

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Hearing on “2014: Seeking PPACA Answers”
January 16, 2014**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today we continue our thoughtful oversight of the Obama administration’s implementation of the health care law and its effects on Americans in Michigan and across the country.

Mr. Cohen, welcome back. You have testified before the committee a number of times and I appreciate you returning again today. In preparing for today’s hearing, we went back to review the transcripts of your testimony from last year. When we asked you what to expect at the start of open enrollment on October 1, you assured us on two separate occasions, once in April and again in September less than two weeks before launch, that everything was on track.

During your more than four hours of testimony before the committee last year, there was no mention of the fact that you had been briefed twice by McKinsey in early April 2013 and warned about the number of risks facing the marketplaces and the website. Nor was there any elaboration on the fact that CMS employees were well aware that the website build was riddled with problems, far behind schedule with the October 1 launch in jeopardy.

The purpose of today’s hearing is not to rehash every detail of the failed launch of HealthCare.gov. But to move forward, we must understand what you knew about the status of the website and implementation of the president’s law at the time you appeared before this committee, looked us squarely in the eye, and proclaimed that everything was “on track.” It is time to be fully candid and transparent with Congress and the American people.

Lots of promises have been made, many already broken. What’s next? The only way the public can trust this health care system and the administration that is implementing this law is if administration officials are open and transparent about the facts and what the American people should expect from this law and for their health care moving forward. Providing facts and specifics is an important first step toward restoring credibility. The American people deserve the peace of mind that there will be no more surprises, that the information available is the entire and true story. I hope you will help us understand what happened and provide some answers today.

###