



## Congressman José E. Serrano

Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

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### **Opening Statement of Chairman José E. Serrano Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee Hearing on the Federal Judiciary's FY 2010 Budget Request March 19, 2009**

Today we will hear testimony on the fiscal year 2010 budget request of the Federal Judiciary. The Judiciary, as an independent branch of government, submits its funding request directly to Congress rather than going through the Office of Management and Budget. Therefore, we already have their budget proposals for 2010 and can hold this hearing, even though the President's budget will not arrive until next month.

The independent Federal Judiciary plays an important role in our constitutional system. Like other government institutions, the Judiciary needs sufficient resources to properly function and perform its constitutional duties. This subcommittee has made it a priority to try to ensure sufficient funding for the proper functioning of the courts and the related functions included in the judicial budget, such as probation and pre-trial services and public defenders.

For fiscal year 2010, the Judiciary is requesting \$6.6 billion in discretionary funding, an increase of more than \$500 million above fiscal year 2009. I look forward to discussion of this request today.

Joining us to testify in support of the Judiciary's budget request is Judge Julia Gibbons of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Since 2004, Judge Gibbons has also served as Chair of the Budget Committee of the Judicial Conference. Judge Gibbons has testified before this subcommittee for the last few years and we are pleased to have her here again today.

Also appearing before the subcommittee today is James Duff, the Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. Mr. Duff was appointed to this position in 2006 by Chief Justice John Roberts. In the late 1990s he served for four years as Administrative Assistant and Chief of Staff to Chief Justice William Rehnquist. We welcome you both today, and we very much look forward to hearing from you about the resource needs of the Federal Judiciary.

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*Congressman José E. Serrano has represented the Bronx in Congress since 1990. He is the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government.*