

**Opening Statement of Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
As Prepared for Delivery  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce  
Hearing entitled “Proposals to Enhance Product Safety and Transparency for  
Americans”  
September 27, 2023**

Good morning. Welcome to all our witnesses...

...who are advocating for people that we depend on every day...

...from those fixing our cars, to protecting us from fraud, to ensuring the products and services we use are what they claim to be.

This hearing also serves as an appropriate follow-up to last week’s legislative hearing on supply chain management.

We know that losing control of our supply chains can limit the availability of critical goods ... harm production quality... and weaken the security and integrity of products and services being sold to American families and businesses.

This subcommittee is leading to ensure people aren’t getting ripped-off, and even more importantly that families and communities are safe.

My colleague, and the ranking member of this subcommittee, Jan Schakowsky, has been a tremendous leader for us on these product safety topics.

Working with her when I was ranking was a pleasure... and I appreciate her continued efforts with Subcommittee Chairman Bilirakis on these issues.

We have an ambitious docket today.

Much of our work still lies ahead for us on these bills.

I hope we build bipartisan consensus and stakeholder support as we move them forward.

This committee has a rich history of coming together on behalf of those we serve.

Many of these bills address issues that we’ve heard about directly from people in our communities to make products and services safer...

...Rep David Valadao’s proposal would combat romance scams by going after con artists who prey on lonely people, particularly adults over 60, who were scammed for \$139 million dollars in 2020 alone....

...Rep Young Kim's proposal will help travelers distinguish the good actors from the bad in the lodging industry by ensuring they know the full price of accommodations, including things like resort fees, up front....

...and a bill by Reps Ritchie Torres, Andrew Garbarino and Yvette Clarke would ensure that rechargeable batteries used to power products like e-scooters don't explode because of their inferior quality.

This is the People's House, and as representatives of the people, it is our responsibility to ensure their concerns are being addressed.

That is why I remain concerned about agencies, like the FTC, losing sight of its mission of consumer protection and fighting fraud scams.

Surely we can all agree, it should not be diverting resources to force a political agenda on job creators and family businesses.

It should not be abusing its power to threaten small businesses with fines for actions they haven't done.

It should not be initiating rulemaking proceedings that go far beyond the scope authorized by Congress.

...or weaponizing an extreme green agenda in order to ban affordable cars and home appliances that people rely on every day.

All of these have sadly been on display by President Biden's appointees over the course of this administration.

Many of these actions can be attributed to a lack of accountability.

I was pleased to see Republican nominees for the FTC and Consumer Product Safety Commission were finally considered by the Senate Commerce Committee last week.

These nominees need to be moved to the Senate floor and confirmed expeditiously in order to start returning the agencies to their core missions.

Until bipartisan input is restored, these agencies' credibility and integrity will continue to be eroded.

I hope to see a fully bipartisan and operational FTC and CPSC soon, in both people and practice...

...where input is welcomed by both sides, extremes are rejected, and the law is implemented as it was mandated by Congress.

Thank you to all of the members on both sides of the aisle, on and off committee, for your work on these bills.

I look forward to our witness testimony.

I yield back.