

**Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers**

**Opening Statement**

**11.29.23 Health Hearing**

***As Prepared for Delivery***

This is now the fourth hearing that the Energy and Commerce Committee has held across our subcommittees on the subject of artificial intelligence.

Artificial intelligence has the potential to transform every aspect of our lives—for better or for worse.

It's critical that America —not China—is the one addressing AI's challenges and leading in this technology's development and deployment.

The best way to start is by laying the groundwork to protect people's information with a national data privacy standard. This is a foundational first step towards a safe and prosperous AI future, in health care and beyond.

I look forward to continuing to discuss how we can improve privacy protections for Americans as we incorporate AI tools into our lives...

...and I'm proud of each of our subcommittee chairs for leading on this important issue.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR AI IN HEALTH CARE**

AI has a unique role to play in the future of health care.

AI could help find the next breakthrough cure...

... or improve our ability to catch deadly diseases earlier.

We are already seeing that artificial intelligence can be used to aid in the assessment of medical imaging, which one of our witnesses will discuss in detail.

Additionally, AI is reducing administrative burdens on health care providers.

We have all heard from the providers in our districts about the burden of necessary but cumbersome paperwork...

...how this often leads to burnout for our doctors and nurses...

...and how it eats up time that they could spend providing actual patient care.

For just about my entire tenure in Congress, one of the top issues that we've struggled with has been finding ways to cut paperwork and redundancies in our health care system so that we can let doctors do what doctors do best: treat their patients.

For years, we've nibbled around the edges of this issue, but the future of AI could be transformative and will hopefully let doctors

be doctors instead of administrative staff. We'll hear more from Dr. Schlosser from HCA on how this is being tested out in their hospitals.

## **CONCERNS WITH AI IN HEALTH CARE**

To be clear, AI will not solve all the problems with the American health care system.

One concern that we have frequently heard is the potential for human biases to be implicitly baked into AI technologies.

The first piece of health care legislation that this Committee advanced this year was my bill to ban the usage of Quality Adjusted Life Years—or QALYs—which are discriminatory measures that are used by federal payers to deny health care services to people with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

If AI is reliant on QALYs or other similar measures when assisting in clinical decision making, our most vulnerable will be left behind.

No one here wants to advocate for discrimination, and we need to be conscious of how federal programs and AI technologies incorporate these types of biases and what we should be thinking about in this area.

## **CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE**

I'll close by saying that I'm optimistic about the promise of many of these technologies.

I think these technologies can make a difference in the lives of patients, and this Committee needs to lead the way in supporting innovation.

For American to lead, we must strike the right balance with AI...  
...one that gives businesses the flexibility to remain agile as they develop these cutting-edge technologies, while also ensuring its responsible use.

A national standard for the collection and handling of data will provide businesses, health care providers, and every American with clear and understandable protections wherever they are.

Today's hearing will hopefully shed more light on the current landscape of AI in health care and hopefully provide us with further insight on next steps that we should take to continue supporting patients.