

**CANCELLING CONSUMER CHOICE:
EXAMINING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION'S
REGULATORY ASSAULT ON AMERICANS'
HOME APPLIANCES**

HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY
POLICY, AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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- * Questions for the Record: to Dr. Richmond; submitted by Rep. Fallon.

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Tuesday, July 18, 2023

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY
POLICY, AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:15 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Pat Fallon [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Fallon, Comer, Perry, Boebert, Edwards, Bush, Brown, and Norton.

Also present: Representative Moskowitz.

Mr. FALLON. The hearing on the Subcommittee of Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs will come to order. I want to welcome everyone. I want to apologize for being a bit tardy.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Today, we will examine the Department of Energy's proposed rulemaking on home appliances, a tidal wave of regulatory burdens affecting Americans' daily lives. This slate of rules includes the controversial consumer convention cooking products rule, which imposes stricter requirements on gas stoves, but it does not stop there, unfortunately. There are other rulemakings under consideration for dishwashers, refrigerators, water heaters, furnaces, air conditioners, and other household appliances under the guise of improving energy efficiency as proscribed by the Environmental Policy and Conservation Act or EPCA.

In May, this Committee invited DOE officials to discuss gas stove rule, which would impact 40 percent of American households, but the Department refused to make witnesses available. Instead, the Subcommittee heard valuable insight from nongovernmental witnesses that the gas stove rule is not a sincere attempt to improve efficiency. Today, the hearing follows over 2 months of correspond-

ence between the Committee and the DOE, requesting the Department testify on these opaque and burdensome rulemakings.

During the Subcommittee's hearings last month regarding EPA emissions rules, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle expressed annoyance that we are repeating hearing topics. I am here to say that we wholeheartedly agree. As I said last month, and I will say it again now, if the Administration cared about transparency, they would appear before this Committee when requested, and this Committee would not have to duplicate hearing topics. We do have a lot to talk about in the next year or two, and we would like to move on as well. And we are glad the Department finally showed up to answer questions about the burdensome rules that they want to impose on our constituents.

The gas stove rule, in particular, presents alarming violations of EPCA and erroneous analysis according to the experts who testified in place of invited departmental officials. The Department relied on uncited, court-supervised consent decree and dubious citations to the law as grounds for refusing to testify at earlier hearings. We saw this rationale on full display from Democrats who claimed the Department's rule is "required actually by law," which is not accurate. We also heard the Democrats say that gas stoves create an unsafe indoor air quality environment and may be linked to childhood asthma, ignoring peer-reviewed research suggesting that there is no causal relationship between the use of gas indoor cooking appliances and asthma.

I am adding this research submitted by the American Gas Association to the hearing record, and without objection, so ordered.

In defending their position, the Department and Democrats appear to be endorsing the sue and settle type of practices of radical activist litigants, a practice which allows special interest groups to achieve regulatory goals by forcing agencies to implement policies in response to litigation by friendly organizations that occurs in secret to bypass the legislative and regulatory processes. On September 20, 2022, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Center for Biological Diversity, and other liberal groups settled the lawsuit against the Department to update "overdue" energy efficiency standards for 20 categories of consumer and commercial appliances and equipment, including gas stoves. The settlement accelerated the Biden Administration's 100-plus actions on energy efficiency standards, avoiding EPA requirements, which now cover a whole host of household items Americans use every day.

Many of the rules result in hundreds of millions in cost to manufacturers, costs which will ultimately be passed on to none other than our constituents: the American consumer. The DOE, however, will argue that the savings of, say, 12 cents a month or \$1.50 per year is more than enough reason to reconfigure the entire gas stove industry. If that does not seem like much, well, you can sleep easy knowing that getting rid of your gas stove is saving the planet from climate change.

And, yes, come on. We all know that these rules are a solution in search of a problem. America is a global leader in technology and technological advancements in energy efficiency regardless of the fuel source. And as I have said on many occasions, we have reduced our carbon footprint by over 20 percent in the last 20-plus

years where China has increased their carbon footprint by 300 percent. The United States is not a planet. We are sharing a planet with another 192 other countries.

There are plenty of reasons to be concerned about the coordinated efforts between radical environmental activists and subsequent agency rulemakings that stand to impact even the smallest aspect of our daily lives. If an agency is going to propose rules that stand up and the entire sectors, you know, like the appliance industry, then they should be ready to answer questions about them, and that is why we are here today.

I want to thank our witness for appearing before the Committee today, and I yield to Ranking Member Bush for her opening statement.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. St. Louis and I are here today, again, to discuss the Biden Administration's regulations to improve the efficiency of gas stoves and now other household appliances. Since our last hearing on this very topic, the importance of commonsense regulations has not changed. The harmful effects of fossil fuel usage, similarly, has not changed. The consequences of Federal inaction remain dire.

Since we are at yet another hearing about home appliance regulations, I am going to reiterate what we said last time about gas stoves. The Biden-Harris Administration is not banning gas stoves, nor is it leading a conspiracy to regulate your appliances out of existence. This hearing is Republicans playing defense for Big Oil and Gas. We should not be surprised that some of the largest contributors to climate change are for-profit interests opposed to regulations that reduce energy consumption and affect their bottom line. Those who pay the highest price from regulatory inaction are Black and Brown communities.

Lawmakers have an obligation to regulate both indoor and outdoor pollution by increasing the energy efficiency of common household appliances. As energy-efficient technology evolves, so should our regulatory powers. The Department of Energy stated that their proposed changes to gas stove energy standards "would save a significant amount of energy and would yield significant environmental benefits." These benefits include lower energy bills, fewer toxic emissions in our air and water, and providing monetary health benefits. The estimated financial benefits of implementing these rules amounts to over \$130 million in reducing operating costs, nearly \$60 million in climate benefits, and \$94 million in health benefits. Those dividends are just on this single proposal related to stoves and does not account for the benefits of improving energy efficiency standards for dishwashers, refrigerators, washing machines, and other common household appliances.

Republicans enjoy talking about the price of regulation and the cost increases companies and manufacturers may incur to remain DOE compliant. The reality is the appliance standard programs have saved consumers and businesses billions of dollars. Families and businesses have benefited for decades from more efficient gas stoves, laundry machines, dishwashers, and light bulbs.

The climate crisis is here, and it is very, very real. Record heatwaves have enveloped the Nation this month alone, and large parts of Missouri have been designated as natural disaster areas

due to drought, as we speak. According to Nexus Media, within this decade, St. Louis will become 2 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than it was during the latter half of the 20th century. This warmer air will lead to more severe rainfall, leading to massive and more regular flooding in the region. Missouri endures both extremes of the climate disaster. Parts of my state battle drought, while other parts of my state battle historic flooding. In 2019, St. Louis' river system reached a historically high level and inundated the area surrounding the Gateway Arch. As these storms and flooding grow more common, it is low-lying neighborhoods, often those of whom who are populated with Black and Brown families, that will bear the brunt of Federal inaction.

Despite the frightening reality of climate change and its very real and very visible effects on our communities, my Republican colleagues oppose commonsense regulations to curb harmful emissions. The Biden Administration's rules incentivize the innovations most private sector companies are already pursuing. Some manufacturers are choosing not to protect our health and safety in the interest of short-term profit. By cutting regulatory corners, manufacturers are making it more difficult to protect consumers, but the reality is Republican opposition to basic efficiency standards is entirely new.

These pragmatic policies used to be bipartisan. Presidents Reagan, H.W. Bush, and W. Bush all signed efficiency standards for various household appliances into law during their presidencies. Today, however, the only regulations Republicans fight for are to restrict access to abortion and children's books. Republicans are fighting tooth and nail to deny vital access to Republican healthcare and to needlessly regulate classroom learning, and yet it is not OK to protect the environment. It is not OK to reduce climate change or improve public health. The Republican agenda will exacerbate existing health and climate issues. The Biden-Harris Administration's plan, however, will help ensure a cleaner, healthier future for our children. I want to thank them for their efforts on this front, as well as the Department of Energy for protecting our planet. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. I am pleased to welcome our witness today, Dr. Geraldine Richmond. Dr. Richmond is an Under Secretary of Science and Innovation at the Department of Energy. We look forward to hearing what you have to say on today's important topic.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(G), the witness will please stand and raise her right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Ms. RICHMOND. I do.

I will let the record show the witness answered in the affirmative. Please take your seat.

Mr. FALLON. We appreciate you being here today, Doctor, and look forward to your testimony. Let me remind the witness that we have read your statement, and it will appear in full in the written record, in the hearing record. Listen, please limit your oral statement to 5 minutes. And as a reminder, you are going to have a little button there. Please press it so we can hear you. And then you

will have a light that will be yellow for 4 minutes—or I am sorry—it will be green for 4 minutes, and it will turn yellow for the last minute, and then red, and then if you could wrap it up, we would appreciate it.

And I now recognize Dr. Richmond for her opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF GERALDINE RICHMOND
UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Ms. RICHMOND. Great. Well, good morning, everyone, and Chairman Fallon, Ranking Member Bush, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. As mentioned, I am actually—you can call me Geri Richmond—I am Under Secretary for Science and Innovation in the Department of Energy, and actually 45 years of conducting research at the University of Oregon, so I am a scientist by trade.

Energy conservation standards are one of our Nation's most important tools to save energy in homes and businesses across the country, and under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, EPCA, Congress has required DOE to issue many of these standards. From the program's inception since 1975 to 2020, appliance standards saved consumers more than a trillion dollars on their utility bills, and that number is expected to pass \$2 trillion by 2030. DOE's energy conservation standards also provide transparency and uniformity, that is very important, and stakeholders alike. Our test procedures ensure all covered products sold in the United States are evaluated against the same methods and criteria so consumers and industry can compare apples with apples. What we are talking about today is saving consumers and companies money, protecting the environment, and improving our Nation's energy security. I look forward to working with the Committee to advance each of these important goals, which I know that we all share.

As I mentioned, Congress enacted EPCA in 1975 and established a Federal program of test procedures, labeling, and energy targets for consumer products. The law was amended in 1979 and directed DOE to establish energy conservation standards for consumer products, including consumer conventional cooking products. At least once every 6 years, EPCA requires DOE to review existing standards for covered products and determine whether to amend the existing standard based on the analysis of stationary criteria.

Pursuant to its statutory obligations under EPCA, the Department is proposing energy conservation standards for both gas and electric consumer conventional cooking products, which includes ovens, ranges, and cooktops. DOE is required to conduct this rule-making on a specific timeline due to the consent decree ordered by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, which requires that the final rule be completed by January 2024.

As with all energy conservation standards, the proposed standards for cooktops were based on data-driven analysis and statutory factors outlined in EPCA, including a robust stakeholder process. These proposed standards would only apply to products manufactured or imported into the United States 3 years from now, 3 years after a final rule is published in the Federal Register. So, according to the efficiency levels outlined in the proposal, American con-

sumers would save up to \$1.7 billion per year in 2021 dollars, and a new gas cooktop would use 33 percent less natural gas on average than the least efficient models today. Nearly 50 percent of the current gas cooktop models would not be impacted by the rule. In fact, the entry-level gas models on the market are also the most efficient and would not be impacted by this rule. In its evaluation, DOE found that the proposed standards would not reduce the utility or performance of the products under consideration. And that means the proposed rule would not make stoves less hot or make them heat up more slowly, among other performance features that we know consumers care about.

So, there has been some confusion around this rule, so I would like to just provide some clarity on a few points. The Department of Energy is not proposing any ban on gas stoves. DOE is committed to consumer choice. The Department does not have the authority to ban gas stoves. DOE cannot require and is not proposing that consumers replace stoves already installed in their homes. And again, DOE's proposed standards, if adopted, would only apply to products manufactured or imported 3 years after the final rule published in the Federal Register.

The Department of Energy is always working to seize the opportunities for energy efficiency offers and saving families and businesses money by saving energy, and the Department will continue to fulfill its statutory obligations as directed by Congress and the courts. And I appreciate the chance to share information on DOE's Energy Conservation Standards Program for cooktops, and I am happy to answer the Committee Members' questions on this topic. Thank you.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Doctor. I now recognize myself for 5 minutes for the purpose of questions.

Dr. Richmond, who was responsible for the decision at the Department to decline the Committee's previous invitation to appear before this Subcommittee to discuss the gas stoves rule on May 24th?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, I was not involved in that initial decision that came from May 4th, but the minute that I got the invitation to come and speak with you, I immediately accepted it.

Mr. FALLON. Well, thank you because you understand why there would be concern. It should be a bipartisan concern, regardless of which party is in power, that we are the elected representatives of the people. And when we ask an agency of the administration to come and testify, I think it is incredibly important and paramount really to doing your job effectively to answer questions, both easy and the tough ones, the softballs and the fastballs, if you will. As outlined in the Committee, July 11, 2023, letter to your Department, the DOE representative stated that preparing you to testify on all proposed and finalized rules regarding home appliances would be "too much to be able to get you ready to testify for." Do you take exception to that?

Ms. RICHMOND. I could talk about the other ones, too, to some degree. I am here. I oversee it, so to the degree that I can, I am happy to talk about other appliances, but I may not be able to be as much detailed as you might like, but I would always get back to you, if you need it.

Mr. FALLON. Because, you know, seeing as all of these rules fall under your purview——

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes.

Mr. FALLON [continuing]. As Under Secretary, you would not have any issues to be able to talk about the matters that clearly fall within your job description.

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes. That is right.

Mr. FALLON. Yes. OK. Great.

Ms. RICHMOND. That is right.

Mr. FALLON. It seems clear that the sheer volume of rules proposed by your office is impacting your ability to pay proper attention to each proposal. Why would you allow so many rules to be put forth if you do not have the ability to adequately review since we were told that you would be unable to testify about them? That is essentially what your Department had told us.

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, thank you for that question. Let me just say that DOE has an incredible team that works on every single one of these, including the six that are up right now. I am just incredibly impressed by it, and I do not think that it is too much for the Department of Energy to be doing. We have been doing this for 50 years, and as the number of appliances have increased, their technical capabilities have increased, too. So, I have full confidence that the DOE team involved in this can manage the number of appliances that we are working on right now.

Mr. FALLON. It is my understanding that the DOE relied on a court-ordered consent decree initiated by environmental activist groups as a basis for not providing witnesses at our May 24, 2023 hearing. Is that correct? Do you agree with that?

Ms. RICHMOND. That they were influencing the decision as to whether or not these other outside groups were?

Mr. FALLON. That they would not provide witnesses.

Ms. RICHMOND. The reason that DOE would not provide witnesses——

Mr. FALLON. Mm-hmm.

Ms. RICHMOND [continuing]. To talk to you?

Mr. FALLON. Mm-hmm.

Ms. RICHMOND. No.

Mr. FALLON. OK. In October 2020, environmentalist groups filed a lawsuit to update overdue energy efficiency standards for appliances, which conveniently overlaps with the Biden Administration's actions on energy efficiency standards. This is certainly a coincidence. Is the DOE coordinating with outside environmentalist groups to enact policy changes on energy efficiency standards?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, we do not consult with environmental groups in making our policy rules and decisions. Once we have put them out, have announced our proposal, then we take a lot of input both on the web as well as meeting with stakeholders, but by no means is any outside group influencing the rules that we propose. Again, after they have been proposed, we listen to stakeholders.

Mr. FALLON. Doctor, thank you, respectfully, just because my time is limited, when you say you meet with stakeholders, did you meet with the stakeholders that produce the stoves and other appliances?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes.

Mr. FALLON. And do you feel that they are happy about your decisions?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, you know, in this case, we take all of the input and then we discuss it, and I think for me to say whether we are happy or not with it at this point would not be appropriate. But we continue to listen, and many times negotiate with them on things to make it so that it is not a burden to them also, so I think we have a very open process.

Mr. FALLON. So, you are saying that you do not think that these regulations are a burden on the producers of these appliances because they believe that it is a huge burden, and a lot of them think they are going to be losing millions if not hundreds of millions of dollars.

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, thank you for that question. Our analysis suggests that, for example, for the gas, if we are going to focus specifically on the gas stoves, that for the gas stoves, for all the products that are out there that we have looked at, 50 percent of those do not require, and those are the low-entry ones, they do not require any modification whatsoever. Of the other 50 percent which would not be able to meet the proposed rule, those would take, we figure, the manufacturer, to cost about \$12 per unit for them to modify their gas stove, so we do not see that this is an undue burden.

Mr. FALLON. Well, thank you. My time is up, but the folks in the industries vehemently disagree with what you just said. Now I yield to Ranking Member Bush for her 5 minutes.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. St. Louis and I rise today to reiterate, the Biden Administration is not banning gas stoves. I just want to keep saying that. Despite what some of my Republican colleagues and conservative pundits would like for the American people to think, the Department of Energy's updated appliance standards do not ban gas stoves or any appliance. In fact, I believe that one of my Republican colleagues came to that conclusion during our last gas stoves hearing. He said in his closing statement twice, "This is not a ban," and so I am glad that my colleague agrees. The Department of Energy's proposed updates to its appliance standards, when implemented, will benefit American consumers in several ways. So, Dr. Richmond, what are the costs in savings for American consumers associated with the proposed updates to these standards?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, they are substantial, and, for example, the gas stoves would take 33 percent less fuel in order to run them. In 30 years, they save, in electricity, enough for \$19 million homes and also can save consumers \$2.3 billion on their energy bills in that time, so it is significant savings. It is significant savings, and, in fact, the estimate is that over the lifetime of the gas stove, some are on the order of \$45 for the gas stove in terms of their energy savings, so it is a lot of savings. And, you know, we are here to reduce waste and save people money. That is what we do.

Ms. BUSH. And that is significant. So, Dr. Richmond, will these updates help reduce pollution and, as a result, potentially improve health outcomes for families, and businesses, and consumers alike?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, no, it is not the role of Department of Energy to determine issues of health. So, we are here, in particular, to set the rules for increasing the efficiency of the products, so

health issues are a little out of the bounds of what I can talk about. It is not really under our umbrella.

Ms. BUSH. Let me ask, in the last hearing, one of my Republican colleagues claimed that this proposed rule, if implemented, actually raise rental costs for some home renters because landlords will be forced to buy new ovens and would pass along those costs to renters. Can you tell us, was this potential scenario considered when the Department of Energy published this rule? Is it a possibility?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, thank you for that question because that is an important issue to us because renters usually oftentimes have the tightest budgets, but, no, it would not because the point is we are not banning the gas stoves. We are not forcing any building to have to retrofit to be able to go to electric. Everybody can continue to use whatever gas or electric that they want, so there is no reason for a building to require its renters to change to electric.

So, in fact, you know, again, the 50 percent that will pass through these rules without modification, they are really the entry-level stoves. They are really the entry-level gas stoves, and from my perspective, those are usually ones that are in the rental units, too, so they are actually doing quite well with regards to this rule.

Ms. BUSH. So just to be clear, can the Department of Energy go into people's homes or businesses and take away their stoves or any other appliances? Is there anybody peeking in?

Ms. RICHMOND. No. No, we are not, and we are not in the business of it. We are not yanking anything out. But that aside, I think it is important to get across a point that we want people to be able to choose what they want to choose, but when they choose it, we want to make sure that it is the most efficient appliance that they can get. That is the point.

Ms. BUSH. And thank you for confirming what congressional Democrats have been saying that the Biden-Harris Administration is not banning gas stoves. With all of these described benefits, I fail to see why my colleagues across the aisle would be opposed to new Department of Energy efficiency standards. These updated regulations are not an attempt to ban or take away appliances, like gas stoves, light bulbs, or dishwashers, from small businesses or from families. These updated standards will improve the efficiency of appliances. They will reduce harmful impacts to consumers and the environment, and help families and businesses save money on their utility bills. Thank you for being here, Dr. Richmond, and I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our good friend from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Chairman. I am sure I am happy the Department of Energy is out here making sure that we can all save money because we are too dumb to figure out how to do it ourselves. Dr. Richmond, as I look at this, you are looking at a gas stove rule, a dishwasher rule, a washing machine rule, a clothes dryer rule, a general service lamp or light bulb rule, a refrigerator rule, and a new room air conditioner rule. And you said earlier that you do not coordinate with radical environmentalist groups, but in May, in a letter refusing to provide testimony at a hearing in this Committee, DOE relied on a court-ordered consent decree initiated by radical environmentalist activist groups for the basis for not

providing witnesses. If you do not coordinate, why was that the case?

Ms. RICHMOND. So, thank you for that question.

Mr. PERRY. You do not have to thank me, ma'am. Just answer it. It would be great.

Ms. RICHMOND. So, that was to apply pressure for us to give a timeline for us to actually put the rule in place, which is now January 20.

Mr. PERRY. So, OK, fair enough. When is it? When must energy standards be updated per the statute?

Ms. RICHMOND. So, every 6 years, DOE is to look to see whether—

Mr. PERRY. And consider them, right?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. OK, consider—does “consider” mean promulgate rules every 6 years?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, it does not suggest that. What we do every 6 years is we look to see whether—

Mr. PERRY. OK. So, when do you decide that it is finally time?

Ms. RICHMOND. Every 6 years.

Mr. PERRY. Every 6 years you take a look to determine whether you like efficiency standards or not, but every 6 years you do not promulgate a rule, right? I just went through gas stove, refrigerator, air conditioner, clothes dryer, a light bulb, washing machine, but every 6 years we have not had one of them. So, how come every 6 years we have not had one if you look at them every 6 years?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, you know, they are not exactly all timed for the very same year, of course.

Mr. PERRY. Well, they look like they are pretty well timed right now.

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, the six are certainly, but we have 60 appliances that we work with.

Mr. PERRY. Yes. And, you know, washing machines, refrigerators, gas stoves are something that are found in most people's homes, even people on the lower end of the economic spectrum. Ma'am, I do not know what kind of gas stove you have in your house, and to the gentlelady from the other side of the aisle who says it is not a ban, according to my figures, 4 percent of current gas stovetops available in the market today meet the rule, which means 96 percent of them do not. And if you are not making a lot of money, you cannot afford the expensive one that probably will meet it, so you got to try and buy the other one.

You know, I am glad the Department of Energy is saving everybody a bunch of money by forcing them to spend a bunch of money, but if you have a gas stove in your home right now, there is a gas line coming to it and probably a 110 connection. Do you know what it takes to put an electric stove in your home? Do you have any idea?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, I do not, but I do—

Mr. PERRY. Here, I do. You got to run the 220 line, which means you got to probably have to get an electrician because unless you know how to do that yourself, you are playing with potentially losing your life and electrocuting yourself, and your township or your

municipality is not going to let you do it. You are going to have to hire somebody to come in and drill holes in your floor and pull wire to the panel and hook that whole thing up, and how much is that going to cost? Is that included in your efficiency savings calculation? Is that whole operation included, especially for poor people who are just happy to have a gas stove?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, I have two things to say to that. First of all, we are not requiring anyone to change to an electric stove.

Mr. PERRY. So, when your stove dies, when your stove no longer works, and the Department of Energy has determined you cannot buy one of these. You have got to buy one of the expensive ones or an electric one because that is all you can afford, and then you have got to run electricity. I am just asking, have you included that in your calculation of saving us all from ourselves?

Ms. RICHMOND. Let me just say that we, again, are strongly in favor of consumer choice, and so the consumer has something to do.

Mr. PERRY. Apparently not.

Ms. RICHMOND. And if I could—

Mr. PERRY. Let me ask you this. DOE and EPA signed a joint memorandum on interagency communication and consultation on electric reliability in March, where both agencies agreed to consult with FERC on carrying out activities related to the reliability of the electric grid. Now DOE's proposal regarding gas stove regulation encourages 40 percent of American households to switch from gas powered to electric stoves. Did the DOE consult with FERC to ensure the rules proposed under your purview to not necessarily strain the U.S. grid?

Ms. RICHMOND. We did not.

Mr. PERRY. You did not?

Ms. RICHMOND. No. What I am saying is that in our energy conservation standards program, we did not consult with FERC on what—

Mr. PERRY. So, does that mean the Department of Energy intends to ignore the impact of our Nation's energy security for their own selfish reasoning and intent?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, let me go back to the fact that we do not require anyone to change from gas to electric—

Mr. PERRY. Ma'am, you do not have to require them if they are not available on the market to buy. There is no requirement. You just cannot get it. Thank you very much for limiting our choices. We thought we were free in America until we met you folks. I yield the balance.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our friend from Ohio, Ms. Brown.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to set the record straight, to clarify. If a home needs to overhaul its electric wiring to accommodate these new appliances, by virtue of the Inflation Reduction Act, which none of my Republican colleagues voted for, a homeowner could receive up to \$4,000 in Federal assistance, not to mention that Dr. Richmond expressed that the entry-level appliances are the ones that are the most efficient and compliant as it relates to this non-ban. Let me restate: non-ban on gas stoves.

But I regret that this Committee continues to hold hearings on things that do not exist, like a bogus ban on gas stoves, while ig-

noring the real economic and energy issues affecting people across this country. Could it be that this is part of an effort by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to distract from the numerous wins of the Biden Administration? The more we see Bidenomics in action—lowering inflation, the price of the pump going down, and record unemployment numbers—the more we seem to hold these culture war hearings.

So, let us be clear. President Biden and congressional Democrats have spurred the creation of over 13 million new jobs since 2021. In fact, the national unemployment rate has fallen below 4 percent for the longest stretch in over 50 years. And how did we do it? By investing in clean energy and our supply chain, by taking on Big Pharma in the Inflation Reduction Act, and by taking historic action to rebuild our Nation's infrastructure. But these are not the things that my colleagues want to talk about. No, they would rather talk about our bodies and banning books than real kitchen table issues. Well, let me tell you, no matter what my colleagues may say, the Biden Administration is committed to growing our economy from the middle out and the bottom up, and that starts with everything, from lowering prescription drug prices to the cost of electricity and gas.

So, Dr. Richmond, can you share with us how are Biden Administration policies making life more affordable for middle-class Americans?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, thank you for that question. I am going to focus on, in particular, what our energy standards are that we do in the energy conservation standards program. You know, when we look at every 6 years when we are reviewing whether there should be standards that could be improved or not improved, what we do is we look at what is out there, and we come up with a proposed rule. And the proposed rule has to fit the seven statutory requirements of EPCA, and the most important ones really are that they are more efficient, but they are also affordable, and so this is what is of really importance there. And so, they have the technical capabilities to do that, but also, they are affordable, and that means that they save money on the cost of the energy that they are using in order to run that appliance. For example, as I mentioned, 30 percent less for a gas stove, 30 percent less energy to run that gas stove. We have saved consumers trillions of dollars since it was passed in 1975 on appliances.

There is no doubt about it that increasing efficiency saves money, but we also take into account what the manufacturers are concerned about with regards to cost for them to make those changes. And that is where we come up with a value that we believe shows that it is not an undue burden for the companies, but it is also just a great savings for the consumer because that is what we do. We want to reduce waste and save money.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. Democrats are committed to delivering record investments in America to create better-paying jobs. We are taking on the special interests along the way and to lower costs for our working families. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues in this Committee, as a whole, seem to prioritize made-up crises instead of the actual challenges we are still facing, like income inequality, access to reproductive rights, and out-of-control gun violence. So, I

respectfully state for the record that I truly hope that our next hearing will address a new topic because this one is still dangerous and dumb. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our friend from North Carolina, Mr. Edwards.

Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dr. Richmond, thanks for being with us today. You mentioned in your testimony just a few minutes ago, as I heard it, 50 percent of the gas stoves out there would be required to be modified, and that means 50 percent would not be required to be modified. Can you tell us what you meant by that?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes, I am happy to do that. I am happy to do that because this is really the crux of what we are talking about. So, what we do is we look at what Department of Energy does, is it takes all the manuals. You know, we have got a lot of appliances. And so, we take all of the materials that the companies give us with regards to the different components that they have within their gas or electric stove—we are talking about this now—and we can figure out from looking at what elements they have with the burner, and the grades, and everything else, we can figure out, at least give an estimate of what their efficiency is.

And so, when we did that, we found out that 50 percent of those, which are really the entry-level gas stoves, those are the ones that immediately already have the efficiency that we would be putting in with the proposed rule. The other 50 percent are the ones that do not look like that they would be able to pass the rule because of different features, whether that be the down venting or things like that. But let me just say, because it goes back to this 96 percent, we take those that appear to be the least efficient, and we test those to see if they actually are inefficient.

Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you. So, are you saying that 50 percent of the gas stoves that are out there today in American kitchens would have to be modified in some way?

Ms. RICHMOND. No. Thank you for asking that question. No. What it means is that the products that come on the market 3 years from now would have to have that efficiency.

Mr. EDWARDS. OK. Thank you. Thank you.

Ms. RICHMOND. I am sorry. Thank you for clarifying that.

Mr. EDWARDS. Can you describe the Department of Energy's authority for establishing energy-efficiency standards and then, more specifically, what can they do and what can they not do when evaluating products that are available on the market?

Ms. RICHMOND. Thank you for that question. EPCA, passed by Congress in 1975, required us to basically determine, to develop rules which would look at the efficiency of appliances and look to see if we could make them more efficient while also being cost effective to the consumer. And so, we have seven different factors—I could go into these, but probably not time—seven different factors that we use to think about what that rule should be set up on, and so that is where I talk about efficiency but also consumer affordability.

Mr. EDWARDS. OK. Thank you. So, according to the Department of Energy's own estimates, financial impact on gas stove manufacturers would likely range somewhere between \$155 million to, well,

at a total between 2022 and 2056, at a cost of about \$183 million. Is that number factored into your equation of affordability?

Ms. RICHMOND. So, I am not so familiar with that number. What I am familiar with is the fact that any particular unit that we have looked at, I looked at how much modification it would have to be to whatever component, and the companies can decide which component they want to make more efficient. That is on the order of \$12 for the company per unit in order to bring that up to where it would fit the standards.

Mr. EDWARDS. OK. What kind of precedent exists for a rule-making of this size and scale, and has anything this expansive ever been proposed before?

Ms. RICHMOND. Do you mean for cook stoves and for gas?

Mr. EDWARDS. Yes.

Ms. RICHMOND. I think it is very consistent with what we have done over the past with regards to rules that we have passed. I do not see it is out of the ordinary at all.

Mr. EDWARDS. So, \$183 million impact to modifying conform to this rule is normal.

Ms. RICHMOND. I do not know whether that number is accurate. I do not know what the source of it is, but we are happy to get back to you on that. Very happy to get back to you on that. It is just not a number I am familiar with.

Mr. EDWARDS. OK. Thank you.

Ms. RICHMOND. Thank you.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chair, I yield.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes our friend from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And first, may I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Moskowitz be allowed to participate in today's hearing?

Mr. FALLON. Without objection, Representative Moskowitz of Florida is waived on to the Subcommittee for purposes of questioning witnesses today at today's Subcommittee hearing.

So, ordered.

Ms. NORTON. As unlikely as it may seem, improvement of household appliances, of all things, appears to have become a new battleground for right-wing hostility, propaganda, and outrage. The conservative narrative about Democrats' supposed war on gas stoves, dishwashers, and laundry machines is the latest misinformation campaign perpetuating right-wing falsehoods and delaying critical action to protect our constituents and our planet, and these tactics are all at the behest of the fossil fuel industry.

Presently, right-wing propaganda surrounding the efficiency regulations are focused on the false narrative that Democrats and Department of Energy, itself, want to ban home appliances to take away consumer choices. This falsehood could not be further from the truth. I want to be clear: the Biden-Harris Administration is not banning anything. Instead, the Administration's actions will provide businesses and families the information they need and the opportunity to purchase home appliances that meet their needs and keep the planet and themselves safe. Dr. Richmond, do the Department's proposed energy conservation rules ban any type of household appliance or take away choices from families and businesses?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, the Department of Energy is not suggesting a ban. In fact, it has no authority to ban any type of appliance.

Ms. NORTON. Now, I want to be clear on another point. Some claim that the Department of Energy's proposed standards would be so stringent, that purportedly it would constitute a de facto ban. Dr. Richmond, is that true?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, we do not see this as a de facto ban for the same reasons that I have mentioned before, which is, at this point, 50 percent of the gas stoves that are out there would comply with the rule that, if finalized, we would set up 3 years from now, and the other 50 percent would take minor tweaks in order to make them comply.

Ms. NORTON. Dr. Richmond, does the Department ever set efficiency standards that industry would be unable to achieve?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, no. The answer is no.

Ms. NORTON. In fact, Dr. Richmond, does not the law require DOE's efficiency standards to be technologically feasible based on current industry trends?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes. Yes. And, you know, let me just say that industry is full of innovation, and look what they have done over the years to the point that we, you know, that if you look back, our clothes washers use 90 percent less energy, and that is because companies have stood up and increased the efficiency of those. Hopefully most of us have washers in our houses or have access to washing machines, so this is just huge. This is relative to a 1990 model. I need to get a new clothes washer.

Ms. NORTON. And to be clear, the appliances that do not yet achieve the proposed standard would have several years to be improved before the standards would take effect. So, Dr. Richmond, do I have that right? Is there any reason to think that this proposed standard is unfair to, or unachievable for, the private sector companies that manufacture appliances?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes. Well, again, people that have gas stoves in their home right now, they do not have to do anything. It is the companies that then, the ones that they put out on the market 3 years from now, to meet those standards. We do not believe that that is an undue burden.

Ms. NORTON. Dr. Richmond, could you briefly discuss the costs the Department of Energy believes these regulations would cause and who would incur those costs?

Ms. RICHMOND. So again, for the 50 percent of the gas stoves that do not need modification, the companies can continue to put them down as they are now. For the 50 percent that we anticipate would need to be upgraded a bit, that is, again, sort of \$12 a unit, which we estimate, and they would then pass that on to the consumer, and that is going to vary based on how much of it and how much they need to change the models. But 3 years from now, they would have to do that, and that would be passed over to the consumer.

But let me also say that those in that upper 50 percent, those are the fancier ones, also. And so, that what we are really protecting are those that really are working with entry-level stoves, which are in this bottom 50, this other 50 percent.

Ms. NORTON. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes Mrs. Boebert, our friend from Colorado.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is amazing. I have heard today that this will have no impact on consumers, and then I also heard that in 3 years, these changes will be required to take place, and the companies will then have to make those adjustments and pass on those increases to consumers. So, it would seem that there is certainly a deficit to the American people in this.

Under Secretary Richmond, why does the Biden Administration not care about the hardworking Americans struggling to make ends meet that will not be able to afford your Agency's new regulations for gas stoves? As we just heard, in 3 years this will be passed on to consumers for gas stoves, clothes washers, dishwashers, clothes dryers, air conditioners, light bulbs, et cetera.

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, thank you for that question. My statistics are really about the gas stoves with regards to that issue. But let me, again, reinforce the fact that 50 percent of those gas stoves—

Mrs. BOEBERT. That still gets passed on to the consumer. So, just by saying that somebody is more well off, more wealthy than someone else, that that does not matter, that argument is not flying with me. From mandating new electric vehicles and electric stove mandates, to promoting ESG extremism, to pushing radical Green New Deal policies, there is one thing you can always count on in this Administration to do, and that is put the American people and our economy last. Dr. Richmond, do you believe, like many of our other colleagues, like many of your other colleagues in the Biden Administration, that gas stoves strongly contribute to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions?

Ms. RICHMOND. Well, I am here today to talk about the—

Mrs. BOEBERT. Do you believe that gas stoves which you said you are here to talk about, do they contribute strongly to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions?

Ms. RICHMOND. We believe that anything that puts out carbon dioxide does contribute, such as a gas stove, does—

Mrs. BOEBERT. Interesting. So, I would respond by pointing out that many of the false and misleading studies that had been cited by this Administration to support banning gas stoves were authored and paid for by radical environmental extremists and these activists with an agenda to ban fossil fuels entirely. Now, you testified that the Department of Energy does not have the authority to ban gas stoves. Does Consumer Product Safety Commission have the authority to ban gas stoves?

Ms. RICHMOND. I do not believe so, but that is not something I am certain about. I mean, how they get—

Mrs. BOEBERT. Well, then why, Dr. Richmond, did Richard Trumka, Jr., a commissioner appointed by Joe Biden at the Consumer Product Safety Commission, say, "Gas stoves are a hidden hazard. Any option is on the table. Products that cannot be made safe, can be banned?"

Ms. RICHMOND. The Department of Energy has no authority to ban gas stoves.

Mrs. BOEBERT. If the Biden Administration is not seeking to ban gas stoves, as you claim, then why did a Biden-appointed Commis-

sioner Trumka initiate a notice for proposed rulemaking to ban gas stoves in American homes?

Ms. RICHMOND. I cannot answer that because the Department of Energy has no authority to ban gas stoves.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Does a Consumer Product Safety Commission have that authority?

Ms. RICHMOND. I do not believe so, but I am——

Mrs. BOEBERT. You have a commissioner here advocating for this. Has Commissioner Trumka ever been disciplined for going rogue as some are trying to claim that he did?

Ms. RICHMOND. The Department of Energy does not have the authority to ban gas stoves.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Has Commissioner Trumka ever been disciplined for going rogue with this statement?

Ms. RICHMOND. I have no idea.

Mrs. BOEBERT. If he has not been disciplined, he is still an acting Consumer Product Safety commissioner, and he has aggressively tried to ban gas stoves in American homes. This is shameful that you can sit here and try to claim that the Biden Administration is not trying to ban gas stoves. Do you think that Commissioner Trumka should resign or be disciplined for his comments and efforts to ban gas stoves and end this consumer product?

Ms. RICHMOND. I am sorry. I do not have anything to say about that.

Mrs. BOEBERT. You would not condemn any remarks like that. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield the remainder of my time to you.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you very much. So, I am trying to reconcile something, Doctor.

Ms. RICHMOND. Uh-huh.

Mr. FALLON. Your testimony said, repeatedly, that half the models of gas stoves that are on the market today would not comply, you know, obviously, that glass half full, then half would. But then when you do the research and you read the Department of Energy's own estimates, it reflects that 96 percent would be non-compliant. Please help me reconcile these two features.

Ms. RICHMOND. Thank you so much. I have been trying to——

Mr. FALLON. Again, do not thank me. Just please help us.

Ms. RICHMOND. No. OK. Here we go. Fifty percent, like you talked about, the other 50 percent, so what we did was take a small subset, but the 96 percent comes from the fact that we took a small subset of those that would not comply, the ones that looked like they would least comply, and we did tests on them. We did tests on them to see actually would they comply or not? There were 21 of those. One of them did comply, 20 did not, so it was 96 percent that did not comply of the 21 models. So, there are many more than that. So, that is where the 96 percent come from.

Mr. FALLON. But that is a pretty good sample size. I mean, any statistician would tell you, you randomly picked these 21 models.

Ms. RICHMOND. They were the ones that when we looked at them, and well, it was not particularly random because we looked at all the manufacturing specifications that they had there. And we looked at the ones that had features that seemed to be the least efficient, so we took those 21. These 21 are really the ones that

seemed to be the least efficient, whether it be whatever component it is, and that was only 1 of those 21 did pass.

Mr. FALLON. But why wouldn't you pick a sample size that would reflect the market?

Ms. RICHMOND. In this case, we actually did physical tests on them. And we do not have the capacity to physically test all of them until the rules are passed and then we are able to make sure that they comply.

Mr. FALLON. OK. My time is up. The Chair recognizes our friend from Florida, Mr. Moskowitz.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for allowing me to waive on. By the way, I love when we tell only half the story. Mr. Trumka, who obviously, you know, is just super important to folks here, came out afterwards and clarified his comments and said that we are not coming to take anyone's gas stoves away.

So, Dr. Richmond, I have a question, and I am sorry for this line of questioning, but I think it is important because of the messaging that has now not gone on at just this hearing, but at a markup and a previous hearing. When are you coming to take my gas stove away, and will I get a 4-hour, like, window, like when Comcast comes to my house or the power company, because I just want to be home when it happens because I have a dog, and I do not want him to be let out by accident. So, can we schedule that now? When are you coming?

Ms. RICHMOND. I am sorry for laughing, but I have two dogs and chicken. OK. We are not coming.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. OK.

Ms. RICHMOND. We are not coming.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. So, I think this whole thing is kind of a program, like, that has been around forever, right? We see it in stores. It is called the Energy Star, right? It has to do with, you know, making sure appliances are energy efficient. And by the way, not to, you know, bring up Donald Trump, you know, but he is in the news again today because he got a target letter from the Department of Justice on January 6. But in 2019, Donald Trump proposed to lawmakers, in his budget, to switch the burden from Federal funding of the Energy Star Program away from the Federal Government, and he wanted to switch that burden on to companies. He wanted companies to pay a fee, and the companies said, well, if we have to do that, that is going to drive the price of appliances way up. And so, when I hear my colleagues talking about appliances being more expensive, I did not hear them come out and say that Donald Trump was trying to do that when he was trying to, in his proposed budget, switch the burden to companies, which would have made appliances more expensive.

What I do not understand is, aren't we really just talking about innovation, Dr. Richmond? I mean, isn't this really just about innovation, that as appliances get better and smarter, they can hook up to Wi-Fi now, right? When we talk about efficiency, that is really what we are talking about. We are talking about innovation.

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes, absolutely. And, again, I am a research scientist all my career. I understand innovation and I understand the challenges, believe me, I do, but I also understand the value of it,

and you are absolutely right. If you look at the amazing innovation that has gone into our products, there is a TV on our refrigerator. I mean, you know, things like that are just——

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. And haven't we done really the same thing with cars?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Is anyone advocating that cars should only get one mile per gallon? I mean, I think I kind of heard that earlier, by the way, I mean, come on, we have made cars more efficient. Did we ban cars? No. The industry now make engines that can go more miles per gallon, right? And that is what this is also. This is more miles per gallon, meaning you are going to get more out of your appliance with less, meaning less power, right? And that is what we do. We get more out of our engines with less fuel. That is it. It is an efficiency thing, and gas stoves are not going to disappear, or blenders, or dishwashers, or refrigerators, or the Nutribullet, or Ron Popeil's dehydrator or, you know, I could go on, anything that they sell on QVC. None of this is going to disappear. It is just going to get more efficient.

And I do not know why anyone on the Committee here is against innovation. It does not seem right to me. I think it would make more sense, quite frankly, it would be great if we had a hearing more on supply chain, right, because I do not know if anyone has had a microwave or a dishwasher or a refrigerator go down. Sometimes it takes weeks to get parts because those parts are not made here, and, in fact, that is what the Biden Administration was doing with the CHIPS and Science Act, which is trying to get these microchips made here in this country. Obviously, most of my colleagues across the aisle voted against that. But when we talk about appliances and the American people, we should try to make it easier for these appliances to get fixed by onshoring and nearshoring where these appliances are made.

And just to finish it off, anyone keeping score, any parent out there, anyone who has a kid, let me tell you something. Here is the score: gun violence hearings in the 118th Congress, zero; gas stoves, three. That is all you need to know about what is happening in the 118th Congress. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our good friend from Kentucky, Chairman Comer.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your leadership on this issue, and I have to respond to the gun violence. What good does it do to have gun laws on the books when you waive gun penalties for privileged White children of high-elected public officials?

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Will you yield?

Mr. COMER. I will yield.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, there were 17 people killed at my high school in my neighborhood, and so let us not make gun violence——

Mr. COMER. I am not making gun violence—I yield my time back. I asked a credible question. You are not serious. So, Dr. Richmond, thank you for being here. I think it has already been mentioned that the Department of Energy estimates that the conversion costs associated with compliance will be over \$183 million. Obviously,

that is very concerning to people in the industry. I used to own some restaurant franchises. I knew people are very concerned about these regulations. I wonder, does the Biden Administration, before you issue executive orders or have massive regulatory change, do you consult with people in the industry at all to get their input?

Ms. RICHMOND. Yes, thank you very much for that question because once we put out the proposed rule, which we did in January, then we had open meetings, open sessions for people to tell us what their concerns are. Also, their comments are all on the web. That is on a regulatory docket on the web that you can see all the concerns in the comments. So, we listen. We listen very carefully, and that is why when we do have a proposed rule and then in order to come up with the final rule. So, we absolutely do listen.

Mr. COMER. So, I am sure you are getting feedback from people in the industry. Obviously, the restaurant industry has been severely impacted by COVID shutdowns and things like that. A big part of the rationale behind the PPP loan program, which I am not even going to get into that. One industry it did help, and it should have helped was the restaurant industry. A lot of people in that industry have expressed deep concerns about these regulations and other regulations, quite frankly. The energy policies coming out of the Biden Administration are very concerning to the House Oversight Committee. We believe that this is adding significant costs to consumers, creating more obstacles for success for private industry, so I want to relay our concern with the proposed rule.

Second, I assume that the proposal from the Biden Administration is because you are concerned about climate change and things like that. This Administration has a climate czar by the name of John Kerry. Have you had any communication with the climate czar, Mr. Kerry, on any of these rules or regulations?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, not at all.

Mr. COMER. Because one of the things we are trying to determine in this Oversight Committee is what exactly does John Kerry do? We do not know what authority he has. He was not approved for confirmation by the Senate, but yet it appears that he has a Cabinet-level position. According to what I have seen on television, he flies to China and negotiates with the Chinese on climate policy. We have no idea what authority he has, and I did not know if he had communicated or his office. I think there are 40 employees or something in that office. No communication on this regulation?

Ms. RICHMOND. No, none. None whatsoever.

Mr. COMER. OK.

Ms. RICHMOND. And I want to go back to the fact that we do take very seriously the companies because we do not want to have them go under. And that is why economically feasible fits for both the consumers as well for the companies. And right now, we have all of these massive comments that we have gotten from consumers as well as stakeholders, and we are reviewing those now as we work toward the final rule.

Mr. COMER. Got it. OK. Mr. Chairman, thank you again, for your leadership on this issue, and I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, the Chair recognizes our friend from Washington, DC, Ms. Norton, for her closing statement.

Ms. NORTON. I thank the Chair. My colleagues in the Majority continue to insist that the Department of Energy is trying to either outright ban or regulate gas stoves to death. We have heard this talking point time and again, including today, to the extent we are holding a second hearing to prove it. And this time we have expanded the scope to look at all appliances that Congress required DOE to regulate.

Republicans have said that the Department of Energy's conservation program is a "war on appliances." It is not. Once again, my Republican colleagues have employed more ridiculous and hyperbolic rhetoric meant to further divide our country and wind back efforts to improve lives of families and the air in our communities. They have even gone so far as to pass legislation that bars the implementation of the Department of Energy's proposed rule on gas stoves and legislation seeking to prevent the Agency from proposing or implementing any substantially similar rules regarding other household appliances.

What Republicans did not tell the American people is that the Department of Energy's proposed rule would lower energy costs and provide health benefits to households and businesses. Like the Biden-Harris Administration's energy agenda, we need to clear the air. The DOE's Energy Conservation Standards Program is simply an update to efficiency standards for home appliances, an update that states and local governments literally sued the Federal Government to make happen.

Updating energy efficiency regulations has been a standard practice for years. In fact, Presidents Reagan and H.W. Bush both signed efficiency standards for various household appliances into law during their presidencies. This hearing today is just another example of Republicans' attempting to ignite the right-wing rage machine over a non-issue. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you. I now recognize myself for a closing statement.

So, we just heard some interesting things that your Department is in favor of consumer choice, and yet it is either 50 percent would not comply or 96 percent. Regardless, they are both large numbers, and we are talking about less choice and limited choices. And then a colleague of mine said that this is going to result in massive savings and less pollution. Well, who would be against that? Everybody would be for that. That is ridiculous to say that. Unfortunately, it is not true, that statement, saving money and reducing waste.

So, we are to be told that the Federal Government is going to save us money and reduce waste and is going to be highly efficient and make sure our products are. So, it is a question of, really, do you trust the Federal Government or you trust the private sector? And many people trust the Federal Government to be more efficient than the private sector. I am not amongst them. I believe in the private sector. I will give you an example. There was a homebuilder in Texas. As you may imagine, we have high electricity bills in the summer. And they had a really insulated home, and they

would brag about it because instead of \$700 a month in electric bills that you would have in a regular home, their installation was so good, it was only going to be 60 bucks a month. They did that on their own in the free market because it was a selling point. I almost bought a house. I did not even really like the house, but I like \$60 a month bills for electricity in July.

So, I trust the free markets and the private sector to say, hey, look at my gas stove. It is so much more efficient. You are going to use less energy. I would like to use less energy. And then we had a colleague say that she was bragging about Bidenomics and Joe Biden lowered inflation. I mean, that is really high-quality spin. It really is, because the inflation rate, everybody agrees, was 1.4 percent before he got into office. It is 3 percent today, which is 214 percent higher than it was when he took office, but somehow magically he lowered it. That was a peach. But in 2021, it was at 7 percent. In 2022, it was at 6.5. So, if a car cost \$20 grand back in 2021 when he took office, and if the inflation rate had remained constant, that car would cost \$20,852. But where we saw the inflation rate actually go, that car would cost \$23,475, or \$2,623 more or 17 percent more than it would have otherwise cost. But magically, he lowered inflation for us, so I want to thank him for that.

And I am grateful for the Department of Energy to decide finally to, Dr. Richmond, for you to be here and to testify today, and that you recognize Congress' authority to call witnesses and discuss Article II rulemaking authority. So, if anything, that was a plus and a win for our republic. So, this Congress and the Majority has established a relentless pursuit of holding the Administration accountable for what we believe are unclear, unlawful, and un-American regulations.

The fact that the Department of Energy had to publish a misinformation page on home appliance standards on the Agency's website tells us all we need to know about the Administration's priorities. We have seen that in responses to the Majority's questions even today. We have also heard them loud and clear in the earlier hearings on gas stove rules with non-governmental witnesses. We have even heard the Vice President, Kamala Harris, call on the United States to reduce population in recent climate change speeches, which is rather an unbelievable statement from a vice president.

This Administration simply does not care about what is best for the American people. You know, I trust the American people to live their lives in the best way possible. This Congress on the gas stoves rule became a lightning rod for debate on governmental overreach extending into those choices because what can be more sacred than an American's right to a gas stove? Even beyond that, the gas stove rules, the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy has expended countless taxpayer resources in a backward effort to limit customer choice—gas stoves, light bulbs, dishwashers, clothes dryers, gas furnaces, water heaters, air conditioners, refrigerators—and as we heard today, the list goes on and on. This is something the likes of which the American people have really never seen.

It is important that we hear from the Department on the development processes, the substance of all proposed and finalized rules

related to home appliances because another thing that really concerns me is passing a rule first and then seeing its effects. I would rather really know what the effects are going to be before a rule is passed.

And career bureaucrats that we have seen across the Administration are running wild with EPCA to take certain products off the market with unjustified cost analysis. They held studies that since have been walked back and de facto bans on healthy and safe products the American people rely every day on. The unelected Agency employees apparently have no check on the practicality of the rulemaking, considering that the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy does not have a confirmed official to hold it accountable. But not only that, the Department leadership does not even have the subject matter depth to understand the breadth and impact of the rulemakings, considering the DOE needed to have over 2 months to decide if its staff was even going to be ready to testify before Congress, and the agencies need to step up and stop passing the buck.

So, I am very glad that you are here today. I just look at what the DOE is doing with energy efficiency standards, but even the proposed rule, still in draft, are garnering significant pushback like energy efficiency standards for water heaters. But listen, I want to thank you all for coming, and you have to understand, Congress cannot and will not pass the buck. We are elected by the people, so we have to do our jobs. And in conclusion, I urge the Department to reconsider, reevaluate, and withdraw some of these proposed rulemakings in light of these valid and pressing concerns. We are all about efficiency. And, again, I trust the free market to be as efficient as possible because it is a selling point when you are selling your product, and I look forward to working with you to achieve these results, and I want to thank everybody here and thank you very much.

With that, and without objection, all Members will have 5 legislative days within which to submit materials, to submit additional written questions for the witnesses, which will be forwarded to witnesses for their response.

Mr. FALLON. If there is no further business, without objection, the Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:28 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

