



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Ranking Member Frank Lucas Speaks to the U.S. House of Representatives in Opposition to H.R. 4447

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Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to this bloc of amendments and to express my profound disappointment with this process.

As I said yesterday, climate change is a generational challenge: one where our work today will have an impact for decades to come. I believe our work on something of this importance deserves thoughtful consideration, careful analysis, and substantial debate. After all, what's at stake here is no small matter.

The policy decisions we make on this issue will not only impact our greenhouse gas emissions—they will also have a direct effect on what Americans pay to cool and heat their homes. And they'll determine whether we hamstring our energy sectors or give them a global advantage.

Congress has an established process to make smart policy decisions on important issues like this. We consider issues in hearings, debate and vote in Committees, and then bring legislation to the House floor. That's not what happened here. Instead of following regular order on individual policy proposals, we were given one week to review 900 pages of legislation.

In an effort to have a voice in this process, Members offered 176 amendments to this bill. Only 99 were made in order. And now, Madame Speaker, we don't even have the chance to debate and vote on those amendments individually.

Instead, we're expected to vote to pass or reject 26 amendments en bloc right now. With only one exception, this is how we'll vote on all 99 amendments made in order. That's a problem, because it forces us to either vote in favor of policies we don't support, or vote against the ones we do. That's where I find myself right now.

Not surprisingly, I strongly support my own amendment in this bloc. It expresses the sense of Congress that in order to reduce emissions, the Secretary of Energy must prioritize funding for fundamental research infrastructure and for basic research and development activities carried out through the Office of Science.

Office of Science programs have long served as the cornerstone of U.S. energy innovation. Our clean energy future will be built on next-generation technology areas like grid scale energy storage, advanced grid security, and integrated carbon management strategies. And these technologies are dependent on federal support for basic research programs and infrastructure.

The Office of Science at DOE is behind some of the most groundbreaking scientific discoveries and technological developments in recent history. Without the innovations that have come from DOE basic research, we wouldn't have successfully reduced emissions through clean, affordable natural gas. That's why a clean energy legislative package that fails to include comprehensive Office of Science provisions is not a serious proposal – even if it is 900 pages long.

I'd urge my colleagues to remember that Americans need affordable and reliable energy, and that has to be a central goal in any policy to address climate change.

We can reduce emissions, keep energy prices competitive, and ensure that the U.S. remains a world leader in science and energy technology, by committing to prioritize basic research and critical infrastructure supported by the Office of Science.

I believe my amendment would improve H.R. 4447 by establishing that Congress is fundamentally committed to the research and development of breakthrough clean energy technologies. Unfortunately, I can't support my amendment, because it has been lumped in with so many others that actually worsen the underlying legislation by increasing our support of well-funded applied research programs that are duplicating work that private industry can and should be doing on its own.

But that's what happens when you force through a massive, partisan messaging bill instead of allowing for individual policy consideration. This shows a lack of good faith process from House Democrats and is no way to pass legislation for the public good.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bloc and reserve the balance of my time.