

Statement of Rep. G.K. Butterfield
Energy & Commerce Full Committee Markup of
H.R. 1582, H.R. 1900, H.R. 83, H.R. 2094, H.R. 698, H.R. 2052
July 16, 2013

Thank you Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman for holding this important markup on several bipartisan bills. I am pleased to see the full committee taking up two important public health bills which I supported and helped pass out of the Health Subcommittee.

H.R. 2094, the School Access to Epinephrine Act, is especially vital to my constituents in eastern North Carolina because it would expand the availability of epinephrine in schools and improve training for school staff.

Epinephrine can be used to combat asthma and cardiac arrest. My district is nearly 50 percent African American, and those constituents are twice as likely to experience cardiac arrest and 30 percent more likely to suffer from asthma than Caucasians.

I also support H.R. 698, the HIV Organ Policy and Equity Act since it provides greater public health opportunities to people suffering from one of the world's most deadly diseases. African Americans are infected with HIV at a higher rate than any other group, and more than 250,000 African Americans have died from AIDS after being diagnosed with HIV.

I am encouraged by these bills and by bipartisan efforts to promote United States manufacturing and to help meet the energy needs of insular areas and Freely Associated States.

At the same time, I am concerned by efforts to move two controversial bills without sufficient dialogue and input. I look forward to exploring whether those contentious bills are necessary – especially after the CEO of the Interstate Natural Gas Association of American said “the approval and permitting process for interstate natural gas pipelines is generally very good,” and one of the bills would make major changes to a pipeline approval system that isn't broken.

From this markup's agenda, it is clear that there are legislative proposals that can benefit each of our districts and be widely supported. I hope the bipartisan proposals offered in this markup indicate that the Majority is willing to abandon controversial legislation and find ways we can work together.

Thank you, I yield back the balance of my time.