

Opening Statement for Chairman Scalise
Energy & Power Subcommittee: **Promoting New Manufacturing Act**

I want to thank Chairman Whitfield for having this markup on this important piece of legislation. As we talk about economic growth and job creation in the American economy, we're really talking about ways to get this country back to work. Some Americans have been able to find jobs but others are still looking. And the reason that they are still looking is because there are barriers that have kept businesses from investing. One roadblock in particular that we have seen in the past few years is the amount of time it takes for new or expanded manufacturing facilities to get the required permits under the Clean Air Act before they can proceed to construction. These are known as preconstruction permits. The Promoting New Manufacturing Act is a bill that will introduce a level of accountability and certainty to the permitting process that will help put more than \$100 billion investment dollars into the economy.

The accountability lies in requiring EPA to publish on its website the total number of preconstruction permits issued in a fiscal year. EPA also has to publish the percentage of preconstruction permits issued within one year after the date of filing of a completed application. These common-sense solutions will give

those willing to invest easily accessible information that is necessary to make business decisions.

The discussion draft also requires EPA, when new or altered air quality standards are issued, to propose guidelines on how to comply with the new standard. There is no loophole or amnesty. If there is no guidance, the current standard – whatever it is – still applies. This is not an attempt to get around environmental rulemaking or – as the other side would argue – to “gut” the Clean Air Act. This is permitting reform, plain and simple. It is our belief that all of the changes that are outlined in this bill can be achieved with information that is already in EPA’s possession. There should not be the need for the agency to go out and gather reams of additional information.

Finally, we ask EPA to identify goals to expedite the process for issuing preconstruction permits. This is not too much to ask. As I said, there are billions of dollars that are ready to be invested and there are thousands more jobs that will follow from that investment. I think the question we have to ask ourselves is this: are we going to make it easier or harder for those investments to be made and those jobs to be created? I can assure you that I want to make it easier for those jobs to be created. Because more jobs here at home – good, well-paying jobs – is good news for all of us.

So I want to thank Chairman Whitfield once again for having this markup and I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue. I thank the Chairman and I yield back.