

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

Markup of 26 Bills, Full Committee

April 8, 2025

We're here today for what would normally be a routine markup of 26 bills, however, these are not normal times. I know Republicans want to pretend like it's business as usual around here – but the daily chaos and illegal activity that we are seeing from the Trump Administration is not business as usual.

The reality is most of the bills we're considering today were already agreed to last year as part of a bipartisan, bicameral legislative package that was set to be passed and signed into law in December before Elon Musk intervened and killed the agreement. We should be passing that entire package as one bill today.

That package included important provisions that would have lowered costs for hardworking Americans, but instead of passing it and sending it to the President's desk to be signed into law, my Republican colleagues allow Elon Musk to decide what becomes law.

What's especially upsetting about this is my Republican colleagues know this was a good agreement that would have helped people – it included provisions to lower prescription drug prices, crack down on junk fees, lower gas prices, ensure our water is safe to drink, and fund Community Health Centers and Teaching Health Centers.

Republicans repeatedly look the other way. First as President Trump gave Elon Musk and his DOGE lackeys free rein to loot the American government, destroy our institutions, and illegally fire tens of thousands of public servants who go to work every day to serve the American people. And now as Trump's reckless tariffs are leading to the largest middle class tax increase in at least 50 years. These tariffs are crashing our economy, raising costs for groceries and other goods, and wiping out the hard-earned retirement savings of middle-class families.

Amidst all this chaos, Republicans have refused to hold this Administration accountable. As we markup 26 bills that would task various federal agencies with more responsibilities while at the very same time the Trump Administration is gutting the agencies and firing the public servants who would implement these new laws.

Republicans are bringing up consumer protection bills, while also ignoring Trump's attempted illegal firing of the Democratic FTC Commissioners and reports that DOGE has arrived at FTC to fire people at an already understaffed agency. This illegal action threatens the ability of our nation's leading consumer protection watchdog to do its job, including protecting

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children from Big Tech online harms, but Republicans blindly move ahead without acknowledging the new reality.

Meanwhile, we will debate health related bills today, like the SUPPORT Act, all while President Trump eliminates 20,000 jobs at the Department of Health and Human Services. Amidst a continued fentanyl crisis, and a measles and bird flu outbreak, a 25 percent reduction of the workforce at HHS is alarming and irresponsible.

The truth is Republicans want to hold this markup today so they can continue to pretend like everything is normal. But it's all a charade.

It's time for this Committee to wake up and pay attention to what's going on around us. This is not business as usual. The Trump Administration is driving up costs, ruining our economy, and putting American families at risk – it's time for Republicans to pull their heads out of the sand and start demanding some accountability before it's too late.

I yield back.