

Opening Statement of Chairman Greg Walden
Subcommittee on Environment Markup of H.R. 3128
July 17, 2018

Today we take an important step in this committee's work to advance reasonable updates to our environmental laws—to ensure more effective environmental programs as well as a more productive economy.

H.R. 3128, developed by Congressman Griffith, addresses a problem that has been identified in the Clean Air Act's New Source Review program. And that is the controversy surrounding when a change at a major source of emissions—be it an efficiency improvement, an emission control improvement, or basic upkeep and parts replacement—is sufficient to trigger preconstruction permitting.

The uncertainty over this costly, time consuming process creates powerful incentive to avoid making beneficial improvements to manufacturing and other facilities—depriving communities benefits for the environment and for efficient operations that help increase jobs and economic activity.

This bill simply adds much needed clarification into the law to say that a change at a facility that warrants this NSR review should be based on a maximum hourly emissions rate—a clear and objective measure, consistent with similar provisions in the Clean Air Act.

This will greatly accelerate decision-making at regulated facilities around the nation. I thank Congressman Griffith for his efforts on this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.