

Remarks for Member Day
at the
Select Committee on Climate Crisis
November 14, 2019

We now well understand climate change, we know we have many of the tools at our disposal to deal with climate change, and we know the target is net zero by mid century. We cannot get to where we need to be without dramatic and substantive *policy* change. We need to tackle that now.

Some argue that what we need is the Green New Deal.

While I agree with just about every policy in the Green New Deal that relates to climate change, it also calls for major, expensive, societal overhauls such as a federal jobs guarantee and free college for every American. We can debate those policies separately without burdening the already daunting task of climate action with these extra requirements.

Greta Thunberg emphasized when she came to Capitol Hill that we climate warriors need to keep our eyes on the ball. She said:

Yes, of course a sustainable transformed world will include lots of new benefits. But you have to understand. This is not primarily an opportunity to create new green jobs, new businesses or green

economic growth. This is above all an emergency, and not just any emergency. This is the biggest crisis humanity has ever faced.

It's not responsible to pretend that a one-party, nonbinding resolution that itself enacts not a single legislative change or a one party bill that can't be enacted is the answer.

Great challenges like sending a man to the moon, or winning a world war against tyranny, or fighting climate change to save the planet are won with national unity and consensus. We need to work together if we want our children and our grandchildren to have a habitable planet. There is no time to waste.

We have some openings in the Congress to get real, bipartisan, science-based legislation passed. Let's seize them.

At the Energy and Commerce Committee this April, EPA Administrator Wheeler testified that climate change is real and that it is driven by human activity, including use of fossil fuels.

Florida Republicans Francis Rooney, Brian Mast and Matt Gaetz are all cosponsors of legitimate climate legislation. Floridians have noticed the streets of Miami flooded on sunny days, and they know why that is.

Perhaps most noteworthy for bringing about a change of opinion toward climate among Republicans is the moral advocacy of religious leaders. Pope Francis issued an encyclical declaring climate change is "both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."

The Evangelical Environmental Network is prioritizing climate change action, because they believe we are called upon to take care of God's creation. These trends present new opportunities for not just the usual suspects, but for actual change.

I assembled a Climate Playbook, which lays out over 90 bills authored by Democrats and Republicans in recent years, most of which already have bipartisan support. Many have already passed through their committees of jurisdiction and some have passed the full House. It's a resource we update as ideas are written into legislation, and as bills advance. It's hosted on my web site and available to everyone.

One of these bills is the (USE IT) Act, which I coauthored with Dave McKinley. It's bipartisan and bicameral and supports the development and construction of vital carbon capture and removal technologies as called for by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It also invests in technologies to transform captured carbon dioxide into commercial products.

Florida Republican Matt Gaetz and I introduced the bipartisan Super Pollutants Act, which aims to regulate black carbon, hydrofluorocarbons, and methane—some of the most potent greenhouse gases – which are significantly more harmful than carbon dioxide. Among other things, the bill would codify the new source methane regulations the Trump Administration is trying to kill, and

would incentivize, then mandate, control of methane from existing sources.

New York Republican Elise Stefanik and I introduced the Renewable Electricity Tax Credit Equalization Act, which extends tax credits for investments in qualified renewable biomass, geothermal, solid waste and hydropower, so that we can develop new renewable baseload power that could replace fossil fuels.

The DISASTER Act, which I introduced with Rep. Mark Meadows, mandates the OMB to give us an accurate picture of federal costs for disaster response, so we can understand the costs and we can emphasize the need to act on climate.

Related to our clean energy future, Rep. Elaine Luria and Rob Wittman have introduced the Nuclear Energy Leadership Act, which has the DOE demonstrate advanced nuclear plants, develop the fuel needed for this technology, and write a 10-year strategic plan for advanced nuclear reactor development.

Finally, there are two bipartisan efforts to advance a carbon fee: the MARKET CHOICE Act and Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. We generally accept that a price on carbon is an indispensable component of an effective climate action plan, incentivizing every business, consumer and family to reduce their own carbon footprint.

Great challenges like sending a man to the moon, or winning a world war against tyranny, or fighting climate change to save the planet are won with national unity and consensus. Great challenges don't wait for or depend on the next election results. We need to work together now, across party lines, if we want our children and our grandchildren to have a habitable planet.

So, what's the right policy approach? I'm for the ones that might actually become law, and I hope the Committee agrees, there is no time to waste.