

Opening Statement
Energy and Commerce Committee
Health Subcommittee Markup
July 20, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased that we are moving on these important pieces of legislation, and I commend the Members and staff for working so hard to get us to this point.

I would like to take a moment to speak about my resolution, H. Res. 261, that I am bringing up under a UC agreement this morning. The bipartisan resolution commends CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) for implementing the Medicare demonstration project to assess the quality of care of cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, and calls on CMS to extend the project, subject to any appropriate modifications, at least through 2006.

The demonstration project was critically important to protecting quality cancer care in 2005. It provided resources to assess the patient experience with chemotherapy side effects, including pain, nausea, and fatigue. The project has achieved three important objectives: collecting data to improve the quality of cancer care, maintaining stability in the cancer care delivery system, and focusing limited resources in an aspect of cancer treatment most difficult for patients.

I would like to thank the American Society of Clinical Oncology for working so closely with me on this resolution, and I would like to commend Chairman Deal, Chairman Barton, and the committee staff for working with my office to bring this resolution before the committee today. I would also like to thank Dr. McClellan and the staff at CMS for working with my office on clarifying language so that I can put forth a resolution that everyone can be happy with.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.