



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**

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## Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Valerie Foushee (D-NC)  
of the Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight**

Joint Subcommittee Hearing:  
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight  
Subcommittee on Environment  
*Missing the Target: CEQ's Meritless Selection of SBTi*

November 30, 2023

Good afternoon, Chairman Obernolte. And good afternoon, Mr. Mayock – thank you for joining us today.

As I said two months ago at a hearing on this same topic, wise allocation of taxpayer money relies on fully informed, science-based decision making. Few problems put federal investments at greater risk than climate change. I won't repeat myself too much at this second hearing today. My beliefs are unchanged – we have a responsibility to ensure that taxpayer money is well stewarded by the contractors receiving hundreds of billions of dollars every year.

Finalizing this rule will lead to an unprecedented level of transparency into climate vulnerabilities, and contracting agencies can use that information as they think best. I am glad the Biden administration took this important step, and I look forward to seeing how the FAR Council improves the rule as it moves towards finalization.

For instance, after hearing the expert testimony at the September 20<sup>th</sup> hearing, I came away with the opinion that the inclusion of SBTi is less important than the broader push to require greater transparency into the emissions of the government's largest contractors competing for the largest contracts. I hope the FAR Council takes this and other comments into consideration as they move toward finalization.

However, I am puzzled by the presence of Mr. Mayock here today. Mr. Mayock is an extremely distinguished witness, as a leader in the Administration's effort to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change. It's a privilege to have him here before us. Mr. Mayock does so much important work that Members of this Committee are deeply invested in – ensuring that the best available science on our changing climate drives decisions spanning the breadth of the Federal government.

But Mr. Mayock is not the appropriate witness to address the topic of this hearing. Contrary to the hearing's title, CEQ did not write this rule. This rule is being promulgated by the FAR Council, and questions about the drafting and finalization of the rule are best directed elsewhere, not to CEQ.

I am familiar with the memo CEQ wrote that was the genesis of the FAR Council's proposed rule. It is simply not the case that Mr. Mayock or his CEQ colleagues "selected" SBTi for inclusion in the rule. Issuing a memo is not the same thing as awarding a contract. Suggesting that a different office consider an entity's role in a proposed rulemaking is not the same thing as making a selection.

Mr. Mayock cannot speak on behalf of the FAR Council on this rule. I am sure he will have a lot of interesting things to say, given his leadership on the Administration's sustainability policies, and hopefully he will have ample opportunity to discuss the great work CEQ is doing to promote climate adaptation and resilience.

But once again, CEQ did not write this rule – the FAR Council did and is now working to finalize it. CEQ did not "select" SBTi, the FAR Council chose to include it, and it remains to be seen how they take into consideration public comments criticizing that inclusion.

Despite these facts, I am glad to join Chairman Obernolte in welcoming you here today, Mr. Mayock. I hope to hear about how CEQ is working to promote a more sustainable, adaptable, and responsible federal government. I yield back.