

OPENING STATEMENT
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Environment
Subcommittee on Oversight

“Examining the Underlying Science and Impacts of Glider Truck Regulations”
September 13, 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Majority called this hearing today to discuss the issue of glider truck regulations. Administrations from both parties have recognized the importance of reducing emissions from heavy-duty trucks and have worked diligently to do so. Thanks to the efforts of former Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama, the air we breathe every day has gotten cleaner and healthier over the last twenty-five years.

However, a decade after stricter emissions limits from heavy-duty trucks were put in place, a cottage industry popped up whereby certain companies began to sell glider vehicles that could skirt these stricter emissions standards by capitalizing on a loophole in the original rule.

In 2015, the Obama Administration moved to close this loophole by requiring glider vehicles to meet the same emissions standards as new freight trucks. In November 2017, former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt released a proposed rule to exempt glider trucks from the Obama-era regulations.

Some members of our Majority, and certain members of the glider industry, claim that gliders emit fewer pollutants than new trucks. If that were true, they would not have lobbied EPA to undo the rule regulating glider trucks. We know that glider trucks, often furnished with 1990s-era engines manufactured prior to the advent of modern day vehicle emissions technologies, are dirtier for the air we breathe and more dangerous to our health than new trucks. Credible scientists understand this and have documented it multiple times.

In response to this glider controversy, and at the request of members of the House Appropriations Committee, EPA’s vehicle testing lab based in Ann Arbor, Michigan published a study in November 2017 showing that glider trucks emit far more pollutants than new truck models. Some in the Majority want the public to believe that this EPA lab engaged in a secretive partnership with representatives of the trucking industry to color the outcomes of this objective and accurate study. I suspect the Majority will present e-mails at today’s hearing in an attempt to paint a picture of some sort of illicit or inappropriate activity between them, although in actuality, the facts run counter to the narrative that the glider industry seeks to put forth.

Instead, we should be focusing our attention on the scientific misconduct inquiry currently pending at Tennessee Technological University regarding a summary document that the EPA relied upon to justify the repeal of the glider provisions. In February of this year, the President of Tennessee Tech wrote a letter to then-Administrator Pruitt requesting that the EPA withhold any

use or reference to this study until the University completes its investigation. I will add that the study's Principal Investigator withdrew his name from this study and returned funding he had received to conduct it to Fitzgerald Glider Kits, the company that funded the study and one of the largest manufacturers of glider kits in the nation.

While I am disappointed that, yet again, the Majority has not sought testimony from EPA to explain its actions, I am pleased to see Dr. Paul Miller, a scientist and lawyer who has decades of experience working in air quality research and policy, testify before us again this morning. He's joining us today from the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, where he provides technical and policy coordination among the air quality agencies of eight northeastern states. Welcome, Dr. Miller, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

As we examine EPA's proposed repeal of the glider rule, let's remember one essential fact. The Environmental Protection Agency was created to protect public health and the environment. I am skeptical that repealing the glider rule will achieve either goal.

Thank you. I yield back the remainder of my time.