

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Health Ranking Member Diana DeGette

***Hearing on “Legislative Proposals to Maintain and Improve the Public Health Workforce,
Rural Health, and Over-the-Counter Medicines”***

July 16, 2025

First, I want to congratulate my friend Morgan Griffith on his new role as chair of this subcommittee.

He and I have worked together a lot over the years, and he has always been a thoughtful partner.

We have our ideological differences and we represent very different constituencies.

But we share a belief that this committee and this institution can and must achieve good things for the American people when it works effectively.

And we want our constituents to live longer, healthier lives.

Today, we are considering important legislation to reauthorize FDA’s over-the-counter medicines program, critical health workforce development programs, and more.

I am particularly proud of this committee’s past work on over-the-counter medicines.

Five years in, we have seen early successes, and I thank my colleague from Ohio, Mr. Latta, for introducing legislation with me to reauthorize the over-the-counter medicines program.

I look forward to seeing the continued success of this program in the next five years.

This hearing was scheduled for a week ago.

Republicans postponed it because they were more concerned with celebrating the passage of the worst piece of legislation, both in process and substance, that has passed into law in my time in Congress.

Republicans jammed through the Big Bad Bill and its handouts to the wealthiest Americans under the cover of night, including in our committee, while real legislating to help our constituents was nonexistent.

Between cuts to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act and the choice not to extend tax credits for health care coverage, 17 million fewer people will have health insurance.

July 16, 2025

Page 2

There is nothing beautiful about that.

The law rolls back much of the progress we have made since passing the Affordable Care Act in the first place.

Medicaid expansion was a lifeline to hospitals struggling to keep their doors open.

Now, faced with a financial cliff, many of those hospitals might close.

And just last week, I visited a Planned Parenthood in my district that can no longer serve individuals covered by Medicaid.

They had to cancel hundreds of appointments for women coming in for things like cancer screenings and family planning.

These cuts to Planned Parenthood don't even save money.

Republicans have preached for decades about fiscal responsibility, but apparently giving billionaires more money and kicking millions of Americans off their health care is more important.

The Big Bad Bill makes our mounting national debt even worse, increasing it by trillions of dollars to finance tax cuts.

Now, it is law.

Much of it will not go into effect for years.

I only hope that we can clean up this mess of a law before it hurts more people, and apparently, so does Josh Hawley who, after voting for the law two weeks ago, introduced a bill to reverse many of the cuts to Medicaid.

Democrats have been frozen out of the work of this subcommittee since the beginning of the year, from issues that should be noncontroversial to the cruel, shameful legislation the majority rammed through to take health care from millions of Americans.