

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.

Markup of the Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress

February 25, 2025

Today's markup of the Committee's oversight plan comes at an important moment for our country and for Congress. With both today's vote on the budget resolution and this markup of the Committee's oversight plan, we have an opportunity to show what we stand for and who we are willing to fight for.

House Republicans are planning to vote later today on a cruel budget resolution that directs this Committee to cut at least \$880 billion. These cuts are expected to come from the Medicaid program – the program that provides health coverage to one in three Americans. If Republicans move ahead with this budget proposal – millions of Americans will lose their health care coverage – all so Republicans can give billionaires and big corporations giant tax breaks. Imagine that – stripping health care away from children, parents, and seniors all so they can give Elon Musk and his buddies a giant tax break.

Democrats stand united against this House Republican budget scheme. We will never support cutting Medicaid to give handouts to billionaires, and if just three Republicans join us today, we can protect American families and stop this budget betrayal.

Committee Republicans also have a choice to make today about whether or not they are going to finally do their jobs and stand up to President Trump's actions to consolidate power in the White House to the detriment of the American people. Oversight requires asking tough questions and demanding answers from the President and the federal agencies in order to hold them accountable, on behalf of the American people, for their actions.

Committee Republicans have silently watched as President Trump and Elon Musk have stolen from the American people by illegally withholding funds approved by Congress. To date, Republicans have refused to ask any questions as crucial investments in our districts to bolster domestic manufacturing, protect public health, find the cures of tomorrow, and keep our drinking safe and clean are being withheld by the Trump Administration.

Committee Republicans have silently watched as Elon Musk and his minions are seeking the personal financial and health care information of every American. This is a serious invasion of the American people's privacy. We have no idea what they are doing with this information. For all we know, Musk could be using it to benefit his own companies. But instead of demanding answers, House Republicans are siding with Musk and refusing to do anything to protect this sensitive data.

And Committee Republicans have silently watched as Musk and his minions indiscriminately terminate hundreds of thousands of federal workers throughout the nation who are working to serve the public good and to address the needs of the American people. Public servants across the board were terminated. That includes federal workers involved in nuclear safety, monitoring the growing threat of the bird flu, fighting wildfires, ensuring that our food is safe to eat, and that air travel is safe too.

The terminations have been chaotic – some employees receive a message that they're fired one day, only to learn the next that it was a mistake. Musk is comfortable moving fast and breaking things, but when American lives are on the line that's a recipe for disaster. They are also moving ahead with these mass firings without any review of a workers' work history or any analysis of the impact the job losses will have on the government's ability to help Americans. It's been a total fiasco and has shown how incompetent the Musk team is.

Committee Democrats will not remain silent. We have been demanding answers from this Administration since day one and we are not going to stop. But it is time for Committee Republicans to do their job.

As it stands, the Committee Republicans oversight plan does not address these serious issues. In fact, it is nearly identical to the plan put forward two years ago despite the dramatically different reality that we are now facing.

This is not an acceptable oversight plan for this Congress and the extreme challenges we face with President Trump in the White House. That's why Committee Democrats will be offering amendments to strengthen it so that we are not only holding this Administration accountable but also fighting to ensure the government works for everyone. I'm hopeful that Republicans will recognize the need to strengthen this plan and join us in supporting these amendments. And with that, I yield back the balance of my time.