

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Paul D. Tonko

Markup of 8 Bills, Subcommittee on Energy

November 19, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to start by thanking you and Chair Guthrie for including H.R. 1355, the Weatherization Enhancement and Readiness Act, as part of today's markup.

I know we still have work to do, but I am serious about trying to reach an agreement. There is no doubt that energy affordability is a real and growing challenge for many Americans, and I believe Congress should be examining ways to help lower costs.

While we're going to have disagreements about the causes, as well as some of the solutions, I hope we can find common ground on the role for proven programs, like DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program. Energy efficiency can be a powerful tool to improve energy affordability for Americans. Many Democrats criticized the President Trump's budget reconciliation bill for repealing key energy tax credits, which I believe was a terrible policy decision for many reasons, but the cost increases to energy bills is certainly near the top of that list.

Multiple independent analyses showed these changes are going to raise average annual household energy bills by about \$110 in the near term. By comparison, households receiving weatherization services on average save \$372 each year on their energy bills. That is a lot of impact, especially for low-income families who spend a much higher portion of their income on utilities.

Energy efficiency lowers bills. It reduces peak demand at a time when electricity load growth is straining our grid and risking major cost increases to consumers. We need to encourage more efficiency, not less.

So, while I am grateful the Committee is interested in working on the Weatherization Assistance Program, I am opposed to legislation that would undermine DOE's efficiency standards program. If not for today's standards, the average U.S. household would be paying \$576 per year more on utility bills. And there is still room for improvements. Potential standards changes in the years ahead could save households another \$150 per year.

I hope we can prioritize legislation that will actually promote cost-effective energy efficiency to lower people's utility bills.

Thank you. I yield back.