

**Statement of Rep. John Kline (R-MN)
Chairman, U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Committee on House Administration Hearing on the
“Committee Budget for 2013”
March 5, 2013**

Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Brady, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear with my colleague, Senior Democratic Member George Miller, to testify about our committee budget for 2013.

In 2012, our committee was allocated \$7,812,094. This represented a 6.4 percent cut in 2012 with an overall 11.4 percent cut for the 112th congress. We honored this cut by leaving numerous staff positions vacant on the committee. Our staffs took on additional responsibilities and expanded their areas of expertise.

In late 2011, we heard rumors of possible additional cuts for 2012, so we put caps on committee travel and committee printing. Due to our

prudent planning, we only spent 82 percent of our overall committee budget.

My message to you today is: Don't punish the good actors; Don't punish the good stewards of taxpayer dollars. We can only go so lean for so long.

We are asked to testify today to both an 11 percent cut from our 2012 allocation and a 5 percent increase over what we spent in 2012. We recognize the fiscal challenges that exist across this country and we are willing to do our part to contribute to fiscal responsibility. But Mr. Miller and I also sit here today to warn you that drastic additional cuts to this committee would affect committee product.

Mr. Miller and I have great aspirations for this Congress. We want to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Higher Education Act, and we also want to reform the

multiemployer pensions system. But all of this requires extensive committee resources.

An additional 11 percent from our 2012 allocation or a 5 percent increase from our 2012 actual expenditures spreads us too thin on the work we want to do to achieve the best legislative product and conduct the best oversight.

In particular, deep cuts mean fewer site visits and fewer field hearings. Last year, my staff went on a site visit to a high school in West Virginia to see implementation of the new school lunch standards. They sat with the students and they ate the chicken on a biscuit. These real-world visits are helpful. They let us bust out of this federal bubble and see what implementation looks like. It's the best way to see successes and identify challenges.

I feel the same way about field hearings. Field hearings are a small way to take the capitol on the road. They provide a first-hand look at the

issues under our committee's jurisdiction, such as employer-sponsored health care and workforce training. I hope the committee takes these important activities into account as they determine our budget.

If we must choose between an 11 percent cut from 2012 allocation and a 5 percent increase over what we spent in 2012, we ask for an 11 percent cut from the 2012 allocation. This treats all committees fairly and doesn't punish the committees who, like us, were good stewards in 2012.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I appreciate your time and would be happy to answer any questions.