

**Opening Statement of the Republican Leader Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Energy
“The CLEAN Future Act: Powering a Resilient and Prosperous America”**

March 24, 2021

As prepared for delivery

One of our most important jobs is to make sure our federal laws and policies will enable--not disable—the affordable and reliable delivery of energy and power.

Keeping the lights on is vital to health and safety. We saw the heart-wrenching devastation when this goes wrong last month in Texas and surrounding states.

The massive winter freeze extending from the Plains into the South-Central states created record-setting demand for power and heat and for a variety of reasons the ability to deliver energy when people needed it most came up short.

Energy managers had to cut off power for millions of people to prevent catastrophic failure of the power system.

This hearing, which follows a related Oversight & Investigations hearing earlier today, seeks to examine how the CLEAN Future Act’s power sector provisions may affect vital reliability issues.

We should look at what the overall thrust of this bill means for energy reliability—as well as for energy burdens on families and jobs on workers.

We know an abundant supply of dispatchable, predictable, baseload power---from fossil, hydro, and nuclear generators--- is essential for providing power when people need it most.

Yet the government driven expansion of wind and solar-- coupled with electricity market designs that don't fully value reliability-- have been driving out traditional baseload generation.

At the same time, increased opposition from the Left to traditional baseload and pipelines are serious problems.

There are even dangerous efforts to remove renewable baseload hydropower that's in my district.

[The North American Electric Reliability Corporation](#) continues to identify the growing reliability risks, as a result of growing reliance on renewable energy.

It warned energy managers to take more action to address the risks in its most recent long-term assessment issued in December—including in Texas and California.

[The Department of Energy released studies](#) last year of previous cold events in Midwest and New England finding that additional pipelines and baseload are needed to secure grid.

Yet keeping the lights on is not the central focus of this legislation.

The CLEAN Future Act mandates massive electrification on [an unprecedented scale and pace](#), with no regard for cost.

How do you realistically do that, without weakening reliability, on the timescales in this bill? Considerations for people's household budgets is also absent from this legislation.

We have already witnessed how aggressive renewable policies in California can't keep the lights on. Those policies will be mandated nationally under this bill.

That state's electricity prices have increased [seven times as fast](#) as the nationwide average over the past ten years. High rates squeeze household budgets needed to pay for heat and electricity—especially when people need it most.

Just like we've seen in California and New York too.... Add in the push to keep fossil in the ground and to remove gas as a source of heating fuel, and the costs increase even further.

This is the one-two punch of electrical mandates that raise prices and undermine rewarding jobs in the energy sector.

This is not the way to build prosperity. We should reset our focus.

We should look at making practical improvements in our energy and electricity systems to place reliable, affordable delivery of energy and power back at the center of our energy policy.

We do this by unleashing innovation through regulatory and permitting reforms for the grid and for systems that use ALL our energy resources.

These are the reforms Republicans are leading for [Securing a Cleaner American Energy](#) and they can become law if we work together.

The United States has such incredible energy abundance. It has tremendous technological know-how. There should be no reason we have to tell our constituents in an energy emergency that we do not have enough electricity, or enough fuel.

Let's focus on practical policies to make sure we can keep that promise.