



Committee on Education and the Workforce Democrats

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Rep. Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (D-VA) Prepared Remarks for the Education and the Workforce Organizational Meeting for the 114th Congress

Good morning, Chairman Kline. Thank you for that introduction.

I am thrilled to now serve as ranking member for the Education and the Workforce Committee. I have been a member of this committee since my arrival in Congress in 1993 when Bill Ford was Chairman and consider it a privilege to follow George Miller as the ranking member. His tenure on this committee and his career-long commitment to the American people should serve as an example for all of us, and for every member of Congress, now and into the future.

I would like to join Chairman Kline in welcoming the new and returning members of the committee for the 114th Congress. I’ve had the honor of working with some of you for many years, and look forward to working with my new colleagues on the committee, including Democratic members:

- **Representative Hakeem Jeffries:**

Rep. Jeffries has represented New York’s 8th District since 2013. Prior to coming to the House of Representatives, Rep. Jeffries served in the New York State Assembly for six years and was a successful attorney for several years before that. In the State Assembly, he authored laws that included protecting civil liberties of law-abiding New Yorkers during police encounters, and improving the quality of justice in the civil court system.

- **Representative Katherine Clark:**

Rep. Clark has represented Massachusetts's 5th District since 2013. Before coming to Congress, she served in the Massachusetts State Senate and State House of Representatives for five years. She was also general counsel for the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services, and policy chief for the state attorney general. Rep. Clark has fought for women and families, including on the issues of wage discrimination, paid family leave, and access to quality childcare and early childhood education.

- **Representative Alma Adams:**

Rep. Adams represents North Carolina's 12th District. She got her start serving on the Greensboro City School Board as well as the Greensboro City Council. Before coming to Congress, she served 10 years in the North Carolina State House of Representatives from 1994 to 2014.

- **Representative Mark DeSaulnier:**

Rep. DeSaulnier represents California's 11th District and is a veteran of California politics. He served on the Concord City Council from 1991 to 2006 and as mayor of Concord in 1993. He also served in the California State Assembly and State Senate from 2006 to 2014.

We serve on a committee that affects everyday life. Our jurisdiction touches everyone in our country, from students and children to older Americans, from employers to working families. What we do or don't do in these chambers will have real implications for millions of Americans.

In the 114th Congress, I look forward to our committee taking an evidence-based approach to addressing the issues of the day, using research to ground policy solutions that can hopefully generate some bipartisan agreement.

We have important work to do over the next two years.

We have major reauthorizations—the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the Higher Education Act, for example—and a number of issues we must attend to, not the least of which include:

- Providing quality early childhood care and education for families across the country
- Overcoming the achievement gap that still exists between poor and minority children and their more affluent peers and helping prevent students from dropping out of school
- Providing healthy, nutritious food for children in schools nationwide
- Helping all interested students, especially those from minority or low-income families, access affordable, quality higher education

- Reforming our juvenile justice system to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline
- Raising the national minimum wage so that no one who works full time has to live in poverty
- Protecting and strengthening the rights of workers to collectively bargain and have a voice on the job
- Strengthening worker protections and defending the civil rights of workers, including fighting against discrimination and supporting diversity in the workplace
- Strengthening and fully implementing the Affordable Care Act in order to ensure that all families have the ability to access quality, affordable health care coverage

We have a big job ahead of us.

The challenges we face are many. But so are the opportunities to make a real difference for students, families and workers.

As we have seen in recent years Congress, we must make a serious effort to work together, across party lines, if we hope to resolve major issues.

It has been my experience that working in a bipartisan way is often the key to legislative success.

If we agree that evidence and research should be the basis for our policies, many partisan conflicts can be avoided because many good-sounding slogans are not supported by research. Furthermore, regular order has value because the deliberative approach allows for the development of a record that shows what that evidence is.

I believe that we can find common goals and the common ground to get things done.

I look forward to working with you, Chairman Kline, and members on both sides of the aisle to make sure this is a productive and successful Congress for the American people.

Thank you.

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