

**Opening Statement of Representative Anna G. Eshoo – 4:00 minutes**  
Subcommittee on Health  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
“Proposals to Achieve Universal Health Care Coverage”  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
December 10, 2019

- Today’s hearing is historic and hopeful. It continues our near century-long work to achieve universal health care for the American people.
- Every American should feel secure that if they get sick or hurt, they will receive the care they need without going bankrupt.
- That principle is why President Johnson signed Medicare and Medicaid into law despite protests that it was “socialized Medicine” and the “Moscow party line.”
- Today, Medicare covers 44 million Americans and Medicaid covers 75 million Americans.

- Our goal to achieve universal coverage motivated Congress to pass the Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997.
- It's why President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law in 2010, which has provided health coverage to more than 20 million Americans.
- But there's more work to be done.
- During our second panel today we will hear stories from fellow Americans who live in daily fear that they'll lose their health care because of a decision by their employer, their insurer, or this President.
- It shouldn't be this way. The question is: How to fix it?
- Today, we'll hear nine plans to do just that.
- Those nine plans are why this hearing isn't only historic, but hopeful.

- I feel hope looking at my talented colleagues before me who will present their proposals.
- It's why I specifically asked you to be here today.
- I feel hope looking at the doctors, nurses, and patients in the audience who've dedicated their lives to achieving quality health care for every American.
- And I feel hope during this Advent Season, that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can approach this hearing with open minds and hearts knowing that the goal is to ensure universal health care, including for the most vulnerable among us.
- Shortly before his death, Senator Ted Kennedy wrote a letter to President Obama about health reform and what he called "that great unfinished business of our society."

- He wrote, “What we face is above all a moral issue; that at stake are not just the details of policy, but fundamental principles of social justice and the character of our country.”
- Let us all reflect on that moral issue today.
- I yield the rest of my time to Representative Dingell.