



## **D.C. Report: Rep. Markwayne Mullin pitches benefits of 21st Century Cures Act**

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Cures: The 21st Century Cures Act has been a tough call for some, but not 2nd District Rep. Markwayne Mullin. Mullin declared his support for the bill before it passed a House vote on Wednesday.

The Senate will take up the bill next week.

Critics say the bill weakens the Food and Drug Administration and will be a bonanza for drug and medical device makers.

In an email to constituents, Mullin touted benefits to rural Oklahoma and the \$1 billion dedicated to opioid abuse treatment and prevention.

“When I came to Congress, I made a promise to fight for the rural priorities of the Second District of Oklahoma,” Mullin said in the email.

“More than 33 percent of Oklahoma’s population is rural,” he said. “Cures provides funding to fight the opioid epidemic, reforms mental health, grants fairer medical device rates, and increases patients’ access to medical care ... in rural areas — all of which directly benefit rural Americans.”

Defense bill: The National Defense Authorization Act passed Friday by the House included several initiatives by 1st District Rep. Jim Bridenstine to further incorporate commercial space industries into federal programs.

These included a pilot program for the Air Force to buy, evaluate and use private weather data and incentives for the Department of Defense to test privately developed satellite communications technology.

Fifth District Rep. Steve Russell’s amendment allowing federal contractors to discriminate based on religious beliefs did not make the bill’s final version of the bill.

Targets: U.S. Sen. James Lankford called for repeal of the Renewable Fuel Standard program after two General Accountability Office reports he requested indicated that key targets are unlikely to be met.

“The RFS program isn’t meeting the greenhouse gas emission goals, it is unsustainable, and it yields few benefits, while it has inflicted substantial costs on consumers. The renewable fuel standard mandate simply doesn’t work,” Lankford said.

The RFS was implemented in 2005 to reduce greenhouse gas and dependence on oil imports through increasing use of ethanol and other biofuels.

But greater domestic oil production, a leveling of demand and a shortage of acceptable biofuels have rendered the program ineffective, unnecessary and a burden on consumers, he said.

Dots and dashes: U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe squawked about renewed efforts by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to add the Lesser Prairie Chicken to the Endangered Species List. ... Lankford pitched his second annual “Federal Fumbles” list to the Heritage Foundation and Cato Institute in Washington and on national television.