

Opening Statement
**“The Drug Enforcement Administration’s Role in Combating the
Opioid Epidemic”**
Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
March 20, 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. The issue of pill dumping in West Virginia is particularly troubling to me, and I appreciate the willingness of the Drug Enforcement Administration to testify before us today to answer our questions.

As a physician, I have first-hand experience in prescribing opioids to manage patients’ pain. I presumed that, given my Drug Enforcement Administration license to prescribe these controlled substances, if I ever abused my prescribing privileges, the Drug Enforcement Administration would punish me. What I struggle to comprehend today is that, while our country is in the midst of an opioid epidemic, nearly nine million hydrocodone pills were dumped into a small West Virginia

town with a population of 392 people, and the Drug Enforcement Administration did next to nothing to stop it.

The manner in which the Drug Enforcement Administration handles its responsibilities in the thick of our nation's opioid epidemic is an essential piece of the opioid puzzle that the Energy and Commerce Committee is trying to solve.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.