

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader  
Gus Bilirakis  
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Legislative Hearing on “Legislative Hearing to Protect Consumers and  
Strengthen the Economy”  
May 26, 2022**

Thank you, Madam Chair, for holding this legislative hearing and thank you to the witnesses for sharing your expertise today. There is a lot to cover with the broad scope of bills on the docket, so we appreciate you all speaking with us, albeit virtually.

Before jumping into the list in front of us, this Subcommittee has a lot of bills, 37 to be specific, in post-legislative hearing limbo that have yet to receive a markup. I know a lot of our members on this side of the aisle are anxiously waiting to hold a meeting to further discuss some of those bills and work across the aisle to make bipartisan progress. I’m hopeful we can move forward with actual legislative action on those bipartisan bills (and leave the partisan ones to the wayside).

Onto the subject at hand, I’m pleased to see bipartisan bills included in today’s hearing like H.R. 7820, the Travel and Tourism Act introduced by my friends in the Florida delegation Representatives Dunn, Soto, and Salazar, and I’m fully supportive of their efforts. I’m also glad to see the Visit America Act that my and colleague and fellow Travel & Tourism Caucus Co-Chair Dina Titus sponsors, which I know also tackles broader issues for the industry beyond our Committee’s jurisdiction.

This Subcommittee has a rich history of coming together in the name of promoting America’s travel and tourism industry, and after the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic this legislation urgently shows the need for this industry to be a focal point for the Department of Commerce. As you all know, our committee unanimously passed my Restoring Brand USA legislation which will release dollars already collected for the program to help restore our travel and tourism industry back to even better than pre-pandemic levels.

H.R. 7820 will further assist the travel and tourism industry by requiring the Department of Commerce to develop a 10-year travel and tourism strategy with annual goals for the number of international visitors to the United States. I believe

the legislation compliments the Committee's previous efforts and I look forward to seeing the bill move forward.

The Committee is also considering legislation to provide greater transparency to our constituents with H.R. 4081, the Informing Consumers about Smart Devices Act introduced by Representatives Curtis and Moulton.

Holding Big Tech accountable has been a priority for Republicans and for Leader Rodgers throughout this Congress, and I believe this legislation will help us move towards accomplishing that goal. In the wake of advancements in technologies, increasingly more innovative devices are being developed and deployed into our economy that have cameras or microphones. I'm certain every member here on the dais has at least 1 or 2 smart TVs or speakers in their homes – I know I do. This legislation would simply require companies that manufacture devices with these cameras and microphones to disclose to consumers of such features.

Unfortunately, I'm not able to cover all the bills on today's docket in 5 minutes, but I did want to raise one final bill that is important to a founding principle of this Subcommittee, which is protecting consumers.

Our Subcommittee has jurisdiction over the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an independent organization whose mission is to protect people against risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products. We owe it to our constituents to examine whether there are dangerous products in the marketplace and actions we need to take without creating loopholes for bad actors or unduly burdening those that follow the law.

That's why I'm proud to support Reese's Law, which will require the CPSC to develop product safety standards with respect to batteries that pose an ingestion hazard.

I want to share my sympathy to Trista Hamsmith on the loss of dear Reese, and thank you for being with us today to share your story and for the countless hours that you have dedicated to the bipartisan legislation brought before us today.

Thank you again Madam Chair. I yield back.