

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Joseph R. Pitts**  
**Subcommittee on Health**  
**Hearing on “Examining Potential Ways to Improve the Medicare Program”**  
**October 1, 2015**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Today’s hearing will consider three bipartisan legislative bills designed to strengthen the Medicare program.

H.R. 556, the Prevent Interruptions in Physical Therapy Act, sponsored by our colleague Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL) would add therapists (physical, occupational, and speech) to the list of providers allowed to transfer care for a Medicare patient in circumstances of illness, pregnancy, or vacation.

H.R. 1934, the Cancer Care Payment Reform Act, sponsored by the House Republican Conference Chairman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA) establishes a national Oncology Medical Home Demonstration Project to improve Medicare payments for cancer care.

And thirdly, draft legislation authored by Rep. Greg Walden (OR) would make changes to documentation and face-to-face requirements for home health providers under the Medicare program.

Together these three bills continue the commitment this Congress has to strengthen the Medicare program and keep the promise for seniors – which was started earlier this year by permanently repealing and replacing the broken Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) – an effort spanning several years to enactment this past April.

I want to thank our witnesses for agreeing to testify today. They bring real world experience regarding problems in the Medicare program and we welcome their views on the legislation before us today.

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