

**Opening Statement of
Energy and Commerce Committee Republican Leader Cathy McMorris
Rodgers
CPAC Subcommittee hearing on
“The Fiscal Year 2022
Department of Commerce Budget”
June 8, 2021**

As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Madam Chair. And welcome Secretary Raimondo.

Promoting American technological and economic leadership is critical to beating China and winning the future. As the lead Republican on this subcommittee last Congress, I know how much can be accomplished when the Department of Commerce and our committee work together.

New and emerging technologies can transform and improve our quality of life. They have the potential to save lives, provide new job opportunities, all while allowing us to conquer some of our most complex problems like crushing COVID-19 and surviving this pandemic.

3D printing helped ramp up PPE, AVs delivered medical supplies, and blockchain is securing Americans privacy in contact tracing.

America also leveraged the power of supercomputing and AI to speed up the development of the vaccine. Empowering you, Madam Secretary, to carry out these responsibilities to spur the development of these emerging technologies is a shared commitment on the committee.

Operation Warp Speed, and the CARES Act—which was authorized by this committee—demonstrate the power of American ingenuity and innovation when we work together. Our ingenuity and innovation sets America apart from the rest of the world, even our close allies.

The European Union, for example, is taking a different tact as it seeks to regulate our American tech companies. At the same time, even they acknowledge that recent intellectual property waivers for vaccines could harm innovation in critically needed vaccine development.

It is true that we must rein in Big Tech, especially when it comes to protecting our kids. I will continue to fight for our children and hold these companies accountable.

However, I fear that protectionist policies like the EU's Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act will not result in more consumer protection and innovation.

This Congress and this Administration have an obligation to push back on such protectionism, especially when US companies are the target and refocus our allies misguided aggression on legitimate threats, like China.

The U.S. can and should do more to protect people and ensure our economic security. Recent attacks on Colonial Pipelines, SolarWinds, and JBS highlight our vulnerabilities to ransomware and other cyber threats.

We need policies—like Rep. Upton's recent Pipeline and LNG Facility Cybersecurity Preparedness Act—that strengthen the cybersecurity of our critical infrastructure against bad actors. The Senate is currently working to pass a U.S. leadership package to boost American competitiveness and beat China.

This committee must also look at **every available vehicle** at our disposal to accomplish that goal. That includes enacting a national privacy standard to strengthen data protection for Americans.

This will signal to the world that we are serious about protecting our data and promoting cross-border data flows that were part of Privacy Shield. If we do nothing, we leave open a void for adversaries, like China, to manipulate outcomes.

We also need to enact a national framework for autonomous vehicles to enable the Department's efforts to secure strong AV supply chains here in the US. If we fail to do this our auto sector will face the same fate as our communications companies suffered with adversarial countries-like China—propping up their own companies to dominate the network equipment marketplace and pushing out trusted vendors.

Doing this will require that we build on the committee's work to pass the CHIPs Act. Which secures our ability to set terms for the semiconductor and microelectronics sector...

And ensure access to a reliable supply chain for leading-edge chips for industries of the future.

Last Congress, I was proud to lead the *American COMPETE Act* with Congressman Rush, cosponsored by members on both sides of the aisle, and enacted with the support of Chairman Pallone and Chair Schakowsky.

As artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies move beyond the lab phase, the written recommendations required by the *American COMPETE Act* can give our committee more insight on how to deploy these technologies and keep our supply chains secure.

Once again, thank you for being here. I look forward to working with you to accomplish our shared goals together. With that I yield back, Thank you.