



Opportunity Nation
1400 I Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

Tel: 1-587-400-0036
Fax: 1-877-890-0376

www.opportunitynation.org

September 16, 2016

The Honorable Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Scott:

On behalf of Opportunity Nation, I am writing in support of the Opening Doors for Youth Act of 2016 that will provide Opportunity Youth with summer and year-round employment opportunities and to assist local community partnerships in improving high school graduation and youth employment rates.

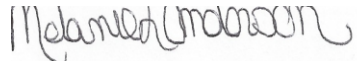
Opportunity Nation is a bipartisan, national campaign comprised of more than 350 cross-sector organizations working together to expand economic mobility and close the opportunity gap in America. We are committed to the notion that an individual's zip code need not determine his or her destiny. We believe that targeted actions to provide greater opportunity for young Americans will pay off in long-term economic success for families and communities.

In order to expand opportunity for the 5.5 million young Americans who are currently out of school or out of work, we must change the way we do business. Opportunity Youth who remain disconnected from school and work are unable to take advantage of opportunities in the job market of the future. As young people need opportunities to reconnect with education and employment, employers are increasingly seeking workers with a specific set of skills to meet the demands of a changing economy. Opportunity Youth who have been out of school and out of work need preparation for these jobs. This preparation for employment can be provided by a variety of education and job training opportunities.

The Opening Doors for Youth Act includes many recommendations highlighted in a policy plan we recently released to close the opportunity gap, including improving and expanding school-based Early Warning Systems, providing work-based learning opportunities, and offering mentors to at-risk students. The evidence-based, bipartisan, and cross-sector plan was developed and supported by Opportunity Nation's Coalition -- more than 120 organizations signed and contributed -- and draws on ideas from many leaders, practitioners, institutions, bipartisan plans, and the perspectives and initiatives of young people, particularly those who have experienced barriers to achieving the American Dream.

Thank you for your leadership in putting young adults on a path towards a meaningful career and look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue. If you have any questions, or if I can provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melanie Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Melanie Anderson
Director of Government Affairs