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House of Representatives

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Ranking Member Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs
“Leading the Charge: Opportunities to Strengthen America’s Energy Reliability”
February 26, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Burlison, and thank you to the witnesses for being here this morning.

As someone who grew up experiencing increasingly frequent Florida hurricanes and power outages, it is so important for our Subcommittee to work on this issue. I look forward to that.

My constituents are in danger because of hurricanes and frequent flooding, and the power outages that result. These outages cost families thousands of dollars in wasted food and medicine, create mold and mildew damage, and are deadly.

I introduced the *Bipartisan Energy Storage for Resilient Homes Act* so Floridians and folks across the country can install home energy storage batteries as part of FEMA’s disaster mitigation support.

As a Floridian, I will often bring up hurricanes, flooding, and sea level rise, but extreme weather is impacting every state with events like hail, tornadoes, and wildfires. One meta-analysis of eleven studies showed we can match energy supply and demand under any conditions with a 70 to 90 percent clean energy grid.

Promoting *clean* energy is a key part of promoting *reliable* energy — and it also has huge benefits to the American economy.

The support for clean energy like that in the *Inflation Reduction Act* has boosted American manufacturing and added almost half a million good-paying American jobs. Many of these jobs do not require a four-year degree.

We must protect the Home Energy Rebate Programs and other programs in the law that lower energy bills and taxes for financially burdened families while upgrading our appliances and protecting our homes from extreme weather.

Despite the benefits of the *Inflation Reduction Act*, President Trump has now frozen this funding. The law lowered emissions, employed hundreds of thousands more Americans, boosted American manufacturing, and lowered costs for families and yet Trump objects. This Committee needs to be asking *why* he’s *really* doing that.

The climate crisis is here, and it is our patriotic duty to reverse it. Right now, our government is stuck in a cycle: Produce more fossil fuels, increase Big Oil CEO pay, worsen the climate collapse which makes it more expensive to produce fossil fuels, the government subsidizes fossil fuel, produce more fossil fuels. And repeat. **We need to break this cycle.**

One of President Trump's first executive orders, called "Unleashing American Energy" is supposedly aimed at restoring American prosperity through affordable and reliable energy. However, President Trump's methodology of "drill, baby, drill" is extremely weak.

First, President Trump continues to say he will impose tariffs on goods from Canada, including crude oil. But the U.S. is heavily reliant on Canadian oil because most of the oil produced here is not compatible with our refineries and our vehicles. Tariffs levied on Canada will increase energy prices for Americans.

And it's not just energy. Since higher energy costs make it more expensive to transport nearly all goods and materials across the country — from clothing to food — these could all become more expensive too.

Second, a key component of the Executive Order is ending the use of the social cost of carbon in federal policy making. The social cost of carbon has allowed agencies to accurately account for *all* of the costs of carbon-based fossil fuels. It makes sure the companies doing the polluting are paying for the costs of the pollution.

I want to paint a picture of why it's so important to use the social cost of carbon measure:

Let's say a new gas-fired power plant is built in Eatonville, Florida. A family that lives a few miles away won't see a penny of the companies' profits, but they will have to pay more when their kids get asthma or their parents get lung cancer. And as the increased carbon emissions cause climate change to worsen and natural disasters to become more frequent and intense, they're at greater risk of a hurricane destroying their home, which also means that they will face higher insurance premiums, if they can get insurance at all. This might just be hypothetical, but it's already the reality of thousands of Floridians and millions across the country.

I'm not surprised by Trump's shortsighted proposals because he started with shortsighted promises.

On the campaign trail, President Trump promised that, "under my administration, we will be slashing energy and electricity prices by half within 12 months, at a maximum 18 months."

That is a pretty hefty promise, it seems unlikely that President Trump's pro-polluter policies will cut electricity prices in half just 509 days from now.

Additionally, it is so important that people understand that just because Trump says he wants to lower the price of energy and electricity, he has not guaranteed that those savings will be passed along to our households. It is entirely possible that any progress that is made will benefit his Big Oil CEO buddies.

Donald Trump may be making empty promises about what our affordable energy future looks like — but I'm not here to do that, and this committee shouldn't be either. The solution to how we

lower costs and protect our planet is in front of our faces and it's clean, renewable energy. I'm here to talk about the future and what we can accomplish.

Thank you and I yield back.

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