



Chairman Tom Cole

*Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

FY19 Oversight Hearing: Pipeline to the Workforce

Opening Statement (as prepared)

April 25, 2018

Good morning. It is a pleasure to welcome our witnesses today to the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education to discuss Career and Technical Education and apprenticeship programs at the Departments of Education and Labor. We look forward to hearing your testimonies.

The Committee recognizes that a four-year college degree is not the only means of achieving a successful career and that for many Americans, it may not be the right path. I fully support higher education while recognizing the importance of alternative approaches to workforce training for those that are unable or choose not to pursue a college degree.

Too many Americans continue to be shut out of good-paying jobs. At the same time—according to current BLS data—there are over six million job openings across the country. We must look closely at the results of Federal investments in job training programs overall and continue to find ways to expand opportunities for alternative approaches like technical education and apprenticeships in order to improve the effectiveness of taxpayer investments in workforce education and training.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what works in technical education and apprenticeships and what barriers exist to achieving greater outcomes. I hope to learn more about how this Committee can help to improve and better target investments that ensure participants have access to better jobs, and that the business community has access to a pipeline of workers with the skills needed to compete in the global market.

Today, I'm pleased to welcome the following witnesses--

- Tom Friedemann is Superintendent and CEO of Francis Tuttle Technology Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
- Maria Coons is Vice President of Institutional Planning and Strategic Alliances at Harper College.
- David Sload is President-CEO of the Keystone Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors.
- Portia Wu is Director of Workforce Policy for the Microsoft Corporation.

As a reminder to the subcommittee members and our witnesses, we will abide by the five-minute rule so that everyone will have a chance to present their testimony and ask questions. I would now like to yield to my Ranking Member, the Gentlelady from Connecticut for her opening remarks.

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