

Committee on Education and Workforce

Chairman Tim Walberg

Testimony before the Committee on House Administration

February 11, 2025

Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Committee on Education and Workforce. Ranking Member Bobby Scott, who also is here today, and I share a view that the Committee is one of the most important in the House of Representatives because its jurisdiction not only affects every American, but also because the issues Americans are most concerned about fall to our Committee. For example, the Committee has jurisdiction over ERISA pension and welfare plans of 156 million workers, retirees, and dependents. These plans' solvency and dependability are vital for many, and the Committee plans to ensure that ERISA funds are safeguarded. The Committee has shared jurisdiction over health care. High-quality, low-cost health care is one of the most important issues for Americans and it is a priority in Congress. The Committee also plans to work alongside the Trump administration to return control of education to the states. It is critical this is done so in a way that supports students and parents, not bureaucrats. The Ranking Member and I also have pledged to work together to advance reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act to provide needed training opportunities in today's economy.

One approach we will use to gather information needed to make important legislative decisions is to hold multiple field hearings. For example, the Committee intends to use field hearings to gather information about our nation's K-12 schools, including antisemitic discrimination, declining academic achievement, and successful career and technical education

and apprenticeship-based programs Also, the Committee may hold field hearings to shine a light on the academic rot and antisemitism at colleges that continue to refuse to uphold the law and protect their Jewish students, faculty, and staff.

Information gathering is not the only way the Committee intends to strengthen its toolbox. The Committee will be working to replace approximately a dozen staffers who left to join the Trump administration. Because the issues being addressed by the Committee are vital to all Americans, the Committee will prioritize hiring very qualified and experienced staff and will offer competitive salaries to attract good candidates. The Committee also recognizes the Speaker of the House has issued a pay order to raise the maximum annual salary to a rate equal to Level II of the Executive Schedule, effective January 1, 2025. As such the Committee will need funding to remain competitive in maintaining employees who have policy expertise, oversight experience, or both. Additionally, the Committee anticipates the creation of several new positions, including a health care policy director, to help shepherd crucial legislation, now that a Republican Senate may increase the likelihood that a greater number of bills may be favorably considered by both Chambers.

Filling staffing vacancies with motivated and experienced employees, adding new positions to meet anticipated expansion in legislation that will be sent to the President, increasing the number of hearings and markups, and holding multiple field hearings, will require additional resources.

It is for these reasons that we respectfully submit the Committee's budget request.