

**Energy & Commerce
Health Subcommittee Legislative Hearing
Examining Proposals that Provide Access to Care for
Patients and Support Research for Rare Diseases
June 14, 2023**

As Prepared for Delivery

OPENING STATEMENT

INTRO

Today's hearing looks at key programs that aim to improve access to care and support research for rare diseases.

This includes solutions to help save the lives of mothers and babies... improve our understanding of blood disorders...

...coordinate federal efforts related to Parkinson's Disease...

...and ensure we are appropriately monitoring instances of cancer in firefighters so we can get these heroes better treatments and care.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about the effectiveness of these programs.

As part of our work to help mothers and babies at every stage of life ...

... we are continuing our work to reauthorize the PREEMIE and Preventing Maternal Deaths programs.

Especially for first time moms, I think about the joy ... and also the uncertainty, the questions, and all that comes with being pregnant.

Across the country, there is a need for stable and consistent resources and education around maternal health.

That is why I was pleased to see the Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization include a requirement for CDC and HRSA to share best practices to hospitals and other health care entities to ensure we are doing everything we can for moms, babies, and families to thrive.

I hear often from constituents not knowing where to turn when dealing with postpartum depression in rural areas.

HRSA has a National Maternal Mental Health Hotline, but getting best practices to doctors on how to best help women will hopefully continue to lead to improvements in maternal mental health.

CHGME

We're also considering the reauthorization of the Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Program.

In nearly 60 hospitals across the country, this program helps train our next generation of pediatricians.

As we discuss other solutions today like the Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act ...

.... I imagine moms and dads who hear the diagnosis no parent wants to hear from a doctor –

“Your child has cancer.”

And then--- for the love of their child-- the parents pour themselves into making sure their kid will have the best chance to one day achieve their hopes and dreams.

From our work on this Committee, we all know families who have experienced this.

That is why we must reauthorize this Children’s Hospital program.

So, America’s children are cared for by the best doctors in the world.

Doctors who we trust to practice with the strongest medicine, data, and science so our kids live full, happy, and healthy lives. So, we are not shying away from concerns that children are being rushed to experimental medical interventions that could include puberty blockers, hormone therapies, and surgeries that can cause irreversible damage.

Dr. Miriam Grossman is here today to share the data ...

.... and why other countries are stepping back from these interventions for children because the risks--like permanent infertility--outweigh the benefits.

Our Children’s Hospitals and medical institutions should also be urging caution and being honest about where evidence is lacking.

Many times on this committee, we've come together to protect the younger generation.

I've had many conversations with my colleagues about our concerns for teenage girls in particular ... who are facing more stress, anxiety, and pressure than ever before.

For them and children in crisis ... we have taken historic action on mental health care reforms.

We are leading right now to stop Big Tech's algorithms from manipulating children and preying on their vulnerabilities.

This work must continue... and we need to do everything we can to stand up and protect children.

That is our goal today.

Let's send the message to the younger generation that they are loved as they are ...

.... and let's make sure they are getting the best health care possible.

They deserve nothing less.

[pause]

CONCLUSION

To close, I want to thank all my colleagues who are leading on solutions we are discussing.

Thank you to our witnesses for your time and providing your expertise this morning.

We're grateful as this committee does the hard work to legislate and improve the lives of those we serve.

I look forward to the discussion, and I yield back.