

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this markup and for all of your hard work to bring this bill before the full committee.

I also want to thank Mr. Dingell, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Stupak, Ms. DeGette, and Ms. Sutton for their work on this legislation.

As I have mentioned before, this issue is very personal to me.

I began my public career working to ensure that the food on our store shelves was safe.

I also have a very dear friend, Nancy Donley, lost her son Alex in 1993 after he ate ground beef contaminated with E. coli. My thoughts are with her, along with all Americans who have had family members sickened or killed by foodborne illness.

Today we are considering a strong bill that will strengthen the Food and Drug Administration's ability to keep our food system safe and help prevent such tragedies in the future.

To begin with, it establishes mandatory recall authority for the FDA so that companies cannot refuse to recall products that could be harmful or deadly to consumers.

But the real strengths of this bill are its prevention components – stopping an outbreak before tainted food can reach our kitchen tables.

The bill requires all food facilities to implement hazard control plans to analyze, anticipate, and preempt any point at which a potentially dangerous contaminant could affect a food product.

The bill also increases inspections of food facilities. Studies have shown that Americans support thorough and frequent inspections of the places where their food comes from. We must maintain, if not strengthen, the timelines for inspections contained in the manager's amendment

The manager's amendment also will implement a requirement that positive test results are reported to the FDA. The agency must have enough information to know where problems are.

In addition, I am also pleased that, at my urging, the manager's amendment includes stronger language on data gathering, sharing, and research into the public health effects of foodborne illness.

There is also new language from Mr. Markey calling for a reevaluation of the presence of bisphenol-a (BPA) in food and beverage containers. Research indicates that BPA is not safe, and I think Chicago's efforts to limit its presence in children's food and beverage containers should be replicated and strengthened at the national level.

I think we have made improvements since we took the bill up in the Health Subcommittee last week, and we have a strong bill before us.

However, I think we should continue to examine whether the bill's language effectively protects stronger state and local laws.

Also, I will offer an amendment today that would require FDA to take action in regards to the relationship between non-therapeutic antibiotic use in livestock and the growing incidence of antibiotic pathogens. I understand that some (on the minority side) think this step would be too aggressive, but already, resistant bacterial infections are increasing health care costs by \$4 billion to \$5 billion each year. I hope this committee will take up this issue in the near future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.