



COMMITTEE ON
**EDUCATION
& LABOR**
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE
STATEMENT**

**Opening Statement of Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Republican Leader
Committee on Education and Labor**

**Markup of H.R. 3992, the *Protect Older Job Applicants Act*; H.R. 729,
the *Strength in Diversity Act*; H.R. 730, the *Equity and Inclusion Enforcement Act*;
and, H.R. 2119, the *Family Violence Prevention and Service Improvement Act of
2021***

July 15, 2021

(As prepared for delivery)

“The last time the full Committee conducted official business there was an unfortunate incident. One of the Republican Members was insulted and slandered while asking the Secretary of Education questions. I understand how passions can overtake one’s senses, but that language is unacceptable in Congress. I sincerely hope we stay cordial with one another as we debate contentious topics. It is also another reason we should end remote hearings and markups. Decorum and orderly procedures are more easily followed in person when Members are reminded of the gravity of their work and heed a Chair’s gavel.

Our Committee is considering four very different bills today. Together, they span the full partisan spectrum. There is no doubt that some of these bills could be bipartisan while others are destined for single-party support.

We will start with H.R. 2119, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

For far too long society regarded domestic violence as a family matter. But this violence occurs with distressing frequency. One CDC study estimated one out of every three Americans is a victim of sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by a partner.

Since the mid-1980s the federal government has distributed hundreds of millions of dollars a year to states, territories, tribes, and other recipients to shelter and assist victims of violence.

Preventing family violence and assisting victims is the right thing to do. These individuals, who are disproportionately women, are not interested in partisan victories. They just want help.

Reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act should follow through on previous federal commitments. Current law is serving these victims well, and any policy changes should be bipartisan and made for the benefit of victims and not political allies.

Next, the Committee is scheduled to consider H.R. 3992, the *Protect Older Job Applicants Act*. The bill prohibits disparate impact *discrimination* against job applicants because of age and, contrary to federal court precedent, authorizes disparate impact *claims* for job applicants under the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967*.

This ill-advised and harmful legislation targets employers' reasonable recruitment and hiring practices at precisely the worst time for our recovering economy. There are over 9 million unfilled jobs available today. Businesses are desperate for qualified workers regardless of an applicant's age. There is no evidence this bill is necessary. In fact, there is good reason to believe this bill is counterproductive for employers and jobseekers alike. Job Corps students, younger college graduates, and prospective apprentices will no doubt suffer if this bill becomes law.

We will also mark up two bills related to civil rights and education: H.R. 729, the *Strength in Diversity Act*, and H.R. 730, the *Equity and Inclusion Enforcement Act*.

My Republican colleagues and I share the same convictions as our Democrat colleagues. Discrimination and state-sanctioned segregation are vile acts that are immoral, illegal, and have no place in society.

There are multiple studies highlighting the benefits of diverse schools. For example, studies show diverse schools promote tolerance and can lead to stronger academic outcomes for all children but particularly for minority students.

Committee Republicans want equality of opportunity for all of America's children. But we believe there is a much more efficacious way we can achieve our common aims than these proposals.

Rather than burdening hardworking taxpayers with new programs and strangling the American people in bureaucratic red tape, this Committee should be focused on getting the government out of the way and empowering communities to succeed.

Committee Republicans stand ready to work with our colleagues in the majority to expand educational opportunities to all families. There is a bipartisan path forward, and I hope my Democrat friends will work with us today so that students have the tools, skills, and opportunities they need to build a successful life for themselves.

Republicans earnestly desire the best for America's families. We believe domestic violence shelters across the country are doing incredible work that should continue without political squabbling. We believe jobseekers should not face friction or discrimination during their job search. We believe businesses should be able to hire employees free from excessive federal intervention. We believe children should have an opportunity to succeed in school.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help our constituents prepare for lifelong success."

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