

**Congressman Brett Guthrie**  
**Health Subcommittee Hearing 4.19.23**  
**Opening Statement**  
*As Prepared for Delivery*

Today the subcommittee is taking an important step in reauthorizing critical programs within the Health Resources and Services Administration. The policies before us today each play a unique role in providing greater access to care for millions of Americans, particularly those in rural and underserved communities.

By taking early action on these programs, many of which expire on September 30, we are providing reassurance that they can continue without disruption. Early action also provides subcommittee members with the chance to understand the current impact the policies are having and work to ensure all future funds are directed in the most effective and appropriate way possible. It also gives us time to work together and find bipartisan offsets for mandatory spending in future years.

The first bill, the Strengthening Community Care Act of 2023, would extend the Community Health Center Fund and the National Health Service Corps through 2028. Both programs allow millions of Americans across the country in medically underserved communities to receive access to high-quality primary care services, including pharmacy services, mental health services, substance use disorder services, and dental care.

Across Kentucky, HRSA's Uniform Data System Data shows that 25 health system received grant funding in 2021, leading to almost 600,000 patients served, many of which were served by providers who participate in the National Health Service Corps. I thank Dr. Joyce for leading on this important issue, especially at a time in which we are facing primary care provider shortages across the nation.

I am hopeful that we can come to a bipartisan agreement on a path forward to extend funding and agree to the necessary offsets for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program. I don't think now is the time to make the program permanent, but I am committed to working with my colleagues to continue this essential program.

The National Nursing Workforce Center Act led by Reps. Kim and Blunt-Rochester, is designed to help bolster our nursing workforce. The legislation would specifically require HRSA to work with state nursing workforce centers to help streamline their nursing workforce programs and ultimately provide more targeted investments that reflect the needs of local communities. I thank my colleagues for working on this bipartisan bill.

I also would like to thank Ms. Blunt-Rochester for working with me on one of my nursing workforce priorities, the Building America's Healthcare Workforce Act, which would address very serious nursing workforce shortages in the long-term care community. I will continue my push to advance legislation like this that cuts red tape in the future—especially as we near the expiration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on May 11.

We will also consider proposals to provide continued access to key programs for chronic conditions like diabetes. The Special Diabetes Program Reauthorization Act of 2023 and the Special Diabetes Program

for Indians Reauthorization Act will provide continued funding for both programs through 2028. With over 1.6 million Americans living with Type 1 diabetes, these programs will allow patients to continue receiving comprehensive diabetes care, leading to improvements in quality of life and lower health care costs. I thank Mr. Bilirakis and Mr. Cole for leading on these issues.

We are also considering legislation that would promote more transparency and greater access to care for the over 100,000 individuals in need of an organ transplantation. Dr. Bucshon's Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Act would ensure the nation's organ procurement system is operating as efficiently as possible and ultimately leading to increases in organ transplants for vulnerable patients.

Last, is a proposal to increase transparency within the Covered Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program and to help ensure claimants are receiving adequate information in a timely manner.

I look forward to today's discussion, I thank the witnesses on both panels for being here with us today, and I yield back.