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Opening Statement

Danny K. Davis, Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Health Care, District of Columbia, Census and National Archives

Forum Entitled: "Transforming Lives by Enhancing Drug Prevention, Treatment and Creating Alternative Pathways in the Adjudication Process"

October 17, 2011

The purpose of today's forum is to examine the current state of drug prevention, treatment, and alternative adjudication processes, as well as best practices across these spectrums. In this era of budgetary dilemmas, many times social service oriented programs receive the short end of the stick. Those of us who continually view the programs as merely numbers to be crunched and solely as a "budget challenge" are missing the mark.

I have personally been impressed with the successes and changed lives that originate from second chances. These programs involve real people – families, children, moms and dads. Policy and budget solutions that focus only on limiting services do our community a great injustice and ignore the realities and possible opportunities for sobriety. No one ever said it would be easy, but the outcomes are definitely worth the investment. To that end, I determined that the Congressional Subcommittee should allow an atmosphere for dialogue and discussion of federal initiatives, local work and efforts, and philanthropic endeavors.

I would like to thank A Safe Haven Foundation and specifically Neli Vazquez-Rowland for agreeing to host our forum. It is a most appropriate location to host this discussion. Thank you.

Today we will hear testimony from stakeholders in the areas of advocacy, philanthropy, drug prevention and treatment, the judiciary and federal officials. I thank all of our witnesses for appearing today and look forward to their testimonies.