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Press Release

FOR

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION & LABOR

The Hon. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott • Chairman

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Contact: Democratic Press Office, 202-226-0853

House Education Leaders Describe How Congress Can Help Schools Reopen Safely

WASHINGTON – Today, Chairman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (VA-03) held a press call with Congresswoman Jahana Hayes (CT-05), Congresswoman Donna Shalala (FL-27), and Dr. Nyree Washington, an educator from Miami Coral Reef Senior High School to discuss what must be included in the next COVID-19 response package to help schools reopen safely.

The call highlighted the need for significant and immediate federal investment in education to ensure schools can follow the safety guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health officials.

Over the past two months, House Democrats have passed more than \$200 billion in education funding to help schools reopen safely. In addition, the House passed \$1 trillion in state and local funding relief to help avert painful cuts to public education. Those proposals, the *Heroes Act* and the *Moving Forward Act*, have been ignored by the Trump Administration and Senate Republicans.

“All of us want to get students back into the classroom for full-time, in-person instruction as soon as possible. But our first priority must be the health and safety of students, school staff, and their families,” said Chairman Scott. “Unless the federal government delivers significant financial support, school districts will not be able to purchase Personal Protective Equipment, soap and hand sanitizer, disinfecting and cleaning services, and many other critical safety measures included in the CDC’s reopening guidance.”

According to the Superintendents Association, the average school district will need **an additional \$1.8 million to safely reopen**.

“There is nothing more that I want to do as a teacher than go back to schools and see my students face to face, make sure they are safe, and give them a ‘normal’ high school experience,” said Florida educator Nyree Washington. “But I do not want them to get infected and unknowingly carry the virus to their home and potentially expose their family. And that goes for me as well. Educators want to teach, but we need the federal investments right now to do so safely.”

On May 15, House Democrats passed the [*Heroes Act*](#), which directs more than \$100 billion in emergency education funding to help schools cover unexpected costs that are necessary to reopening safely. It also provides nearly a \$1 trillion in state and local funding to fill unprecedented budget shortfalls that will likely lead to devastating cuts to public education.

On July 1, House Democrats passed the [*Moving Forward Act*](#), which invests \$130 billion toward repairing and modernizing school facilities that endanger the health and safety of students and school staff.

To watch a recording of the press call, click [here](#).