



NEWS FROM

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Opening Remarks by the Honorable Bobby L. Rush, Ranking Member
at the
Energy and Commerce Committee Markup of the
“Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011”

WASHINGTON — “Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I extend my thanks to all of our guests for being here today.

“Mr. Chairman, today we are marking up the so-called “Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011,” which would amend section 328 of the Clean Air Act that addresses air pollution from Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) drilling activities, and the TRAIN Act, which would establish an interagency panel to analyze certain aspects of EPA regulations.

“The TRAIN Act would highlight the costs of implementing certain EPA rules but does not take into account all of the benefits of these regulations, including enhanced public health, increased job productivity or lives saved.

“This bill would also not take into account the positive impacts that EPA regulations have had on our economy, including spurring additional research and development of clean energy technologies, instituting higher fuel efficiency standards and helping make the country less dependent on foreign oil.

“Unfortunately, for many of my colleagues, if the benefits of a regulation cannot be monetized, such as lives saved or job loss prevented, then they are written off as having no economic value.

“I would submit that for many local communities, especially those less affluent ones which are so often disproportionately affected by dirty air and the consequences that come with it, the omission of health impacts in the analysis that the TRAIN Act calls for would be a great disservice to them.

“Additionally, my concerns with the “Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011” have been expressed through each step of this legislative process.

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“The minority and majority staffs have met to try and come up with a bipartisan bill that many on this side of the aisle could support, but to no avail.

“As I have stated in both hearings on this bill, putting the environmental impacts aside, momentarily, one of my biggest concerns is that this bill would attempt to reduce the input of local communities that, in many cases, are home to the people most affected by drilling in these areas.

“As representatives of the people, I find it odd that we would vote to take away the American people’s right to participate in the local permitting process, with the charade that we are doing this in their best interest.

“The amendments that I will offer today will attempt to address these problems so that we are not cutting out the people who are the most vulnerable and who have the most to lose when these permitting and regulatory decisions are made.

“I hope that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be open to strengthening these bills so that they are not being jammed through the committee, and eventually the House floor, only to ultimately die in the Senate for lack of bipartisan support. Let’s get it done in a bipartisan manner and let’s get it done today!

“And, so, I look forward to the markup today and with that I yield the balance of my time.”

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