

Opening Statement of Chairman Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy
Markup of S. 710, the Hazardous Waste Electronic Manifest Act
July 26, 2012

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Let me begin by thanking Chairman Shimkus, Mr. Green, and Mr. Waxman and their staff for their efforts to produce this commonsense, bipartisan bill.

Companies that handle hazardous waste have long been required to submit manifests – detailed records – of the type, volume, and location of each container from the time it leaves the factory where it was generated to the final storage or disposal site. This bill does not reduce that information requirement -- it makes it work better. With electronic filing, we will eliminate millions of paper copies and reduce expenses and labor.

At the same time, the information will be far more accessible to first responders and others. Data retrieval will entail a few clicks on a keyboard instead of rummaging through file cabinets stuffed with paper copies.

The manager's amendment preserves the essential features of S. 710 while converting the bill from "mandatory" to "discretionary" spending in line with the House's cut-go guidelines. By funding the system with user fees, the bill creates no cost for taxpayers. Meanwhile, users tell us the fees are a bargain because they eliminate the high cost and time-consuming burden of filling out, mailing, and keeping paper forms.

I urge the subcommittee to adopt the manager's amendment and support this bipartisan effort.