

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Greg Walden
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
“Building a 100 Percent Clean Economy:
Solutions for Economy-Wide Decarbonization”
December 5, 2019**

As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your work in these hearings to inform your plans for “decarbonizing” the nation by 2050. The hearings have provided useful information and necessary context to your plans.

We have heard testimony that underscores the essential role of technological innovation in addressing the demand for cleaner energy, transportation, and industrial systems. This echoes the central message Republicans have for the Majority: work with us. Work with us on practical solutions so we can **continue** to lower emissions and unleash American innovation.

Republican’s support realistic steps to reduce emissions and address current and future climate risks. This requires we examine the costs, effectiveness, and economic impacts of solutions proposed to address the risks—and that we do not undermine the economic priorities of communities and states around the nation. We can have a cleaner environment and a strong, American economy.

Over the past year we have pointed out that resurrecting old, top-down policies that will hurt American consumers and workers. We've invited our colleagues to work instead with Republicans on the bipartisan policies – focused on the bottom-up benefits from incentivizing and deploying innovation – that we can move into law. In fact, we have a dozen, bi-partisan measures that we could turn into law that would help reduce emissions and spur jobs and innovation. Hopefully, Mr. Chairman, we'll get to work on passing those measures.

Today's hearing offers two approaches to climate policy. One reflects the Majority's preferred approach to impose costly, carbon taxes and old, cap and trade regulations and schemes. These are some of the top-down regulatory policies we have been warning about. Not only do these policies severely disrupt the American consumer, but they have no chance of becoming law.

Just read the newspapers. Around the world, top-down energy policies are not working, from the Paris yellow vests protests last year, to the riots across Chile, the poor and middle class, fueled no doubt by other resentments, rejected increasing transportation costs in violent protests. Ironically, the Chilean riots caused the international climate conference to relocate to Madrid. One can only imagine what will

happen if the decarbonization schemes throughout Europe really begin to turn the regulatory screws on consumers as European bureaucrats seek to meet proposed emissions targets in ten years.

This is not the way to address global emissions. The more realistic approach is to focus on the advanced technologies – developed in the United States – that can meaningfully address emissions where they are increasing the fastest, which are in poorer nations striving for the benefits of advanced energy and industrial systems.

Recent Energy Information Administration data shows that fossil energy, even with the tremendous growth of renewables, will remain a dominant form of energy in developing nations through 2050. This is where the U.S. can make a difference: providing the innovative fossil and other advanced, cleaner technologies to meet this growing demand.

Tackling the emissions where they are growing the fastest represents the broader approach to climate policy that Professor Gattie can speak about this morning. The deployment of our new nuclear technology to address climate change and to preserve our national security interests is an essential element in serious climate policy.

This is not only a sensible way to address emissions, it is in keeping with our goals to resurrect our technological leadership in nuclear technology around the world for broader national and energy security reasons – much as unleashing U.S. LNG from our shale revolution restored our ability to counter Russia in energy markets, while also driving cleaner technology.

For our part on Energy and Commerce, let's continue the work we have been doing in the past few Congresses that will reduce the barriers to innovation and enable the United States to deploy new technologies. Let's reject taxation and regulation that leads to economic stagnation and pursue practical policies of innovation, conservation, and preparation to drive our economic engines and make realistic headway in curbing emissions, from advanced carbon capture to nuclear technology to innovative hydropower.