

Chair Jeff Duncan
Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid
Security
Markup of Six Bills
March 6, 2024
As prepared for delivery

Thank you all for being here today and welcome to the Energy, Climate, and Grid Security subcommittee markup.

We will be marking up six bills today to continue our work in delivering affordable and reliable energy to Americans.

The first bill we will be taking up is my discussion draft, “The Pipeline Safety, Modernization, and Accountability Act of 2024.”

We will then take up a series of bills to stop the Biden Administration’s war on America’s home appliances.

With the Pipeline Safety, Modernization, and Accountability Act of 2024, the Energy and Commerce Committee is getting back to its long history of reauthorizing the relative agencies and programs under this Committee’s jurisdiction.

Our bill would reauthorize the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration’s (PHMSA, *pronounced FIM-ZA*) pipeline safety program for five years and update policies to construct and operate pipelines.

The Energy and Commerce Committee plays a critical role in reauthorizing PHMSA and ensuring the agency complies with its statutory mandates and maintains a strong focus on public safety.

In January of this year, we held a legislative hearing where we heard from PHMSA Deputy Administrator, Tristan Brown. He discussed PHMSA’s current operations and the agency’s implementation of the *Protecting Our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety (PIPES) Act of 2020*.

We also heard from a stakeholder panel who gave us their perspectives on PHMSA’s implementation of the PIPES Act and what needs to be done to ensure PHMSA is operating efficiently and effectively.

Based upon this feedback, we updated our discussion draft to include many provisions from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s bill, which was reported out of their committee by voice vote in December of last year.

Some of these provisions include: technical changes to eliminate natural gas leaks; opportunities for formal hearings; clarifications on maximum allowable operating pressure; excavation damage prevention; class location rulemaking requirement; and inspection of in-service breakout tanks.

T&I's bill is an important approach to reauthorizing PHMSA. Because the Energy and Commerce Committee has broader jurisdiction over federal agencies, our draft legislation reflects a comprehensive approach to reauthorize PHMSA safety programs and update policies for pipeline permitting.

It is no secret the United States is in desperate need of expanded pipeline energy infrastructure.

Through hearings on this committee, we have heard warnings from energy reliability experts, Grid Operators, and FERC Commissioners that the lack of pipeline capacity in this country is contributing to reliability issues.

Unfortunately, this Administration has not taken these warnings seriously and continued efforts to block oil and gas development in the United States.

Pipelines all over the country have been delayed and ultimately cancelled as result of permitting challenges and lawsuits funded and backed by radical environmental groups.

My draft legislation addresses this by strengthening penalties for damaging pipelines and incorporating permitting reform centered on safety, modernization, and expansion.

It improves pipelines safety by updating PHMSA programs to reflect new technologies....

It puts an end to "gas bans" by protecting the American people's right to choose the energy source that fits their needs.

Pipelines are essential to the energy security of the United States and I would like to see all of my colleagues join me in support of this effort.

Another avenue by which this Administration has waged war on oil and gas is through its aggressive and illegal energy efficiency mandates.

This Administration is using efficiency and appliance standards to pursue climate objectives over consumer choice. These standards will increase the cost of appliances and limit the availability of consumer options.

Last year, the Biden Administration began its assault on home appliances by trying to ban gas stoves. Now they are trying to impose new mandates on virtually every appliance in your home.

The bills we are reviewing today address washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators and freezers, and room air conditioners.

These bills are simple - they prohibit the Secretary of Energy from imposing new efficiency mandates or enforcing existing standards for these particular appliances unless the Standards are:

- 1) Cost effective and technologically feasible;
- 2) Save the consumers money; and
- 3) Save a significant amount of energy.

I hope that all the members on this Subcommittee – Republican and Democrat – would support energy efficiency standards as long as the technology exists to meet them, they keep more money in Americans' pockets, and they save energy.

All of the bills we are reviewing today are in discussion draft format and we are open to continuing to work with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle on these efforts.

I now recognize Ranking Member DeGette for five minutes.

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