



Below is the [opening statement](#) of Chairman Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) as delivered.

"I want to thank Ranking Member Whitehouse and his staff for working with me and my staff to bring two bipartisan bills before the committee today.

"I'd also like to thank Senator Boozman for his leadership on the bipartisan recycling legislation we will consider.

"The agenda for this meeting is to hold three votes after Ranking Member Whitehouse and I give our opening remarks. The first vote will be to approve the Committee Rules and Budget Resolution. The next two votes will be to approve bills that previously passed this committee with unanimous support.

"Today we'll consider S.347, the Brownfield Reauthorization Act of 2025. This bill, which passed unanimously out of the committee last Congress, will continue the critical work of the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields program, which I'm sure is active in everyone's state. Since first being authorized in 2002, the Brownfields program has been a resounding success story for our economy and for the environment.

"Cleaning up abandoned and polluted Brownfields is a powerful economic development tool, and revitalizes rural and economically challenged communities where it's needed most. Despite the program's many achievements, the rigorous and complex grant application process remains a key challenge.

“Rural and underserved communities lack the resources needed to compete with larger entities, putting them in an unfair position. Our bill streamlines the application process to level that playing field.

“The legislation also modernizes the program's grant amounts to match current construction costs and project sizes, aligning them with the reality of doing business. Today, I look forward to advancing the Brownfields Reauthorization Act of 2025 and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this passage.

“Next, we will consider S.351, the Strategies to Eliminate Waste and Accelerate Recycling Development Act. How do you like that – called the STEWARD Act.

“Now this legislation combines two separate recycling bills that we had last Congress, that were passed unanimously, not just by this committee, but also unanimously out of the United States Senate.

“The STEWARD Act reflects years of collaboration and input from members of both chambers, on both sides of the aisle. These efforts result in a bipartisan agreement that near that nearly became law at the end of last Congress, and the STEWARD Act that we will vote on today preserve that bipartisan language.

“For too many Americans, recycling remains out of reach, either because facilities don't exist in their communities, or because the infrastructure to make recycling economically feasible is not in place. The STEWARD Act aims to close those gaps by ensuring that recycling services are available to all communities.

“The bill also recognizes that to solve a problem, you need to measure and understand it first. The data provisions in the STEWARD Act will empower decision makers to attract progress, identifies areas needed for improvement, and make informed decisions that will drive real change in our nation's recycling system.

“With these two bills, the Committee can begin this Congress passing legislation through the well-established bipartisan tradition that is characterized so much of this Committee's success. I urge my colleagues to support both of these bipartisan bills.

“Also on the agenda, as I mentioned, is the necessary housekeeping items to run the Committee, our rules and our budget. My staff reviewed the previous rules of the Committee, and in coordination with Ranking Member Whitehouse's staff, we have proposed some updates and streamlining edited for the rules.

“The three main changes to the rules are providing for receiving sworn testimony from witnesses, having transcripts kept for business meetings, and setting a clear process for issuing subpoenas, either by agreement of the Chairman and the Ranking Member or by a majority vote of the Committee.

“Passage of our Committee Funding Resolution is necessary to ensure that we are funded to continue the good work of this committee into the 119th Congress.

“Our new budget will ensure that the Committee has the resources to develop a Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill, work towards bipartisan solutions to fix our environmental review and permitting processes, reauthorize the Toxic Substance Control Act, and continue our vital work on oversight and implementation of the laws within the jurisdiction of the Committee

“I urge my colleagues to support our Committee Rules of Budget Resolution for the 119th.”

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