

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115  
Majority (202) 225-2927  
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February 24, 2016

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn  
Chair  
Select Investigative Panel  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chair:

As the Ranking Member of this Select Panel and the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, we are writing to ask that you move next week's Select Panel hearing to a later date and make it possible for us – and you – to participate fully in a hearing on the Zika virus.

We brought this conflict to your attention and asked that you move the Select Panel hearing. A few hours later, the Energy and Commerce Committee issued hearing notices for next Wednesday, March 2, 2016, showing that your Select Panel hearing is still scheduled to conflict with the hearing on Zika in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

The Zika virus has been linked to microcephaly, a serious and incurable condition. The World Health Organization has declared Zika-linked birth defects a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued travel warnings to pregnant women. While it already is clear that Zika is transmitted by mosquitos, just yesterday the CDC reported that it is also now investigating fourteen new cases of potential sexual transmission of the virus. A number of these cases involve pregnant women who were infected here in the United States, making it additionally clear that addressing this problem is a high priority, time-sensitive matter for Congress.

Our standing committees must play a critical, immediate role in addressing the Zika virus. Yet the current scheduling conflict between the Select Panel and the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee means that you will not be able to participate fully in the Zika hearing. It also means that Representative DeGette – who serves as the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee – will likely miss substantial portions of the Select Panel hearing because she will be in the Zika hearing. Two other Select Panel Members –

Ranking Member Schakowsky and Representative Larry Bucshon – face the same unfortunate, and unnecessary, choice.

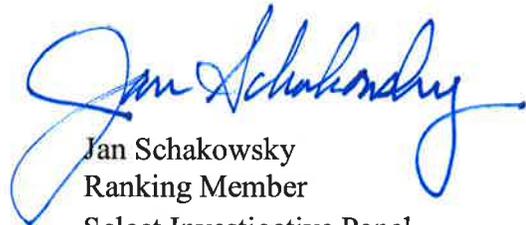
You have proclaimed this to be the “Select Panel on Infant Lives.” Given the disproportionate and devastating impact of the virus on women and infants, having our members fully engaged and participating in congressional work on Zika should be a shared interest for all of us. Indeed, it would be unfortunate if members of the Select Panel were unable to attend a hearing on a matter with such clear, negative impact on infants.

While addressing the Zika virus is of utmost urgency, a short delay of a few weeks to hold the Select Panel hearing should not impede the Select Panel’s ability to complete its work, particularly given the lack of any investigative plan or timeline for doing so. We therefore ask that you move the Select Panel hearing to a date later in the month so that we – and you – can participate fully in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on the Zika virus.

Sincerely,



Diana DeGette  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations



Jan Schakowsky  
Ranking Member  
Select Investigative Panel