Upton, DeGette Outline Goals for 21st Century Cures Bill

Last week, Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) and Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) outlined five broad goals of the 21st Century Cures draft bill they plan to introduce later this month. In a CNN.com opinion piece, Upton and DeGette provided highlights of policies that they intend to drive cures and treatments for the more than 7,000 diseases for which only 500 have cures and treatments. The goals include:

• Modernize clinical trials to streamline the approval of drugs and devices;
• Integrate the patient perspective into the regulatory process;
• Promote better access to and sharing of information such as genomic and other clinical data to foster more collaboration among researchers;
• Invest in the future of science to support and encourage young, emerging scientists;
• Incentivize new drugs and devices for unmet medical needs.

Last year, Upton and DeGette embarked on the 21st Century Cures initiative with the goal of getting new cures and treatments to patients more quickly. Over the course of the year, the E&C committee issued four white papers and hosted a series of hearings and roundtables around the country to gather stakeholder input. In January, 21st Century Cures will release a discussion draft based on their review of input from patients and advocates, healthcare workers and researchers, and government and the private sector. Upton hopes to have final language for the bill in March, and vote on the legislation by Memorial Day with the goal of having the measure on President’s Obama’s desk by the end of the year.