

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
Hearing on “Challenges Facing America’s Businesses Under the Patient  
Protection and Affordable Care Act”  
June 26, 2013**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

One of my top priorities as chairman of this committee has been rigorous oversight of the Affordable Care Act to learn more about how the law is being implemented and how it is impacting Americans and the nation’s job creators. Last month, the committee released a report, based on actual data provided by the nation’s leading insurers, that chronicled the looming premium rate shock in store for millions. And just last week, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office released a report requested by this committee about implementation, and the findings raised additional red flags. The GAO found that, despite having over three years to prepare, the administration is still woefully unprepared for implementation and the missed deadlines and delays show potential for further challenges ahead of the October 1st enrollment.

Today, we are here to learn more about how the Affordable Care Act is affecting business owners and their employees. It is our job creators who are on the frontlines of implementation – they have a very important story to tell, and I would like to welcome our witnesses and thank them for taking the time to be here for this important discussion. Like many small businesses across the country, the choices facing the business owners who will testify this morning are not easy ones. Because of the costs of the law and its requirements, these businesses will have to make gut wrenching decisions - whether they can keep the employees they have; whether they will have to let employees go or cut their hours; or whether they can continue offering health insurance altogether to their employees. These are not hypothetical issues. These are real questions businesses are facing right now. As we will hear today, for some businesses, the costs of this law may force them to close their doors. Despite the president’s promise that this law would “lower costs for businesses and families,” the testimony of these witnesses reveals that the Affordable Care Act is not, in fact, “affordable” for many of the nation’s small business owners.

Sadly, job creators large and small across the country are facing similar difficult decisions. In my home state of Michigan, a medical device manufacturer announced it would lay off over 1,000 employees from across its global workforce because of the Affordable Care Act. The health care law’s threat to job creators and job growth is real, and I worry similar announcements will soon be all too common. Our rigorous oversight will continue as we fast approach the law’s full implementation.

###