



## Opening Statement of Chairman Frank Lucas

Full Committee Markup

*H.R. 4755, H.R. 4824, H.R. 4877, H.R. 1069, H.R. 3915, H.R. 4866*

July 27, 2023

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Good morning and thank you all for joining us today.

We have six bills up for consideration in this last markup before August recess.

We've had a busy and productive start to the year, and I look forward to coming back in September to continue advancing our full agenda.

Today we're considering bills spanning from the research and technology realm to the energy and environment sector.

The first bill under consideration is H.R. 4755, the Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act, sponsored by Ranking Member Stevens and Rep. Kean.

This legislation supports research, workforce development, and standards-setting activities at NSF and NIST for privacy-enhancing technologies – also known as “PETs” – and calls for government coordination for the development of PETs to ensure responsible data use.

In simple terms, PETs are a broad range of technologies that allow organizations to collect, share, and use data while mitigating the privacy risks that arise from those activities.

As we have moved more of our lives online through services such as online banking, healthcare, and shopping, it is critical we have the measures in place to protect individuals' personal and private data.

Up next, we have three energy bills beginning with H.R. 4824, the Carbon Sequestration Collaboration Act. This bill directs a coordinated research effort across the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Interior to improve our ability to sequester carbon through land use.

Sound land use practices can conserve resources and improve our environment, while also helping the development of cleaner energy production methods.

This bill will advance the research and development at our federal agencies on large-scale carbon sequestration opportunities and pave the way for additional solutions for a wide range of geographies and economic sectors.

Many thanks to Rep. Baird and Ranking Member Lofgren for sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

Next, H.R. 4877, the Abandoned Well Remediation Research and Development Act from Reps. Bice and Lee.

There are currently tens of thousands of known abandoned oil and gas wells across the country – including in my district – that leak methane, pose health and safety risks, and can pollute local groundwater.

This legislation will help us identify new materials and advanced techniques to find and manage abandoned wells, which will ultimately lower overall costs incurred by state, local, and tribal communities undertaking these plugging efforts.

Our third energy-related bill today is Rep. Mike Carey's Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act of 2023, which I have cosponsored along with Ranking Member Lofgren, and Rep. Williams.

In the past, we have seen millions of dollars in taxpayer funded demonstration projects be significantly mismanaged.

H.R. 1069 will improve transparency in clean energy demonstration projects at the Department of Energy by expanding Congressional reporting requirements for all demonstration projects managed by their new office of Clean Energy Demonstrations.

This will ensure a level of accountability to prevent any problems that may arise and guarantee funds are used appropriately.

Lastly, our two final bills today are environment- related, focused on improving our weather forecasting capabilities.

H.R. 3915, the Aviation Weather Improvement Act, enhances the National Weather Service's forecasting of turbulence events and increases the NWS' procurement of aviation weather data from the commercial sector.

It will also greatly advance turbulence forecasting tool and services, as well as identify data gaps that can inform flight planning.

I want to thank Rep. McCormick for his time and efforts in leading this vital piece of legislation.

Our last bill today is H.R. 4866, the Fire Weather Development Act of 2023, sponsored by Rep. Garcia.

This bill directs the NOAA Administrator to establish a program to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting and modeling.

Wildfires are happening year-round across the country, frequently destroying lives and property. To mitigate these devastating consequences, it is critical we have the best forecasting and prediction capabilities to stop fires in their tracks.

It is only fitting that NOAA – our world-class forecasting entity – lead these efforts to support emergency services and protect everyday citizens.

But we cannot forget the many agencies involved in land management decisions and the actual fighting of active fires, as well as state and local emergency managers who have to coordinate their communities' response to these severe weather events.

That is why I'm pleased to see an Interagency Coordinating Committee and a National Advisory Committee established through this bill to ensure all parties have a seat at the table and federal tools or services have a direct pipeline to those who need them most.

With that, I look forward to a productive markup today, and again thank all our Members for their hard work and bipartisanship in bringing these important bills to the table. I look forward to continuing the good work.

I now yield to the Gentlewoman from California for her opening remarks.