

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader David B. McKinley
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
“Back in Action: Restoring Federal Climate Leadership”
February 9, 2021**

As prepared for Delivery

First, let me congratulate you, Paul, on your return as Chairman.

It’s an honor for me to have the opportunity to lead this panel for the Republicans. Even if we disagree on the approach to our country’s problems, I’m confident you too will consider the costs to families and communities, and the overall impact of executive orders.

Efforts to transform our energy sector should be mindful of the failures of past regulatory overreach, and an inability to pivot to renewables. Look at the coal industry. When the war on coal was underway, there was no transition to renewables, but rather, those workers adapted their skills for jobs in the natural gas sector, which is now threatened.

Or what about America’s steel industry. During the 80s and 90s, excessive government regulations devastated steel towns and families. Think about it. Just 45 years ago, America was producing 5 times the amount of steel as China.

But now, America is producing less than 90 million tons, while China has exploded to manufacturing a billion tons – 11 times more than America.

What happened to the tax base, the school systems, and the health care in the communities that lost the high paying jobs of Kaiser, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, McClouth, National, Bethlehem Steel, and others?

The companies and jobs are gone. The communities have never recovered. Where was the compassionate transition for those communities and families?

Based on these experiences, neither a President nor a Congress should ever put a regulation in place before a bipartisan transition plan has been adopted.

Mr. Chairman, Republicans are ready to work to develop renewable energy, but the lack of sufficient battery storage is enormous.

Even former Energy Secretary Moniz has said, “Dependence on 100% renewables is not yet realistic...and certainly not cost effective...”

The path to developing sufficient battery storage in America will be complex, and I look forward to examining solutions to that issue in future hearings.

Mr. Chairman, these new executive orders will increase the divide between big cities and rural areas, not foster unity. Think about it. 70% of Alaska’s state revenue comes from fossil fuels; Wyoming, 52%; and North Dakota, 45%. That money funds their schools, emergency services, health departments, and pensions. It’s how states operate.

Mr. Chairman, you and I would agree that climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. So hopefully our panelists today won’t insult us by saying that rejoining the Paris Agreement will solve America’s environmental dilemma.

Look at Article 4, Paragraph 4, of the Agreement, which says China “should try” to reduce its emissions. There is no “must” or “shall.” And there is no enforcement or penalties for violations.

Meanwhile, according to the *Financial Times*, China is aggressively building additional coal fired power plants that will equal the entire fossil fuel fleet of Europe.

Furthermore, it should concern everyone that ill-thought policies to rush to green in the United States alone will not improve the global environment, but will actually undermine our national security, and decimate our jobs, families, and communities.

We will hear testimony today from Mark Mills, of the Manhattan Institute, who will explain important considerations about the scale and reality of hurriedly replacing America's energy infrastructure with renewable energy.

Don't forget that when Joe Biden was a candidate, he said that executive orders could become an abuse of Presidential Power.

So, solutions to climate change should not be pursued through executive orders, but rather through consensus and bipartisan policies that accelerate innovation, ensure affordable and reliable energy, and enable our American communities and families to thrive.

But if members of this Committee naively think that other nations are waiting for America to lead, they're wrong. Nations have not been following. Therefore; John Maxwell summed this up by stating, "he who thinks he leads, but has no followers, is merely a man taking a walk."

So, Mr. Chairman, remember...your party controls the House, the Senate, and the White House. You can do almost anything want, but don't forget that "just because you can, doesn't mean you should."

I look forward to a thoughtful discussion and I yield back.