

Statement of Rep. Robert C. Scott (D-VA)
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Before House Administration
February 15, 2017

Chairman Harper, Ranking Member Brady, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee with Chairwoman Foxx to discuss the budget of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Let me first thank Chairwoman Foxx for her leadership in developing our Committee budget and thank her staff for working so closely with my staff on this effort. I fully support her request for the 115th Congress which represents a 2.9 percent increase over last Congress. With this request, I know that the Committee will be able to carry out its activities, both legislative and oversight, in a robust and efficient manner.

Per past practice, one-third of the budget will be allocated to the Minority and I appreciate the Chairwoman's commitment to continuing this custom and providing me with autonomy over the Minority's allocation.

This modest increase to our budget will allow the Minority to continue its work with a high level of expertise and professionalism. I have placed a high priority on ensuring my staff is diverse, highly educated and credentialed. As the policy and legal workplace continues to be highly competitive, it is key that we attract, train, and retain talented staff who are knowledgeable and capable of delving into the wide array of complex issues facing this committee.

During the last Congress we were successful in producing several bipartisan reauthorizations that became law: the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Older Americans Act and amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. We also worked together on 5 higher education bills, career and technical education reform, and juvenile justice reform. I am eager to continue to work in a bipartisan manner as I know the Chairwoman is.

Our Committee has a robust agenda this year as well. We have been active at the full committee level and subcommittee level already holding hearings on issues within the Committee's jurisdiction and we have been called on for floor action as well. As we look ahead, we expect to engage in reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act, Head Start Act, and the Child Nutrition Act to name several. And I hope we can finish the work we started on CTE and JJ as I mentioned earlier. Completing all of these reauthorizations in this Congress is a tall order, but I believe we can be successful and your support for this request will assist with that.

For the Minority we believe it is also our responsibility to engage in comprehensive oversight for programs within our jurisdiction, such as in the area of civil rights, federal student aid, worker safety, fair pay and retirement security. We are committed to carrying out this work in addition to our legislative responsibilities with the resources provided to us by asking our staff to take on more and to be efficient in doing so.

I join Chairwoman Foxx in asking the Committee to support our request and to provide the Committee on Education and the Workforce with sufficient funding to do the quality and range of work the American people deserve and that will help strengthen America's working families.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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