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Opening Statement
Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney
Subcommittee on Environment Hearing on
“Climate Change, Part IV: Moving Towards a Sustainable Future”
Sept. 24, 2020

As we commemorate Climate Week 2020, I want to start by commending Chairman Rouda on his remarkable leadership on this Subcommittee and on one of the most urgent global crises defining the modern era. From devastating fires in the West, to historic hurricanes in the South, to rising sea levels that threaten 40 percent of America’s population near our coastlines, the destruction of climate change is mounting—and menacing.

From his first days in Congress, Chairman Rouda has recognized the existential threat that climate change poses to Americans and people around the world. With this series of hearings, he has demanded accountability from fossil fuel companies, he has exposed their undue influence over this Administration, and he has demonstrated a steadfast determination to meet these challenges to ensure a more sustainable and livable future for our children and grandchildren.

Building on Chairman Rouda’s great work, today I released the [Oversight Committee’s Climate Change Agenda](#). This is a set of bills to implement recommendations from the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis that fall within our Committee’s jurisdiction.

Our [Committee’s Climate Change Agenda](#) focuses on the federal government’s unique position in the fight against climate change. The federal government is the largest employer in the United States and the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. It is an important partner to states, localities, Tribal governments, the public and private sectors, and other countries. Our Agenda takes advantage of this leverage to move our nation forward.

For example, Chairman Rouda and I are introducing a new bill called [the Federal Agency Climate Planning, Resilience, and Enhanced Preparedness Act](#)—or [the Federal Agency Climate PREP Act](#). Senator Amy Klobuchar is introducing a companion bill in the Senate.

Our legislation is modeled on two Executive Orders issued by President Barack Obama to build climate change preparedness, mitigation, and resilience into all aspects of federal government operations.

Our bill would require each agency to create a climate change adaptation plan with strategies for confronting risks to agency missions, operations, and programs. These plans would address any agency practices that worsen climate change threats, and they would identify strategies to tackle the disproportionate impacts of climate change on frontline communities and vulnerable populations.

Our bill also would establish a Council on Federal Agency Climate PREP to guide the implementation of federal preparedness and resilience actions and to work with state and local leaders to improve federal efforts to support these goals.

An effective federal response to climate change begins with evidence-based planning that recognizes the magnitude of the threat and responds accordingly. American lives, livelihoods, ecosystems, security, and prosperity depend on strategic and whole-of-government efforts in the face of the climate crisis.

Our [Committee's Climate Change Agenda](#) also includes other innovative and action-oriented legislation by our colleagues, including Representatives Don McEachin, Julia Brownley, Peter Welch, Matt Cartwright, and others.

For example, it includes a [bill](#) I introduced with Representative Gerry Connolly, the Chairman of our Subcommittee on Government Operations, and Representative Jared Huffman that would build a “Fleet of the Future” at the Postal Service by upgrading its vehicles to electric or zero-emission by 2040.

Today's hearing is an important opportunity to look forward, to identify changes like these that are doable—that are within our power—and then to take action. I thank Chairman Rouda again for his invaluable partnership and leadership.

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