

Opening Statement of Chairman Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Health
Hearing on: “Strengthening our National Trauma System”
July 12, 2016

Trauma causes tremendous economic and human costs to Michigan and our nation. A new National Academy of Medicine (NAM) report underscores we need to do more. This report cites nearly 30,000 preventable civilian deaths per year due to trauma – not overseas in a distant war torn land – but here at home in the United States.

The NAM points to a number of gaps in our national trauma system, including the inconsistency in trauma care quality over time and in specific geographic areas. They also found a diffusion of responsibility across agencies of the government. Additionally, they found significant gaps in our ability to exchange knowledge and best practices, the result of which is significant variation in trauma care delivery which in turn leads to unnecessary suffering and lives lost.

The NAM puts forth several recommendations on how to move forward, including: improving the leadership of trauma care; for integrating military and civilian trauma data systems, best practices and research; reducing regulatory

barriers; and improving trauma care quality processes.

Today we will also hear from two emergency medical services physician medical directors. The practice of medicine in prehospital environment is very unique and is key part of our healthcare system. Our EMS physicians, paramedics and other first responders are the front line of our emergency medical and trauma care system. They must have the tools, training and support to rapidly stabilize and treat a variety of emergency conditions 24 hours per day in every community in the US. These EMS physicians will discuss the implications of HR 4365, the Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2016, introduced by Mr. Hudson to ensure first responders have critical emergency medications needed to treat a variety of emergency and life-threatening conditions.

I would like to thank the witness for coming here today and look forward to their testimony.