

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power  
Hearing on “H.R. \_\_\_\_, “Title II: 21st Century Workforce”  
April 23, 2015**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

I am very excited about the “Title II: 21st Century Workforce” discussion draft that we will be examining at this hearing. I am even more excited about the bipartisan process that led to it as well as the other titles in the new energy bill that this subcommittee is working on. I want to particularly thank Bobby Rush, Gene Green, Bill Flores and Richard Hudson for their efforts to collaborate on a positive energy agenda on which I hope we can all agree.

Creating jobs remains my number one priority as it does for most of us, and America’s energy boom offers a major opportunity to do so. The good news is that the energy sector continues to create a wide variety of jobs, and even if the drop in oil prices has temporarily reduced some types of upstream positions, there are still many others like those in manufacturing that benefit from affordable domestic energy prices. Manufacturing is making a comeback in Michigan and across the country, and skilled workers are now in high demand.

The energy and energy-related jobs are there to be filled, but job training has struggled to keep pace. There is often a disconnect between the young men and women ready to launch their careers and the skills necessary to take advantage of the opportunities in energy.

The 21st Century Workforce bridges the gap. It takes the existing Department of Energy job training programs and redirects them towards the market needs of today and the future. One important component of this discussion draft is to make sure that more women and minorities can acquire the skills needed to participate in America’s energy and manufacturing boom.

Affordable and plentiful supplies of American energy offer long term employment opportunities for millions seeking well-paying careers, and the 21st Century Workforce discussion draft helps make sure that these opportunities are available for all who seek them.

###