

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Hearing on “The Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013”
April 12, 2013**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Common sense dictates that we should fully understand the cost of new regulations to jobs and the economy before they are implemented – especially the highest-cost regulations as the nation continues to endure high energy prices and unemployment. Maybe the EPA does not present a full economic analysis now because they know the public would not like what it hears. But transparency in regulatory costs is a reasonable expectation, and the Energy Consumers Relief Act will make sure the EPA provides it.

Having worked in President Reagan’s Office of Management and Budget, I have long been interested in the proper oversight of federal regulations. And I cannot think of a set of regulations more in need of additional oversight than EPA’s energy-related rules. I commend Rep. Bill Cassidy for his Energy Consumers Relief Act, which is a commonsense solution that bolsters EPA transparency and puts American consumers first.

For an agency that was never granted any energy policy setting authority, EPA nonetheless has taken charge of directing the nation’s energy agenda. They are seeking to regulate where they have been unable to legislate, evidenced by EPA’s avalanche of coal regulations seeking to effectively regulate out of existence the use of an abundant American resource without any regard for electricity prices, reliability, or jobs.

At a time when most Americans haven’t seen gasoline under \$3.00 a gallon in years, we now have a proposed Tier 3 gasoline rule that would put further upward pressure on prices at the pump, creating a disproportionate hardship for the country’s most vulnerable. But gas prices aren’t alone in being stubbornly high. With just 88,000 jobs created last month, it looks like 2013 is going to be yet another year with unemployment staying well above 7 percent.

The Energy Consumers Relief Act gives the Department of Energy the lead role in conducting a multi-agency analysis of EPA energy-related rules estimated to cost at least one billion dollars. No longer will the impacts of these measures on energy prices, jobs, or manufacturing competitiveness be a secondary consideration that is hidden from view.

It is now more important than ever to weigh the consequences of EPA’s actions; the U.S. is on a pathway to unprecedented energy self-sufficiency—a pathway that has seen technology and innovation in the energy sector drive new energy resource abundance, diversity and affordability, all for the benefit of consumers. Without the additional checks and balances this bill provides, this pathway will remain threatened by an agency that fails to provide an adequate and complete picture of the sweeping cumulative impacts of its own regulations.

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