

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Full Committee Markup 5.24.23
Opening Statement
As Prepared for Delivery

WELCOME

Good morning.

I'm proud this committee is building on its rich history of delivering on important priorities at the very center of improving people's lives and raising the standard of living.

HEALTH

We will begin our markup today with legislation from our health subcommittee.

Our solutions will

- lower costs for Americans and provide more health care price transparency,
- responsibly fund community health centers and diabetes research
- prevent harmful cuts to hospitals that serve the most vulnerable patients,
- train more doctors in our communities, and
- improve FDA's review of animal drugs used by farmers and pet owners.

We are taking action to make the health care system more patient-friendly... so that people can access health care when they need it and at a cost they can afford.

Just recently, I read in the Washington Post of the absurdities of American health care system – insurers denying a baby's coverage to stay in the

NICU for a fourth day by saying in a letter, “you are drinking from a bottle” and “you are breathing on your own.”

I can’t imagine what it was like being the new, tired parents of a NICU baby and receiving that harsh and cold letter.

To put patients and their needs first, we had a long discussion about the bills in health subcommittee in both bipartisan legislative hearing and markup.

Today, is a very important step, but just a first step in our effort to improve how the health care system works for patients.

C&T

Next, we’ll move to our Communications and Technology Subcommittee solutions to help close the digital divide...

... and lift permitting burdens so we deploy broadband faster, with less government waste, and more efficiently.

High-speed broadband is an important part of our economy, yet many Americans, including in Eastern Washington, do not have access to reliable broadband.

In order to deploy broadband, providers need to go through burdensome permitting processes at the federal, state, and local level...

...and the time to receive approval on a permit can range from several months to several years.

Congress provided an unprecedented amount of spending – more than 42 billion dollars – for broadband deployment.

Without reforms to the permitting processes, this money could be wasted.

Our legislation would cut the red tape and ensure that this money can reach rural, unserved Americans quickly.

We're moving forward on several of these bills in a bipartisan way, but am disappointed that my colleagues across the aisle are not joining us on our other solutions. Regardless, we are moving forward to deliver for the American people.

Finally, on spectrum, we are acting again to reauthorize the FCC's spectrum auction authority, this time for 3 years.

The Spectrum Auction Reauthorization Act would extend spectrum auction authority, make important changes to existing spectrum auction processes, and direct spectrum auction proceeds to fund crucial programs.

This bill would promote our national security by providing \$3.08 billion for our small communications providers to remove Huawei and ZTE from their networks.

It would authorize and fund Next Generation 9-1-1 technology to help our public safety officers and make sure Americans can reach emergency responders when they need it most.

Most importantly, this bill is a product of long bipartisan, bicameral negotiations, and I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

ENERGY

On the energy front, we are continuing our mission to make energy more affordable and strengthen American energy security.

Nuclear is a key part of our energy mix...and right now America is dangerously reliant upon Russia's supply of nuclear fuels for our existing nuclear power plant fleet.

My legislation – the Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports Act – bans fuel imports from Russia and sends a strong signal to the market that will help restore American nuclear leadership and fuel infrastructure.

We also will be considering two bills from Representatives Lesko and Armstrong that prevent DOE and the CPSC from universally banning gas stoves.

The Biden Administration is trying to use the federal government's power to dictate every aspect of our lives from what kind of car we can drive to how Americans are allowed to cook food for our families.

I'll note, if a celebrity chef can be excepted from local Democrats from Palo Alto's natural gas stove ban...

... surely we can all agree today to allow every hardworking person of this country to decide for themselves what stove is in their kitchen.

Finally, I'm pleased that Mr. Walberg, Ms. Schrier, and Ms. Blunt Rochester are leading on two cybersecurity bills to continue the Committee's bipartisan leadership on protecting our critical energy infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

Again, thank you to all my colleagues who are leading in this markup.

It's a reflection of our most important responsibilities as duly-elected members of the People's House to listen to those we serve...

....engage in the battle of ideas... and find solutions to make people's lives better.

I look forward to our discussion today.
Let's get to work.