COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION & WORKFORCE
CHAIRMAN TIM WALBERG

COMMITTEE STATEMENT

Opening Statement of Rep. Mark Harris (R-NC)
Field Hearing
"Workers in Charge: Restoring Choice and Accountability in the Workplace"
November 13, 2026

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, and welcome to Charlotte, North Carolina.

I want to thank my colleagues for joining us here in our great state, as well as our witnesses for taking the time to participate in today's hearing.

We are here today because every American worker deserves a voice in the workplace and the freedom to choose whether or not to be represented by a union. Our federal labor laws were intended to protect workers' rights. But today's hearing will examine whether those laws truly give workers a meaningful say in the unions that represent them and whether union leadership is acting in the best interests of its members.

Throughout this Congress, Committee Republicans have advanced proposals to strengthen worker choice, improve union transparency, and hold union leaders accountable to their members. Our priority has been clear: put workers first, not union bosses. Unfortunately, my colleagues across the aisle see it the other way around.

For years, Democrats have catered to powerful union leaders, often at the expense of the hardworking Americans those unions are supposed to represent.

Committee Republicans believe workers should have the right to decide whether they want union representation through a private, secret ballot-election. And that decision should reflect the will of a majority of all workers, not simply a majority of those who cast a ballot. It is ironic that the same party that prides itself on protecting democracy seems unwilling to apply that principle when it comes to union elections.

We also know that workers benefit when businesses succeed, grow, and create jobs. In order to create those jobs, businesses need stability and predictability in labor law to make those investments. They need to know what the rules are today and what they will be tomorrow so they can plan for the future.

Unfortunately, we have seen repeated swings in labor policy whenever Democrats hold the majority at the National Labor Relations Board, often with little regard for the consequences for workers and businesses. Too often, those changes have served the interests of union leadership rather than the people those leaders represent.

And what are the consequences when federal policies give union leaders more power while leaving workers with less of a say?

Under current federal law, unions are not required to allow their members to vote on major decisions, including whether to approve contracts or authorize strikes. Yet these decisions can have major consequences for workers and their families, affecting their paychecks, benefits, working conditions, schedules, and job security.

When so much is at stake for workers and their families, they deserve a voice in these decisions. Greater transparency and meaningful member participation help ensure that union members understand how their unions operate and that they have a say in the decisions being made on their behalf.

Unfortunately, come January, Democrats will pass bills that take away any influence workers have in the collective bargaining process and on the contracts that shape their lives.

The *Faster Labor Contracts Act, or FLCA,* would put government arbitrators—not workers or business owners—in charge of writing labor contracts, without giving workers an opportunity to vote on the outcome. Perhaps a more fitting name for the FLCA would be the *Filling Labor's Coffers Act* because the result will be fuller pockets for union leaders and less power for the workers they represent.

Committee Republicans have taken our oversight responsibility seriously. We have investigated reports of misconduct involving union leadership, including abuses of power, antisemitism, and the employment of a convicted child sex offender.

Our Democrat colleagues should be doing the same. Instead, they continue to push for bills like the FLCA and the *Protecting the Right to Organize Act* to do the bidding of unions.

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the challenges facing American workers and businesses and what we can do to address those challenges.

As we look ahead to next Congress, Committee Republicans remain committed to a simple principle: workers deserve more choice, a stronger voice, and greater accountability from the unions that represent them. We will continue fighting to ensure that workers, not union bosses, have a meaningful say in decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.