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Texans Unite: Bipartisan Byline for 21st Century Cures

The 21st Century Cures initiative has demonstrated that bipartisan members of Congress are able to put aside differences and work together toward a common goal: helping patients. Health Subcommittee Ranking Member Gene Green (D-TX) and Rep. Pete Olson (R-TX) write in the Houston Chronicle, “We have an obligation to patients and families across America who are in need of hope and of cures.”

June 5, 2015

Cures Act Makes Bolder Science a Reality

By Health Subcommittee Ranking Member Gene Green (D-TX) and Rep. Pete Olson (R-TX)

Over a year ago, the House Energy and Commerce Committee launched the 21st Century Cures Initiative, a high-minded legislative effort that asked how we, as a nation, can accelerate the pace of medical innovation and get cures to patients who need them.

The early stage of this effort featured roundtables held across the country where medical researchers and scientific experts gathered with policy makers to discuss the current environment and how we can do better.

Houston is home to world-class medical institutions, and we are proud to have so many of them represented throughout the Cures initiative. We hosted one of these roundtables at the Texas Medical Center last October. It was remarkable to hear the best and the brightest minds from our premier research institutions come together and unite behind this effort. …

To reverse course on flagging investments and inflexible, sometimes outdated regulations, the 21st Century Cures Act was crafted. The landmark legislation takes a forward-looking, patient-centered approach to health care. It introduces reforms to remove hurdles between scientific advancements and the development and regulation of medical products.

Provisions of the bill give the FDA new tools to utilize today’s best science and leverage key resources in the review process. It includes $10 billion in new mandatory funding for the National Institutes of Health. This infusion of funding is long overdue, and reflects the broad consensus that the health of our country depends on robust investment in medical research.

The 21st Century Cures Act (HR 6) was passed out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee on May 21, by a vote of 51-0. The unanimous vote reflects the bipartisan understanding that, while we have made great progress, we can and must do better and use innovative strategies to fight and treat disease. We have an obligation to patients and families across America who are in need of hope and of cures.

The 21st Century Cures Act will be headed to the House floor in the coming weeks, and we look forward to its swift passage.