

E&C Health Subcommittee
Public Health Reauthorizations
Congressman Michael Burgess
Opening Statement
As Prepared for Delivery

First, I'd like to thank the Chair for holding this important hearing to consider all the critical public health reauthorizations that need to be addressed before the end of the year.

I am pleased to see the consideration of the PREEMIE Act of 2023 introduced by my good friend Marionette Miller Meeks and I, along with several of my other fellow members. The PREEMIE Act would reauthorize programs that expand research,

education, and intervention activities aimed at reducing premature birth.

On August 7th, 1963 the death of the Patrick Bouvier Kennedy sparked a nationwide race to prioritize research on premature birth. A day before his death, the President Kennedy toured a space research facility in San Antonio, Texas. At this facility, President Kennedy asked a doctor studying oxygen tanks if it was possible to use the technology to treat premature births. His observation set off one of the most significant discoveries in neonatology. It is 2023, and we still face the same challenges in our ability to accurately prevent, address, and treat premature birth.

This issue is deeply personal to me because I have a daughter who was born prematurely. Going through that treatment process is not easy for any family. I'm pleased to see this reauthorization move forward and thank my fellow members for their work.

I am also pleased that we are considering the Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act. This important bill reauthorizes assistance to states for Maternal Mortality Review Committees to better understand the burden of maternal complications and mortality through research, education, best practices, and prevention efforts. I appreciate my fellow members Reps. DeGette, Carter, Kelly, Cammack, and Castor for working with me on this.

Lastly, I'd like to mention the history of great bipartisan work between myself and Mr. Davis to address sickle cell disease. Before 2018, there hadn't been authorization for sickle cell research since 2004. I am grateful for Mr. Davis and Mr. Carter's partnership and hope to see more advancements for sickle cell patients. As a provider and a legislator with experience working on these issues, I urge the committee to support these critical reauthorizations.