

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery**  
**of**  
**Member Diana DeGette**

*Markup of 7 Bills, Full Committee*

**September 17, 2025**

Today, we are marking up several good bipartisan bills.

Meanwhile, over in the Senate, one of our counterpart committees is holding a hearing with former CDC Director Susan Monarez and former Deputy CDC Director Deb Houry.

Speaking for everyone on my side of the aisle, we are frustrated that this committee is not taking its oversight duties seriously. As we discussed last week, every Democrat on the health subcommittee has requested a hearing with RFK Jr. and former CDC Director Monarez regarding her firing and the politicization of science at the agency.

Will you commit to holding such a hearing the week of October 6?

This Thursday and Friday, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which Secretary Kennedy has stacked with anti-vaccine ideologues, is meeting to consider vaccine recommendations. Will you commit to holding an oversight hearing with Secretary Kennedy on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and how vaccines protect our children the week of October 6?

Mr. Chairman, we asked for this committee to conduct oversight on the Trump administration's illegal gutting of our public health agencies. In a hearing on April 1, you stated, "we have to have the proper oversight to make sure the things that Congress directs the Administration is in place."

We sent you a letter following up on that the next day.

Yet in response, you had a spokesperson call our request for oversight, quote, "a partisan ploy." Let me be clear: wanting to ensure that CDC, FDA, NIH, and other public health agencies can serve the American people is not a partisan ploy. Will you commit to holding a hearing on public health staff firings and the state of the public health agencies the week of October 6?

I'd like to enter into the record an article from the New York Times describing the devastation that this administration has wrought on cancer research, and my staff has a copy for every member on this committee. It discusses the firings at NIH, new burdens on researchers, and the horde of political appointees who are interfering with science. Former NIH Director Harold Varmus is quoted saying "We are great in science. Why would we want to destroy one of our greatest assets?"

September 17, 2025

Page 2

Simply put, this committee is not fulfilling its duties.

And today, Democrats on this subcommittee are demanding that this committee live up to its obligations and work for the American people.