

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of 6, Full Committee

July 27, 2023

Today is our last markup before we depart for the August recess. Committee Democrats have been laser focused on efforts to grow our economy and lower costs for the American people. Three laws passed during the last Congress – the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act – are beginning to make a real difference. We continue to work to build upon these successes. And we continue to fight back efforts by Committee Republicans to undermine these laws, which would only weaken our economy and raise prices on Americans. Those Republican efforts will, unfortunately, continue at this markup.

Today we are considering six bills. I am pleased that we will begin with three bipartisan bills that advanced out of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

H.R. 4510, the NTIA Reauthorization Act, is bipartisan legislation from Subcommittee Chairman Latta and Ranking Member Matsui. It reauthorizes the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and elevates its leadership in the Department of Commerce by making the Administrator position an Under Secretary. This change and the other provisions will help to better reflect the agency’s current mission and responsibilities. It also now incorporates bills led by Representatives Kuster, Eshoo, and Walberg, among others.

H.R. 3369 directs NTIA to assess the degree to which AI systems are accountable to consumers and the measures needed to reduce the risks AI poses. Congress must consider these important issues as this new but rapidly growing technology becomes more mainstream.

H.R. 3385 will require NTIA to assess the value of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber cable connecting the United States, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, to increase the security of our networks and protect them from untrusted actors.

Unfortunately, that’s where the good ideas end. Today Republicans are also pushing through three highly partisan, extreme, anti-EV bills, despite the fact tens of millions of Americans are right now struggling with extreme heat made worse by climate change. In fact, earlier this month, more than 100 million Americans were under excessive heat warnings and heat advisories. The climate crisis is here, and while Democrats are fighting it with investments to reduce pollution and grow our economy, Republicans are fighting to take away those investments and reverse our progress.

July 27, 2023

Page 2

The transportation sector is a significant contributor of climate pollution, but thankfully, decades of ambitious clean vehicle standards have driven historic innovation, delivering cleaner air and better technologies, and positioning the United States as the global leader in cleaner transportation.

It has become clear that the Republican agenda is focused entirely on propping up Big Oil Corporations. The bills on today's agenda are no different. They abandon homegrown American innovation and reverse hard-won climate progress – progress that Americans both need and deserve as we continue to face the record-breaking consequences of climate change.

H.R. 1435 would turn back over 50 years of recognizing California's authority to set more protective vehicle emission standards. It infringes on the rights of states, like my home state of New Jersey, to voluntarily adopt those standards to protect people from dangerous air pollution.

H.R. 4468 would outright bar EPA from finalizing its light- and medium-duty vehicle emission standards for Model Year 2027. This bill also jeopardizes EPA's ability to finalize new vehicle emission standards, effectively preventing the agency from fulfilling its obligation to protect Americans from motor vehicle pollution.

Finally, H.R. 4469 would hamper biofuel opportunities across the country.

All three of these bills prove that Republicans are willing to sacrifice Americans' rights to clean air and a safe climate. They prove Republicans are willing to abandon American innovation and global leadership in order to support big corporations. Reversing our progress on clean transportation and doubling down on our fossil fuel dependence would make the United States weaker, not stronger.

We already have the technology and the ingenuity to be the global leader in clean transportation. These efforts will lower energy costs, protect public health, fight the climate crisis, and strengthen our economy. But these three Republican bills would abandon our position in favor of maintaining the status quo of putting polluters over people. And that's why I'll oppose all three bills. And with that I yield back.