



COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION & LABOR
REPUBLICANS

COMMITTEE
STATEMENT

**Opening Statement of Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Republican Leader
Full Committee Markup**

**“H.R. 2193, Asuncion Valdivia Heat Illness and Fatality Prevention Act of 2021 and H.R. 8450, To
reauthorize child nutrition programs, and for other purposes”
July 27, 2022**

(As prepared for delivery)

“Both bills we are marking up today do more for the radical activists pushing these flawed policies than they do for the groups they are purported to help. For example, H.R. 2193 piles on yet another onerous and ineffective standard from Biden’s Labor Department. Committee Republicans recognize the importance of keeping workers safe in the workplace, but this bill is more about kowtowing to Big Labor and progressive activists than it is about worker safety.

“The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) already recognizes the hazard of extreme heat and actively enforces existing standards related to heat illness prevention. Additionally, OSHA is currently in the process of writing a heat illness prevention standard. Yet instead of waiting for the regulatory process to play out, this bill attempts to preempt OSHA. This legislation is obviously being used to manipulate the regulatory process and undermine OSHA’s rulemaking in an effort to appease activists who contend there is a so-called climate emergency.

“Didn’t we learn from the pandemic that one-size-fits-all national mandates are a mistake? This is especially true in regard to a heat standard because climate varies throughout the country. Temperatures that may be considered extreme in Michigan, for example, may be the norm in Arizona. But H.R. 2193 completely ignores this fact and encourages OSHA to adopt the bad policies of Washington state and California.

“Further, businesses are still struggling to recover from the pandemic—more onerous and ineffective regulations will push our economy backwards.

“Finally, heat illness is a complex issue that should be more thoughtfully examined before moving rushed legislation that was shared a mere 24 hours before the markup. But the Majority chose a shortcut, and now the voices of small business owners will be silenced if OSHA isn’t allowed to finish its rulemaking process.

“H.R. 8450, the Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act, is another bill that misses the mark. Instead of funding targeted need-based programs, this bill would create bloated and extraneous programs at the expense

of taxpayers. Spending more is not the way to ensure these programs are meeting the intended purpose of feeding kids in need.

“Ever since we passed Democrats’ last nutrition bill, schools have been struggling with the standards and excessive requirements. In fact, USDA had to issue multiple waivers because schools were unable to meet the bill’s unrealistic demands. Schools are just now getting back to normal, post pandemic, but have yet to operate fully under the new programs. We need to give these schools a chance to learn what is and is not working before we add new requirements.

“Rushing another reauthorization of our child nutrition programs is not the answer. We need more time. Time to see how these programs actually work, time to assess their impact before we change them or layer even more requirements on schools. Rushing to score political points before November is no reason to weigh schools down with more unnecessary standards, reports, and programs.

“Lastly, this bill will cost taxpayers billions of dollars when inflation is the highest it has been in 40 years. Pushing plant-based pilot programs, adding new grants for scratch cooking, and expanding multiple other programs are ridiculous when schools are facing inflation and supply chain crises. Can the Majority assure us that the spending in this bill won’t make inflation worse? As the House of Representatives, we are entrusted with the power of the purse—this is an important duty. If we are going to throw more money at programs just because special interest groups ask us to, we are not taking our responsibility to taxpayers seriously.

"I urge my colleagues to vote against both these bills."

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