

Opening Statement
Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Markup of 30 Bills
July 15, 2020

Today, the Full Committee is meeting for our first fully virtual markup to consider 30 pieces of legislation – these are all consensus bills, which are truly bipartisan, and the details of which have been worked out with myself and the Ranking Member. Many of these bills were marked up earlier this year in our Energy, Health and Communications and Technology subcommittees. As our nation continues to suffer from the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting severe economic downturn, this Committee continues its work to provide real relief to the American people by providing the Administration the tools and resources it needs to properly combat the virus and to stimulate the economy.

We will begin this markup by considering five energy bills that will improve energy efficiency, promote clean energy and improve tribal communities' access to affordable, reliable energy sources. I'd like to focus on legislation introduced by Representatives O'Halleran and Mullin, the Tribal Power Act, which builds on the discussion we had at last week's Full Committee hearing on the urgent needs of tribal communities by improving access to energy sources that are affordable and reliable. I thank all the sponsors of these five bills for their hard work and bipartisan collaboration.

Next, the Committee will mark up 17 health bills. As our nation continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, we will consider legislation today that will continue our efforts to better help Americans with their health care needs during this unprecedented period in our nation's history. We will consider legislation that will expand health care coverage and access to care, something that is critical as we learned just yesterday that more than five million Americans have lost their health care coverage since the beginning of the pandemic. We will also strengthen mental health parity and provide mental health support to first responders.

We will consider a bipartisan bill that incorporates several standalone pieces of legislation to enhance the capabilities of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). This bill will ensure the SNS is operating at its highest potential moving forward in order to continue to respond to COVID-19 and also prepare for the next public health emergency. And we will also improve the safety of America's food, drugs, and medical devices. These measures could not come at a more critical time, and I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work.

Finally, we will consider eight vital communications policies to better protect and connect Americans. Representative Engel's Don't Break Up the T-Band Act will ensure first responders can continue to use their radio systems. Representative McNerney's READI Act will enhance

the emergency alert systems. And Representative Matsui's legislation will help us improve network resiliency after disasters.

I also want to highlight Subcommittee Chairman Doyle and Ranking Member Latta's Spectrum IT Modernization Act that will improve the sorry state of federal spectrum coordination. And the USA Telecommunications Act that I have led with Representatives Guthrie and Matsui, and Ranking Member Walden, which will facilitate the availability of open wireless network equipment.

I encourage my colleagues to support all 30 of these bills before us today.