



**Opening Statement of Rep Virginia Foxx, Chairwoman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce**

**“Organizational Meeting to Consider and Adopt the Rules of the Committee on Education and the Workforce for the 118th Congress and to Consider and Adopt the Committee on Education and the Workforce Oversight Plan for the 118th Congress”**

**January 31, 2023**

(As prepared for delivery)

“Thank you everyone for attending the Education and the Workforce Committee organizing meeting. Welcome, Ranking Member Scott and all of our new and returning members on both sides of the dais.

I am hopeful we will have a productive Congress and I look forward to working with all of you. Ranking Member Scott and I have always prided ourselves on being able to disagree without being disagreeable. Because of this, we have a great track record of bipartisan cooperation and robust debate, and I hope that will lead us to create great legislation.

This Committee’s jurisdiction is broad—from education and employment to health care and retirement, our work affects EVERY aspect of people’s lives. That’s why the work we do here is so important.

Republicans are committed to protecting the rights of Americans to govern themselves.

This starts in breaking up the control Washington has over education. The pandemic gave us a window into just how broken our K-12 education system is. I know everyone here cares deeply about giving our nation’s students the best chance at success.

Working together this Congress, I believe we can truly improve education and give all students the opportunities they deserve.

Republicans are also ready to present real solutions to address the broken student loan system. We firmly believe there are ways to help borrowers while protecting taxpayers.

We will also strengthen our workforce development programs. We must close our nation’s skills gap and prepare the next generation of workers for our evolving economy.

Workers are the backbone of our economy. Republicans are committed to ensuring all workers and job creators are given the chance to succeed.

We will also focus on strengthening and expanding access to employer-sponsored health insurance.

I look forward to the next two years. And, to everyone on this Committee, get ready to work hard. You can’t pick more rewarding work than looking out for the interests of students and workers.

Before turning things over to Ranking Member Scott, I’d like to introduce the new Republican members.

First, three members are returning to the Committee: Representatives Lloyd Smucker of Pennsylvania, Ron Estes of Kansas, and Julia Letlow of Louisiana. We are excited to welcome them back to the Committee.

Now, new members of the Committee are:

- Representative Kevin Kiley of California
- Representative Aaron Bean of Florida
- Representative Eric Burlison of Missouri
- Representative Nathaniel Moran of Texas
- Representative John James of Michigan
- Representative Lori Chavez-DeRemer of Oregon
- Representative Brandon Williams of New York
- Representative Erin Houchin of Indiana

Welcome to the Education and the Workforce Committee.”

### **Rules Package**

“As many of you may have noticed, the Committee name has changed once again to the Committee on the Education and the Workforce. We make this change to reflect the fact that this Committee represents everyone who works to earn a living.

I believe all work is dignified, and I want to honor every hardworking man and woman.

Each of us represents constituents in numerous lines of work, and I know we all want to serve them to the best of our abilities. That starts by honoring them with the language we use.

Another big change includes a return to regular order. During the 118th Congress, there will be no remote hearings or remote markups.

I believe showing up to do the work of the American people is important. That’s why I made it a point not to utilize the proxy voting system over the past two years.

The best debate and deliberation take place when we are able to interact face to face in real time. It is also far easier to maintain decorum and orderly procedures with in-person hearings.

The pandemic is over; it is time to return to regular order.”

### **Oversight Plan**

“Before I get into our oversight plan, I have a bittersweet announcement: Mandy Schaumburg, the Committee’s Chief Counsel, is retiring after 20 years of public service.

Mandy has served this Committee under multiple chairs and has been instrumental in passing important legislation to help children and students.

Throughout the last two decades, Mandy was involved in nearly every major piece of education

legislation. This includes legislation that reformed: child nutrition laws, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevent Act, and so many more.

I have also appreciated Mandy's dedication to holding the federal government accountable no matter which party controls the White House.

I have appreciated Mandy's tireless work; she will be missed.

Oversight will be a major priority for this Committee in the 118th Congress. The executive branch has gotten too comfortable bypassing the legislative process set up by the Constitution.

As the people's representatives, we should all be willing to guard the authority granted to us by the Constitution, regardless of which party is in the Oval Office.

As elected officials, we should be focused on ensuring that government agencies are run as efficiently as possible and in accord with congressional intent.

Federal agency heads might as well get comfortable with this hearing room—they are going to be here a lot.

You can't have good governance without good oversight.

And I intend to have both."

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