

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
Department of State FY 2013 Budget Request
February 29, 2012

Thank you, Chairwoman Granger for yielding. And Secretary Clinton, thank you for appearing before the subcommittee today.

From the instability in the Middle East to the economic crisis in Europe to the evolving challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, there is no question that you are serving during a critical period in history. World events often remind us that our country, our freedom and our way of life remain at constant risk.

In recent years, we have also seen a different kind of threat to our independence 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 \$95 billion compared to FY10. That hasn't happened since World War II.

While I share your interest in supporting key national security priorities, I am concerned that the State and Foreign Operations request of \$54.7 billion is an increase of nearly 2.6% above fiscal year 2012. Even while the proposed Department of Defense budget is being reduced by the Administration, State and USAID continues to rise.

In addition to the many valid budget concerns expressed by Chairwoman Granger, I would like to add our shared concern about our country's energy security to that list. Even though the State Department has said, "Energy security is vital to U.S. national security," the Department continues to rattle off excuses for delaying the Keystone XL pipeline. While the State Department is pushing back on a viable energy option that would also create jobs in the U.S., the budget proposes to bump up funding by \$5.4 million for the newly created Bureau of Energy Resources and to increase aid to other countries by \$14.3 million to help them address their energy challenges.

Finally, I would urge you to keep your eye on the New London Embassy Project. While I know the Department plans to finance it with the sale of existing U.S. Government properties in London, I am concerned that this new embassy project, which envisions a state-of-the-art facility and exceeds \$1 billion in projected costs, has the potential to spiral out of control. The projected proceeds may align now with the estimated costs, but I am skeptical that they will by 2017 when the project is scheduled for completion. The Department needs contingency plans now that do not involve any taxpayer funds or sales of additional properties.

We've got some tough choices ahead of us, and I look forward to hearing from you today about the Administration's priorities.

Thank you.

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