

**Chairman Gary Palmer Opening Statement
As Prepared for Delivery
Subcommittee on Environment
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
“Subcommittee Markup of Three Pieces of Legislation.”
Thursday, May 14, 2026**

Welcome to today’s markup before the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Environment.

Today, we will consider three pieces of legislation, starting with the *Brownfields Revitalization for a Better Tomorrow Act*. This legislation reauthorizes the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Brownfields Grants Program and the State Response Program.

The policy updates in the bill incorporate input from two Subcommittee hearings, which included testimony from local government officials, state environmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. The Subcommittee considered opportunities, such as the value of reusing existing infrastructure at brownfields sites, as well as challenges, such as the difficulties rural communities face in putting together competitive grant applications.

The policy improvements in the Brownfields Revitalization for a Better Tomorrow Act reflect bipartisan negotiations and feedback from the Environmental Protection Agency.

This reauthorization bill includes enhancements to existing tools, such as increased grant award amounts, a waiver of cost share requirements for small or disadvantaged communities, and additional oversight of the revolving loan funds.

It also incorporates some new ideas to facilitate the timely remediation of these sites and, ultimately, their return to productive reuse. For example, this legislation would support use of brownfields grant funding to help local communities clean up and redevelop former military installations, and locate the building of critical infrastructure at brownfield sites. It also builds on existing requirements for states receiving funding under the State Response Programs, directing states to publish an inventory of sites on which this funding was utilized. Our bill also requires EPA to issue guidance to assist federal agencies to more efficiently utilize site-specific information and previous environmental reviews in considering redevelopment on brownfields sites.

This legislation reauthorizes these programs consistent with the most recently enacted appropriations legislation. While my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like to see higher authorization levels, we cannot ignore historical regular appropriations levels. We plan to continue discussions with our Minority and Senate colleagues on authorization funding levels. I hope we can work together to get this bill across the finish line rather than allowing the authorization for this important program to continue to lapse.

We will also consider H.R. 2145, *the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act*, introduced by Representative Miller-Meeke of Iowa.

This bipartisan legislation directs the EPA to establish a pilot program to award grants to states, Tribes, local governments, and public private partnerships for projects to increase access to recycling systems, particularly in underserved communities. Increasing recycling rates provides us with an opportunity to recover and reuse more discarded material. In turn, we can keep more of these products in our domestic supply chains, enhancing our economic and national security. This

legislation will also reduce the costs of implementing recycling programs in underserved communities.

Finally, we will also consider H.R. 4109, *the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act*. This legislation, which also enjoys bipartisan support, tasks EPA with collecting data and information to assess national recycling and composting rates. We plan to take up this legislation as an amendment to the *Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act*.

With this markup, we hope to further our goal of maximizing the value of our federal dollars and channeling them towards programs that improve the quality of life in communities across our country. I look forward to hopefully advancing these bills and to our continued discussion today.