

**Rep. Joseph R. Pitts**  
**Opening Statement**  
**Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health Hearing**  
**“Improving the Medicaid Program for Beneficiaries”**  
**September 18, 2015**

The Subcommittee will come to order.

The Chairman will recognize himself for an opening statement.

Today, Medicaid is the world’s largest health coverage program. Medicaid plays a critical role in our health care system, providing access to needed medical services and long-term care for some of our nation’s most vulnerable patients.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that federal Medicaid expenditures will grow from \$343 billion this year to \$576 billion in 2025. At the same time, state expenditures have grown significantly, today accounting for more than 25% of state spending in FY 2014.

Given rising federal costs, Congress has a responsibility to ensure that proper incentives are put in place to increase the ~~accountability~~~~inclusiveness~~ of Medicaid, while maintaining quality for our nation’s neediest citizens.

To that end, the clarification of eligibility limits and thresholds on Medicaid will serve to bring vulnerable populations into the program, while ~~confirming~~~~reassuring~~ existing enrollees as to their eligibility status.

As a result, the creation of certainty in the Medicaid system will allow us to take another step towards providing meaningful access to care, while protecting taxpayer investments ~~and ensuring that care is provided for the truly needy (?)~~.

That’s why I’m so pleased today to be discussing several ~~bipartisan~~ bills that will help boost the accessibility and transparency of the Medicaid program.

First, a bill to be introduced by Reps. Doggett (~~TX~~), McGovern (~~MA~~), and Marino (~~PA~~) would permanently allow individuals with rare diseases who participate in clinical trials to exempt up to \$2,000 in compensation for services rendered from

their Medicaid eligibility. (explain in one sentence why that's important – has to do eligibility for SSDI)

Second, Representatives Bilirakis (FL), Lance (NJ), and several other colleagues have introduced H.R. 3243, which would authorize the HHS Secretary to waive certain Medicaid requirements in regards to the PACE program (spell out or describe PACE?).

Next, Ranking Member Pallone (NJ) and Rep. GT Thompson (PA) have introduced a bipartisan bill that would allow for a special needs trust exception to extend to non-elderly, disabled individuals for purposes of Medicaid calculation (so that what?).

Finally, Representative Collins (NY) will be introducing the Medicaid Directory of Caregivers Act, a bill that would require State Medicaid programs to increase patient accessibility through the publication of an electronic list of Medicaid providers. (why is that helpful?)

It is my hope that through the steps currently taken in these bills, as well as any productive additions that may occur henceforth, (Mr. Pitts doesn't speak like this) this committee can come together to take meaningful steps towards Medicaid certainty, transparency, and accountability.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today, and I yield to \_\_\_\_\_.