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Efficiency

March 10th, 2011

Opening Statement - March 10, 2011 *Efficiency*

I welcome our witnesses today to hear their views on two bills regarding the Department of Energy's appliance energy efficiency program: *S. 398*, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to improve the energy-efficiency of certain appliances and equipment, and *S. 395*, to repeal certain amendments to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act with respect to light bulb technology, these were revisions passed in 2007 and now proposed for repeal.

The first bill is an updated version of the appliance standards legislation – known as INCAAAA – that nearly passed the Senate by unanimous consent in December. It combines provisions that were reported from this committee as a part of the American Clean Energy Leadership Act (ACELA), with amendments to ACELA that were reported in May 2010, and with more recent agreements as well. The bill would increase or establish new efficiency standards for nearly 20 types of appliances, from air-conditioners to water dispensers.

This legislation would continue to protect and create jobs by reducing regulations on business through the preemption of multiple state standards with simpler, more stable and more predictable Federal regulations. This legislation would also reduce the power and water bills of American households and businesses, free those savings for other uses, make our economy stronger and more competitive, and help protect the environment by avoiding the environmental impacts of reduced energy production.

Enactment of this legislation would continue a bipartisan tradition, which started in this Committee in 1987, and repeated in 1988, 1992, 2005 and again 2007, and that tradition is one of enacting consensus appliance standards negotiated among manufacturers, energy efficiency advocates and consumer groups. Overall, it is estimated that, by 2030, these standards will reduce national electrical demand 12 percent below what it otherwise would be.

The second bill on today's agenda, *S. 395*, would repeal the efficiency standards for general service incandescent light bulbs and the other provisions of Subtitle B-III of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. The proposal is of concern to me because it goes against this tradition that I spoke about earlier of broad, bipartisan support for consensus appliance standards. I hope the record today will confirm, as I understand, that not only will consumers continue to be able to buy incandescent bulbs that look the same as those they currently buy, but provide the same quality light as traditional incandescent bulbs, but these bulbs will last longer, use less energy and save consumers money.

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