

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Markup of “Committee Print that includes the following titles: Title I, Modernizing and
Protecting Infrastructure, Title II, 21st Century Workforce, Title III, Energy Security and
Diplomacy, and Title IV, Energy Efficiency and Accountability”
July 22, 2015**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today, we take an important step as we work to ensure our energy policies reflect our game-changing resource abundance and fulfill the nation’s energy potential in the 21st century. No one said this effort would be easy, but today, this subcommittee begins advancing what I am proud to say is the first attempt to put together a broad bipartisan energy package in nearly a decade.

We started this process back in July of last year, announcing the beginning of a framework we called the Architecture of Abundance. We have worked in a bipartisan fashion to refine it into four titles – modernizing energy infrastructure, 21st century workforce, energy security and diplomacy, and energy efficiency and accountability.

I commend Subcommittee Chairman Whitfield and Ranking Member Rush for their commitment and dedication to working through this process. We held seven legislative hearings and received testimony from nine government witnesses, including the Secretary of Energy, and 38 private sector organizations and experts. I also led a bipartisan delegation to Europe that included Ranking Member Pallone, and we met with numerous European officials to discuss areas of mutual cooperation around energy security.

I hope we are on a bipartisan roll after the 21st Century Cures Act. Cures was about commonsense reforms to outdated medical research policies, and I believe what we’re discussing today is an equally sensible effort to modernize energy policies stuck in the energy scarcity mindset of the 1970s.

While a lot of work remains, I am pleased that today’s draft starts on the right foot with broad bipartisan support. While it does not encompass the entire universe of issues on the table, the staffs and Members will continue discussions over the next several weeks in order to advance a broader package when we return in September. There are several issues that Members want to see addressed, including LNG and oil exports, more predictable permitting rules for cross border energy infrastructure, provisions on electric reliability and wholesale markets, hydropower reforms, and efficiency. I also believe this legislation must go further to protect our nation’s recyclers and paper products industry.

Ranking Member Pallone and I have committed to working to include several of the Department of Energy’s recommendations from its Quadrennial Energy Review into the final draft, including changes to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, state grant programs for grid and pipeline infrastructure resiliency and modernization, and updates to the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. In addition, I want to reiterate my commitment to pipeline safety, which means holding PHMSA accountable for implementing the last round of safety reforms enacted by this committee and working with our friends on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to reauthorize the Pipeline Safety Act before it expires at the end of September.

Working on many of these remaining issues will be challenging, but this markup helps to move this process forward to form a bipartisan foundation for some of the tough decisions ahead. By embracing our abundant energy resources, we can deliver so many benefits to folks in Michigan and across the country – affordable prices, greater security, and a boost to jobs and the economy. Again, I want to thank the committee and staff for their hard work in getting us this far. I look forward to continuing discussions toward an energy bill that says yes to energy and jobs - one we all can agree is an important step forward.

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