



COMMITTEE ON  
**ENERGY & COMMERCE**  
DEMOCRATS  
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 26, 2018

**CONTACT**

[CJ Young](#) – (202) 225-5735

## **Pallone Remarks at Energy Hearing on Geopolitics of Oil and Gas**

**Washington, D.C.** – *Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks today at a Subcommittee on Energy hearing titled “The Shifting Geopolitics of Oil and Gas.”*

After nearly two years of Republican control of all branches of government, my Republican colleagues have little to show for their efforts. And the little they have accomplished is benefiting the wealthy to the detriment of the middle class and the vulnerable. Just think about it: skyrocketing health care premiums and growing numbers of the uninsured, a wildly unpopular Trump Tax Scam, trillions of dollars in new and mounting debt, and now a devastating Trump inflicted policy that stripped thousands of children from their parents.

So, faced with the failure of their policies, Republicans have started to retreat to their “safe spaces,” including proposing draconian cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security as part of their new budget and, of course, today’s old favorite: cheerleading for fossil fuels.

The latest version of this tired old story has Republicans going so far as trying to legislatively blackmail states that have stood up to the Administration’s Oil-Above-All agenda by imposing sizable fees on any state that refuses to rubber stamp President Trump’s offshore drilling expansion plan. Earlier this year New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy listened to our coastal communities and blocked offshore oil and gas drilling in state waters. The Jersey Shore is a priceless national treasure that is an engine for a tourism industry that generates \$38 billion a year, and one of the largest recreational fishing industries in the nation.

That’s all threatened by offshore drilling. We simply don’t need to risk the health and vitality of our coastal communities for the sake of putting more fossil fuels into our energy mix.

We have seen this show before. First, rising gasoline costs or something else moves us toward reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. Then, in response, fossil fuel industry executives come to Congress to tell us that the only solution to our problems is to ramp up drilling and decrease restrictions on their industry in order to increase supply.

---

That's happening today as reckless Republican policies have led to a significant jump in the price of gasoline since March. In fact, the price of gasoline has gone up nearly 25 percent since President Trump took office. You would think that would lead to an effort to support cleaner, less gas guzzling vehicles. But, that logic is lost on President Trump and his ethically challenged EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt, who have gone completely in the opposite direction. They have moved aggressively against clean cars and a diverse 21st Century energy policy. Instead, President Trump has worked tirelessly to put in place a 1950s approach to energy that only an oil company could love, and can best be summed up by the words "dig, drill, anytime, anywhere" even if it's in our coastal recreational waters.

President Trump also made a foolish decision by announcing his intention to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement. This was an agreement we spent years negotiating with the global community, and was signed by roughly 200 countries. By abandoning our friends and allies, we have ceded our leadership on climate action and clean technology development and deployment to China and others. We were the global leader, but now we don't even have a seat at the table. That puts America Last, and is tragically shortsighted.

Republican Oil-Above-All policies have always centered on one thing: putting the profits of oil tycoons and fossil industry donors first. The current re-run of this clichéd show should have been canceled long ago.

I yield back.

###

---

[democrats-energycommerce.house.gov](https://democrats-energycommerce.house.gov) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Flickr](#)