

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

Hearing on “Examining Opportunities to Advance American Health Care through the Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies”

September 3, 2025

Today, Committee Republicans are holding a hearing on Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in health care while the Trump Administration and HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. are dismantling the Department of Health and Human Services and waging a war on public health.

For nine months now, the Trump Administration and Secretary Kennedy have created chaos in our nation’s health care system. Last week it hit a breaking point when the Administration fired the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and three key scientific leaders resigned after refusing to sign off on watered down and misleading and unscientific recommendations on vaccines. The Trump Administration’s reckless actions leave the CDC with a critical leadership vacuum as we head into the fall and flu season. Coupled with the mass layoffs of over 25 percent of CDC’s workforce, this Administration’s path of destruction threatens America’s health.

The CDC must be guided by Leaders who govern above politics and remain focused on the agency’s core purpose: safeguarding and improving the health of our communities, preventing infectious and chronic diseases, and protecting all Americans. I would like to submit for the record the powerful resignation letter of Dr. Daskalakis, the former Director of the CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, which details the widespread deception at HHS over changes to the vaccination schedule.

Last week’s actions follow the Trump Administration’s decision to restrict access to COVID-19 vaccines for millions of Americans. The unprecedented action by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) means that healthy adults under 64 will no longer be able to receive the COVID vaccine.

Americans will die as a result of Secretary Kennedy’s actions and that’s why it is well past time for this Committee to finally begin demanding answers.

In April, we called on Chairman Guthrie to schedule a hearing with Secretary Kennedy specifically on his illegal layoffs and reorganization. Then, in June, I called for Chair Guthrie to join me in conducting a bipartisan investigation of Secretary Kennedy’s actions to restrict access to vaccines. I have also called for this Committee to examine the administration’s devastating cuts to the NIH, and the administration’s dangerously inadequate response to the growing measles epidemic. These requests have been met with silence – Republicans would rather sit on the sidelines as Kennedy moves ahead with advancing his dangerous pseudo-science agenda.

Secretary Kennedy must testify before this Committee to answer questions and be held accountable for threatening public health by abusing his authority, propagating disinformation, and politicizing science. It is time that Republicans take these threats seriously and join us in holding Secretary Kennedy accountable.

Turning to today's hearing, AI has the potential, if used appropriately, to provide innovative approaches and efficiencies in health care. The goal in using these technologies should be to provide better direct patient care and health outcomes but I am concerned that the expanded use of AI in health care has generated significant risks that we simply cannot ignore. Congress must recognize and address the complex ethical, legal, economic, and social concerns raised by using AI in our health care system.

Without adequate oversight, these new technologies can lead to devastating consequences for patients. Medical care could be delayed and insurance coverage denied – preventing Americans from getting the care they need to live. There's also the threat of personal health information and data privacy breaches. While AI tools can support health care providers, their advice and recommendations should not serve as a substitute for the nuanced judgment of health care professionals and should not come at the expense of patient safety.

I am very concerned about the impact of AI on mental health. The tragic stories of teens interacting with AI chatbots that encouraged them to take their own lives are devastating.

The speed at which AI technologies have been incorporated into health care has so far outpaced the regulation and oversight over them. That's why it is concerning the Trump Administration rescinded a 2023 Executive Order aiming to strengthen AI governance in high-risk domains and issued a separate executive order to "remove barriers" and revoke policies that they view as hindering AI innovation.

I am also extremely concerned by the Administration's announcement to implement a pilot program in New Jersey and five other states that will allow for-profit companies to utilize AI to review prior authorization requests for seniors in Medicare.

I also believe it is critical that safeguards are in place to protect the privacy and security of patient data. AI cannot function without large quantities of data, and we must ensure that the increased data which AI relies on does not come at the expense of consumers' right to privacy.

Thank you. I yield back.