



Opening Statement of Environment Subcommittee Chairman Max Miller

Full Committee Hearing

Science and Technology at the EPA

September 27, 2023

I want to welcome everybody to this morning's hearing, Science and Technology at the Environmental Protection Agency.

I'm pleased to welcome EPA Administrator, Michael Regan, for the very first time in front of the Science Committee. In fact, this is the first time any EPA Administrator has testified since 2019, so we certainly have a lot to discuss.

While I appreciate you joining us today, I have to say that your testimony was sent to the Committee unacceptably late. We require witnesses to share their written testimony no less than 48 hours ahead of our hearings.

This isn't an arbitrary deadline – our members need time to review your statements so we can fully prepare for these discussions and ask thoughtful, informed questions.

We invited you to testify in July, so you had plenty of time to meet this deadline. And while I know you have an internal review process, previous Administration witnesses have had no problem getting us their testimony on time.

Given the importance of science at EPA, it's my hope, and Chairman Lucas', that the Administrator will come before this committee regularly in the future. So I expect that the next time you join us we'll have your testimony ahead of time so we can have the most productive discussion possible.

I anticipate that much of today's conversation will focus on the use of science and technology in EPA's regulatory – and when necessary, deregulatory – agenda.

And although it's been a while since we've heard it, every EPA Administrator that has come before our Committee has stressed the need for scientific integrity at the EPA and the importance of relying on the expertise of career staff and scientists when crafting the regulations and policies of the Agency.

That reliance on science is especially important today given the fact that the Biden Administration's EPA has promulgated 1,083 rules to date. That's nearly 55 rules a month since the President took office.

There is no industry exempt from the wide range of topics these rules cover. From pesticides in agriculture, to emissions for power plants, to chemicals in manufacturing, regulations have the potential to hamstring our economy if not achievable and based on science.

Administrator Regan's EPA has set very ambitious goals: reducing emissions from the power sector by 80%, having two-thirds of the cars on the road be zero-emission, and nearly eliminating all methane emissions in the country, to name a few.

Admirable as those may be, we simply cannot set goals without analyzing the economic and social costs to achieve them.

We can't flip the switch off for domestic fossil energy production unless we have reliable and affordable replacements.

Otherwise, hospitals and military bases would go dark, families would struggle to make ends meet, businesses would close, and lives would be lost. We need to be realistic about what these goals require from the people we serve.

Additionally, today's hearing is an opportunity to get an update from the Administrator on the \$100 billion dollar influx of funding the Agency has received through the IJJA and IRA. No matter what side of the political spectrum you sit on, this pace of spending is undeniably vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse.

This funding has the potential to positively impact crucial sectors of our economy. But it also has the potential to fund wasteful projects that line the pockets of select environmental groups and prop up technologies that will never achieve success on their own in the market.

So we must carefully examine the Agency's processes to set up new programs, get money out the door, and monitor the progress of projects well into the future.

I want to thank Administrator Regan for being here today and I'll end with a bit of sentiment. Testifying is a lot like a doctor's appointment. While we're purposely looking for things that are wrong – and you'll hear criticisms on how things look – it's because we want to prevent actions from turning into an unfixable problem.

Everyone here wants an effective, smoothly running Environmental Protection Agency and today is a necessary step to ensure that. I hope we can work together to ensure EPA is doing things for people, not to people.