

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Health Ranking Member Anna G. Eshoo

Hearing on “Legislative Proposals to Support Patients and Caregivers”

February 14, 2024

Thank you Mr. Chairman and good morning, colleagues. Happy Valentine’s Day to everyone, it was always a happy celebration in my household because it was my mother and father’s wedding anniversary. Today, the Subcommittee will consider 19 bills to authorize critical public health programs that support and improve the health and wellbeing of children, adults and caregivers. I’m so pleased the majority of the bills – 18 of the 19 bills – are bipartisan.

Each bill before us today supports individuals and families at the most vulnerable times in their lives. I’m sure most members of our Subcommittee, I think all members of this Subcommittee, have experienced at least one – if not more – of these vulnerable moments in their lives. I have and so have most Americans.

Emergencies involving children are terrifying, most especially for their parents. The *Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act* led by Rep. Castor gives parents peace of mind by reauthorizing the only federal program dedicated to enhancing medical care for children during an emergency.

Rep. Cardenas’ *Lifespan Respite Authorization Act* supports people who serve as the primary caregiver for an aging or sick loved one. Being an unpaid caregiver is physically and mentally exhausting. Reauthorizing this program will ensure caregivers get a temporary break.

Finally, the *SHINE For Autumn Act* introduced by Reps. Castor and Kelly closes gaps in stillbirth data, research and awareness to ensure every mother can have a healthy pregnancy and life with their baby.

So many Americans experience one of these vulnerable moments each day. If someone you love were facing health challenges or in trouble, I think each one of us would go to the ends of the earth to help them. We should give families confidence that when they seek out help, these programs will be there for them.

Together, these bills bring us closer to the goal of quality health care for all Americans and show the vital importance of federal agencies such as the CDC and HRSA.

Our seven witnesses, thank you for being here today, will explain what people in these moments need and how these bills can help. I look forward to hearing your recommendations for how Congress can maintain and improve these essential programs.

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Before I yield back to the Chair, I'd like to give one minute of my time to Congressman Paul Tonko. He leads three bills before our Subcommittee today which offer crucial resources to detect Alzheimer's Disease early, reduce risks and support the caregivers who take care of their loved ones.

Congressman Tonko, I yield you the rest of my time.