

Congress Daily

House GOP Blasts Pace of Climate Measure

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By Cyra Master

Eight ranking House Republicans have sent a letter to House Speaker Pelosi calling on her to step back from her deadline to get the Democratic climate change bill to the floor this summer.

"This bill ... will have probably the greatest impact on our economy, on workers and families than any piece of legislation that has ever passed in the Congress," said Ways and Means ranking member Dave Camp at a news conference today. "Not only are we being shut out, the committees of jurisdiction are being shut out and our Democratic colleagues are being shut out, but most importantly the American people are being shut out."

Camp was joined by the ranking members of the Agriculture, Financial Services, Natural Resources, Science, and Transportation and Infrastructure committees. Republicans on the Education and Labor and Foreign Affairs committees - which have discharged the bill -- were also on hand.

The letter, sent earlier this week, came as Pelosi is trying to engage GOP moderates and gain their support for the measure in case farm-state Democrats defect in significant numbers.

Agriculture ranking member Frank Lucas said his committee held a hearing last week with Agriculture Secretary Vilsack and seven other witnesses, none of whom would endorse the bill without reservations. "A thousand pages of permanent law, a massive tax increase, very little time to look at it. This is not how you make laws," Lucas said.