

**Opening Statement of Congressman Robert E. Latta**  
**Subcommittee on Energy**  
**“Reviving our Economy: COVID-19’s Impact on the Energy Sector”**  
**June 16, 2020**

*As Prepared for Delivery*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing on how the energy sector has been impacted by the coronavirus health crisis. I’d also like to thank our witnesses for agreeing to participate today, given the circumstances.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on our nation’s entire economy – from energy, to construction, to manufacturing, to retail, to name a few. We saw businesses go dark, energy demand decline, and everyday interactions transition to digital and remote platforms.

Furthermore, this health crisis has also exposed our supply chain vulnerabilities. Whether it’s medical supplies or energy products and materials, we’ve had to learn the hard way that more attention needs to be focused on maintaining a strong supply chain and building up domestic industries. This is good for national security and good for American jobs.

I’ve also seen firsthand how Americans innovate to adapt to the new challenges raised by the outbreak. For example, during a visit to the campus of Bowling Green State University just a few weeks ago, I saw how unmanned delivery services –robots—are already being used to deliver food and beverages in the community. It is this kind of remarkable innovation that will help our country regain its footing in the global economy.

Finally, we must acknowledge the devastating loss of life this health crisis has inflicted on our country and around the world. Tens of thousands of Americans in each of our communities have lost their lives to the virus, and many tens of thousands of others have experienced economic hardship due to the shutdowns, including job losses in the energy sector. We need to be doing all we can to help our neighbors get back on their feet and get the economy moving again.

Again, thanks to our witnesses for being here today and I look forward to your testimony.

And now I yield the remainder of my time to my friend from the Washington, Rep. McMorris-Rodgers.