

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of 24 Bills

July 21, 2021

Today, the full Committee will be marking up 24 bills that will continue our work of strengthening and improving our public health and health care system and bolstering the security of our telecommunications networks and supply chains.

We will begin by considering 16 health bills that came out of the Health Subcommittee.

First up will be my bipartisan legislation with Health Subcommittee Ranking Member Guthrie to foster the development of advanced and continuous pharmaceutical manufacturing technology. This legislation will lead to a more nimble and efficient mode of drug production at universities across the country including Rutgers University in my Congressional District. We are hopeful this will help prevent future drug shortages and other supply chain interruptions, while bringing jobs back to the United States.

We will also take up legislation that will provide resources and support to help Americans impacted by the ongoing opioid and substance use disorder epidemic. Our continued work in this area is so critical since overdose deaths reached tragic highs last year.

The Committee is also considering legislation intended to improve our public health infrastructure, address social determinants of health, improve maternal health outcomes, and increase access to lifesaving vaccines. The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the importance of investing in our nation's public health system to both prevent and quickly respond to future public health emergencies and that's exactly what these bills are intended to do.

Finally, on the health front, we will consider bipartisan legislation led by Representatives Soto and Bilirakis to prevent a fiscal cliff for millions of American citizens who rely on Medicaid in the U.S. territories. The bipartisan bill would be the longest extension of increased Medicaid funding for the U.S. territories in more than a decade. While I believe we must find a permanent Medicaid funding solution for the territories, I believe this is a very strong bill worthy of bipartisan support.

We will then move to the eight bills related to our communications networks. Collectively, these bills will only further our commitment to increasing the safety and security of our networks and supply chains, while at the same time increasing competition and innovation in the telecommunications marketplace.

July 21, 2021

Page 2

As we move forward on this critical issue, we need to make sure that Americans across our nation have the ability to leverage the great technological advances of our time in a manner that improves their lives. It is also vital that we help them understand and mitigate the risks and vulnerabilities that come with sophisticated new and more complex technologies.

This suite of bills will help inform consumers and smaller providers about the risks and benefits of new communications technologies and provide stability and structure for the federal government to work with the private sector to keep us safe.

I commend the bipartisan cooperation that went into today's markup and thank you all on both sides of the aisle.