

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

Markup of 8 Bills, Subcommittee on Energy

November 19, 2025

Americans know all too well that we are in an affordability crisis. Utility bills are skyrocketing across the country and Trump's disastrous tariffs are being passed onto the American consumer. Grocery prices are up, and the cost of buying a home feels out of reach for too many. And this is all exacerbated by the fact that millions of Americans are facing the reality that their health care premiums are about to surge at an alarming rate because President Trump and Congressional Republicans refuse to extend the premium tax credits that make health care more affordable for millions of Americans.

To put it simply, Americans across the country are experiencing sticker shock in nearly every facet of their lives. But instead of offering solutions to help lower costs for American families, Republicans are largely putting forward a slate of bills that will only increase monthly energy bills and worsen the Republican affordability crisis.

Most of the bills we are marking up today gut efficiency programs and make buildings use more energy, which will not only hurt Americans' wallets, but also threaten our ability to compete with China in the artificial intelligence race.

At a time when we are experiencing an increase in electricity demand driven by AI data center expansion, we need to free up more space on our electric grid. So, if my Republican colleagues are serious about competing with China and lowering costs for Americans, energy efficiency measures that reduce energy consumption from households and businesses should be a no brainer.

Yet Republicans remain wedded to their corporate polluter friends, propping up expensive fossil fuels at the expense of hardworking Americans.

Republicans have repeatedly doubled down on this principle this Congress. Look no further than their Big Ugly Bill, which gutted critical incentives to bring cheap clean energy to the grid and is expected to raise electricity prices by a staggering 61 percent over the next decade.

This is all more alarming when you consider the fact that electricity prices are already up 11 percent across the country – climbing twice as fast as inflation. This jump is even bigger in some parts of the country.

I know my constituents back home in New Jersey are feeling the pressure of rising energy costs. Thanks to PJM's inability to add new resources to the grid and the devastating project financing cuts from the Trump Administration, New Jersey families are really hurting.

And the Republican-led bills we are considering today will only cause more pain. The bills add cumbersome and duplicative requirements to the Department of Energy rulemaking process, severely hampering DOE's ability to issue energy efficiency standards that save Americans money. They repeal critical energy efficiency standards for manufactured housing under the so-called Affordable HOMES Act, which will saddle residents of manufactured homes with even higher energy bills. They attack federal building energy efficiency, waste taxpayer dollars, and undermine states' rights.

The bills also rip away popular appliance rebates that help with the upfront costs of energy-saving products, terminate assistance for building code adoption, and revoke energy efficiency workforce training grants.

Energy efficiency is an important tool in our toolbox to lower costs for Americans and help us meet the growing demand for power. It is nonsensical that this once bipartisan solution is now being attacked with partisan bills that will only raise electricity costs and exacerbate grid reliability issues.

Now there are two bipartisan bills that I do support, including Congressman Tonko's Weatherization Enhancement and Readiness Act. This bipartisan bill actually addresses rising costs for families by reauthorizing the Weatherization Assistance Program and increasing the average cost per household so that more families can receive assistance that better matches their needs. I look forward to continuing the conversation with Chairs Latta and Guthrie on a path to move this vital bill forward.

So while I am pleased to see Representative Tonko's bill on today's markup, as I already stated, several of the other bills raise major concerns.

It's abundantly clear that the Trump Administration and Republicans have their priorities out of whack. We just came out of a government shutdown where President Trump was more focused on demolishing the historic East Wing of the White House for his new ballroom than paying SNAP benefits to families struggling to afford food.

However, Democrats remain laser focused on lowering costs for Americans despite Trump's empty campaign trail promises.

Thank you, and I yield back.