

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of**

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Member Kathy Castor

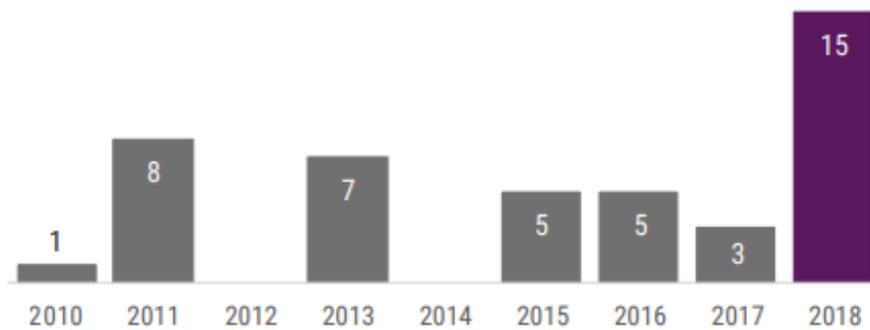
Confronting a Growing Public Health Threat: Measles Outbreaks in the U.S.

February 27, 2019

Chairwoman DeGette, thank you for holding this important hearing today on the measles outbreak that is hitting certain communities around the country. While most of the attention is focuses on Washington State, I wanted to share some facts from Florida’s Department of Health (DOH) on how measles impacted my home state in 2018.

According to DOH, 15 measles cases were reported in four counties in 2018, while fewer than 10 cases were reported each year from 2010 to 2017 as you can see in the graph below. Last year, 15 Floridians and four visitors with measles have spent time in Florida while infectious. DOH reports that there were two outbreaks in 2018, which represent 11 of the 15 cases that were reported. In December 2018, there were four reported cases and they were all associated with an outbreak in Sarasota County just south of my Congressional District. All four of the measles cases reported in December were unvaccinated for measles.

It is my hope that through the continued work of local public health experts, we are able to vaccinate all Floridians with the safe and effective MMR vaccine and prevent outbreaks that could have life- threatening consequences.



Source: Florida Department of Health Measles Surveillance December 2018