

**Opening Statement of the Honorable John Shimkus  
Subcommittees on Energy and Power and Environment and the Economy  
Joint Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2014 Environmental Protection Agency Budget”  
May 16, 2013**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

I too want to welcome Mr. Perciasepe to our committee for this joint hearing on the proposed budget and operations plans of the EPA in fiscal year 2014.

We very much want to know what the agency is doing in its core, statutorily authorized programs; whether it is sticking to congressional intent; and whether hard working Americans' tax dollars are being used to appropriately, effectively, and efficiently protect against significant risks to human health and the environment, based on the best available and valid science, and that these laws are enforced fairly and effectively.

In fact, tomorrow, the subcommittee I chair will be holding a legislative hearing on small changes to Superfund. This law was enacted to clean-up the most hazardous waste sites in America, yet after almost 33 years, more than 1300 sites, and billions of dollars spent, less than 37 percent of these sites have been completely cleaned up. That is not acceptable.

Just doing things a certain way because that's how we've always done it not a viable excuse; we need to do better, recognize advancements in technology, reward innovation, cut red tape, and leverage the expertise of state regulators.

Case in point is E-Manifest. I am pleased Congress was finally able to get these changes into law last year and applaud the agency's budget for committing resources to its usage. We should not stop there and I am also encouraged by the greater use of the Internet and other e-technologies to modernize EPA reporting programs, including the guidance supporting Consumer Confidence Reporting under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

On the other hand, I do not believe this is the time for EPA to launch new programs when there is clear evidence it must focus on its legally mandated responsibilities and doing a better job on them within the current budget climate. I want to know more about:

- How EPA wants to use newer technologies to transform existing programs.
- The agency's capitalization goals for the drinking water State Revolving Funds and whether we are getting closer to a sustainable SRF program, and
- The specific timeline for EPA before released Integrated Risk Information Systems assessments have fully, not partially, implemented the important National Academy of Sciences recommendations.

I appreciate EPA styles itself as a science agency, but its deployment of that science should be beyond reproach. Unfortunately, external review boards have repeatedly called this science into question. To truly protect the public from harm as well as unnecessary negative economic outcomes, we need an unbiased, valid process educating policymakers about the science, not policymakers dictating that science.

Again, I want to thank Mr. Perciasepe for being with the committee today. I hope he and EPA will welcome our oversight efforts as a way to openly inform Congress and the American people about the agency's efforts and all its activities.

###