

TESTIMONY

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND POWER

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of our draft legislation, which addresses EPA regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from both new and existing power plants. Our legislation would protect Americans' access to reliable and affordable electricity now and for decades to come.

We need a diverse energy portfolio— a true “all-of-the-above” mix of natural gas, nuclear, renewables, oil and coal.

Unfortunately, the Environmental Protection Agency has chosen a regulatory path devoid of common sense that will take us way off course from a future of abundant, affordable, clean energy. Our legislation tries to get the EPA back on track, but in a way that does nothing to prevent the EPA from acting in a reasonable, rational way.

Mr. Chairman, EPA's proposed standards for new coal-fired power plants would effectively prevent any new plants from being constructed. Their standards require coal-fired power plants to deploy technologies that are not currently commercially viable. And though EPA has yet to formally

propose new standards for existing power plants, there is every indication that these standards will be unachievable as well.

The EPA is holding the coal industry to impossible standards. And for the first time ever, the federal government is trying to force an industry to do something that is technologically impossible to achieve – at least, right now.

The industry is making steady progress but is still a ways off from developing the carbon capture and storage technologies that the EPA claims are commercially viable.

Right now, coal provides 37 percent of all the electricity generated in the United States, and the Department of Energy projects coal will provide at least that much through 2040. Right now, we simply can't make up the difference with renewables. That's just wishful thinking.

So, if we just stand by and do nothing and let the EPA eliminate coal from our energy mix, we're going to see the stability of our electrical grid threatened and see the price of electricity rise dramatically, jeopardizing America's economy and countless

jobs with no real environmental benefit. But we aren't just standing by.

Our bipartisan, bicameral legislation is a part of a national discussion about our energy future and the proper role of regulatory bodies like the EPA.

Our legislation ensures that the EPA will no longer be able to impose unachievable standards on coal-fired power plants. It is just common sense that regulations are based on what is technologically possible at the time they are proposed. With regulations, if they aren't feasible, they aren't reasonable.

For new plants, our legislation will require that any EPA regulation must be categorized by fuel type – coal or gas. EPA can only impose a standard if that standard has been achieved for 12 consecutive months at six different US electricity generating plants operating on a full commercial basis.

For existing plants, any EPA proposed rule will not take effect until a federal law is enacted specifying the rule's effective date. And EPA must report to Congress on the economic impact of the rule.

Mr. Chairman, it's time we strike a balance between a healthy environment and a healthy economy. And that's what our legislation does. Abundant, reliable, affordable energy made this country the economic leader of the world – and that's the same formula that will keep us at the front.

It's time the EPA started working as our partner, not our adversary, to achieve that balance. And the EPA can start by recognizing it is just common sense that regulations should be based on what is technologically possible at the time they are proposed.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to appear before your committee. And thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this very important piece of legislation.