



COMMITTEE ON  
**ENERGY & COMMERCE**  
DEMOCRATS  
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pallone Remarks at Full Committee Markup**

**Washington, D.C.** – *Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks today at a Full Committee Markup of Six Bills:*

Today we will be marking up six bipartisan bills – five from our Health Subcommittee and one from our Energy Subcommittee.

Three of the bills before us today will enhance Medicaid, our nation’s largest health insurer.

I’d like to thank Representatives Castor and Barton for all their hard work on the ACE Kids Act. This bill aims to improve care coordination for children with medically complex conditions in the Medicaid program. Better care coordination can help lead to better outcomes for the child, and that’s why it’s important to move this legislation forward.

The EMPOWER Care Act, proposed by Representatives Dingell and Guthrie, reauthorizes funding for the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program. This program assists people who want to transition from institutional care to care in their community. I urge support for this important legislation.

I also support a bill introduced by Representatives Welch and Walberg that expands the authority of Medicaid Fraud Control Units to investigate and prosecute Medicaid fraud and beneficiary abuse and neglect in non-institutional settings. This legislation is particularly important as more Medicaid beneficiaries begin to receive care outside of institutions.

We will also review a discussion draft that bans so called “gag clauses” in Medicare as well as the private health insurance market that can limit pharmacists from informing consumers that their prescription may be purchased for a lower price if paid out-of-pocket instead of through their insurance plan.

This is a good bill, but I would like to reiterate something that I said during our subcommittee markup – this legislation cannot and should not be our only effort to reduce drug prices this Congress. For the last two years, Committee Democrats have been demanding that we do

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more to help reduce prescription drug prices, and, with the exception of this bill today, Committee Republicans have refused to join us in finding meaningful solutions to this ongoing problem.

Finally, we will mark up the “Strategic Petroleum Reserve Reform Act,” introduced by Vice Chairman Barton and Ranking Member Rush.

This bill would set up a pilot program to facilitate the leasing of unused storage space in the reserve, while attempting to ensure the government and taxpayers benefit from those leases.

I thank all of the members for their ongoing work on these bills, and I yield back.

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