

Opening Statement

Rep. Gene Green

Health Subcommittee Hearing: “Examining Public Health Legislation: HR 2820, HR 1344, and HR 1462”

June 25, 2015

Good morning and thank you all for being here today.

This hearing was called to examine three bills that will strengthen public health, each of which is the product of bipartisan effort.

H.R. 2820, the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act, is led by Representatives Doris Matsui and Chris Smith. According to the Health Resources and Service Administration, nearly 20,000 patients in the United States need a bone marrow, peripheral, or cord blood transplant each year.

H.R. 2820 will reauthorize federal programs that support cord blood donation, a national bone marrow registry, and related research, all of which expand access to transplants for patients in need.

H.R. 1344, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act, is championed by Representatives Lois Capps and Brett Guthrie. Beginning in 2000, Congress took steps to facilitate the development of newborn and infant screening, and intervention programs.

H.R. 1344 reauthorizes and makes further improvements to the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program. Early identification of a child's hearing loss increases the likelihood that intervention and treatment services can successfully prevent or limit development delays.

Finally, we are considering H.R. 1462, the Protecting Our Infants Act. The CDC has found drug overdose to be the leading cause of injury death in the U.S., and according to a recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the incidence rate of neonatal abstinence syndrome (N-A-S) quadrupled between 2004 and 2013.

H.R. 1462, led by Representatives Katherine Clarke and Steve Stivers, is an important step to combat the rise of N-A-S and prenatal opioid abuse. It will require the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to develop recommendations for preventing and treating prenatal opioid abuse and N-A-S, provide for better coordination of federal efforts, and improve data collection.

I thank all of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle for putting forward these thoughtful and worthy proposals, and for their commitment to improving access to and delivery of health care. I look forward to continuing to work in a bipartisan manner on the many issues before our Subcommittee.