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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4209

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE (U.S.  
HELSINKI COMMISSION)

House Energy and Commerce Committee Member Day Statement

September 19, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Rodgers, Ranking Member Pallone and Members of the Committee, and thank you for allowing me to submit a statement for today's hearing.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have worked with many of you on issues that fall under the jurisdiction of the Energy and Commerce Committee. From expanding access to affordable health care to modernizing the power grid to preventing the abhorrent practice of horse soring to ensuring the safe disposal of coal ash, I have sponsored, cosponsored or voted for hundreds of measures that have been assigned to your Committee. This year, I hope you will support and advance my bills that address infant mortality, the rights of people with disabilities, and medical research.

This Congress, I have been pleased to see this Committee place greater focus on reducing maternal mortality, especially as childbearing has become increasingly dangerous in the United States, despite medical advances. I am a cosponsor of many bills that would address maternal mortality, but I would also like to bring to the Committee's attention to infant mortality. In our country, a child is more likely to die before their first birthday than those born in other developed countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Sweden and Japan. Other countries do better, and we can, too. That's why I will be reintroducing the Nationally Enhancing the Well-being of Babies through Outreach and Research Now (NEWBORN) Act later this week, which will expand the Healthy Start Initiative to provide pilot project grants to the communities in the United States that have the highest infant mortality rate.

I also appreciate the Committee's attention to people with disabilities. Though it has been more than 30 years since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and more than 20 years since the *Olmstead* decision, there is still much work to be done to remove physical and societal barriers to allow full participation in the community. I am proud to lead the Latonya Reeves Freedom Act, which has the support of nearly 180 bi-partisan cosponsors. The bill would

guarantee minimum requirements for coverage of long-term support services in the setting of the patient's choice. The bill is named after Latonya Reeves, who moved from my hometown of Memphis, Tennessee to Colorado because Tennessee would not provide the care she needed to live in her own home. People should not have to be institutionalized to receive support services, and this bill would make that a national standard.

Beyond removing barriers for people with disabilities, we also need to continue funding research into preventions, treatments and therapies. Cerebral palsy (CP) is the most prevalent life-long physical disability in the United States, yet it has no dedicated federal funding into reducing its prevalence or how to best support the more than 1 million Americans who have CP. I have introduced the Cerebral Palsy Research Program Authorization Act, which would establish a research program under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to address diagnosis, public health surveillance, treatment and therapies of CP.

Thank you for your attention to infant mortality, disability rights and medical research and for allowing me this opportunity to present some of my priorities to the Committee. I look forward to continuing to work with you on these issues and many others in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress.