

July 25, 2019

Congresswoman Grace Meng (NY-6)
Testimony to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Member's Day Hearing

Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Chairwoman Eshoo and Ranking Member Burgess, and distinguished members of this Committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss several of my priorities as it pertains to the Subcommittee on Health – but also more broadly across the full House Committee on Energy and Commerce. I sincerely ask this committee move forward with the following bills and priorities.

Protecting women and children from harmful chemicals is one of my top priorities. That is why, I introduced a package of bills to ensure safeguards are in place to bolster consumer confidence that the products they purchase are safe for their loved ones.

First, **H.R. 2267 – the Infant Formula Act** would prohibit the sale of expired baby formula. Although regulations require expiration dates to be placed on formula, federal law does not prohibit the sale of infant formula after its expiration has passed. I was shocked to learn that parents who unknowingly bought these expired formula reported their infants being so violently sick. Busy parents need to be able to rely on the safety of products, like formula, that they buy in grocery stores to make sure their newborns are well-fed and healthy.

Second, **H.R. 2268 – the Menstrual Products Right To Know** would require companies to list ingredients in feminine hygiene products, such as scented and unscented pads, cups, scented and unscented tampons, and therapeutic douche apparatuses. We can easily see the ingredients used in the shampoo we put in our hair, or in the foods that we eat; the same transparency requirements must apply to products that touch, or are inserted to, our most sensitive and absorbent parts of the body.

Third, **H.R. 2269 – the Get Additives Out Act** would require a GAO report on the physical and behavioral health risks of food additives on children. The food additives and its effects are dramatically under-studied, particularly on the impact on children as they enter critical stages of development. I am committed to ensuring more transparency in the foods that we eat – and the foods that my two boys eat.

In the coming months, I will also be introducing legislation to address the Consumer Product Safety Commission's inability to effectively oversee recalls, particularly with products that threaten the safety of infants and children. The Britax jogging stroller recall rollout was a shameful fiasco with failed missteps and a clear abuse of consumers' trust. Sadly, this incident is not the exception, which is why I will tackle this issue head-on.

As the co-chair of the Congressional Hepatitis Caucus, I also recently introduced **H.Res.505 – which recognizes July 28th as “World Hepatitis Day”**. This legislation also encourages people from across the world to take preventative action, and urges greater partnerships between federal, state, and local health departments to eliminate new infections in the United States.

Another one of my priorities is to ensure access to affordable menstrual hygiene products. One might think these products are ubiquitous and cheap, but many women face difficulty when it comes to affording and accessing them. I know this, because I have heard the heartbreaking testimonies from girls and women across our nation. That is why I introduced **H.R. 1882 – the Menstrual Equity for All Act**, which is a comprehensive solution to ensuring this basic health care need for the 51 percent of the U.S.

population. No girl should have to choose between their dignity or their education; no one should have to lose their dignity just because they are incarcerated; and no family should have to choose between buying these products or groceries.

Additionally, I am deeply committed to the issue of our environment and its impact on the health of our constituents and their families. That is why, yesterday, I introduced the **Safe Drinking Water in Playgrounds and Parks Act** which would ensure that states, schools, and municipalities have the necessary resources to replace drinking water fountains in those places. As you know, no amount of lead is safe for consumption, and if consumed, its effects are dangerous to children.

Furthermore, aviation noise is a critical issue that impacts my district of Queens. That is why, as the founding member and former co-chair of the Quiet Skies Caucus, I introduced **H.R. 3001 – the Quiet Communities Act**. This bill would reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the U.S. Environmental Protection Act. Chronic exposure to excessive noise can have short and long-term negative health impacts, including hearing loss, stress, high blood pressure, and diminished cognitive performance. Noise pollution is not just a minor inconvenience; it is a health issue that needs to be addressed.

Thank you again to the Subcommittee and the Committee for allowing me to testify. I ardently hope that we can work together on the priorities I have set forth today.