

Opening Statement of Chairman Fred Upton
Health Subcommittee Hearing on “Examining Public Health Legislation to
Help Local Communities”
November 20, 2013

Since the start of this Congress, one of the major priorities of the committee has been helping and protecting families and local communities. Back in southwest Michigan and all across the country, families and local communities expect those of us in Washington to work together to solve problems, especially on issues affecting public health.

I’m proud to report that, because of the hard work and dedication of the members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, we have been able to send six public health bills to the president’s desk that will help American families and communities. These include H.R. 307, the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act; S. 622, the Animal Drug and Animal Generic Drug User Fee Reauthorization Act; S. 252, the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act; S. 330, the HOPE Act; H.R. 2094, the School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act; and most recently, H.R. 3204, the Drug Quality and Safety Act. Together, these bills will make a significant difference in Americans’ lives and improve public health in this country.

Today’s hearing is an opportunity to build on our bipartisan success as the subcommittee examines legislation to further improve the lives of our constituents and their families. These bills involve prescription drug abuse, poison control centers, liability protection for volunteer health care professionals at community health centers, newborn screening, Lyme Disease, sudden unexpected death of infants, and traumatic brain injuries.

These are important issues, and working together, we can continue to make a difference. I thank those members both on and off the committee who have worked on the bills we will review today.

I thank the witnesses for attending today's hearing, and I look forward to their testimony and recommendations.