

Prepared Opening Statement of Representative Anna G. Eshoo

Subcommittee on Health

House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Markup of Bills to Lower Consumers' Health Care and Prescription Drug Costs

2322 Rayburn House Office Building

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- This is the first markup of our Subcommittee and it's a significant step in our work to lower the price of prescription drugs and reduce health insurance costs for families across America.
- We are marking up 12 bills, with many being bipartisan, and delivering on our promise to the American people to lower the cost of health care.
- Taken together, the six drug pricing bills before us today will lower drug prices and save taxpayers billions of dollars. The bills will close loopholes to prevent drug manufacturers from gaming the system, and the bills will make cheaper generic drugs available to patients more quickly.
- We're also considering six bills that will help more Americans afford quality, comprehensive health insurance.

- These bills are timely. Earlier this week, the Trump Administration said the entire Affordable Care Act should be struck down in federal court. Yet again, this Administration has shown that it will stop at nothing to take health care away from people.
- If the Administration gets its way, previous estimates from the Congressional Budget Office show that 32 million more people will be uninsured by 2026.
- It's a contrast between parties. On one side, the Republicans are continuing an absurd nine-year-old fight without thought to how their actions will dangerously upend our entire health care system including pre-existing condition protections, Medicare, Medicaid, and payments to hospitals and doctors.
- On our side, we're considering six commonsense bills today that build on the progress of the Affordable Care Act.
- One bill helps more states set-up their own health insurance marketplaces. Another extends the reinsurance program to protect people with pre-existing conditions and lower premiums by an estimated 10 percent.

- The bills also undo the Trump Administration’s ongoing sabotage of the Affordable Care Act.
- Two bills restore the funding for marketing, outreach, and in-person assistance for the private health insurance marketplace established by the Affordable Care Act.
- Two others will dismantle the Administration’s regulations and guidance to expand junk plans and weaken the ACA’s consumer protections, including protections for people with pre-existing conditions.
- Over the course of four legislative hearings held in this Subcommittee, we’ve examined these bills and heard testimony about people who have been hurt by our health care system.
- We heard about the millions of Americans who aren’t taking their medicine as prescribed because prices are unaffordable.
- We heard about people with pre-existing conditions who watched this Administration make rules that return our insurance system to the “bad old days” when they could be denied coverage because they’re sick.

- We heard about Americans who think they've bought quality insurance, only to find out that their plan doesn't cover their care when they get sick.
- Today, our Subcommittee takes the first steps to improve the health care system, so more people are covered and more people get the care they need.
- Thank you to the Members of our subcommittee and the other Members of the House who authored the bills before us today to lower the costs of prescription drugs and make health care more affordable.
- Throughout this process, we've asked Members, patients, experts, and federal agencies for their feedback, and we've incorporated technical assistance from the Administration. We will continue that collaboration as we continue to tackle the problem of America's high health care costs.
- Today's markup, and the bills we're advancing are the first our Subcommittee will consider to lower prescription drug prices and protect Americans with preexisting conditions. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting these bills.