

Opening Statement of Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI), Chairman
Committee on Education and Workforce
Markup of H.R. 2617, H.R. 2616, H.Res. 237, H.R. 2262, H.R. 2270
April 9, 2025

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, and welcome to the Committee on Education and Workforce's markup of several bills that will empower students, families, and workers, as well as a Resolution of Inquiry designed, unfortunately, to distract this Committee and the Trump administration from the important work of repairing the damage done to our education system by the Biden-Harris administration.

The first bill we will consider today is H.R. 2617, the *Say No to Indoctrination Act*. The bill, introduced by Mr. Owens, would effectively codify President Trump's January 20 executive order on gender ideology as it pertains to K-12 education. Across the nation, we've seen a troubling rise in districts teaching a radical leftist view of gender, including that gender is a spectrum, that one can switch between genders, and that one's gender is determined primarily by one's feelings. Federal taxpayer dollars should not fund these extreme teachings. Receiving federal tax dollars is a privilege, not a right, and schools should use dollars responsibly. This bill would prevent schools from using ESEA dollars to spread woke ideas about gender.

The second bill to be marked up is H.R. 2616, the PROTECT Kids Act. I have championed this bill for several years because I believe parents ought never be left out of important conversations about their children. About 21,000 schools have policies allowing or requiring school officials to help a student transition genders while keeping it a secret from his or her parents. That's a travesty. Parents should be the first to know about major changes in their students, not the last, and school officials should never lie to them or hide the truth. This bill would prohibit

elementary and middle schools from helping a student transition genders without parental consent.

The third piece of legislation we are considering is H.Res. 237. This resolution of inquiry is an attempt by the Democrats to derail the work of this Committee and gaslight Americans about Democrats' decades of failure on education. When the Department of Education was created, Americans were spending about \$2,300 per K-12 student. Today, we're spending more than \$15,600. Despite all that spending, fewer than a third of eighth graders are proficient in reading and math. Why would we want to keep failing?

Today, we will also consider two important efforts to modernize the *Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938*.

Ms. Hinson's bill, H.R. 2262, the *Flexibility for Workers Education Act*, cuts red tape that currently hamstring workers and businesses. This bill improves the FLSA by ensuring there are no disincentives for employers to offer voluntary professional development opportunities to workers.

Mr. Messmer's bill, H.R. 2270, the *Empowering Employer Child and Elder Care Solutions Act*, will increase access to child care for hourly workers. This bill would encourage employers to offer child care and elder care benefits that employees greatly value.

These bills will unlock opportunities for workers and help businesses invest in their workers.

I'm excited to mark up these bills today and dispense with the Democrats' questionable resolution of inquiry. The bills we are considering this morning will improve the lives of students and workers and reinforce the central role of parents and other caregivers in the lives of those under their charge.