

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery**  
**of**  
**Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Materials Ranking Member**  
**Paul Tonko**

*Markup of 20 Bills, Full Committee*

**March 9, 2023**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

While I appreciate the opportunity for us to consider these bills through regular order, I have major concerns with the energy and environmental bills before us.

I know that several Members, on both sides of the aisle, would like to have a serious conversation about permitting reform, but unfortunately these bills are not the basis for that discussion.

All seven of the bills advanced by the Environment Subcommittee were on party-line votes and are destined to be ignored by the Senate.

Two of those bills, H.R. 1023 and H.R. 1141, would repeal provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act—the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and the Methane Emissions Reduction Program.

These are two of the most important provisions for achieving the pollution reduction goals of the IRA.

The GHG Reduction Fund in particular is essential to ensuring that our clean energy transition benefits all Americans by enabling low-income households and disadvantaged and rural communities to more easily access project funding and financing opportunities.

Four of the other bills, H.R. 1070, H.R. 1131, H.R. 1140, and H.R. 1158, would create new loopholes in our some of our nation’s most important environmental laws for the benefit of broadly defined “critical energy resources.”

I suspect we will hear the term critical energy resources be used interchangeably with critical minerals by our majority colleagues.

And I believe we would actually find some common ground on the need to explore policies that will lead to more resilient and sustainable supply chains for critical minerals. It is a worthy conversation.

But this is not the purpose of the bills before us.

These bills, as drafted, go well-beyond the limited and knowable list of critical minerals.

March 9, 2023

Page 2

Critical energy resources would allow coal, gas, and oil to receive special treatment and the ability to skirt fundamental environmental protections.

If Members want to work together on critical mineral issues, I would welcome that, but I have no interest in giving sweetheart deals to fossil fuel companies under the guise of our national critical minerals needs.

Our environmental laws exist to protect Americans from harmful pollution.

And they have a strong track record of success—improving public health and addressing climate change while preserving energy security and growing our economy.

Unfortunately, the bills from the Environment Subcommittee are not going to protect our constituents' air and water, and therefore I must urge their opposition today.

With that, I yield back.