

**Remarks of Rep. Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (D-VA)  
Statement on Proposed Rules Change  
January 21, 2015**

Thank you, Chairman Kline. I do not intend to oppose the proposed Rules change, since it is merely adding the standing House Rule to our Committee Rules.

I do want to express some concern about the change in what has been the practice in this Committee. Typically, we have not sworn in witnesses in this Committee. In some oversight hearings, we have exercised the discretion to have the testimony be under oath. I think this practice has worked well.

Swearing in all witnesses sends the message that we do not trust witnesses. This is particularly of concern when we are asking witnesses for their opinions. We should be careful not to do anything that will chill the free discussion of varying opinions.

Again, while I will not oppose the proposed Committee Rules, I urge the Chairman to give all due consideration to the issue of changing the Committee’s longstanding practice with regard to swearing in witnesses.

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