

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Health
Markup of H.R. 2017, H.R. 2446, H.R. 2646, H.R. 3014, H.R. 3537, H.R. 3716, and H.R. 3821
November 3, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

The subcommittee looks to build upon our record of success as we are set to consider seven health bills that will have a positive impact for folks in Michigan and across the country.

H.R. 2446, the VERIFI Act, is a bipartisan Medicaid bill sponsored by Health Subcommittee Vice Chairman Brett Guthrie, that would address waste and abuse identified by the Office of the Inspector General at HHS. This bill would protect Medicaid beneficiaries by requiring the use of electronic visit verification for personal care services furnished under the program for our most vulnerable.

H.R. 3014, the Medical Controlled Substances Transportation Act, introduced by Rules Committee Chairman Pete Sessions, would allow inherently mobile medical providers like team doctors and emergency responders to appropriately care for their patients while minimizing the risks of abuse and diversion of controlled substances.

H.R. 3537, the Synthetic Drug Control Act, introduced by Rep. Charlie Dent, would combat the dangerous proliferation of synthetic drugs in neighborhoods across the country. Mr. Dent has been a continued leader on this important issue. We must stay aggressive in our efforts to keep pace with the criminal enterprises who are eager and willing to exploit any legal loophole. But we must make sure that we do not hinder legitimate research in the process. I am committed to addressing any such issues before the full committee markup.

H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Terminated Providers Are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act, is a bipartisan bill sponsored by Dr. Bucshon, as well as our colleagues Reps. Butterfield and Welch. This bill would implement several targeted recommendations by the Office of the Inspector General at HHS to address a flaw in the president's health law and improve CMS oversight of terminated providers, also improving each state's incentives to better police their programs and screen providers. The amendment in the nature of a substitute incorporates technical assistance from CMS.

H.R. 3821, the Medicaid Directory of Caregivers Act, is a bipartisan Medicaid bill sponsored by Rep. Chris Collins. This bill would require states to publish online information about primary care and specialty care providers who participate in Medicaid, so beneficiaries are empowered with better information about accessing health care. Mr. Collins will offer an amendment at markup that incorporates some technical assistance from CMS as well as state feedback.

H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, introduced by Conference Chairman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, would make federal menu labeling requirements workable, so that businesses with different models can comply and provide consumers with nutrition information in the most meaningful way.

Finally, the subcommittee will consider H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act. Authored by Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chairman Tim Murphy (R-PA), the legislation addresses many of the issues identified by the committee's review of the nation's mental health system. The bipartisan legislation aims to fix the nation's broken mental health

system by refocusing programs, reforming grants, and removing barriers to care. With tomorrow's vote, we will take an important step in helping families in Michigan and across the country dealing with serious mental illness.

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