

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Fred Upton  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
“Markup of 38 Energy, Health, Consumer Protection, and  
Telecommunications Bills”  
September 9, 2020**

*As Prepared for Delivery*

Good morning. I am glad to see that we have so many bills that we will be moving through the Committee on an agreed upon track. People think bipartisanship is lost; but they are wrong.

In the Energy Subcommittee, we have two bills on today’s markup. The Expanding Access to Sustainable Energy Act (EASE Act) will help rural communities with technical assistance and support from the Department of Energy to expand the use of grid storage and micro grid projects.

This legislation will authorize DOE to continue working with small electric co-operatives on projects to help advance their grid reliability and environmental goals, while keeping electricity rates affordable for consumers.

This is a good bipartisan bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Our second Energy bill that we will take up is HR 8159, the Department of Energy Organization and Management Improvement

Act. This bill installs a reporting mechanism to ensure continuous improvement in DOE's management.

The DOE Organization and Management Improvement Act also removes barriers for the Department's mission support staff for the Secretary from ensuring the whole department, including the NNSA, is implementing policies consistent with the Secretary's directives.

This bill should make for improved agency performance across all department missions—including nuclear weapons programs – and I encourage you to support its passage.

There are plenty of other great bipartisan bills being marked up today. I'm very pleased to see that we are marking up HR 2075 – The School Based Health Centers Reauthorization Act, of which I am one of the lead Republican cosponsors. This bill will help reauthorize and provide much-needed resources to our school-based health centers. I have a number of these centers in my district and they do great work providing healthcare to children who may not have access otherwise.

I'm also pleased to see that HR 8122 is being considered today. This bill, which I cosponsored with my colleague Rep. Castor, authorizes a study on the impact COVID has had on the tourism industry and legislative recommendations to address those impacts. Tourism is vitally important to my district on the shores of Lake Michigan, and I have seen first-hand the devastation the pandemic has caused to many

small businesses in that industry. We need to make sure those folks are taken care of and this bill starts the process to do just that.

Thank you and I yield back.