

Opening Statement

Hearing Before the Regulatory Affairs

And Federal Management

Subcommittee

Thursday September 27th at 10:00 AM

Good morning and welcome to today's Subcommittee hearing titled "Examination of Regulatory Policy on the Economy and Business Growth." Today we will review how this administration's regulatory policy has influenced the economy.

As we begin this conversation, it is important to be clear that, well thought and inclusive regulations are a necessary facet of an orderly society.

Well thought out regulations brings clarity for individuals and businesses alike and provides for the safety and well-being for everyone.

Regulations are necessary to carry out the laws passed by Congress, and they must be promulgated in a careful and deliberate manner with thorough analysis done on the front end.

However, over the years through both republican and democratic administrations, there has been an onslaught of regulations that crippled many aspects of our economy. It was during these years that, a new term, "regulatory burden," was used to describe just how much regulations were affecting both small and large businesses, and the economy in general.

Like most Members of Congress, I can attest that over the years I held hundreds of meetings with constituents, not to talk about a single problematic regulation; instead, it was the cumulative effects of many regulations that caused tremendous hardships and their pleas for Congress to address this burden.

How big is the regulatory burden? As a nation, we spend nearly \$2 trillion each year on regulatory compliance.

This has been a problem for too long and the burden has grown with each subsequent administration. Until this one.

This administration's regulatory policies have, in effect, stopped the regulatory onslaught that was commonplace for decades.

This administration, through various Executive Orders and policy changes, has taken significant steps to reform the administrative process.

These actions have spurred a marked increase in optimism from individuals and businesses, which has resulted in a strong and vibrant economy and lower unemployment.

According to many economists, the recent increases in Gross Domestic Product are the result of the certainty that comes through regulatory stability.

With regulatory relief, businesses have the confidence to plan for the future, re-invest in their business, and hire more employees.

While I applaud the administration's focus on breaking the cycle of piling one regulation on top of another, the Executive branch alone cannot provide long-term regulatory stability. That responsibility rests with Congress.

Businesses face uncertainty that comes from one administration to the next. This administration has very different priorities from the last one and the next administration may very well have different priorities from this one.

This drastic swinging of the pendulum needs to stop.

This committee has debated legislation that will set clear guidelines for agencies – not to dictate a particular outcome, but simply to require them to complete thorough analysis before issuing a rule.

Common sense things such as measuring the full impact of a rule, consulting with state and local governments, and listening to small business owners at all stages of the process are just a few ideas Congress needs to pass.

I'm optimistic we can find areas of agreement that Congress can act on to provide long-term regulatory stability, which in turn will add to GDP and act as a natural defense to possible economic recession.

I've called this the "nerdiest Subcommittee in the Senate" and this morning's conversation should live up to that standard.

With that, I recognize Ranking Member Heitkamp for her opening remarks.