

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
Markup of H.R. 3527 and H.R. 1098
Subcommittee on Health
December 10, 2013

Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening this afternoon's markup. These bipartisan measures address two important public health issues that are leading causes of injury disability and death: unintentional poisoning and traumatic brain injuries.

H.R. 3527, the Poison Center Network Act, reauthorizes the Poison Control Program. Federal funding for the nation's poison control centers supports:

- Treatment advice on poisonings to health professionals and the public;
- Educational activities; and
- Poison exposure surveillance efforts.

The poison control network plays an important role in reducing the number of injuries and deaths resulting from exposure to household products and other harmful substances and drug overdoses. In California alone, the poison control system has managed millions of cases since its inception and consults on hundreds of thousands of cases each year.

H.R. 1098, the Traumatic Brain Injury Reauthorization Act of 2013, extends TBI surveillance and research activities as well as programs for services and supports administered across the Department of Health and Human Services. TBI affects millions of Americans of all ages. These injuries are of particular concern among our active duty military and returning veterans.

I represent the nation's largest Veterans Affairs health facility – the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. TBI is one of many, complex health problems affecting the veteran community served by this facility. I am pleased that we were able to include a provision in the manager's amendment that calls on the Departments of HHS, Defense, and Veterans Affairs to report on their progress in coordinating TBI efforts for current and former members of the military.

I want to commend two Energy and Commerce members, Congressman Engel and Congressman Terry, for their work on H.R. 3527. I'd also like to acknowledge the sponsor of H.R. 1098, Congressman Pascrell.

Mr. Chairman, we are not moving forward on the newborn screening legislation so staff on both sides of the aisle can continue their work on this legislation. I am confident that we will reach agreement on this bill and hope we can bring it back before the Subcommittee soon into the New Year, along with other measures that were the subject of last month's hearing.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and staff for the work done on these bills. I support both of these measures and urge my colleagues to do the same.