



# Chairman Hal Rogers

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## House Committee on Appropriations

**Full Committee Organizational Meeting  
January 28, 2015  
Opening Statement as Prepared**

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The Committee will come to order.

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the first meeting of the Committee on Appropriations for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. I'm looking forward to a busy, successful year for this Committee and for this Congress.

The main order of business today is the consideration and adoption of our Committee rules, subcommittee jurisdictions, and oversight plans.

We are on a tight schedule today, so I hope we can work in a speedy fashion.

Before we get to down to business, I want to welcome my friend from New York, Nita Lowey, back to her role as Full Committee Ranking Member. Over the past two years, I have greatly appreciated her partnership, her leadership, and her dedication to getting our appropriations work done.

While we may not always agree, I thank her for upholding this Committee's tradition of collegiality. I look forward to continuing that tradition over the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress – as we work to pass all 12 Appropriations bills on time and under regular order.

Next, I would like to introduce and welcome our four new GOP members – and I know Mrs. Lowey will introduce the new members on her side shortly.

On the Republican side:

- David Jolly, representing Florida's 13<sup>th</sup> District
- Scott Rigell, representing Virginia's 2<sup>nd</sup> District
- David Young, representing Iowa's 3<sup>rd</sup> District
- Evan Jenkins, representing West Virginia's 3<sup>rd</sup> District

Welcome to all of our new members. We're all looking forward to working with you all this year.

Some of you may be noticing the absence of one of our cherished members, a dear friend, and a great legislator, Mr. Alan Nunnelee. Alan is continuing to rest and recuperate back in Mississippi, and we keep him and his family in our thoughts and prayers throughout this difficult time.

I also want to recognize the three members from the majority side who have agreed to serve as our representatives on the Budget Committee: Tom Cole, who has served in this role for the past four years, and new appointees Mario Diaz-Balart and Steve Womack. I know they will represent the Appropriations Committee – and the American taxpayers – well as they work through the tough issues the Budget Committee will be considering this year.

Finally, I would like to make a quick house-keeping note: This year, Evan Jenkins and Derek Kilmer will serve as co-chairs of the Committee Flower Fund. For those of you new to the Committee, this is a fund used by the Committee to send flowers or food baskets to the family of a member who has experienced an illness, lost a family member, or is celebrating the birth of a child. Our coffers have shrunk a good bit, so I would ask that each Member make a contribution of \$20 to the fund today or in the near future.

Before we move on, I would like to tell you that I am honored to continue serving this nation as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee and to serve side by side with all of the Members in this room.

Over the past four years, we have made real progress in getting back to regular order. Last year, the House got off to the earliest start to our appropriations work since 1974 – and we passed seven bills off the floor before the August recess.

By and large, we brought our bills to the floor under open rules. Since 2011, we have spent more than 400 hours on the floor, considering nearly 1500 amendments to our bills.

We've also made serious strides toward getting our fiscal house in order, responsibly trimming discretionary spending, while still providing for our national security, our infrastructure, and the federal programs that Americans rely on.

I commend you all for your efforts in making these goals a reality, and I hope that we can continue down this path over the next two years.

I am optimistic that we will: work with our friends across the aisle to find common ground whenever possible; hold hearings and conduct important oversight to ensure sustainable, accountable federal programs; get all of our bills on the floor under an open amendment process; and complete our work in a timely fashion.

To achieve this, I ask that you all be prepared for an aggressive schedule this year - starting early and moving quickly.

Our bills will focus on making the most of every tax dollar we spend, prioritizing funding where it is most needed, and continuing our efforts to streamline the federal government, weed out duplicative programs, and reduce waste.

In closing, I am honored to be able to work with all of you and look forward to continuing our collaboration to do the best job we can on behalf of the American people. Thank you all in advance for your hard work over the coming months.

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