

Chairman Hal Rogers
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security FY 2013 Budget Request
February 15, 2012

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your comments and for yielding to me. Madam Secretary, thank you for being with us today as we begin the Appropriations process for fiscal year 2013.

Your appearance today marks your first before this Subcommittee since our country paid tribute to the tenth anniversary of September 11, 2001. Since that unforgettable day, our country has taken necessary and impressive strides to protect our people from threats – manmade or natural. As the Chairman noted, our brave soldiers and those in intelligence community have surgically rid this earth of two of our greatest threats - Osama bin Laden and Anwar al-Awlaki.

However, when we pause this week to honor the memory and legacy of ICE agents Jamie Zapata and Victor Avila, it will serve as an apt reminder that our country, our freedom and our way of life remain under constant siege and our job is not done.

In recent years, we have seen a different kind of threat to our sovereignty emerge in our escalating fiscal crisis. This Committee has been front and center in attempting to address the very real security threat posed by out-of-control Washington spending and trillion dollar deficits. Last year, this Committee worked to restore transparency, austerity and tough oversight to the Appropriations process – and we succeeded in reducing discretionary spending by some \$98 billion compared to FY10. That hasn't happened since World War II.

While DHS was spared some of the more dramatic cuts, agencies across the board are being expected to make scarce dollars count, increase efficiencies, prioritize the mission, reduce redundancies, and budget responsibly. Your Department must be the best at this, which is why I have some strong concerns that the budget you've put forth today:

- Demonstrates a reticence to prioritize frontline operations so vital to our drug interdiction efforts along the border -- cutting CBP Air and Marine procurement by 52% as well as reducing Coast Guard patrol boat hours by 40% and active duty military by 500 billets;
- Offsets hundreds of millions of dollars with an aviation security fee you know will never be enacted – a budget gimmick the Congress has rejected time and again,
- Fails to include a meaningful and forward-looking acquisition program for the Coast Guard, reducing this important program by 20%, and
- Proposes to add layers to the already muddled bureaucracy at your headquarters.

Needless to say, this gives me great concern. Madam Secretary, I hope your testimony today will allay my concerns as we work together in protecting our homeland. Thank you.

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