Opening Statement of Republican Leader John Shimkus
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
"Time for Action: Addressing the Environmental and Economic Effects of Climate Change"
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As Prepared for Delivery

First, let me congratulate you Mr. Chairman. While you and I had some policy differences over the past six years, we also enjoyed some significant bipartisan policy achievements during my Chairmanship—in no small part because of the thoughtful work you brought to the panel as Democrat Leader.

I believe this Subcommittee will be well served with your leadership.

Today's hearing kicks off a topic that will be challenging, but not impossible, to work through in a bipartisan manner. We all agree that extreme weather events and climate change present risks to our communities—and communities around the world.

While we agree these risks should be addressed, we may disagree about what to do. If we are to reach an agreement on this issue, I believe we must look more openly and broadly at potential solutions.

Many climate policy advocates have been suggesting for years that, if you agree climate change is real, then command-and-control policy prescriptions are the *only* way to address the problem. If you question these expensive solutions, you must not accept the problem.

This is a false choice. And the amped up partisan rhetoric it generates severely inhibits a full look at potential, practical policies that not only help reduce carbon dioxide emissions but also ensure our nation and its communities can grow and prosper.

Recent projections by the International Energy Agency show that fossil energy, even with all existing and announced policies implemented, will remain the dominant form of energy in our global systems through 2040, and likely beyond.

Wind and solar energy will serve a larger portion of electricity generation across the World and in the United States, according to this data, but fossil energy and

nuclear energy—a technology regrettably frowned upon by many climate policy advocates—will remain dominant.

While future innovation could substantially change these projections, the stubborn reality is, the U.S. and global energy systems necessary for societies to develop, grow, trade, and prosper depend upon affordable (and abundant) energy and mobility.

Policies that artificially raise the cost or availability of energy threaten to undermine this fundamental fact, which helps explain the 30-year failure of international climate agreements to significantly reduce global emissions. (Although the United States seems to be doing better than most other nations)

No nation seeking to improve the lives of its citizens will accept energy or transportation constraints, and neither should the United States if we want to maintain robust economic growth and remain globally competitive for future generations.

We could have a fuller conversation about accelerating the transformation to cleaner technologies if we accept that proposing top down government requirements to rapidly decarbonize the U.S. and global economies *may **not*** be the most realistic way to address the climate change problem.

We should be open to the fact that wealth transfer schemes, suggested in radical policies like the Green New Deal, *may **not*** be the best path to community prosperity and preparedness.

And we should be willing to accept that affordable (and abundant) energy ***is*** a key ingredient for economic development and growth. Afterall, economic growth and economic resources, coupled with sound planning, infrastructure, and governance, increase local capabilities to minimize impacts of future extreme events.

These are realities we should explore today and in future hearings if we want to develop sound environmental and energy policies to address climate risks.

We should also focus on the ingredients behind the exceptional achievements of American know-how in energy, in technology, and in innovation that has led to world-leading prosperity—and make sure we can continue to foster these advances in other technologies.

The American shale revolution transformed our nation's economic competitiveness and is driving cleaner electricity generation because of old-fashioned innovation, entrepreneurship, regulatory certainty, and private capital—not big government mandates. Let's apply these lessons more broadly.

Mr. Chairman, there are different approaches to dealing with climate change. Let's focus on solutions that work for the American public.