

Rep. Joseph R. Pitts
Opening Statement
Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health

Markup of H.R. 3548, the Improving Trauma Care Act; H.R. 4080, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act; H.R. 1281, the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act; and H.R. 1528, the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act

February 27, 2014

The Subcommittee will come to order.

The Chair will recognize himself for an opening statement. Today we are marking up four bipartisan public health bills. The first two are trauma-related:

- H.R. 3548 – the Improving Trauma Care Act of 2013, introduced by Rep. Bill Johnson, which expands the definition of “trauma” under the Public Health Service Act to include injury resulting from exposure to thermal, electrical, chemical, radioactive, and other agents.
- H.R. 4080 – the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act, introduced by Dr. Burgess, which would reauthorize two important grant programs, the Trauma Care Systems Planning Grants and the Regionalization of Emergency Care Systems. The first supports state and rural development of trauma systems and the second funds pilot projects to design, implement, and evaluate innovative models of regionalized emergency care.

We know that immediate access to trauma care within the “golden hour” after injury is critical. By improving access to the specialized care designed to treat trauma injuries, both of these trauma bills will save lives.

Our third bill is:

- H.R. 1528 – the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act of 2013, introduced by Rep. Kurt Schrader, which allows veterinarians to legally carry and dispense controlled substances in the field. This bill has a direct impact on my district – home of the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Veterinary Medicine

New Bolton Center. Vets are often required to provide ambulatory services in the field – especially in rural areas and for the care of large animals like cows and horses. Sometimes it is not feasible for owners to bring the animals to a hospital or clinic like New Bolton Center, and so vets provide such “house call” visits. Clarification of the law is necessary to allow vets to transport, administer and dispense controlled substances outside of their registered location.

Finally, we have:

- H.R. 1281 – the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013, introduced by Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, which reauthorizes federal programs that provide assistance to states to improve and expand their newborn screening programs, support parent and provider education, and ensure laboratory quality and surveillance. Early screening and diagnosis can be life changing for these children and their families.

I look forward to reporting each bill to the Full Committee, and I yield back.