

**Opening Statement
Health Subcommittee Hearing: “Examining Legislation to
Improve Public Health”
Rep. Gene Green
September 8, 2016**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Today we are examining five pieces of legislation that will improve public health and build on this committee’s record of advancing and enacting bipartisan bills.

I want to thank the Chairman for calling this hearing, and our witnesses for being here with us this morning.

H.R. 1192, the National Diabetes Clinical Care Commission Act was introduced and championed by Representatives Pete Olson and Dave Loebsack.

We will be considering a managers amendment to H.R. 1192, which will establish a National Clinical Care Commission to evaluate and offer recommendations to improve care, leverage resources, and coordinate efforts around complex metabolic, autoimmune and insulin related diseases.

Through innovation, collaboration and maximizing return on investment, this important legislation provides the opportunity to address the enormous economic and human impact caused by diabetes and other disorders.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation.

H.R. 1717, the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Reauthorization Act or “STOP Act,” was introduced by Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard.

She has been a tireless champion for this issue, and I want to recognize her and thank her for her leadership.

The STOP Act will build on successful efforts to reduce underage drinking by reauthorizing a number of important public health programs and add additional component of screening and intervention.

H.R. 1807, the Sickle Cell Disease Research, Surveillance, Prevention and Treatment Act will enhance our ability to understand, surveille, and treat Sickle cell disease.

Sickle cell disease is a group of inherited red blood disorders that affect approximately 100,000 Americans.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to diagnose, the symptoms can be severe, and treatment requires comprehensive and complex care.

H.R. 1807, introduced by Representatives Danny Davis and Mike Burgess, will promote research, prevention and treatment, and emphasizes collaboration of community-based entities focusing on Sickle cell disease.

H.R. 3119, the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act is an important bill to improve palliative care. Representative Eliot Engel introduced this legislation, recognizing that palliative care enhances the quality of live for individuals with a serious or life-threatening disease by treating the symptoms, side effects, and emotional pain experienced by patients.

H.R. 3119 will improve training of health professionals, enhance research into palliative and hospice care, and support projects to fund the training of physicians and non-physician health professionals entering the field of palliative care.

Finally, we are considering H.R. 3952, the Congenital Heart Futures Reauthorization Act.

Each year, approximately 40,000 babies are born with a congenital heart defect, making it the most common type of birth defect in the United States.

It is estimated that one million children and 1.4 million adults live with congenital heart disorders.

They require specialized care and face a lifelong risk of disability and premature death.

The cause is unknown, but several genetic and environmental factors have been linked to the diseases.

H.R. 3952, introduced by Representatives Gus Bilirakis, Adam Schiff, and Eleanor Holmes Norton builds on existing efforts by requiring the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to enhance and expand research, surveillance, and education outreach to providers and the public about congenital heart diseases.

Under this legislation, the CDC will report to Congress on a cohort study to improve the knowledge of the epidemiology of the disease across lifespans, and implement an awareness campaign.

I am proud to support each of these important bills and thank their sponsors and this committee for their commitment to improving public health.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and learning more about each of these bipartisan pieces of legislation.

Thank you and I yield back.