

Opening Statement of Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr.
Energy and Commerce Full Committee Markup

July 17, 2013

Thank you Chairman Upton. I would first like to discuss the energy bills before the committee today. Congress should be promoting a domestic energy plan that creates good jobs here in America and reduces our dependence on importing energy from foreign nations. Unfortunately, we are focusing on the same tired policy that promotes polluting fossil fuels and ignores clean, renewable energy. We are also once again facing legislation that tries to undercut the efforts of EPA to protect human health and the environment.

H.R. 1900, the “Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act”, is a dangerous bill that would unnecessarily deem permits for interstate natural gas pipelines approved if they aren’t finalized within arbitrary timelines set up in the bill. Just last week in North

Jersey, a section of road collapsed while a contractor was drilling beneath it as part of an expansion of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline. This just shows that, even under current law, potential safety hazards exist. By uprooting this process as the bill before us today does, we risk more dangerous accidents like this occurring in our country.

The “Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013” sets up an unnecessary and complex review process for EPA rules with costs that exceed \$1 billion. This review process will handcuff the agency and grind to a halt important rules that protect the environment and human health. The bill only considers the costs of these rules without looking at the benefits that come from important EPA rules. I oppose this legislation and ask my colleagues to oppose it as well.

Turning to H.R. 2094, the “School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act” and H.R. 698, the “HIV Organ Policy Equity

Act,” I would have liked to see these bills go through the Health Subcommittee and follow regular order, but I also understand the importance of these public health bills and their bipartisan nature.

The HIV Organ Policy Equity Act, or the HOPE Act, would lift the federal ban on research into organ donations from HIV-positive donors to HIV-positive recipients, potentially opening the door for the safe transplantation of these organs. If the research demonstrates that transplants from HIV-positive donors to HIV-positive recipients can be safely and successfully completed, then the Secretary of Health and Human Services will have the authority to set up procedures to begin such transplantations, potentially saving hundreds of lives each year. The ban on the donation of organs from HIV-positive donors and on related research is medically outdated, and the HOPE Act has broad support from the medical community. This is a progressive, common sense approach to

today's medical realities and I commend Rep. Capps for her leadership on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 698.

I also support H.R. 2094, the "School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act." This bill encourages states to require schools to have epinephrine available, in addition to allowing children to bring their own medications to school. Given that millions of American children have food allergies and many children have first-time reactions to previously unknown allergies while at school, it is commonsense that schools should be equipped to handle emergency situations by maintaining a supply of epinephrine. I want to commend the staff – especially Ruth Katz on the Democratic side - for their hard work on finalizing this bill. I urge members to support H.R. 2094.

Lastly, Chairman Upton, I support two other pieces of legislation being marked up today. H.R. 83, introduced by Rep.

Christiansen, will help the insular areas of our country develop energy action plans to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels. H.R. 2052, the “Global Investment in American Jobs Act”, will study ways our country can attract foreign investments here in the U.S. These are important pieces of legislation and I urge my colleagues to support them.

Thank you.