

JOHN KLINE
2ND DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
SENIOR REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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September 2, 2009

Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We understand you plan to deliver a national address directly to millions of our nation's students on September 8, the first day of school in many states. According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, "This is the first time an American president has spoken directly to the nation's school children about persisting and succeeding in school." Given the unprecedented nature of this communication between the White House and our nation's classrooms, it is our hope that you and your staff will ensure full transparency in both the remarks you plan to deliver and any supplemental materials or activities you are encouraging school leaders and students to complete.

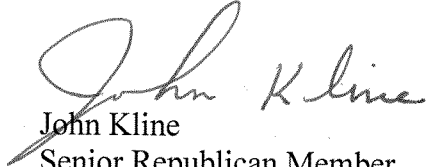
Although the federal government has traditionally avoided any role in the development of curriculum or specific classroom practices, Secretary Duncan has distributed suggested classroom activities and questions for teachers to use in discussing your remarks with their students. We are pleased these suggested activities have been made available to educators – and the public – in advance of your address, and we write today to request that your remarks be released to the public as well.

In recent days, questions have arisen about the purpose of this address and some of the specific tasks suggested for young students. We believe the release of your planned remarks would facilitate the public's understanding of this unique outreach to students, teachers, and school leaders.

As you know, parents play a pivotal role in their children's education. Just as parents are able to review a textbook before it is used or consider a planned field trip before children leave the classroom, public consideration of your remarks in advance of the live address would ensure parents can review them, make an informed decision about whether the material is appropriate for their children, and engage them accordingly.

We are sure you will agree that a good teacher and involved parents are the keys to helping all children achieve their educational goals. We support your efforts to encourage all students to take their education seriously, set and strive for ambitious goals, and engage in the civic process. We look forward to reviewing your address to our nation's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Kline". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent than the last name "Kline".

John Kline
Senior Republican Member
Committee on Education and Labor

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thaddeus McCotter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thaddeus" being more prominent than the last name "McCotter".

Thaddeus McCotter
Chairman
Republican Policy Committee