

Chairman Brett Guthrie
Opening Statement
Full Committee Markup of Health, Energy, and Environment Legislation
July 20, 2026, 5:00PM ET

Good afternoon and thank you all for attending today's start to the Full Committee Markup of 29 bills, focused on our work to strengthen our grid, protect American families from higher costs, keep our communities safe from illicit drugs, and support patients across the country.

Our Committee has been focused this Congress on winning the race to AI dominance while securing our grid, but to help ensure that our communities are not paying for the associated electricity costs of new data centers, I'm glad that we could find bipartisan support for the Ratepayer Protection Act.

The bill encourages states to consider establishing large load tariffs, so that the data centers are paying for necessary grid upgrades and electricity, and consumers don't shoulder the cost.

Further, we'll consider legislation to modernize our grid infrastructure to ensure our communities have access to the power they need, 365 days a year, into the foreseeable future.

We know it takes energy to move commerce, so today we also will consider a reauthorization of PHMSA's pipeline safety

program to ensures the continued delivery of the energy American families depend on.

We are also considering two bipartisan bills to strengthen our domestic critical mineral supply chains and break our dependence on foreign adversaries like China.

The United States is 100 percent import reliant for 13 critical minerals, which is a vulnerability China has already shown it is willing to exploit. The two bills direct the EPA to coordinate federal efforts to recover critical minerals from materials that have been discarded, and support technologies to recover critical minerals from contaminated materials.

Demonstrating the breadth of the Committee's jurisdiction, we'll also vote on bills in this markup that further our ongoing commitment to safeguarding American communities from the threat of dangerous substances and illicit pill presses.

We are considering bills to appropriately schedule xylazine, while maintaining access for legitimate use, and enact class-wide scheduling of nitazenes to protect against emerging threats.

We will also consider Tyler's Law, named after Tyler Shamash, who was killed by fentanyl poisoning after being admitted to a hospital that did not test for fentanyl. Thank you to

Tyler's mom, Juli, for being with us today. The legislation will help us study the utilization of fentanyl testing in hospitals and help save lives.

A handful of bills will help crack down on the production of counterfeit substances and support the DEA in conducting oversight of a closed system of distribution for pill presses and their components.

Finally, we will consider the bipartisan Lower Costs, More Transparency Act, which seeks to address a wide array of challenges that exist with price transparency in our American health care system. The legislation would require hospitals and insurance companies to publicly and clearly disclose actual benefits and procedure prices.

As you can tell by the length of my opening statement today, we have a significant amount of work to do this week, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support these bills as we work towards a safer, more affordable, and healthier America.

I now yield five minutes to my friend and collaborator, the gentleman from New Jersey, Ranking Member Pallone.