

Opening Statement of Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA), Chairman
Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee
“Modernizing Retirement Policy for Today’s Workforce”
January 7, 2026

(As prepared for delivery)

Today’s hearing focuses on maximizing the retirement security of American workers. Employers sponsor 837,000 retirement plans, holding almost 10 trillion dollars in assts. Of these, 755,000 are defined contribution plans. More than 121 million participants hold more than 8 trillion dollars in assets in defined contribution plans. These assets represent the savings and contributions of workers and their employers.

The success of defined contribution plans reflects a strong partnership between employers who voluntarily sponsor and often contribute to these plans, and the employees, who save through them for retirement. Congress has enacted policies to encourage participation and savings in these plans. Today, we turn our attention to what happens when workers retire—specifically, how retirees draw down their defined contribution plan balances.

Congress recognizes the widespread adoption and popularity of defined contribution plans among private-sector employers and their employees. As these plans have become the cornerstone of retirement security for

millions of workers, there is now an opportunity to build upon this system by expanding lifetime income options. This hearing will evaluate whether today's workforce would benefit from additional or more flexible payout options from defined contribution plans as retirement needs continue to evolve.

The retirement industry and Congress can work together to support predictable income streams and help retirees manage longevity risk and market fluctuations during retirement. Maximizing retirement savings is a shared goal. I look forward to discussing how the Committee can continue its efforts to protect ERISA plan participants and strengthen their benefit plans.

I want to thank our witnesses for joining us today. Each brings front-line experience helping defined contribution plan participants convert retirement savings into lifetime income. We will hear about how retirees manage their savings in retirement, the products that can help them do that, and an employer plan that has tailored an investment and payout option specifically to provide a lifetime income stream.

At the same time, we must remain committed to preserving the ability of retirees to choose how and when their retirement savings are paid out. This hearing will explore whether defined contribution plans should offer lifetime income options and how plans may do so while maintaining flexibility for their participants.

With that, I yield to the Ranking Member for an opening statement.