

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Health Subcommittee Hearing 4.19.23
Opening Statement
As Prepared for Delivery

WELCOME

Good morning and thank you for being here.

ABORTION

Before we begin, I would like to address the current discussion around the abortion pill.

We will continue our responsibilities to ensure the FDA is performing its job for the safety of the American people, especially for women and babies.

What I've heard from my colleagues across the aisle and the Biden administration, are policies that have nothing to do with protecting the health of women and everything to do with forcing an extreme agenda on the American people.

Every single time there's been a change on the regulation of the abortion pill, it appears to have been because of a political agenda.

For example, President Biden's FDA permanently eliminated the in-person dispensing requirement, allowing abortion by mail without any in-person exam.

This means a young woman can respond to a social media ad for pills to be delivered to her doorstep without her parents knowing and without seeing a medical provider.

It's an agenda to present abortion as her only option so she goes through the trauma of ending a pregnancy alone.

If AGs in Blue states get their way, FDA will no longer be able to keep in place safety requirements that it feels necessary to protect women, and the scenario I just described will surely become common.

Regardless of what happens in the courts, my appeal today remains the same.

I'm asking my colleagues to abandon this radical agenda for no restrictions on abortion.

Let's come together to uphold the human rights of the unborn...

and to help women at every stage of life and no matter their circumstances.

Every life is worth living.

HEARING

Now to the topic of today's hearing.

We will hear from Carole Johnson, the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, known as HRSA (HER-SAH).

We will discuss several existing federal programs and proposed legislation related to health care workforce, primary care services, organ procurement competition, countermeasure injury compensation transparency, and diabetes research and treatment.

EXPIRING PROGRAMS

The healthcare workforce shortage is leaving people without the primary care they need, which is why we are considering the Strengthening Community Care Act of 2023, led by Representative Joyce.

This legislation will reauthorize the Community Health Center Fund and the National Health Service Corps, that help support both primary care services and the health care workforce.

I'm particularly proud of the work community health centers in my district are doing to expand services and increase job opportunities.

NEW Health currently offers a Medical Assistant pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with local high schools.

They are also working with a local school district to develop workforce training center where rural high school students can gain access to clinical and non-clinical internships.

Additionally, CHAS Health in Spokane is giving high school students the opportunity to participate in training sessions where they can learn about the different aspects of the health clinic and related professions.

I'm hopeful these efforts will help bring more health care workers into our community.

Next, we'll discuss proposals to continue the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program funding. I'm a long-time supporter of this program, which helps to bring more primary care doctors, OBGYNs, mental health providers and others to rural areas.

Spokane, Washington has recognized this and is a national leader on recruiting the next generation of health care workers.

The mandatory funding for this program runs out Sept 30, and I am committed to working to extend it. I hope that we can come to a bipartisan agreement and find the offsets needed.

We will also consider the National Nursing Workforce Center Act of 2023, led by Representative Young Kim. This bill will help enhance existing state-based nursing workforce centers so we can better assess workforce challenges and address any gaps.

ORGANS / CICP

I'm thankful for Representative Bucshon's leadership on the Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Act.

It will allow for HRSA to make the organ procurement and transplantation network process more competitive with the ultimate goal of making organs available to more people in need.

One area where more work needs to be done

We will also consider a proposal to increase transparency within the Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program.

This is administered by HRSA and provides compensation for covered injuries or deaths that occur as a direct result of using certain countermeasures used to treat ailments from a public health emergency or security threat.

DIABETES PROGRAMS

Lastly, we will discuss two programs critical to improve the lives of people with diabetes, including Representative Bilirakis's, Special Diabetes Program Reauthorization Act of 2023," and Representative Cole's "Special Diabetes Program for Indians Reauthorization Act of 2023."

With that, I am looking forward to today's discussion and I yield back.