

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

*Markup of 10 Bills, Full Committee*

**September 2, 2026**

Today the full Committee is marking up 10 bills – six nuclear bills out of our Energy Subcommittee and four bills from our Environment Subcommittee.

Nuclear energy plays a vital role in our nation's power grid, providing carbon-free power to the grid around the clock. But we must ensure there is public confidence that nuclear power is safe, and that the cops on the beat are keeping it safe. One of the best ways to ensure that is through transparency. I want to once again state that my support for nuclear energy legislation is contingent upon the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy having sufficient transparency into their safety rules and regulations, so the American public can be sure that our nation's nuclear industry is safe.

That's why I want to compliment Energy Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor on her bill, H.R. 9084, the Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act. It is an important piece of legislation that will help build confidence in the American nuclear industry as a whole. As the nation continues to invest in expanding nuclear energy, it is critical we have these important transparency guardrails in place.

I thank the Chairman and his staff for their willingness to work with us on these nuclear bills. In July, I expressed concerns about two of the bills before us today: H.R. 9612 and H.R. 9613. On the Nuclear Advisory Committee Reform Act, the amendment in the nature of a substitute strikes a provision from the introduced bill that would have only allowed the independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to review and investigate issues if asked by the NRC. Chairman Guthrie's staff worked diligently with us to find a path forward that worked for everyone. If the amendments for those bills are adopted, I will support all six nuclear bills on today's markup.

We are also considering several bills from our Environment Subcommittee.

H.R. 9615, the BRACE Act, will help increase the domestic recycling batteries and ensure the critical minerals recovered from those batteries stay here in the United States. This is a critical first step to get the Environmental Protection Agency moving on a regulatory framework for lithium-ion battery recycling that provides certainty for industry and addresses safety concerns, while maintaining critical protections for the environment and public health. This bill is a compromise so neither side got everything they wanted, but I support this reasonable approach. It is also not the end of the conversation on battery recycling, and I look forward to continuing to work across the aisle to address this growing issue.

I am also pleased we are considering a bipartisan reauthorization of the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. This long-standing program helps replace older, dirty diesel engines across the nation, cleaning up our air and cutting down on fuel costs.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to support the remaining bills out of the Environment Subcommittee. In the wake of Trump's reckless war of choice in Iran, Americans are facing a fuel affordability crisis, with diesel prices over five dollars a gallon and gas prices up thirty percent compared to last year. American families are struggling to afford groceries and school supplies due to high fuel costs having a devastating ripple effect throughout the economy.

Yet today Committee Republicans want to move two bills that would increase fuel use and health-harming and smog-forming pollution, and undermine states' ability to improve air quality and protect public health.

H.R. 9317, the BUSES Act, needlessly attacks state policies to allow school buses and motor coaches to idle for fifteen minutes or longer. This would allow toxic diesel exhaust to poison children going to school and increase fueling costs in the process, putting a strain on school budgets.

And H.R. 3194, the LOCOMOTIVES Act, attacks states' ability to control pollution from older, dirtier locomotives in use today, locking in this harmful pollution for years to come and leaving communities and workers to foot the bill with their health.

I will oppose both of these bills and with that I yield back the balance of my time.