

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Roundtable on “21st Century Cures”
May 6, 2014**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Welcome to the first roundtable of our 21st Century Cures initiative – a collaborative effort that aims to accelerate the pace of cures and medical breakthroughs in the United States. As my colleague Diana DeGette and I mentioned in the video we released last week, as part of this bipartisan initiative, we will spend the next six months reviewing the full arc of the discovery, development, and delivery process to determine what steps we can take to accelerate new cures and treatments and ensure we keep America as the innovation capital of the world. We cannot do this alone. We need the support of and ideas from those of you here today or watching online.

We will hold roundtables here in Washington, D.C., and across the nation, we will hold hearings at Chairman Pitts’ Health Subcommittee, and we will solicit feedback from experts and interested parties through our white papers, just as we did last week.

No idea is too big. No idea is too small. The only way we will accomplish our goal is if we all work together and join this conversation, and we hope to hear from you during this process. You can email your ideas to cures@mail.house.gov.

Today, we continue our process of soliciting ideas by hosting our first roundtable of 21st Century Cures. We’re lucky enough to be joined by some of the nation’s greatest thought leaders on medical innovation. They are:

Dr. Francis Collins
Director of the National Institutes of Health

Dr. Janet Woodcock
Director of FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research

Dr. Jeff Shuren
Director of FDA’s Center for Devices and Radiological Health

Dr. James Woolliscroft
Dean of the University of Michigan Medical School

Dr. Joe Gray
Associate Director for Translational Research, Knight Cancer Institute, Oregon Health and Science University

Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach
President of Samaritan Health Initiatives Inc.
Chairman of Project FDA at the Manhattan Institute

Margaret Anderson
Executive Director of FasterCures

Dr. Peter Huber
Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute

Dr. Ellen Sigal
Chairperson and Founder of Friends of Cancer Research

Sarah Despres
Director of Government at The Pew Charitable Trusts

Jonathan Leff
Partner at Deerfield Management and Chairman of the Deerfield Institute

Thank you all for being with us here today to begin this important conversation surrounding 21st Century Cures.

In order to get the most out of the next couple hours, I'm first going to give you my word that I'm going to talk as little as possible so I can listen. We don't get this many bright minds at one table often so I'd like to encourage my fellow members to listen as much as possible too. Second, I'd encourage everyone to view this as a conversation, not a committee hearing. If you have a thought or idea, offer it. Don't be shy. We need your ideas.

Before we get into our first question, I want to recognize Diana DeGette and then our Majority Leader Eric Cantor and to say a few words. I would also note that Minority Whip Steny Hoyer would have liked to have been here today and looks forward to participating in the future.

In your invitation, we sent four questions:

1. What is the state of biomedical innovation in the United States?
2. What does biomedical innovation mean for American patients and jobs?
3. How does the U.S. compare to the other countries with respect to biomedical innovation and how can we make sure that we lead the way in the 21st Century?
4. What steps can Congress take to accelerate the discovery-development-delivery cycle in the U.S. to foster innovation, bring new treatments and cures to patients, and keep more jobs in the U.S.?

I think we all agree that we can always be doing more to help biomedical innovation. Today's roundtable is a unique opportunity to begin this conversation with many involved parties and leading thinkers, so in the interest of time, let's go directly to Question #4. What steps can Congress take to accelerate the discovery-development-delivery cycle in the U.S. to foster innovation, bring new treatments and cures to patients, and keep more jobs in the U.S.?

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