

Chairman Robert Latta
Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Energy
“Appliance and Building Policies: Restoring the American Dream of Home Ownership and
Consumer Choice.”
September 16, 2025
As prepared for delivery

Welcome to today’s legislative hearing, “Appliance and Buildings Policies: Restoring the American Dream of Home Ownership and Consumer Choice.”

Today, we will hear from the Department of Energy and industry stakeholders as we consider 8 bills seeking to address consumer choice, appliance and home affordability, reckless federal building policies, and duplicative regulatory structures.

Many policies pushed over the last several years have raised prices for all consumers, strained our nation’s grid, and yielded little to no benefit for Americans.

That is why the subcommittee will discuss legislation that would have a massive impact on the day-to-day necessities on which American families and businesses rely.

During last week’s hearing, Jim Steffes of Washington Gas said it well when discussing gas bans: *“The idea that we are going to push the gas back down the power wire and use it in a less efficient manner than you would use it at home is absolutely going to raise prices.”*

Importantly, one of the bills we have on the hearing today, the bipartisan Energy Choice Act will prohibit state or local governments from adopting policies that ban access to an energy service based on the fuel that is sold. This includes building performance standards and codes that act as de facto gas bans.

The Homeowner Energy Freedom Act will repeal the funding included in the IRA which bribed states to adopt the 2021 IECC model code. Today, we will hear first-hand testimony of the chilling effect that has had on home building in those states.

Duplicative standards for manufactured housing have also decreased production of affordable, new housing. As home ownership continues to be a top issue for millions of Americans, we must remove regulatory red tape that has restricted options for families.

The anti-fossil fuel agenda doesn't stop with state and local laws—federal policies like the required phase out of fossil fuel use in federal buildings could jeopardize our national security.

The Reliable Federal Infrastructure Act will repeal this inappropriate policy, and the bipartisan Federal Mechanical Insulation Act will refocus evaluations for federal buildings on the potential for implementing true energy efficiency measures, like the installation of mechanical insulation.

The legislation before us today is focused on restoring consumer choice—especially for America's working families. These misguided and duplicative policies from the previous administration hit them the hardest because they (1) price out first-time homebuyers; (2) destroy appliance affordability through steep upfront and installation costs; or (3) discourage the production of affordable, manufactured homes through regulatory morass.

The Don't Mess with my Home Appliances Act will make much-needed statutory reforms to energy efficiency standards for appliances, which have increased in cost while deteriorating in performance because of overregulation.

Lastly, the SHOWER Act will codify a commonsense definition of a showerhead, improving water pressure for those who desire that choice.

We also have included, at our Democratic colleagues' request, legislation by the gentleman from New York's 20th district on DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program. While I have concerns with this bill, as introduced, we are willing to work with our Democratic colleagues to see if we can reach a compromise.

Altogether, the majority of the bills before us today represent an opportunity for this Committee to refocus energy efficiency policies on true energy savings, whether reflected in the cost of an appliance or their utility bills, for hard-working American families.

Thank you to our panels of witnesses for your participation.