

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Full Committee Vote on H.R. 698, H.R. 1900, H.R. 2094, H.R. 2052, H.R. 83, H.R. 1582
July 16, 2013

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today, we begin consideration of six important bills that collectively will boost economic growth, help secure our energy future, protect children's health, and support breakthrough medical research.

First, the committee will consider Dr. Cassidy's H.R. 1582, the "Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013." This legislation will finally put some interagency checks and balances on the EPA, an agency whose transparency in recent years has been woefully inadequate. Thanks to technological innovations that have allowed us to safely tap the nation's abundant energy resources, the U.S. is on an unprecedented path toward energy self-sufficiency. But this U.S. energy renaissance is threatened by an agency that fails to provide a transparent and accurate picture of the sweeping cumulative impacts of its own regulations. H.R. 1582 brings much-needed accountability and perspective to EPA regulations.

Equally critical to capitalizing on our nation's energy abundance is Mr. Pompeo's "Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act," H.R. 1900, which is a bipartisan bill that would modernize the federal review process for natural gas pipeline permit applications. Our nation's energy landscape has dramatically transformed over the last several years, but our energy infrastructure still lags behind. To take full advantage of our abundant natural gas supplies, we need a new, modern pipeline system. This legislation makes commonsense reforms to the natural gas pipeline permitting process and will allow new pipeline projects to be built safely and efficiently to help meet the nation's energy needs.

I also encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 83, a bill introduced by Rep. Donna Christensen, which will help address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States, including the Virgin Islands.

The committee will also consider H.R. 2094, an effort led by Mr. Roe and Mr. Hoyer to support our nation's schools as they work to ensure they have the capability to treat severe allergic reactions.

The second bipartisan health bill that we'll consider, H.R. 698 sponsored by Rep. Capps, is an important measure to boost medical research. The legislation would eliminate the restriction on acquiring HIV-positive organs to permit research on transplants involving HIV-positive individuals. It also would require the Secretary of HHS to develop guidelines and revise transplant standards based on the research. In June, the Senate passed similar legislation, S. 330, which was introduced by Senators Boxer and Coburn and cosponsored by Senators Baldwin and Paul.

Lastly, we will consider H.R. 2052, the "Global Investment in American Jobs Act," authored by Mr. Terry and Ms. Schakowsky, that seeks to make the United States more competitive in attracting foreign direct investment. It directs the Secretary of Commerce to lead an interagency review of the federal government's current efforts to attract foreign investment and to identify noteworthy initiatives at the state and local level and best practices in other nations. The review will inform recommendations for improving our competitiveness in attracting foreign direct investment, thus creating jobs here in the United States. The bill moved through subcommittee by voice vote, and similar legislation passed the House on voice vote last Congress.

I am hopeful that all six bills will be approved by this committee on a bipartisan basis and will soon be considered by the full House.

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