

**STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE JACKIE WALORSKI
INDIANA'S SECOND DISTRICT
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this Member Day and allowing everyone to discuss their priorities before our committee.

I want to begin by saying I have the honor and pleasure of serving as the ranking member of the Worker and Family Support Subcommittee with my colleague Chairman Davis. It is my sincere hope that our subcommittee can work on a bipartisan basis to bring a human element back into our safety net programs; to make them about families and human connections, and not just numbers in a spreadsheet.

Just last night we were on the floor extending TANF. We need to continue working toward long-term reforms that hold states accountable and improve access to child care. My Republican colleagues and I have proposed the JOBS for Success Act, which would build on the strong, bipartisan welfare reforms of 1996 to prioritize engagement, with a focus on the outcomes of helping parents find and keep a job.

Another emerging issue in my district that we should explore together is the high percentage of grandparents who are now caring for their grandchildren, in large part stemming from the opioid epidemic that has swept our country. I hope we can work together to address this growing trend through the implementation of Family First, specifically with respect to kinship caregivers.

In light of this committee's recent hearing on maternal mortality, I think there is certainly more that can be done using our home visiting models to save the lives of mothers and children, allow new parents to build strong connections, reduce child abuse and neglect, and promote school readiness.

Beyond the Worker and Family Support Subcommittee, trade has been another important priority for the committee. I'm proud to represent a district that's home to major manufacturers of RVs, boats, trailers, and more, not to mention hardworking farmers of a diverse array of crops.

When tariffs were imposed on steel and aluminum imports last year, the Department of Commerce set up a process to exclude steel and aluminum products not available domestically from the tariffs. I've been watching this process very closely because it's been broken from the beginning. As I noted in a recent letter to Secretary Ross, the exclusion process has been a master class in government inefficiency. Though the Department has made some changes, the process continues to lack fairness, transparency, and efficiency for all participants. The Committee held a hearing in July last year examining the exclusion process and I hope the Committee can devote time to oversight of this program this year too.

Now that the steel and aluminum tariffs have been lifted from Mexico and Canada, it is time for Congress to consider the USMCA, which will modernize the 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement. This new agreement will help manufacturers, farmers, consumers, and workers in my district. Delaying consideration means they can't benefit from the improvements carefully negotiated by President Trump and Ambassador Lighthizer.

Finally, in order to continue building on the economic growth unleashed by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, we must continue striving to foster a system that is fair, creates jobs, and provides certainty for taxpayers. The Committee should focus on the following critical initiatives which do just that:

1. HR 1869, the Restoring Investment in Improvements Act, which I helped introduce with Mr. Panetta. This bill would restore the 15-year depreciation schedule for qualified improvement property to allow restaurants, retailers, and small businesses to unlock the full benefits of tax reform;
2. HR 2207, the Protect Medical Innovation Act, which I helped introduce with Mr. Kind. This bill would repeal the job-killing medical device tax from Obamacare;
3. HR 1398, Health Insurance Tax Relief Act, which I helped introduce with Mr. Bera. This bill would delay Obamacare's health insurance tax that has raised premiums on hardworking Americans;
4. Legislation I plan on introducing soon to ensure that motorized and non-motorized recreational vehicles are treated equally under the tax code;
5. A tax extenders package to provide certainty for American businesses, particularly two key provisions – the short line railroad tax credit and the biodiesel tax credit – which have a profound impact on Hoosier businesses require congressional action; and
6. HR 2782, the Employee Flexibility Act, which I helped introduce with Mr. Lipinski.

Traditionally, our nation has used the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) as the standard for defining full-time employment as 40 hours per week. However, that changed when Obamacare changed the full-time threshold to 30 hours per week. Our bipartisan bill would restore employees' ability to pick up and trade shifts by restoring the full-time employment standard to 40 hours per week.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity. I look forward to continuing to work together to find bipartisan, commonsense solutions to the challenges American workers and families face.