



COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION & LABOR  
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE  
STATEMENT**

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**Opening Statement of Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Republican Leader  
Committee on Education and Labor Hearing:  
"Budget Cuts and Lost Learning: Assessing the Impact of COVID-19 on Public  
Education"  
June 15, 2020**

(As prepared for delivery)

"As a former teacher I want to begin by recognizing the teachers and schools for their herculean work this spring to stand up distance learning mechanisms for students, and in some cases, doing so almost overnight. Educators at all levels should be celebrated for their dedication in responding to the coronavirus crisis and going far beyond their normal responsibilities to respond to the needs of their students and communities.

Just as our teachers are working to overcome the many challenges this global pandemic poses, this nation's elected officials must also step up and do the job they were elected to do. This means working from D.C. and being physically present like our Founders intended. That is why Committee Republicans are participating in today's hearing in person from our hearing room. The Republican-invited witness is also with us in the hearing room.

We can and should be at work here in Washington, and I urge my Democrat colleagues to make that a priority moving forward.

The coronavirus pandemic has adversely impacted private and public schools alike. An estimated 94 percent of public and private schools closed this spring, impacting approximately 97 percent of the country's students. All students, including those at traditional public schools, charter schools, and private schools, should have access to the tools they need for lifelong success.

That is why Congress responded swiftly and enacted the CARES Act, which provided more than \$30 billion in emergency education funding to students, schools, institutions, and states.

There has been no evaluation of how \$30 billion in hardworking taxpayer money has been spent, yet here we are with Democrats pushing those same taxpayers to dole out more of their hard-earned money at a time when many Americans are being forced to tighten their belts.

Given the ever-evolving threat COVID-19 poses it would be irresponsible to rush to throw additional funds at a problem we don't understand fully. Also, some schools have not yet spent the funds they received from the CARES Act. Despite these facts, Democrats are demanding we spend more money.

Money is not a cure-all solution and it is irresponsible to blindly throw more money at this situation.

Let's not forget that history has shown that more spending doesn't guarantee better outcomes. In fact, per-pupil education spending has increased significantly over the years, but high school seniors aren't performing any better than they were 30 years ago.

Congress must first evaluate the impact of the billions of dollars in federal taxpayer education aid already provided through the CARES Act before rushing to further burden taxpayers with additional spending. Demanding additional funds at this time is premature and illogical.

As we continue to monitor the issues students and schools face, it is within this Committee's jurisdiction to explore opportunities for long-lasting reforms that will improve the education system for all families. For example, families' experiences this spring illustrated the inadequacy of the status quo for providing all students the foundation they need for lifelong success.

I am looking forward to testimony today about what states and school districts are learning from the work done this spring, how they are identifying weaknesses in the educational offerings provided to students, and how they are seeking to address those weaknesses. Superintendent Johnson will talk about the need for more personalized learning so that students' needs can be identified quickly, and

instruction that can be tailored to ensure each student is back on the path to success when school resumes. I hope we hear from others about how they are using these current challenges to question long-held assumptions. We owe it to our educators and students to examine this carefully and legislate with meaningful reform."

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