

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.
Hearing on “Member Day”

July 13, 2021

Today, we are going to hear from our colleagues about the issues of importance to them within our Committee’s jurisdiction. This Member Day hearing is an opportunity for any member of the House to testify before us for up to five minutes on issues important the them, their districts, and the nation.

The Energy and Commerce Committee has been working hard to crush the COVID-19 pandemic, provide relief to struggling families, protect consumers, revitalize our economy, combat climate change, and conduct robust oversight.

We’ve made significant improvements in crushing the virus by passing the American Rescue Plan earlier this year. This legislation gave the Biden Administration the tools and resources it needed to combat this terrible virus. The American Rescue Plan supported a national effort to ramp up distribution and administration of lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines. We also held three oversight hearings on how states, vaccine manufacturers, and the Biden Administration are working to increase vaccines and ensure they are equitably distributed, as well as another important oversight hearing on vaccine hesitancy.

We have also provided critical relief to struggling families – including expanding access to affordable health care coverage during the pandemic. The American Rescue Plan was the largest expansion of health care coverage in more than a decade. It helped families with their utility bills so that they could keep the lights on, the heat working and the water running. And it also expanded internet connectivity to help students and teachers without home internet access so that we could close the homework gap.

We are also protecting consumers by passing bipartisan legislation to help the Federal Trade Commission protect seniors and other targeted groups against predatory fraud and scams. And we advanced out of Committee legislation that would restore the FTC’s longstanding authorities to get Americans their money back after they have been scammed.

We are revitalizing our economy by modernizing our crumbling infrastructure to create millions of good-paying jobs, to keep us competitive on the global stage, and to ensure no community is left behind. Last month, we passed out of Committee and then the House, legislation that will ensure all Americans have access to safe and affordable drinking water. The Committee has also held a hearing on our comprehensive infrastructure bill – the LIFT America Act, which aligns closely with President Biden’s American Jobs Plan.

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And we are combating climate change by restoring commonsense methane pollution standards that were eliminated by the Trump Environmental Protection Agency. We have also held seven legislative hearings on the CLEAN Future Act – this Committee’s legislation to aggressively tackle the climate crisis this decade and to achieve net zero greenhouse gas pollution by no later than 2050.

The Energy and Commerce Committee has a proud tradition of working in strong bipartisan fashion to produce positive results for the American people. We also value the contributions of our colleagues who are not members of the Committee and work hard to listen to their ideas and incorporate them into our Committee’s overall work. That’s why this hearing today is so important. We look forward to continuing to listen to the ideas of all members as we work on legislative proposals to continue to crush the pandemic, provide relief to struggling families, protect consumers, revitalize our economy, and combat climate change.