

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of 24 Bills

September 21, 2022

Today, the full Committee continues its important work by marking up legislation to enhance health care, bolster our travel and tourism industry, and protect animals from inhumane practices.

This markup comes after a very productive Congressional session in which we have made health care and prescription drugs more affordable, strengthened our economy, aggressively tackled the climate crisis, and protected consumers.

Last month, the House passed, and President Biden signed into law, the Inflation Reduction Act that will lower costs for the American people. The new law finally empowers Medicare to negotiate the cost of prescription drugs to lower prices for seniors. It extends enhanced Affordable Care Act Marketplace premium subsidies that are delivering average annual savings of \$2,400 to a family of four.

It is also the single-largest investment in climate action in American history that will also create new clean energy jobs and lower energy costs for American families.

There have also been other major achievements, including some that have garnered strong bipartisan support, and today the Committee's work continues.

We will begin by considering four health bills. The first bill would provide updates and improvements to the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program to help clear an existing backlog of claims and improve the program's capacity to ensure claims are paid in a timely manner going forward.

We will then consider two bills that would improve health care in rural and underserved areas by allowing grants to Community Health Centers to be used to establish mobile health units and by reauthorizing grants to improve emergency medical services and trauma care readiness and coordination.

We will then consider the Flint Registry Reauthorization Act which reauthorizes the Lead Exposure Registry. It's important we continue this program to allow health professionals to collect robust data, monitor lead exposure, and improve care coordination for people exposed to lead.

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Next, we will consider two Consumer Protection and Commerce bills. The Visit America Act supports travel and tourism in the United States through the development of a ten-year travel and tourism strategy. The PAST Act would strengthen protections against soring, the inhumane practice of applying an irritating or blistering agent to a limb of a horse to accentuate the horse's gait.

Finally, we will consider 18 Republican resolutions of inquiry. It's disappointing to see the Republicans using these resolutions for what I believe are political reasons. There is simply no other way to explain it considering the sheer number of resolutions that they've introduced. In some instances, it also doesn't appear the information Republicans are now requesting through these resolutions had ever been asked for before they were introduced. Resolutions of inquiry can be important tools for oversight, but I believe Committee Republicans' efforts today are an abuse of the process.

It's unfortunate, but it will not prevent us from continuing our work to put people over politics.