

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Health Subcommittee 5.17.23
Opening Statement
As Prepared for Delivery

WELCOME

Good morning.

I'm proud this committee is building on its rich, bipartisan history to come together on important priorities for the American people.

The legislation we are considering today will help:

- lower costs for Americans and provide more health care price transparency,
- responsibly fund community health centers and diabetes research
- prevent harmful cuts to hospitals that serve the most vulnerable patients,
- train more doctors in our communities, and
- improve FDA's review of animal drugs used by farmers and pet owners.

We are taking action on the American people's priorities to make the health care system more affordable and patient-friendly..

HELPING PATIENTS

We all know that health care is too expensive...

... and the system is far too complicated.

And well-intentioned government policies too often provide more benefits to large and well-resourced corporations than they do patients.

Take the story of Mike Lauze, from Maine.

Last year he spent one hour in an O.R. undergoing eye surgery.

His bill included 3 separate facility fees totaling \$7,800 and professional fees totaling \$6,200.

Why are three facility fees necessary for one hour of surgery in one O.R.? I do not know.

But I do know that the system must be simpler, more affordable, and work better for patients.

That is why we are moving bills today to increase price transparency and competition throughout the health care system.

I thank Ranking Member Pallone for his partnership on our bill, the Transparent PRICE Act, which builds on work done by the Trump and Biden administrations to bring prices to patients.

We have had two hearings on price transparency and lowering health costs.

I know they have spurred additional ideas on how to help patients and look forward to taking a first step on that work today and continuing this work moving forward.

EXPIRING PROGRAMS

There is another critical reason this markup is so important:

The American people want accountability in our Government...

...Congress cannot meaningfully fulfill its critical oversight and spending roles without examining the reauthorizations of expiring programs through regular order.

We have heard from HRSA on the importance of these programs and worked hard to make sure that additional mandatory spending is fully offset.

I am proud that we are extending mandatory funding for the Teaching Health Center GME program for 6 years. This will help as they plan and recruit for future residency classes.

Extending mandatory funding for the Community Health Center Fund will help ensure that Health Centers in my district have adequate resources to provide much-needed primary care services in the community.

ADUFA:

Finally, regarding ADUFA....

Whether or not you know it, almost everyone in this room relies on the animal drugs approved by the FDA.

Whether you have a pet, drink milk, or eat meat, the FDA plays a very important role in making sure the drugs we give animals work and are safe.

It is important we get this done on time and work in a bipartisan way, without divisive and controversial amendments..

So I'm glad we're on track to reauthorize this on time by moving Representative Pence's legislation through subcommittee today.

CONCLUSION

I look forward to today's discussion, as we prepare for a full committee mark up.

The Energy and Commerce Committee will continue to plow the hard ground on the most important issues before us as a nation...

... and that certainly includes making sure people can find the care they need at a price they can afford.

Thank you and I yield back.