

Opening Statement of Chairman Greg Walden
Full Committee
Markup on H.R. 338, H.R. 627, H.R. 723, H.R. 1109, H.R. 446, H.R.
447, H.R. 951, H.R. 2122, H.R. 2274, H.R. 2292, H.R. 2457, H.R.
1222, H.R. 2410, H.R. 2430, and H.R. 1492
June 7, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning and buckle up because we have 15 bills to consider today. Among these bills are important health priorities like the Food and Drug Administration Reauthorization Act (FDARA) of 2017, and 11 bills aimed at advancing our nation's energy infrastructure and improving energy efficiency.

FDARA is critically important legislation for patients, drug and device manufacturers, and the millions of Americans who work in the health care sector.

FDARA would reauthorize the agency's critically important drug and medical device user fee programs, making improvements to each of them based on lengthy deliberations involving FDA, industry, patient groups, and other stakeholders.

Under the leadership of Dr. Burgess, the Health Subcommittee made several improvements to the underlying bill – from how the FDA inspects device establishments to enhanced generic drug competition through new incentives.

FDARA will make a number of targeted, meaningful, and bipartisan steps to improve the process for generic drug approval and close loopholes that allow companies to increase prices for off-patent drugs where there is no competition.

As I have said before in this room, if we do not have this bill to the President's desk in July, not only will thousands of FDA employees be seeking new employment, but desperately needed treatments and cures will not reach patients. We cannot – and will not – stand for that.

We're also considering three important public health bills. These bills will advance research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment relating to sickle cell disease; improve the CDC's Congenital Heart Disease Surveillance System; and update the DEA registration process for certain mobile medical practitioners operating outside their principle place of practice.

These important public health bills aren't the only reason we're here today. When Congress can take steps that allow for more domestic energy output, lower costs for ratepayers, reduced emissions, and more jobs, it should not hesitate to do so. This is especially true if it can be done at little or no cost to taxpayers. That is what we hope to accomplish with today's slate of bipartisan energy bills.

From measures to facilitate increased generation of clean and affordable hydropower, to wider use of Energy Savings Performance Contracts that cut down on energy use in federal buildings, to programs for reducing energy costs in public schools, these bills all lead us towards the common goal of smarter energy use. These and other projects are also job creators, which is why we also have provisions to update and improve federal job training programs for the energy and manufacturing sectors.

I look forward to advancing all of these important bills and would like to thank the entire committee for its dedication to identifying important ways to help patients and enact solutions that put consumers first.