

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of 6 Bills

June 10, 2021

Today, the Committee is continuing its work to combat climate change, improve energy cybersecurity and protect consumers.

First, we will consider H.J. Res. 34, a joint resolution providing for Congressional disapproval of the Trump Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2020 Methane Recission Rule. The Trump EPA action removed direct federal limits on methane pollution from new and modified oil and gas facilities.

The oil and gas sector is the largest industrial emitter of methane – a potent climate-disrupting greenhouse gas. Methane is responsible for approximately one-third of the planet's warming and resulting climate disruption.

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA has a responsibility to protect public health from dangerous climate pollution like methane. Effectively mitigating climate change and avoiding the worst climate endangerment requires strong methane pollution standards for both new and existing oil and gas sources.

But because of the Trump Recission Rule, there are now no Clean Air Act protections in place to curb dangerous methane pollution from the U.S. oil and gas sector.

The Trump Recission Rule was a thinly veiled attempt to limit regulation of the oil and gas industry at the expense of our health, our safety, and our planet at a time when these protections are needed more than ever. And it was such an outrageous overreach that it was opposed by not only environmentalists, but by many in the fossil fuel industry as well.

Favorably reporting H.J. Res. 34 today soundly rejects and nullifies one of the most egregious environmental rollbacks of the Trump EPA, would restore the robust Clean Air Act pollution standards established in 2012 and 2016, and clears a path for stronger protections in the future.

The second set of bills are four bipartisan energy cybersecurity bills. Members of the Committee have worked together on these bills for several Congresses, and I hope this year we can finally enact them into law. After all, cyber threats to the U.S. energy system have only increased in recent years, culminating with the Colonial Pipeline ransomware attack last month. These bills will bolster the cybersecurity of our energy system.

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Finally, we will consider urgently needed legislation to protect consumers and ensure lawbreakers do not get to profit from fraud, scams, and other illegal conduct. H.R. 2668, the “Consumer Protection and Recovery Act,” would restore the Federal Trade Commission’s authority under section 13(b) of the FTC Act to go to court to get victimized consumers and businesses their money back. Action is needed now after the Supreme Court gutted this authority earlier this year. We must protect consumers and ensure the FTC remains the premier consumer protection agency in the world.

It’s important we take action today on all of this legislation for the safety, security, and well-being of the American people.