



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

"I want to gavel in, and I want to say good afternoon to the Administrator. Administrator Zeldin, I would have come down to shake your hand, but we're running a little behind. And in consideration of time, I'll just wave to you and thank you for being here. I appreciate your time and your willingness to appear before the Committee, as always.

"Over the last year, we have seen a clear change in the direction of EPA. One that is grounded in EPA's authorizing statutes and recognizes the importance of reliable, affordable energy.

"That change matters, no matter where you live, in what state, and [that is] certainly no different in my state of West Virginia. In November, thank you very much, during your visit to West Virginia, you heard firsthand about the real economic benefits that are resulting from the regulatory relief efforts in Congress and with the Trump Administration.

"Administrator Zeldin, thank you. Thank you for taking the time to talk to my constituents and understand how the policies and actions that occur here in Washington directly impact the livelihoods of those in the Mountain State.

"For too long, EPA policies imposed unnecessary and costly burdens on American workers, farmers, manufacturers, energy producers and communities. We saw

rules that drove power plants and coal mines toward closure, raised costs for families and ignored the plain realities of our electric grid.

“The EPA buried the economy in red tape and killed economic growth. So that’s changing. The EPA is now working hard to undo, point by point, the Biden Administration’s War on Coal and other matters.

“The EPA proposed to repeal the Biden Administration’s Clean Power Plan 2.0 rule, an unworkable and unlawful rule that would have forced the shutdown of coal plants and prohibited new gas plants. It would have devastated electric reliability by causing major electricity generation shortages. I encourage the EPA to finalize that rule’s repeal.

“The Agency also extended compliance deadlines for the Effluent Limitations Guidelines and repealed the Biden-era MATS rule. These were unnecessary Biden rules with unrealistic timelines that would have forced power plants to shut down rather than continue to operate efficiently and in compliance with our environmental laws.

“This year, EPA rescinded the 2009 Endangerment Finding. That finding was wrongfully used to justify sweeping rules that Congress never authorized and that imposed hundreds of billions of dollars of costs on our economy. Rescinding it is a momentous milestone in returning the EPA to adhering to its statutory role.

*“The costly regulatory regime that the Endangerment Finding supported was inconsistent with the requirement of clear congressional authority that the Supreme Court found was necessary for such actions in the decision in *West Virginia v. EPA*.*

“The EPA’s work is not limited just to the power sector. After Administrator Zeldin sent the Biden-era California Waiver to Congress, we repealed the Democrats’ attempt to enact a nationwide Electric Vehicle mandate without a vote in

Congress. With that vote, Congress preserved consumer choice and protected our constituents from government-mandated higher vehicle costs.

“Finally, Administrator Zeldin is bringing real accountability for how our taxpayers’ dollars are being spent. The Inflation Reduction Act created a bunch of wasteful programs at EPA that funded “climate” spending with little actual environmental benefit, such as for activists’ pet projects and even funded activists to more easily sue the government to stop permits and projects.

“Two programs were of particular concern: \$30 billion that went to the so-called “Green Bank” and Environmental Justice Block Grant programs. Billions of dollars went out the door with limited transparency and questionable oversight. The EPA’s action to cancel roughly \$17 billion of those grants was an important first step for Congress to build upon, which we did in the Working Family Tax Cuts bill.

“The EPW Committee’s title of that bill took the final step to repeal the Green Bank and rescind those cancelled grant funds, as well as millions of dollars from other IRA programs, clawing them back to the US Treasury on behalf of the American taxpayers.

“The EPA, under Administrator Zeldin’s leadership, is delivering real results to benefit West Virginians and the American people.

“But there is still much work to be done. We need to ensure that the EPA’s bipartisan foundational programs, like the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds, are adequately funded. These programs are how communities, especially small and rural communities, replace aging pipes, update treatment systems and ensure safe, reliable service.

“We also need to ensure that programs and processes are well-established to strengthen economic competitiveness by approving new innovative chemicals and cleaning up environmental brownfield sites.

“Administrator Zeldin, I appreciate the steps your Agency has taken so far. I look forward to hearing how you plan to build on this progress, how you are prioritizing EPA’s core responsibilities and how we can continue working together to support American energy and American jobs.”

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