

Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Markup on H.R. 4775 and H.R. 4979  
Rep. Bill Flores Statement for the Record  
20160517

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's markup on H.R. 4775 and H.R. 4979.

I am pleased to be a cosponsor and supporter of Mr. Latta's and Mr. McNerney's bill, H.R. 4979. This critical bill will help maintain our country's leadership in the field of nuclear energy.

I would also like to reiterate the intent of H.R. 4775, a bipartisan bill, as it progresses through our committee.

1. It brings relief to states and counties that currently face the burden of implementing two different standards for ozone simultaneously.
2. It includes commonsense process reforms for a more efficient implementation and review of ozone standards in the future, while still protecting public health.

Since 1980, our economy has more than tripled in growth while average ozone levels have gone down by 33 percent. EPA predicts ozone levels will continue to improve particularly as the 75 parts per billion standard is implemented, and "the vast majority of U.S. counties will meet the [70 parts per billion standard] by 2025 just with the rules and programs now in place or underway."

H.R. 4775 includes a key harmonization provision from bipartisan legislation I introduced last November, H.R. 4000. This provision ensures these hundreds of counties that EPA projects are already on track to meet the 70 parts per billion standard can come into compliance without being subjected to additional regulatory burdens, paperwork requirements, and restrictions. Additional paperwork and unnecessary red tape will not do anything to protect public health.

The bill also gives EPA needed additional time to review ozone standards. Since 1971, the EPA has taken an average of 10 and a half years to revise the standard. H.R. 4775 includes my provision from H.R. 4000 that matches the average time of actual EPA reviews.

Allowing states the ability to harmonize the two sets of ozone standards will allow for a more efficient implementation process. Protecting both public health and the economy are goals that I believe we all share, and the two are not mutually exclusive.

I urge my colleagues to support these two sound bipartisan bills, and yield back the balance of my time.