

Opening Statement of Rep. John Kline (R-MN)
Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce
Full Committee Organization Meeting
January 21, 2015

OPENING REMARKS:

Good morning. I'd like to begin by welcoming our new and returning members and staff to the first meeting of the House Education and the Workforce Committee. This morning we will consider the committee's rules and oversight plan for the 114th Congress.

Today marks the beginning of what promises to be a very busy two years. We all know the challenges that our country continues to face: An anemic economy that isn't creating enough good-paying jobs; a broken education system that is failing to meet the needs of many students; and a lack of retirement security for millions of hard-working Americans.

These are just a few of the problems that continue to plague workers, students, teachers, and job creators, and they are the problems this committee must work to address. The American people are looking for solutions that will move the country in a better direction and help make their lives a little easier; they want less bickering and more results. That is precisely what the committee will aim to do.

We will continue to have our differences and engage in lively discussions about important issues. Debate is a good thing and the committee will remain a forum for members, stakeholders, and concerned citizens to share their views and offer ideas. We will also move forward with bold reforms to strengthen our nation's classrooms and workplaces, just as we did during the last congress.

Our record for the 113th Congress speaks for itself: the committee issued more than 200 oversight letters, convened 70 hearings, moved 29 legislative proposals through the House, and sent to the president's desk 12 bills that are now the law of the land. A number of these legislative achievements required a lot of hard work on some very tough issues.

But thanks to our leadership, workers have a stronger, more accountable job training system, students enjoy low interest rates on federal Stafford loans, low-income families have access to safe and affordable child care services, and retirees in multiemployer pension plans have greater income security. It is our responsibility to build on this progress in the weeks and months ahead.

There is no question we have plenty of work to do, whether it's replacing *No Child Left Behind*, modernizing multiemployer pension plans, reforming our juvenile justice system, conducting aggressive oversight, or tackling one of the many other important issues before the committee. I am eager to work closely with members on both sides of the aisle and help lead these efforts.

Each congress, we are privileged to serve alongside a dedicated and principled group of men and women, and this congress is no different. I would like to take a moment to introduce to the committee our new Republican members:

- Representative Dave Brat of Virginia;
- Representative Buddy Carter of Georgia;
- Representative Mike Bishop of Michigan;
- Representative Glenn Grothman of Wisconsin;
- Representative Steve Russell of Oklahoma;
- Representative Carlos Curbelo of Florida;
- Representative Elise Stefanik of New York, and last, but certainly not least,
- Representative Rick Allen of Georgia.

On behalf of the committee veterans, we are pleased to have you with us. Speaking of committee veterans, I also want to recognize the members who will serve as subcommittee chairs. The committee's success is due in no small part to those who lead our subcommittees, and I am pleased to announce Representatives Todd Rokita, Virginia Foxx, Phil Roe, and Tim Walberg will continue to serve in their previous capacities as subcommittee chairs. Thank you for your service. The committee continues to work through subcommittee member assignments and those will be announced at a later time.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the committee's new ranking member, Congressman Bobby Scott. Congressman Scott has served the people of Virginia's 3rd congressional district for more than 20 years and he is no stranger to the committee. He is a dedicated public servant and I look forward to working with him and his staff. With that, I will now recognize the ranking member for his opening remarks.