

Energy and Commerce Committee Members Day
Congressman Jimmy Gomez
Remarks on *Jeanette Acosta Invest in Women's Health Act* (H.R.3129)

CHAIRMAN PALLONE, RANKING MEMBER WALDEN, THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME HERE TODAY.

I AM HERE TO URGE THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE JEANETTE ACOSTA INVEST IN WOMEN'S HEALTH ACT, H.R.3129.

THE LEGISLATION HONORS A CONSTITUENT OF MINE, JEANETTE ACOSTA.

JEANETTE WAS A FIGHTER—A FORMER HILL STAFFER WHO I MET AS A WHITE HOUSE INTERN WORKING ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES, WHO TRAGICALLY LOST HER BATTLE WITH CERVICAL CANCER.

AND HER STORY SHOWS JUST HOW IMPORTANT IT IS THAT ALL WOMEN HAVE ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE, LIFE-SAVING CANCER SCREENINGS AT SAFETY NET HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS, LIKE PLANNED PARENTHOOD.

SAFETY NET PROVIDERS LIKE THESE ARE ON THE FRONT LINES, AND THEY PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE LIVES OF LOW-INCOME WOMEN AND WOMEN OF COLOR IN PARTICULAR.

THEY WERE A LIFELINE IN MY OWN FAMILY: GROWING UP WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE, TWO OF MY SISTERS RELIED ON OUR LOCAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD AS THEIR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

EVEN AS SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE WORKING TO CUT MEDICAID, GUT THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, AND DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD, WE NEED TO REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS AND PUSH BACK.

ALL WOMEN SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO PREVENTATIVE CANCER SCREENINGS: THEY CAN SAVE LIVES.

UNFORTUNATELY, TOO MANY BARRIERS, FROM POVERTY TO LANGUAGE ACCESS TO INADEQUATE INSURANCE, STAND IN THE WAY.

THE *JEANETTE ACOSTA INVEST IN WOMEN'S HEALTH ACT* WOULD HELP ENSURE THAT ALL WOMEN, ESPECIALLY LOW-INCOME WOMEN OF COLOR, HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY, LIFESAVING SERVICES AT SAFETY NET PROVIDERS LIKE PLANNED PARENTHOOD.

OUR LEGISLATION WOULD CREATE NEW GRANT AND PILOT PROGRAMS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE SERVICES, BETTER TRAIN HEALTH PRACTITIONERS, AND HELP US BETTER UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS FOR ALL WOMEN.

THESE MEASURES WOULD REPRESENT A MASSIVE INVESTMENT IN WOMEN'S HEALTH, AND THEY ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR LOW-INCOME WOMEN OF COLOR, WHERE TOO MANY DISPARITIES EXIST.

BUT THEY ARE NECESSARY INVESTMENTS FOR THE LONG TERM, AND THEY SAVE LIVES.

IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

EVEN AS HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS CONTINUE TO MISS HER DEARLY, THIS IS A WAY TO HONOR JEANETTE'S LEGACY.

WE MUST ENSURE THAT ALL WOMEN—NO MATTER THEIR BACKGROUND—HAVE ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE, PREVENTIVE CARE.

I URGE THE COMMITTEE TO CALL A HEARING AND TAKE UP THIS LEGISLATION, AND YIELD BACK.