

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Education and Workforce Committee.
- I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this Member Day hearing and discuss priorities where I believe there is a real opportunity for bipartisan partnership to better serve working families.
- I am Maxine Dexter. I am mother, a physician, and the proud U.S. Representative for Oregon's Third Congressional District.
- *I am also a product of the American Dream.* I grew up in a working-class family, and I was the first in my family to graduate from college.
- I left home at seventeen and achieved what once felt impossible for a kid like me: I became a physician.
- ***That was only possible because this country invested in me.*** I had access to well-funded public schools, safe neighborhoods, strong transit, a union job, and affordable rent.

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

- And it is because of the resources and opportunities this country afforded me that I was able to create a better life for myself than my parents had.
- It is painful to say, but the same is not true for our kids today.
- As a mother, I see that for my kids' generation, the American Dream is increasingly out of reach.
- I came to Congress to fix that.
- So where do we start? For one, it means centering working families. That means advancing policies that give working families the support they need to do more than just get by—but to thrive.
- The foundation of a thriving middle class, when you boil it down, is *making sure everyone in this country has a stable, supportive place to call home.*
- I hope this committee will partner with me in making that promise real.

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

- I am developing legislation modeled after an incredible multigenerational housing community in my district called Bridge Meadows.
- Bridge Meadows offers affordable homes to seniors, foster youth, and their families.
- And it's not just housing; Bridge Meadows builds a community with wrap-around social services that enriches the well-being of children and youth impacted by foster care and elders.
- My Intergenerational Community Housing Act would create a pilot to scale this model nationally and gather evidence on the importance of stable, affordable, housing community.
- Likewise, I am developing legislation, the *Healthy and Housed Older Adults Act*, which confronts senior homelessness head on. Senior homelessness is rising at an alarming rate, often driven by fixed incomes, unaffordable rents, and unaddressed health needs.
- My proposal would create a grant program dedicated to bolstering coordination between local homelessness

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

Continuums of Care and Area Agencies on Aging. This would support coordinated housing, medical care, case management, and aging services for our seniors.

- I am also developing the *College Success through Stable Housing Act*, a pilot program to provide stable, affordable housing and supportive services for college students experiencing homelessness.
- Affordable rent made gave me the opportunity to succeed in college and medical school. I want every student to have the same chance.
- These are just a number of my priorities. ***The bottom line is that giving working families the stability they need to thrive must be our mission.***
- It must be the mission of not just this committee, not just of this Congress, ***but of the federal government in perpetuity.***
- Our country has never been perfect. Our history has always been a zigzag, a constant push and pull between our highest ideals and our deepest flaws.

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

- We have confronted slavery, segregation, exploitation, discrimination, and every time we face those truths rather than bury them, we grow stronger.
- Now, we must confront the reality that the federal government has fallen short in its commitment to the working class.
- But it is not too late to choose a different path. We can choose to build a country where every child believes the American Dream belongs to them too.
- In addition to housing, I am committed to making sure the places we live, work, learn, and play have clean, safe air.
- As a pulmonologist, I cared for patients struggling to breathe and I have seen firsthand how smoke and pollution ravage our lungs and steal years of healthy life.
- No child should sit in a classroom filled with hazardous air, and no worker should have to choose between a paycheck and their lungs.
- That is why I introduced the Shielding Students from Wildfire Smoke Act meant to strengthen national

ED & LABOR MEMBER DAY
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

understanding on how to protect children's health during wildfire smoke events.

- And it is why I introduced the Farmworker Smoke and Excessive Heat Protection Act to ensure basic safeguards for the workers who keep our agricultural economy running, many of whom endure the highest exposures with the fewest protections.
- I am grateful that many on this committee are engaged in this effort.
- I want to thank my friend Congressman McGarvey for his leadership on advancing legislation to improve treatment outcomes and preventive measures for black lung disease. I encourage the committee to take up this critical issue.
- Thank you, all, for being here today and for your commitment to supporting working families.
- I look forward to working with you.