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Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical
Materials
Opening Statement for Joint Subcommittee Legislative Hearing
“Unleashing American Energy, Lowering Energy Costs, and
Strengthening Supply Chains”

February 7, 2023
As prepared for delivery

Well..Good morning, everyone.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here today.

You know...my constituents back home in Ohio know firsthand the importance of affordable, American energy...and that abundant, affordable energy is vital to economic growth...and is a key factor in ensuring our national security.

Last week, we heard about some of the domestic problems we face in meeting this challenge.

Today, we'll discuss thoughtfully removing some of the red tape and delays that can prevent constructing new critical energy projects...
keep capital on the sidelines, and kill innovation dead in its tracks.

I'm eager to get going on proposals to streamline the process for building essential energy projects in America. Producing more American energy will help reduce global emissions, improve energy reliability, and lower costs for American consumers.

President Biden's war on affordable and reliable energy – and the problems that war creates – is not limited to killing the use of oil, natural gas, and coal.

His Administration's policies are blocking progress on the President's own stated goal to develop domestic resources essential for the very energy alternatives he prefers – such as wind, solar, and batteries.

For example, the supply of minerals necessary to build these alternative energy sources is insufficient to meet some of this Administration's climate goals, including a quote “carbon-free power sector by 2035” and ensuring widespread use of quote “zero-emissions vehicles.”

In addition, many of these critical minerals -- and the refining and processing capacity for them -
- is controlled by adversaries like China and Russia.

We cannot stake our future on certain technologies that then rely upon our enemies for the minerals and mineral processing needs to develop them.

This Administration must stop promising utopia while prohibiting our own mineral production...like cancelling leases for new nickel and copper mines in Minnesota, blocking a new lithium mine in Nevada, and rescinding a land swap necessary for a copper mine in Arizona.

Fortunately, the legislation we're considering today would reorient the law to reestablish America's energy dominance without weakening America's global leadership in advancing our high environmental and labor standards.

So, today:

- We'll consider a bill amending the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to require EPA to review and make timely decisions on the manufacturing of a new chemical or a new use of an existing chemical that is a critical energy resource. This bill still emphasizes risk protection but will prevent the marketplace from waiting an excessive amount of time for critical materials needed to meet our emissions, climate, and energy expectations.
- We'll also review legislation directing the EPA Administrator to allow more regulatory flexibility in enforcing air quality permits for critical energy resource facilities...like processing and refining facilities.
- Another measure amends the Solid Waste Disposal Act to allow for critical energy resources engaged in mineral processing to receive interim permit status for the treatment, storage, or disposal of their waste – a permit EPA must still review.
- There's also a bill which authorizes EPA, only during national security and energy security emergencies, to waive certain regulations necessary for processing or refining of critical energy resources.
- Additionally, we'll look at legislation preventing EPA from imposing expensive design analysis requirements on already constructed gasoline refineries, which would elevate the EPA's view of what makes sense above what industry experts and best practices prove makes sense.
- Staying on refineries, we'll examine a bill to have the Department of Energy and the National Petroleum Council assess and report on the importance of petrochemical refineries in the United States...including a review of opportunities to expand capacity of such facilities, risks to such facilities, and an assessment of Federal and State regulations or policies that have contributed to a decline in the capacity of such facilities.
- Finally, we'll review a bill repealing the wasteful Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, which was established in the Inflation Reduction Act.

So, as you can see, a lot of work needs to be done to establish an energy strategy that encourages innovation, drives investment, and benefits our economic and national security, while we remain good stewards of our environment.

I also note...we're moving these bills through regular order so that we can gather feedback, including constructive criticism. Several of the bills are in discussion draft form for this very reason. Chairs Rodgers, Duncan, and I welcome input on these bills...it's good to be back to legislating with regular order.

I believe the new Republican majority on the Energy and Commerce Committee is leading with solutions to our nation's energy and critical resource challenges, and I look forward to hearing from each of our panelists and yield back the balance of my time.