



Committee: House Energy & Commerce Committee

Event: [Full Committee Markup of 10 Bills](#)

Date: September 2, 2026

Executive Summary:

On September 2, 2026 the House Energy & Commerce Committee hosted a markup of the following ten bills:

- Nuclear REFUEL Act ([H.R. 3978](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Bob Latta** (R-OH-05)
- American Enrichment Deployment Act ([H.R. 9612](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Russell Fry** (R-SC-07)
- Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act ([H.R. 5549](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Morgan Griffith** (R-VA-09)
- Nuclear Advisory Committee Reform Act ([H.R. 9613](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Diana Harshbarger** (R-TN-01)
- NRC Staff Pay Alignment Act ([H.R. 9614](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Robert Menendez** (D-NJ-08)
- Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act ([H.R. 9084](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Kathy Castor** (D-FL-14)
- Diesel Emissions Reduction Act of 2025 ([H.R. 2140](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Doris Matsui** (D-CA-07)
- Lifting Overburdensome Commerce Obstructions and Motives Act ([H.R. 3194](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **John Moolenaar** (R-MI-02)
- Buses Utilizing Safety and Environmental Standards Act ([H.R. 9317](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Nicholas Langworthy** (R-NY-23)
- Battery Recycling for America's Competitive Economy ([H.R. 9615](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Mariannette Miller-Meeks** (R-IA-01)

Members were broadly supportive of the bills under consideration, in particular strengthening the domestic nuclear industry to meet rising energy demand and boosting domestic battery recycling to recover critical minerals.

Democrats argued for robust safety oversight and transparency at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Department of Energy (DOE) to maintain public confidence. They also championed maintaining strong public health and environmental protections.

Republicans described current nuclear regulatory processes and licensing requirements as obstacles that needed to be streamlined to enable faster construction and accelerate deployment. They also prioritized operational flexibility for transport services and easing regulatory hurdles to boost domestic critical mineral recovery.

All the bills under consideration passed out of Committee.

Member Toplines:

[Committee Chair Brett Guthrie \(R-KY-02\)](#): Guthrie underscored the importance of a strong domestic nuclear industry to maintain U.S. technological leadership and ensure reliable, abundant energy. He described the six nuclear bills under consideration as “building on the *ADVANCE Act*” by streamlining licensing, increasing transparency, and clarifying pay authorities. Guthrie also noted his support for H.R. 2140, H.R. 3194, H.R. 9317, and H.R. 9615.

[Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone \(D-NJ-06\)](#): Pallone emphasized that maintaining public confidence in the nuclear industry requires strong safety oversight and transparency at both the NRC and DOE. He also expressed support for the BRACE Act, characterizing it as an opportunity to establish a clearer regulatory framework for lithium-ion battery recycling. Pallone criticized the BUSES Act, arguing that it would lead to increases in pollution and restrict states’ ability to adopt stronger public health protections.

*Energy Subcommittee Chair Latta:*¹ Latta stressed that expanding the nuclear industry is vital to meeting rising energy demand. He described the nuclear bills under consideration as necessary changes to accelerate domestic nuclear development without sacrificing rigorous regulatory oversight.

Energy Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor: Castor praised the six nuclear bills under consideration for effectively balancing safety, transparency, and regulatory efficiency, as well as building upon previous investments from the *ADVANCE Act*. However, she pointed out that the deployment of additional nuclear energy is not an immediate solution to high electricity bills. Castor urged the Committee to pursue broader transmission and interconnection reforms to increase electricity supply and lower consumer costs.

Environment Subcommittee Ranking Member Paul Tonko (D-NY-20): Tonko supported the BRACE Act, characterizing it as an important first step toward establishing clearer federal standards for the storage, handling, and recycling of lithium-ion batteries. He added that a national producer responsibility framework could ultimately strengthen battery collection, reuse, and recycling efforts. Tonko also backed reauthorization of the *Diesel Emissions Reduction Act* (DERA), citing its effectiveness in replacing or retrofitting older, high-emitting diesel engines.

Legislation Considered:**Nuclear REFUEL Act ([H.R. 3978](#))**

- Member Toplines
 - Latta supported H.R. 3978 to streamline the licensing process for reprocessing facilities. He argued that a strong domestic nuclear fuel cycle is essential to maintaining the existing reactor fleet and supporting the deployment of advanced reactors, particularly as energy demand grows.
 - Rep. **Scott Peters** (D-CA-50) explained that the legislation is a useful first step toward removing barriers to recycling and advanced uses of spent fuel.

¹ Opening statement not available at the time of distribution.

- Rep. **Russ Fulcher** (R-ID-01) emphasized that the bill would allow spent fuel processing facilities to use the same regulatory process as other fuel-cycle facilities rather than the more burdensome production-facility framework. He also highlighted the role of Idaho National Laboratory in nuclear research, noting that Idaho was recently identified as one of several potential host states for DOE's Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campus.
- Rep. **Darren Soto** (D-FL-09) explained that the bill would help modernize spent-fuel reprocessing, licensing, and public hearings.
- Rep. **Gabe Evans** (R-CO-08) stressed that the bill would help the U.S. establish a complete domestic nuclear fuel cycle to meet growing energy demand.
- **The bill passed out of Committee in a 44-0 vote.**

American Enrichment Deployment Act ([H.R. 9612](#))

- Member Toplines:
 - Fry stressed that the legislation would help shorten project timelines by more than a year while preserving necessary safety reviews.
- Amendments
 - Fry ANS² - Clarify congressional intent and further aligns the bill with the existing licensing framework for other fuel-cycle facilities.
 - Fry stressed that the amendment would remove an unnecessary inspections provision.
 - Rep. **Kim Schrier** (D-WA-08) explained that the U.S. needs a rapid expansion of domestic uranium enrichment capacity to support additional nuclear deployment and criticized current rules for preventing enrichment applicants from beginning construction before licensing.
 - Rep. **Erin Houchin** (R-IN-09) stressed that faster deployment of enrichment capacity will be essential to ensuring adequate fuel supplies for new and existing reactors.
 - The ANS was adopted by voice vote.
- **The bill, as amended, passed out of Committee by a vote of 43-0.**

Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act ([H.R. 5549](#))

- Member Toplines
 - Griffith supported the bill, arguing that mandatory uncontested hearings consume substantial NRC staff time and applicant resources without improving safety or fact-finding.
 - Schrier stressed that NRC should focus its limited staff resources on contested licensing matters and substantive safety and environmental reviews.
 - Rep. **Tom Kean Jr** (R-NJ-07) described the bill as a “commonsense” effort to modernize outdated NRC requirements.
 - Rep. **Marc Veasey** (D-TX-33) added that the bill would streamline the licensing process without sacrificing safety or public input.
- **The bill passed out of Committee by a vote of 44-0.**

Nuclear Advisory Committee Reform Act ([H.R. 9613](#))

² Amendment not available at the time of distribution.

- Amendments
 - Castor ANS - Allow the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), rather than NRC commissioners, to determine which issues warrant review.
 - Castor stressed that the ANS would improve nuclear licensing efficiency without sacrificing transparency or safety.
 - Harshbarger explained that the ANS would make ACRS' work more efficient.
 - Rep. **Craig Goldman** (R-TX-12) noted that the ANS would help the U.S. deploy necessary additional nuclear capacity more quickly.
 - The ANS was adopted by voice vote.
- **The bill, as amended, passed the Committee by a vote of 41-0.**

NRC Staff Pay Alignment Act ([H.R. 9614](#))

- Member Toppings
 - Reps. **Buddy Carter** (R-GA-01), **Diana DeGette** (D-CO-01), and **Rob Menendez** (D-NJ-08) explained that the bill would help the NRC secure additional specialized personnel to oversee nuclear safety and efficiently license nuclear reactors.
- **The bill passed out of Committee by a vote of 42-0.**

Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act ([H.R. 9084](#))

- Member Toppings
 - Miller-Meeks and Castor explained that the bill would help improve public confidence in nuclear energy by establishing transparency requirements for DOE nuclear programs.
- **The bill passed out of Committee by a vote of 41-0.**

Diesel Emissions Reduction Act of 2025 ([H.R. 2140](#))

- Member Toppings
 - Matsui supported her bill to reauthorize DERA for another five years. She argued that reducing diesel pollution is particularly important for protecting children and low-income communities.
 - Rep. **Troy Carter** (D-LA-02) stressed the significant air-quality challenges facing communities in Louisiana, particularly those located near major industrial facilities and ports.
- **The bill passed out of Committee by a vote of 43-0.**

Lifting Overburdensome Commerce Obstructions and Motives Act ([H.R. 3194](#))

- Member Toppings
 - Carter (GA) explained that state-specific railroad emissions requirements, such as in California, impose unnecessary compliance costs on the industry, increasing transportation costs.
- Amendments
 - Goldman 01 - Ensure the bill is aligned properly with the *Clean Air Act* provisions it would amend.
 - The amendment was agreed to by voice vote.

- Barragan 01 - Preserve state locomotive emissions standards otherwise preempted by the bill if the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) determines that the standards would prevent premature deaths and reduce healthcare costs.
 - Rep. **Nanette Barragan** (D-CA-44) explained that diesel locomotive pollution creates serious public health risks for rail workers and the public, making the amendment necessary.
 - The amendment was rejected by a vote of 22-26.
- **The bill, as amended, passed the Committee by a vote of 26-23.**

Buses Utilizing Safety and Environmental Standards Act ([H.R. 9317](#))

- Member Toplines
 - Langworthy argued that passenger safety should take priority over restrictive state and local idling limits.
 - Pallone explained that most state and local idling restrictions already contain exemptions for safety and extreme temperatures, making the legislation unnecessary.
- Amendments
 - Peters 01 - Narrow the bill's 15-minute idling protection to pre-trip inspections, loading passengers with disabilities, and temperature control.
 - Peters explained that his amendment would address concerns with disability access and safety inspections without restricting local authority.
 - Pallone argued that the amendment would establish an unnecessarily "weak" federal floor, adding that policymakers should instead encourage technologies that reduce engine idling and fuel consumption.
 - Rep. **Jennifer McClellan** (D-VA-04) noted that restarting a diesel engine consumes far less fuel than extended idling.
 - The amendment was agreed to by voice vote.
 - Ocasio-Cortez 01 - Prevent H.R. 9317 from taking effect until the EPA Administrator can certify that implementation would not increase children's exposure to air pollution.
 - Reps. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (D-NY-14) and **Yvette Clarke** (D-NY-11) pointed out that cities' dense urban environment and high childhood asthma rates require stronger local protections than may be necessary elsewhere.
 - Langworthy explained that the amendment could indefinitely prevent H.R. 9317 from taking effect and would not address practical safety issues faced by drivers.
 - McClellan and Menendez emphasized the respiratory and public-health risks associated with diesel exhaust, particularly for children and communities already exposed to other industrial pollution.
 - The amendment was rejected by a vote of 23-25.
 - Carter (LA) 01 - Preserve state and local authority to impose stricter idling restrictions on buses operating within 100 feet of schools, daycare facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, and other healthcare facilities.

- Carter (LA) argued that the underlying legislation establishes a federal “pollution floor” that would prevent communities from enforcing stronger protections.
 - Langworth explained that wheelchair lifts and other equipment may require the engine to remain running for longer periods of time.
 - The amendment was rejected by a vote of 23-26.
- Tonko 01 - Prevent H.R. 9317 from taking effect until the EPA Administrator can confirm that it would not increase Americans’ fuel costs.
 - Tonko argued that Congress should determine whether H.R. 9317 would increase fuel consumption before allowing it to take effect.
 - The amendment was rejected by a vote of 23-25.
- **The bill passed the Committee by a vote of 26-22.**

Battery Recycling for America’s Competitive Economy ([H.R. 9615](#))

- Member Toplines
 - Rep. **Gary Palmer** (R-AL-06) described H.R.9615 as a bipartisan effort to strengthen the domestic battery recycling industry and recover critical minerals already circulating in the U.S. He added that demand for lithium-ion batteries has increased substantially across electric vehicles, energy storage, and consumer products, creating an opportunity to recover lithium, cobalt, nickel, copper, and other valuable minerals at the end of a battery’s life.
 - Rep. **Raul Ruiz** (D-CA-25) argued that existing federal rules governing end-of-life batteries were developed for older battery chemistries and do not adequately address the risks associated with new lithium-ion batteries.
 - Rep. **John Joyce** (R-PA-13) stressed that current federal regulations have made it unnecessarily difficult to recycle and reuse materials from used batteries.
 - Menendez noted that the bill would create greater regulatory parity for facilities temporarily storing batteries before recycling and instruct EPA to develop regulations to account for the unique risks of lithium-ion batteries.
- Amendments
 - Palmer ANS - Make technical clarifications to the bill’s interim requirements for facilities that temporarily store lithium-ion batteries before recycling.
 - Palmer explained that his amendment reflects feedback from the battery and recycling industries and waste-management experts.
 - The ANS was agreed to by voice vote.
- **The bill as amended passed Committee by a vote of 46-0.**