

**Opening Statement for the Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Full Committee Markup of 6 Bills  
As Prepared for Delivery**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Today we are considering six pieces of legislation that passed the Health Subcommittee last week. Two of these bills address crucial parts of our health care system and are designed to help address access to life-saving health care services for those in need.

The first, H.R. 7666, the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act, introduced by the leaders of this committee, would reauthorize key federal programs that promote access to behavioral health care and comprehensive services for those seeking help overcoming substance use disorder.

We saw throughout the pandemic just how important access to these services can be. Especially in-person counseling services and other wrap-around services for those with mental illness or substance use disorder.

Onerous COVID-19 lockdowns created roadblocks for hundreds and thousands of Americans to access these life-saving services overnight.

During this time, we saw the highest number of recorded overdose deaths in a single calendar year during 2021. Most of these deaths could be attributed to

synthetic opioids, including fentanyl analogues, that are being trafficked into the United States through our Southwest Border.

We need to act now to permanently schedule fentanyl-related substances and get these deadly poisons off our streets. Today we can act on the HALT Fentanyl Act, championed by Mr. Latta and Griffith, which would permanently schedule fentanyl-related substances as Schedule I drugs.

We can act on policies, like HALT Fentanyl Act, while promoting resources that help individuals with substance use disorder gain access to comprehensive treatment and recovery services. I am proud that legislation like my bill, the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support Services Block Grant Act of 2022, was included in H.R. 7666. This would reauthorize critical federal programming designed to help states address the unique needs of their communities dealing with substance use disorder. I thank Representative Tonko for leading on this bill as well as Representative McKinley for supporting this important bill.

We're also voting to reauthorize the FDA user fee agreements that this committee, and ultimately the entire House and Senate, are charged with reauthorizing every five years. It is critically important that Congress conduct oversight and ultimately allows the FDA to collect fees from industry in exchange

for timely reviews of drug and device applications, which in turn helps patients access new, safe medical products as quickly as possible.

The FDA Act of 2022, which passed the Health Subcommittee unanimously last week, will preserve access to life-saving therapies, incentivize innovation, and secure our medical supply chains.

I urge my colleagues to support each of these bills, and I yield back.