

Ranking Member Grijalva
Opening Statement – Full Committee Markup
January 17, 2024

Thank you, Chair Westerman.

With today’s headliner, H.R. 5482, we see yet another Republican proposal to enrich oil and gas companies at the expense of consumers. The only thing new here is an attempt to market this bill as something that addresses energy poverty.

But Republicans are still pushing the same old policies benefitting industry while opposing measures to lower energy prices — including by cracking down on industry practices that raise consumer costs, opposing heating and weatherization assistance, and attempting to rescind investments in energy efficiency passed by Democrats.

And of course, we continue to see House Republicans oppose efforts to hold the oil and gas industry accountable for its long history of concentrating polluting projects in poor communities and communities of color — exposing these communities to disproportionate levels of harmful pollution that threatens public health and local environments.

These communities rightfully continue to demand fair treatment from an industry that treats their communities as dumping grounds.

H.R. 5482 will only make these problems worse.

But, for Republicans, the industry’s bottom line always seems to be the priority. I see nothing has changed.

Now, I do want to voice my support for the bipartisan set of bills that we are approving today by U.C.

I am supportive of H.R. 5874, which would reauthorize the Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program.

This vital program brings together federal and non-federal partners in the U.S. and Mexico to support research on groundwater security, quantity, and quality in our border communities.

I have been proud to lead for many, many years on supporting and funding this important program — and I certainly welcome Mr. Ciscomani for joining these efforts with this new bill.

I also want to celebrate the inclusion on the agenda of the Explore Act, a bipartisan outdoor recreation package that includes many important provisions sponsored by Democrats.

The Senate has its own version of this package, so we expect that negotiations with them will be ongoing as the bills move forward, but today is an encouraging step.

I also want to thank the Biden administration for working with our staff to incorporate technical assistance and address many of the concerns highlighted by the land management agencies.

We made a lot of progress but also understand there is more work to do as this bill moves through the process.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for working with us on these priorities.

With that, I yield back.