

House Committee on Energy & Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy  
Members Day Testimony  
July 25, 2019  
Congresswoman Deb Haaland of New Mexico

Chairman Rush, Ranking Member Upton, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My district is blessed with over 300 days of sunshine each year and abundant wind resources. That is why I am working with several of my colleagues on legislation to set a nationwide goal of a 100 percent clean energy economy by 2050. This will protect public health and our environment; create millions of well-paying green jobs; and mitigate the impacts of climate change for **all** communities and **all**-generations, especially those disproportionately impacted by its effects. I urge the committee to support this effort broadly and through intermediate steps that will enable the transition to clean energy.

The transition to clean energy will require a modernized, smart electric grid to increase integration of renewable energy and support adoption of zero-emissions vehicles. I urge you to encourage deployment of “smart” meters and other technologies, which make our electric grid more responsive and capable of supporting distributed energy resources. I recommend improving the performance, affordability, and deployment of energy storage systems to enhance grid flexibility and reliability; and expanding advanced transmission technologies to get renewable power to demand centers more efficiently.

Improving energy efficiency and transitioning from fossil fuels to electricity are keys to a clean energy future. I urge you to increase energy efficiency in new and existing public and private housing and provide incentives to implement energy efficiency retrofits in municipal buildings, hospitals, and schools. I also recommend that you help homeowners shift from gas-powered appliances to electric; expand consumer choices for power consumption and production; and support the development and integration of new technologies such as advanced insulation, windows, appliances, HVAC systems, and lighting. It is essential to make these measures affordable for low-income families by providing grants to utilities to make energy efficient upgrades accessible to low-income communities while also providing direct assistance to individual families and tribes.

The federal government can also reduce our impact on the climate and environment by providing grants to communities to build recycling and composting facilities and promote waste prevention. Composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions from landfills and incinerators, returns carbon to the ground, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers for crops. These investments can help us move toward a national goal of zero waste.

As co-chair of the Native American Caucus, I am working to address the federal neglect and underinvestment in Indian Country. One of the most pressing needs is broadband service in tribal and other rural areas.

The FCC reports that 92 percent of Americans are able to access high-speed internet compared to just 65 percent of Indian Country, more comparable to a developing country than the world's most prosperous nation. The federal government is creating new digital reservations for Native Americans, leaving Indian Country to fall further behind in the twenty-first century. As you work on broadband policy, I urge the committee to pay particular attention to the needs and challenges in Indian Country and rural America.

American Indian and Alaska Native communities also face a maternal mortality crisis. According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights "Broken Promises" report, Native American women are 4.5 times more likely than non-Hispanic white women to die while pregnant or within 42 days post-partum. To address this crisis, I joined with Congresswomen Gwen Moore and Debbie Dingell to introduce the Mamas First Act. I urge the committee to support this bill that would allow Medicaid reimbursements for doulas and midwives to combat maternal mortality among the nearly 2 million on Medicaid giving birth each year.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.