

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy
Markup of H.R. 1733, H.R. 2872, and H.R. 2880
October 26, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

This morning we meet to markup three bills: H.R. 1733, H.R. 2872, and H.R. 2880.

The first piece of legislation, H.R. 1733, is a bipartisan bill introduced by Mrs. Brooks and Mr. Kennedy that simply requires the Secretary of Energy to update a report on the energy and environmental benefits of re-refining used lubricating oil. Recycling used lubricating oil is good for the environment, reduces energy consumption, and produces high quality products for consumers. I want to thank Mrs. Brooks and Mr. Kennedy for working in a bipartisan fashion on this important bill.

We are also marking up two bills to promote new hydropower development at existing non-powered dams and closed-loop pumped storage projects. As we've heard in testimony before the Energy Subcommittee, these projects are a win-win; minimal environmental impact, new investments, jobs, and added benefits to the grid.

H.R. 2872, Promoting Hydropower Development at Existing Nonpowered Dams Act, was introduced by Mr. Bucshon to promote new hydropower development at existing, non-powered dams by providing the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) with the discretion to grant exemptions from license requirements for certain qualifying facilities. As we've heard in testimony before this committee, the greatest potential for new hydropower projects are at existing dams; however, there is a lot of red-tape and the regulatory agencies could do a better job coordinating with one-another.

H.R. 2880, Promoting Closed-Loop Pumped Storage Hydropower Act, was introduced by Mr. Griffith to promote closed-loop pumped storage hydropower development by limiting FERC's authority to impose only licensing conditions that are necessary to protect public safety; or are reasonable, economically feasible, and essential to protect fish and wildlife resources. Closed-looped pumped storage is not a new technology, but with the changing energy landscape, new opportunities

could become available – such as re-purposing abandoned coal mines for hydro projects.

Hydropower is the nation's number one renewable, producing electricity with negligible emissions. Today, it's responsible for providing 7% of the nation's total energy needs. With continued technological advancements and smarter regulations, hydropower generation could expand by an additional 50% by 2025. These two bills represent good faith efforts to increase hydropower in the United States.

I appreciate the cooperation of our democratic colleagues throughout this process. I understand there are still some concerns with the hydropower bills, and we're committed to working to address them so that we can move these bills out of Committee and to the House floor as soon as possible.