

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
“Back in Action: Restoring Federal Climate Leadership”**

February 9, 2021

As Prepared for Delivery

INTRO

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it’s good to see the Subcommittee back in action.

I look forward to working with you to protect our environment and keep energy costs low.

Congratulations to my friend, David McKinley, for taking the reins as Republican Leader of the Subcommittee.

I know he’ll be a powerful advocate for the people of West Virginia and all of America for a secure energy future.

When we work together thoughtfully, we can win the future with policies that serve American families.

This is especially the case when we advance climate solutions that work for **ALL** regions of the country and our diverse communities.

MANDATES

For too long, the discussion about climate policy has been dominated by the view that there is only one way—the relentless big government mandated approach of the environmental left.

But one-size-fits-all, Green New Deal style mandates **never** yield the best results.

Yet we see that narrow thinking time and again--- in proposals that would undermine hydropower, weaken nuclear energy, and kill fossil energy, including clean natural gas.

A prime example are policies that would **tax** and **cap** and **trade away** our affordable and reliable energy, our industries, and our manufacturing base.

President Biden-- declaring a return to global “leadership”-- is taking us back to this path and weakening the backbone of America’s economic and national security.

His executive orders signal a push to close off large portions of our oil and natural gas resources.

This administration is threatening a million jobs... billions of state tax revenues... and our nation’s energy security.

It makes ZERO sense—especially as we rebuild and restore our way of life in the pandemic recovery.

The Administration has also signaled a slew of new regulatory actions that would raise more barriers to affordable energy and crush economic opportunity.

These actions signal a rapid push to build-out renewable energy at a pace that—as we will hear in testimony—will hurt low and middle income families the most.

CALIFORNIA

Renewable technologies are a key component of our clean energy future, but top-down mandates are not the way.

Just look at California with its renewable energy and electrification mandates.

Energy prices are rising seven times faster there than the rest of the nation. Seven times!

High electricity bills hurt our most vulnerable populations and drive out better-paying jobs.

California's energy policies have failed to meet their most fundamental purpose— keeping the lights on.

We cannot afford to follow California's downfall and force these failed policies on the rest of the nation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Rather than President Biden's plan to nationalize California's mandates, weaken our grid, raise prices, and export jobs to other nations...

.... let's explore in this hearing a more positive, responsible plan to address climate risks.

We can capture all the advantages of our abundant resources—including hydro, our fossil energy, and our nuclear technologies.

We can expand affordable energy **AND** maintain America's global competitive edge to beat China.

We can provide more opportunity and prosperity in all our communities, while ensuring America continues to lead the world in emissions reductions and technologies that make our energy cleaner.

The good news is there are bipartisan policies we can build from.

For example, there's the opportunity zones and brownfields reforms to attract new jobs to communities in need...

... and, the licensing reforms to accelerate LNG exports, nuclear technology, and hydropower.

These can be true game-changers in clean energy, driven by R&D and reforms that unleash innovation.

In Washington State, for example, Energy Northwest is collaborating to support nuclear technologies that benefit from our federal policies and reforms in recent years.

These include TerraPower's Natrium, NuScale's and X-Energy's small modular reactors.

We've also opened doors to new carbon capture technologies.

The recently enacted Energy Act of 2020 and USE IT Act provide support for technological innovations across the energy and industrial landscape.

These new laws provide the ingredients to drive cleaner energy and industrial systems.... and a strong, competitive economy.

We should talk today about what else is needed to remove the barriers to licensing, permitting, and deploying new technologies.

Our goal must be to understand what will work for our environment, our economy, and our security.

They are all tied together.

To win the future, we can lead a new era of innovation--a new era of hope in the American dream.

Let's not let regulations hold us back and crush our chances of achieving this.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.