

**Opening Statement
Ranking Member Raja Krishnamoorthi**

Hearing on “Regulatory Reform Task Forces Check-In Part II”

November 14, 2017

Thank you Chairman Jordan and Chairman Palmer for convening this hearing today. I'd also like to thank Ranking Member Demings for her friendship and leadership, and all our witnesses for participating today.

This is the second hearing our subcommittees have had on regulatory reform task forces, and I am very pleased that we have the witnesses here today that we do. In particular, I am pleased we have a representative from the Department of Health and Human Services.

My constituents know that having health insurance saves lives.

It is for this reason that I am deeply troubled by recent Trump administration actions that undermine the health protections and coverage that millions of Americans have come to depend on through the Affordable Care Act. The Administration's actions and proposed regulations are literally making it harder for Americans to receive coverage.

The Department of Health and Human Services has cut in half the open enrollment period for plans to be purchased on the health exchange, meaning that some individuals will either not have health insurance or will be penalized for obtaining insurance late.

The Administration has cut the open enrollment advertising budget by 90 percent and is waiving requirements that states contact difficult-to-reach individuals, meaning that many people living in rural areas may not even know they need to sign up for health insurance.

The Administration has refused to provide funds to stabilize the healthcare market, as required by law. Failing to do so has raised premiums and deductibles for families buying health insurance on the exchange, and will end up costing American taxpayers more in the long run.

HHS has permitted all employers to deny female employees no-copay access to contraception.

HHS has proposed allowing states to lower standards for essential health benefits, so that states can engage in a race to the bottom in terms of what health insurance plans are required to cover.

Similarly, the Administration has proposed expanding short-term, limited duration plans which need not meet the requirements of traditional health plans, permitting healthy individuals to circumvent the ACA's requirements nearly in total.

HHS has also proposed loosening the medical loss ratio, so that plans can spend more on advertising and executive salaries, and less on doctors, nurses, surgeries and medications, for those who need it.

These are just the beginning of all the actions the Administration is taking to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

There's an old saying that there's no Republican or Democratic way to pick up the trash or fill a pothole. The only thing that matters is that you deliver for your constituents.

I think we should increase efficiencies and cut unnecessary regulations, as long as doing that improves the quality and availability of health care to all Americans.

That is not what the Trump regulatory task force is doing. Instead, it is making it harder for Americans to get quality health coverage.

I'm very grateful to the Chairmen for calling this hearing so we can further investigate the reasons behind administrative actions and the policy goals they serve, and provide comment and insight on how agencies can more effectively serve the American people.

I look forward to discussing this more with the witnesses, and I yield back my time.