

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA
CHAIRMAN

JOHN D. DINGELL, MICHIGAN
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
RICK BOUCHER, VIRGINIA
FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY
BART GORDON, TENNESSEE
BOBBY L. RUSH, ILLINOIS
ANNA G. ESHOO, CALIFORNIA
BART STUPAK, MICHIGAN
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK
GENE GREEN, TEXAS
DIANA DEGETTE, COLORADO
VICE CHAIRMAN

LOIS CAPPS, CALIFORNIA
MIKE DOYLE, PENNSYLVANIA
JANE HARMAN, CALIFORNIA
JAN SCHAKOWSKY, ILLINOIS
CHARLES A. GONZALEZ, TEXAS
JAY INSLEE, WASHINGTON
TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN
MIKE ROSS, ARKANSAS
ANTHONY D. WEINER, NEW YORK
JIM MATHESON, UTAH
G.K. BUTTERFIELD, NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLIE MELANCON, LOUISIANA
JOHN BARROW, GEORGIA
BARON P. HILL, INDIANA
DORIS O. MATSUI, CALIFORNIA
DONNA CHRISTENSEN, VIRGIN ISLANDS
KATHY CASTOR, FLORIDA
JOHN SARBANES, MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, CONNECTICUT
ZACHARY T. SPACE, OHIO
JERRY MCNERNEY, CALIFORNIA
BETTY SUTTON, OHIO
BRUCE BRALEY, IOWA
PETER WELCH, VERMONT

JOE BARTON, TEXAS
RANKING MEMBER

RALPH M. HALL, TEXAS
FRED UPTON, MICHIGAN
CLIFF STEARNS, FLORIDA
NATHAN DEAL, GEORGIA
ED WHITFIELD, KENTUCKY
JOHN SHIMKUS, ILLINOIS
JOHN B. SHADEGG, ARIZONA
ROY BLUNT, MISSOURI
STEVE BUYER, INDIANA
GEORGE RADANOVICH, CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH R. PITTS, PENNSYLVANIA
MARY BONO MACK, CALIFORNIA
GREG WALDEN, OREGON
LEE TERRY, NEBRASKA
MIKE ROGERS, MICHIGAN
SUE WILKINS MYRICK, NORTH CAROLINA
JOHN SULLIVAN, OKLAHOMA
TIM MURPHY, PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL C. BURGESS, TEXAS
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
PHIL GINGREY, GEORGIA
STEVE SCALISE, LOUISIANA

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

MAJORITY (202) 225-2927
FACSIMILE (202) 225-2525
MINORITY (202) 225-3641

energycommerce.house.gov

Opening Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce Full Committee Markup May 25, 2010

I call the Committee to order.

Over the next two days, the committee will consider several important pieces of legislation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their hard work in getting these bills to the point where we can take them forward.

I want briefly to outline the measures we will be marking up:

Today we will consider H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

This legislation will take care of the thousands of first responders who rushed to the World Trade Centers to save as many people as they could, and who have been sickened as a result of the toxic clouds that enveloped lower Manhattan in the wake of the attacks. The legislation will also provide health care for the thousands of people who lived and worked in Lower Manhattan at the time of the attacks.

The bill establishes a program to provide health care from qualified experts to the first responders and other survivors of the attacks. The bill would also monitor the health of first responders and survivors who may develop illnesses related to the 9/11 attacks. The bill also authorizes research to understand what the health effects of the exposures to the toxic debris of the World Trade Center towers are.

Tomorrow we will consider three bills. One is H.R. 4805, the Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Products Act. This legislation would establish a federal standard, based on requirements already set by the State of California, to limit the amount of formaldehyde that can be emitted from composite wood products. Because it would apply this standard nationally, the legislation would result in greater protections for all Americans. It would ensure that we do not

have a repeat of the disaster with the FEMA trailers used after Hurricane Katrina – which made so many people sick – and it would make all consumers safer.

In addition, the legislation would provide a level playing field for American manufacturers in competing against importers, who currently do not have to meet these standards unless they sell in California. This legislation would end this disparity, making all manufacturers – domestic and foreign – meet the same safety standards.

We have worked extensively with the minority over the past two months to resolve some of their concerns with the bill. I would also like to commend Ms. Matsui for championing this legislation and ensuring that we are doing everything we can for both consumers and businesses.

Another bill we will consider tomorrow is the Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 2010 – the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reauthorization. This is important legislation that has the potential to dramatically improve vehicle safety into the future.

This year, we have seen why we need to reform our auto safety laws. Toyota received thousands of complaints of sudden unintended acceleration, but never thoroughly investigated the possible causes. NHTSA, the agency charged with protecting the public from unsafe vehicles, had plenty of evidence that there was a problem. But it lacked the expertise, the resources, and the will to force a recall.

The legislation before us today will address many of these problems and advance auto and highway safety.

Finally, the Committee will turn to H.R. 5320, the Assistance, Quality, and Affordability Act – or AQUA – which will ensure the rebuilding of our safe drinking water infrastructure.

This legislation will work to ensure that public water systems deliver safe, affordable drinking water to the American people, while creating jobs and prioritizing financially sound investment in our water infrastructure.

The AQUA Act has strong support from stakeholders across the board: rural and metropolitan water systems, state drinking water administrators, civil engineers, labor unions, water technology researchers, and environmental groups.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, our nation's drinking water systems require at least \$334 billion in investment over the next twenty years. Currently, we are not investing enough to even maintain the infrastructure we have, let alone improve and upgrade it.

Reauthorizing the drinking water state revolving fund is a critically important step in addressing this priority.

I thank my colleagues for their work on these very important pieces of legislation.