

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

Markup of 7 Bills, Subcommittee on Environment

July 14, 2026

Today, we are marking up several good bills on battery recycling, critical mineral recovery from mining waste and discarded materials, and replacing dirty diesel engines. The Subcommittee will also consider several bills that undercut vital clean air protections and drive-up expensive fuel use.

Starting with the critical mineral bills domestic recycling of still viable critical minerals represents a creative and efficient way to reduce our dependence on foreign adversaries, namely China, for the critical minerals we need to power modern technologies and cost-cutting clean energy. When we talk about bolstering our domestic critical mineral supply chain, it is vital that we also consider opportunities to boost recycling and recovery that increases resource efficiency, reduces the need to mine new materials, and reduce waste.

Since the June Subcommittee hearing, we have worked with the Majority to come to agreement on three bills to address these important goals.

H.R. 9615, the BRACE Act, will help us increase the domestic recycling of batteries, while also keeping the critical minerals found in those batteries in the country for future use. I appreciate the majority's willingness to address many of our concerns in the amendment in the nature of a substitute (AINS). Particularly, the AINS gets the Environmental Protection Agency moving on a regulatory framework for battery recycling that addresses safety concerns while maintaining protections for the environment and public health. This is a compromise, but I believe this bill is a reasonable path forward so I plan to support it and urge my colleagues to do the same.

H.R. 9616, the EMRTAI bill led by Representatives Landsman and Pfluger, is another bipartisan effort to ensure that as we clean up abandoned mines and Superfund sites, we collect any critical minerals from those sites. This is a win-win for our environment and domestic supply chain.

And then we have H.R. 9617, another good bipartisan bill led by Environment Subcommittee Chair Palmer and Ranking Member Tonko, directs the EPA Administrator to consider out a National Critical Mineral Recovery Strategy to coordinate federal efforts to recover critical minerals from discarded materials.

While there is much more work to be done to boost battery recycling and bolster our critical mineral supply chains, these three bills are an important step forward.

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We're also considering H.R. 2140, the bipartisan reauthorization of the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. I am a long supporter of this popular program to help replace dirty diesel engines across the nation – cleaning the air while saving money on fuel costs. I am pleased the Subcommittee is moving this bill forward.

Unfortunately, I cannot say the same for the other Clean Air Act transportation bills on today's agenda. These bills will increase health-harming pollution, attack states' ability to protect their residents, and drive-up fuel use at a time when Trump's reckless war of choice in Iran has sent fuel prices skyrocketing.

Americans have been abundantly clear – at the hands of the Trump Administration, that life has become increasingly unaffordable. Hardworking American families are struggling financially, and instead of looking to cut costs, Republican are doubling down on Americans' reliance on volatile and expensive fossil fuels.

H.R. 9317, the BUSES Act, would needlessly undermine state policies and allow school buses and motor coaches to idle for fifteen minutes or longer. This is a massive waste of fuel when diesel prices are high from Trump's war in Iran, and it's also especially harmful to children's health.

H.R. 3194, the LOCOMOTIVE Act, attacks states' ability to meet air quality, public health, and climate goals by blocking them from setting more protective standards for older, dirtier locomotives in use today. This will lock in this harmful pollution for years to come.

There is bipartisan agreement on the importance of ensuring clarity and certainty around emissions control technology for diesel engines, but H.R. 9618, the Diesel Engine Flexibility Act is not the way to go.

Despite trying to work on a bipartisan compromise, the Republican majority chose to introduce a version of the bill that blocks EPA from setting more protective pollution standards for on- and off-road vehicles and engines, and instead locks in decades-old weaker standards. The bill also includes hyper-partisan language attacking states' ability to set more health-protective standards. While I am glad the AINS attempts to narrow the scope of the bill, I still have major concerns with the legislation's approach and will have to oppose it.

And with that, I yield back the balance of my time.