



ENERGY & COMMERCE NEWSROOM

CHAIRMAN FRANK PALLONE, JR. | 116TH CONGRESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2019

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Pallone Opening Remarks at Full Committee Markup of Net Neutrality, Health Care and Climate Change Bills

Washington, D.C. – *Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) gave the following opening remarks today at a full Committee markup of 14 bills:*

It's great to be here for our first full Committee markup. Today, we are beginning to fulfill our promise to strengthen the economy, reduce costs for consumers and combat climate change. We will be marking up 14 bills that will put consumers first by making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, and by reversing harmful policies that undermine critical health care, environmental and consumer protections.

We will begin by marking up the Save the Internet Act, which will restore strong net neutrality protections that were abandoned by the Trump FCC. Net neutrality is a popular policy that is overwhelmingly supported by both Democrats and Republicans. This legislation will protect consumers and small businesses from abusive and discriminatory practices, while also protecting free speech. It's time we restore a free and open internet by passing this legislation.

We will then move to 12 health bills that are intended to rein in the soaring costs of prescription drugs, lower health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs, and put an end to the Trump Administration's attempts to sabotage the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The first group of bills will lower the cost of prescription drugs by removing barriers and loopholes that prevent cheaper generic drugs from coming to market. We know that one of the most effective ways to lower drug costs is to ensure that consumers have access to generic drugs – and that's exactly what these bills are intended to do.

The second group of bills are part of our comprehensive proposal to lower Americans' health care costs, protect people with pre-existing conditions, and reverse the Trump Administration's sabotage of the ACA. These bills are more important than ever after the Trump Administration announced last week that it would not defend the ACA in court – endangering the health care and wellbeing of millions of Americans.

And finally, we will mark up the Climate Action Now Act, which stops President Trump from pulling out of the Paris Agreement and requires him to submit a plan for meeting our obligations under that accord. This legislation is not only a critical first step to combating climate change, but it is also essential to strengthening our economy. A major transformation is taking place around the world to a low-carbon economy – we can either lead that transition or watch American workers and industries get left behind. We cannot afford to wait another day to act on climate.

We have an opportunity today to make a real difference for the American people by pushing forward these 14 bills. I look forward to a robust discussion and hope that we can find bipartisan agreement on many of these bills.

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