

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Opening Statement:
FY 2013 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security
Witness:
Secretary Janet Napolitano
10:00 AM | Wednesday | February 15, 2012 | 2359 RHOB

Today, we welcome back Secretary Napolitano. Madam Secretary, we thank you for being here and look forward to hearing your testimony on the President's budget request for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2013.

Over this past year, we have seen some extraordinary security-related developments—

- The demise of Osama bin Laden and Anwar al Awlaki;
- Growing concerns over Hezbollah's global reach and al Qaeda's influence in northern Africa;
- Emboldened drug cartels continuing to threaten our border as well as the rule of law in Mexico;
- The persistent threat of homegrown violent extremism; and
- Horrific natural disasters including flooding and the violent tornadoes that struck Missouri and my home state of Alabama – devastation that you and I saw firsthand together.

Despite the significance of these developments, perhaps the gravest threat to our Nation over this past year has been our ballooning debt and crippling over-reliance upon deficit spending.

This leads us to the question of, "how do we sustain and support vital security programs in a fiscal environment that is both profoundly and necessarily constrained?" The short answer for this Subcommittee is, "discipline" – demanding that funds provide tangible results for our Nation's security.

The exercise of such discipline is not new. In fact, appropriators have *always* worked within the confines of finite resources and competing priorities.

What's changed is the urgency and scale of this discipline – there are no more shortcuts out of our budget's red ink and homeland security cannot be immune from fiscal restraint.

This assertion does not mean we should embrace the flawed, over-used expression of "doing more with less". Rather, it means we must get the most out of each and every scarce dollar to further the Department's mission.

This approach of linking funds to results is exactly what this Subcommittee did in the recently enacted FY12 conference report. I reject the mischaracterizations of our FY12 spending decisions as being predisposed to cut programs such as FEMA's grants or science and technology. That is a flawed claim that fails to acknowledge the blatant inadequacy of the Administration's original FY12 budget request.

Madam Secretary, I make no apologies for prioritizing limited funding to vital operations and frontline personnel at the expense of scalable activities and programs that are failing to demonstrate tangible results or execute their budgets. And, in spite of last year's significant budgetary challenges, we managed to increase funding *above the request* for potentially game-changing risk-based programs at CBP and TSA...programs you have strongly supported as crucial to DHS's success.

Sadly, Madam Secretary, the fiscal year 2013 budget request for DHS before us today fails to adequately sustain such operational priorities and repeats many of same inadequacies as last year's request. Using phony offsets and budget gimmicks while low-balling critical, operational programs does not meet the Nation's pressing needs for security or fiscal discipline.

Madam Secretary, it is incumbent upon the Administration to submit a *responsible* budget – one that does not rely upon a fiction of unauthorized fees, unrealistic assumptions, and flagrant contradictions, but rather a budget that adequately supports the Department's mission by funding needed detention capacity for ICE, supporting the necessary modernization Coast Guard and CBP assets, and keeping our research efforts on agricultural and biological threats on track.

Whereas this Administration chooses to apply the term "priorities" as a convenient excuse to avoid enforcing our immigration laws and ignore legislative mandates, this Subcommittee is obligated to work within real world constraints, with the law as it is currently written, and to actually fund vital operations.

That is the standard by which we will evaluate the FY13 budget request – a standard that demands accountability as well as the direct alignment of funding to results for our homeland security. The taxpayers deserve no less.

Madam Secretary, it is clear that we have a lot to discuss today.

###