

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery  
of  
Member Scott Peters**

***Markup of 7 Bills, Subcommittee on Environment***

**December 10, 2025**

I want to be clear that I am always in favor of pursuing commonsense strategies to reform our outdated permitting system. If we are going to stay competitive, we need to build out data centers, AI, and advanced manufacturing faster than our current system allows for.

But, when those reforms are changing our substantive, bedrock environmental protection laws—like the Clean Air Act—they need to be especially thoughtful and targeted.

While I appreciate the majority’s efforts to address some of these issues, I think there is more work to do so that we can solve the problem while still protecting the environment and our abundant natural resources.

The Air Permitting Improvements to Protect National Security Act highlights an important issue: How can we keep from penalizing facilities that are critical to our national security?

However, I think we should be more explicit about the types of facilities we are covering. Rather than leaving these important determinations up to shifting executive discretion, we should be providing specific guardrails, so we don’t risk the environmental protections the Clean Air Act was intended to establish.

I also think the FIRE Act is a concept that many of us in the West can understand: states should not be penalized for mitigating the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

However, existing law already provides a process for states to submit data to the EPA that they want excluded from consideration for NAAQS compliance, which includes wildfire mitigation and prescribed burns.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, we should focus on shoring up that already existing process and ensure it is accessible and easily understandable for the states who will be responsible for navigating it.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on these important issues, and I yield back my time.