

*Rep. Phil Gingrey (GA-11)*  
*Opening Statement for the Record*  
*Energy and Commerce Committee*  
*May 7, 2014*

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for calling today's mark-up on three important pieces of legislation from both the Energy and Power and Communications and Technology Subcommittees. These bills address important aspects of energy production and telecommunications policies that are critical to boosting those industries, thereby boosting our economy.

First, H.R. 3301 – the North American Energy Infrastructure Act – will reform obsolete regulations and needless bureaucracy that prevents us from being able to fully access the vast reserves of energy supplies that our continent has. This will replace the extremely flawed presidential permitting process at the State Department that has resulted in delay after delay for the Keystone XL pipeline simply because an energy resource will cross a border.

Mr. Chairman, by modernizing our approval process, we can effectively work towards greater energy independence, job creation, and regulatory relief. This legislation will help us avoid a future delay like the one Keystone XL has presented, and it won't apply simply to conventional forms of energy. H.R. 3301 will apply to all types of energy that cross borders.

As a former member of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, I am glad that we have moved forward to consider H.R. 4572 – the STELA Reauthorization Act. I commend Chairman Walden for working with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to reach consensus so that 1.5 million people that live in rural areas will have access to the satellite television services upon which they are dependent. Without action, STELA will expire at the end of the calendar year, and this legislation represents an important step in getting this legislation to the President's desk in a timely fashion.

Lastly, the Committee will be considering H.R. 4342 – the DOTCOM Act of 2014. Since 1998, ICANN has been the international non-profit organization that has administered the Internet, and it has been accountable to the federal government in the process. Unfortunately, the Obama Administration recently toyed with the idea that the U.S. will formally relinquish our important stake in global Internet governance to the international community in 2015.

Mr. Chairman, since the inception of the Internet as we know it, the United States has held ICANN accountable to ensure that we have had the ability to exercise our free speech and press rights. Although the Obama Administration has since indicated it will extend the ICANN agreement through 2019, relinquishing control over ICANN only shows the global community that we are willing to stand aside and allow the ongoing censorship that occurs in places like Russia, North Korea, China, and Turkey to continue and potentially weaken our ability to defend free speech.

H.R. 4342 will ensure that any proposal regarding ICANN considered by NTIA must be evaluated by the non-partisan GAO. This will ensure our ability to keep the Internet open and free.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support all three bills, and I yield back the balance of my time.