

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy
Hearing on “Powering America: Consumer-Oriented Perspectives
on Improving the Nation’s Electricity Markets”
October 5, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning. After examining grid reliability issues earlier this week, today's *Powering America* hearing turns our focus to the people and organizations who advocate on behalf of the nation's electricity consumers. Whether the consumer is a large purchaser of electricity, such as Walmart, or one of the millions of households that take service from a local electric company, there are individuals working behind the scenes to advocate and represent the interests of utility consumers. We have some of those fine folks with us today.

Today's witness panel includes ratepayer advocates, as well as representatives for industrial, commercial, and residential consumers. We also have with us the Independent Market Monitor for the PJM Interconnection - the world's largest wholesale electricity market. Since the *Powering America* series has largely focused on the organized wholesale electricity markets, we will spend much of our time examining the role of the nation's RTOs and ISOs and the processes they use to incorporate feedback from various stakeholder interests, including the views of end-use consumers.

Our hearing will also consider the role of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, who is the federal agency charged with regulating the RTOs and ISOs. As an independent agency, FERC's core mission is to provide "Reliable, Efficient and Sustainable Energy for Customers" and they attempt to achieve this goal by helping consumers obtain reliable and efficient energy at a reasonable cost through regulatory and market means. I should also mention that FERC is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this week, so congratulations to the Commissioners and staff at the Commission.

In today's testimony, I hope that the witnesses will share their perspectives on how individual consumers can participate in the proceedings before the Commission. I'd also like to get a better understanding of how the various RTOs and ISOs incorporate consumer perspectives in their stakeholder processes, and

whether the witnesses believe any improvements can be made. I should note that under Order No. 719, FERC already requires that RTOs and ISOs be responsive to the needs of the consumers who ultimately pay for electricity services.

I recognize that we're dealing with very complicated markets and the average consumer is going to leave it to you (the witnesses) to sort through the details and ramifications of the various market design and rate proposals. That's all the more reason why I want to make sure that *your* views and the interests of consumers are adequately represented in the electricity markets. If those views are represented, I am confident that the markets will deliver benefits to all consumers, large and small.