

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH 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
Minority (202) 225-3641

Opening Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
Markup on Discussion Draft of “Pipeline Infrastructure and Community Protection Act of 2011” and, H.R. 2054, the “Energy and Revenue Enrichment Act of 2011”
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
July 27, 2011

During the last twelve months, a series of tragic failures has reinforced the need for stronger pipeline safety laws. Pipeline failures have occurred all around the country, from California and Montana to Michigan and Pennsylvania. We’ve seen natural gas pipeline explosions and ruptured oil pipelines spilling oil into rivers.

We finished a legislative hearing on this topic last Thursday. Just in the last six days, there was a natural gas pipeline failure in Wyoming and an oil pipeline failure near Tampa, Florida. It’s clearly time to update and strengthen our pipeline safety laws.

After this month’s hearing, there were productive bipartisan discussions on the legislation. Those discussions produced the manager’s amendment that we are going to consider today. I’d like to commend Chairman Upton and Mr. Dingell for their hard work on this bill. The manager’s amendment is a good compromise and includes a number of important improvements to the initial discussion draft. I support this amendment and look forward to working with our colleagues to report this legislation out of the full committee.

The other bill we’re considering today is Chairman Whitfield’s legislation to direct the Department of Energy to enter into a contract to enrich its depleted uranium tails so that the resulting enriched uranium can be sold on the market. During the legislative hearing on this bill, I raised a number of concerns about whether it would be good deal for taxpayers.

Unfortunately, the manager’s amendment suffers from the same basic problems as the original bill. This amendment gives a sole-source contract to a company in the Chairman's district. It also ignores other options for disposing of DOE's excess uranium that could provide more value to the taxpayer.

For these reasons, I will be opposing this legislation.