

OPENING STATEMENT
THE HONORABLE JOHN BOEHNER
CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Full Committee Markup
March 21, 2001

As you know, we are changing the committee rules today in order to resolve the disagreement over subcommittee jurisdictions.

Under this agreement, the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee will have jurisdiction over programs for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges. The Select Education Subcommittee will retain oversight responsibility for these colleges.

Today's agreement is a fair and equitable resolution that satisfies the concerns of the Committee's Democratic members and ensures that the Select Education Subcommittee can proceed with bipartisan efforts to reach out to our nation's minority-serving institutions. Subcommittee Chairmen Buck McKeon and Pete Hoekstra were instrumental in working with our Democratic partners to secure this agreement. I appreciate everyone working in this bipartisan manner to put this issue behind us so that we can work on the important legislative issues before the Committee.

As to the Oversight Plan, we will focus on six major priorities under the Committee's jurisdiction.

(1) **Department of Education Fiscal Audits:**

- The Committee will focus on the Department of Education's fiscal audits and agency-wide operations.
- We intend to work with the new Administration to measure the Departments own progress in implementing needed corrective actions.
- We have also changed the Committee Rule to provide the Select Education Subcommittee with jurisdiction over this important responsibility.

(2) **Department of Labor:**

- The Committee will examine the administration of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and other enforcement and regulatory issues, with the goal of increasing worker safety and creating a less adversarial relationship between enforcement agencies and American employers.
- The Committee will also continue to monitor the rights of rank-and-file membership in labor unions.

(3) **Twenty-First Century Workforce Issues:**

- The Committee intends to conduct expansive oversight into the effectiveness and enforcement of the nation's labor, pension, and benefits laws to ensure they are compatible with the New Economy and meet demands of both the workforce and employers.

(4) **Welfare Reform:**

- The Committee will review the success of the “work components” of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, specifically the Act’s effectiveness in moving welfare recipients into employment and toward self-sufficiency.
- The Committee will also examine how well these programs are being coordinated with other job placement programs.

(5) **Elementary and Secondary Education Reform:**

- Following projects initiated in prior Congresses, the Committee intends to continue its oversight efforts and monitor effectiveness of the federal government’s education programs.
- The Committee will examine innovative and successful state and local programs, and determine how federal regulations promote or inhibit effectiveness and the integral components of successful schools.

(6) **Higher Education:**

- The Committee intends to examine thoroughly the laws and regulations governing the Higher Education Act, with a goal of reducing regulatory burdens on institutions and ultimately costs to the student.
- The Committee will also work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions to review ways to strengthen and improve aid to these institutions.