



COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & COMMERCE
DEMOCRATS
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Pallone Remarks at Hearing on Energy Infrastructure

“President Trump spared no expense and required no offsets for tax breaks to fuel profits on Wall Street, but when it comes to helping Main Street, all he is offering is Monopoly money.”

Washington, DC – *Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks today at a Subcommittee on Energy hearing titled “State of the Nation’s Energy Infrastructure.”*

Revitalizing and modernizing our nation’s crumbling infrastructure should be an area where Democrats and Republicans can find common ground.

Unfortunately, the plan President Trump unveiled two weeks ago barely mentions energy and, as a whole, represents another cynical bait and switch. After promising for more than a year to invest over a trillion dollars in America’s infrastructure, the Trump plan does NOT offer any new funding for infrastructure. This anemic proposal calls for \$250 billion in federal spending, but even that is offset by \$200 billion in cuts to vital existing programs. Worse yet, the 80 percent match requirement will do little to help towns, cities and counties all across this country that simply cannot afford that kind of spending. In fact, the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, where President Trump attended college, provides a withering criticism of his so-called infrastructure plan, stating that it really won’t leverage funds and that “There will be little to no impact on the economy.” To call the Trump plan worthless isn’t partisan: it is reality and confirmed by his own alma mater.

In stark contrast, Democrats actually have a real plan – A Better Deal – for investing and rebuilding America. This plan includes important parts of the Committee Democrats bill, the LIFT America Act. This legislation would create jobs and boost the economy by putting real money toward infrastructure like replacing drinking water pipes, cleaning up Brownfields sites, supporting energy efficiency and clean energy, extending broadband service, and revitalizing our hospitals and health care infrastructure.

Democrats are committed to delivering a better deal for Americans, providing cheap, clean energy for consumers and modernizing our aging energy infrastructure so that it is secure, efficient and resilient. We will make key investments that will transport our energy infrastructure into the 21st Century energy economy while creating jobs of the future that lessen our carbon footprint. We do this by expanding renewable energy, and by investing in energy efficiency programs that will lower Americans' monthly bills. These programs are good for the environment and good for consumers.

This is a bold proposal that will revitalize our infrastructure, grow our economy and create new jobs. And, to ensure good, family-sustaining wages for workers, we are committed to maintaining Davis-Bacon community-based wage standards and other worker protections. We will invest in workers through robust training, provide job opportunities for veterans and level the playing field for small businesses, including women and minority-owned businesses.

What we won't do is buy into the false choice between a strong economy and a healthy environment. President Trump and Republicans keep pushing this outdated, false narrative, but the reality is that a clean and safe environment supports a strong economy.

Environmental safeguards are not the obstacle to infrastructure improvements. The real obstacle is the lack of funds. Deregulation won't deliver clean, inexpensive energy, and it is not going to rebuild roads, grow smarter communities, or provide safe drinking water to all Americans.

President Trump spared no expense and required no offsets for tax breaks to fuel profits on Wall Street, but when it comes to helping Main Street, all he is offering is Monopoly money. His plan provides no new federal funding for our crumbling infrastructure or our struggling cities, towns and rural communities.

We can and must do better. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle agree and will work with us to invest in America and truly make our infrastructure great again.

I yield the balance of my time to the Gentleman from New York, Mr. Tonko.

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