Testimony of Rep. John Kline (R-MN)
Chairman, U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Committee on House Administration Hearing on the "Committee Budget for the 112th Congress"
November 30, 2011

Chairman Lungren, Ranking Member Brady, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear with my colleague, Senior Democratic Member George Miller, to testify about our budget for the 112th Congress.

In the first session of the 112th Congress, our committee was allocated $8,346,254 – of which we are on target to spend roughly 76 percent. Our goal is to spend only what is necessary as we strive to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Among the cost-saving measures we embraced on the Republican side of the committee were the elimination of end-of-year bonuses for staff and a decision not to fill all of our staff slots.

In the second session of the 112th Congress, if we face the additional 6.4 percent cuts we anticipate, we will continue to do what we can to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. I remain confident our team will be able to maintain our current workflow and carry out our agenda for 2012 by taking advantage of cost-saving measures, including: collaborating with other committees and personal offices in negotiating prices with current publication vendors; finding multiple price quotes on equipment and supply purchases before making a final decision; using new media to get our message out without incurring printing and publication costs; and producing posters and reports in-house rather than hiring outside vendors.

While I am confident in our ability to weather this additional 6.4 percent reduction in resources, I caution the committee that cuts above and beyond that figure could compromise our ability to carry out our agenda. I have serious concerns that additional cuts could threaten our ability to conduct rigorous oversight while carrying out our legislative responsibilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I appreciate your time and would be happy to answer any questions.