadly air pollution or offering solutions to the affordability crisis the Trump Administration is causing, they are pushing policies to help out their billionaire buddies. Republicans are already forcing Americans to foot the bill for skyrocketing health care costs, and now they want to make people even sicker as they struggle to afford care.

I have opposed these ideas before, and I oppose these bills today. And I strongly urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.