

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have now lost more than 250,000 Americans to the Coronavirus.

The United States is now the first country in the world to reach more than 170,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases in a single day. Those numbers, unfortunately, continue to rise.

In my home state of Michigan, positivity rates rose to almost 12 percent and we have lost 439 Michiganders to this pandemic in just the past week.

In order to successfully tackle this pandemic, our response must be driven by recommendations from public health officials that are rooted in science and transparency.

It will take an all-hands-on-deck approach to ensure Americans receive the most accurate information on how to protect themselves. Unfortunately, misinformation and disinformation continue to run rampant.

That is why I introduced legislation to create a COVID-19 disinformation and misinformation task force that would work to slow the spread of unfounded information and save American lives.

As members of Congress, we also have a responsibility to ensure the information we present to the public is accurate and rooted in science.

Americans must be able to rely on and trust the independent Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Political interference and misinformation undermine the hard work that dedicated scientists and experts are carrying out at those critical agencies.

We must also be careful of giving Americans a false sense of security by promoting untested and unproven outpatient remedies. We all want answers that will keep our families healthy and safe – but I am concerned many of the treatments that will be discussed today have been presented as panaceas for the Coronavirus.

It would be irresponsible to give Americans false hope that these types of treatments will be enough to keep them safe in lieu of other measures that are scientifically shown to slow the spread of Coronavirus.

Our nation's top scientists must be able to do their work without meddling to ensure that both treatments and vaccines for COVID are safe and effective – and trusted by the American people.

Unfortunately, this Administration has continued to exert pressure on our government's top public health agencies to water down health guidance and even promote unproven treatments – further putting Americans at risk.

These actions have also diminished the public's confidence in eventual Coronavirus vaccines and treatments.

From the very start of the pandemic, the President and others in the Administration have consistently undermined and questioned public health experts at the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

They have pushed unproven treatments instead of leading by example and practicing simple measures that we know prevent the spread of this virus: wearing a mask and social distancing.

We have made significant progress in the development COVID-19 treatments – but these developments must be free from politics and driven by solid data.

Recent promising news from both Pfizer and Moderna indicates that their vaccines could be highly effective.

However, we are still waiting for further review of this data, and even an authorized or approved vaccine will likely not be widely available for many months.

We must continue to use masks, social distancing, contact tracing, and other measures for the foreseeable future to protect our friends and neighbors, stop the spread and save lives.