

Chairman Brett Guthrie Opening Statement
Subcommittee on Health
The Fiscal Year 2026
Department of Health and Human Services Budget
Tuesday, June 24, 2025 – 10:00 AM

Thank you, Chairman Carter.

Secretary Kennedy, I'd like to welcome you to the Energy and Commerce Committee—it's good to have you with us today.

HHS has become the largest spender of our federal departments; and whether at the pharmacy counter, doctor's office, or dinner table, HHS's work impacts Americans every single day.

The core mission of HHS is to “enhance the health and well-being of all Americans,” but Americans are increasingly frustrated by a system that has become inefficient and too expensive.

That is why President Trump’s pledge to “Make America Healthy Again” resonated with voters across the country.

The American people spoke loudly and clearly when they rejected “business as usual” in November, and already in the first few months, this Administration has taken significant strides to challenge the status quo.

The budget we’ll be discussing today rethinks how HHS accomplishes the mission of enhancing the health and well-being of all Americans.

Like many other departments across the federal government, HHS ballooned over the past four years. In FY24, HHS was responsible for **25%** of federal spending.

While increasing resources to our Health Department might make sense during a once-in-a-century pandemic, using that

increase as the new baseline for how HHS should operate does not.

As I've said many times this year, it is the mission of HHS that matters most, not the bureaucracy.

If this Administration has ideas on how to more effectively and efficiently deliver on the missions Congress has directed HHS to undertake, it's our duty to thoughtfully examine them. This does not mean blindly accepting them, nor does it mean opposing ideas that go against the grain just because they're new.

While some of these bigger proposals have consumed headlines, there are countless examples that reflect this Administration's mission to modernize.

The FDA's recent announcements about harnessing AI to help streamline review and approval processes speaks to this

Administration's commitment to embracing innovation to greatly benefit the American people.

CMS' recent ACA marketplace program integrity rule represents this Administration's dedication to combatting widespread waste, fraud, and abuse plaguing our health care system. The rule will save American taxpayers up to \$12 billion in 2026 alone and lower patient premiums by an average of 5 percent.

Fighting the chronic disease crisis by investigating its root causes, as well as working to strengthen the safety and quality of our nation's food supply are prime examples of commonsense steps that are long overdue.

As HHS continues to carry out its vital mission, communication and collaboration with Congress will be essential to ensure lasting success.

I'm confident that everyone in this room wants to see a health care system that is driving us to be the healthiest America we can be, regardless of disagreements on the best way to get there.

I would also like to take a moment of personal privilege to welcome my friend Gary Andres back to the Committee—Gary was the Staff Director when I first joined Energy and Commerce—and to congratulate him on his new role as the Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Secretary Kennedy, I look forward to the discussion today and the work ahead of us. I yield back.