

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Full Committee Mark Up
Fiscal Year 2014 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill and
Report on the Suballocation of Budget Allocations
May 21, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

Welcome to our first Full Committee markup of the Fiscal Year 2014 Appropriations cycle. Thank you, everyone, for being present today to start this important process.

First of all, I want to say that our heart and prayers are with the people of Oklahoma and all those that were hit by devastating tornados yesterday. The district of our friend and colleague, Mr. Cole, took a direct and severe hit, and today, he is in his district with his people. I ask that you keep him and those he represents in your thoughts. This is indeed a terrible tragedy, and we stand at the ready to do what we can to assist those in need.

Over the past few months, we held 112 subcommittee hearings – the most of any Committee in this Congress. It is a real testament to our commitment to due diligence and careful oversight of the money we appropriate. Thank you all for your hard work.

I'd like to express my optimism that we continue this year's appropriations work in regular order. I know our Ranking Member Mrs. Lowey shares my commitment, and I'm grateful to her for that. I look forward to working with her as we grind through our long "to-do" list this year, and I want to thank her for being a thoughtful partner in this process.

Working under regular order will produce the best Appropriations bills possible – bills that reflect current needs, cut waste, and provide the American people with the government they deserve. Under this process, each Member will have a chance to put their stamp on these must-pass pieces of legislation.

I look forward to working with you all over the next few months as we endeavor to bring all 12 bills to the House floor. This is a great group of legislators, and I know you'll each contribute a great deal to our work. I've always appreciated the sense of collegiality that is a hallmark of this Committee, and I know we will continue that tradition of respect as we debate our legislation today and in the future.

This is going to be a tough year – one of the toughest that we've faced since I've been part of this body. The guillotine of sequestration has fallen, and I think we all agree that its consequences have been, and will continue to be, very harmful, and it should be replaced in the very near term.

On a final note, I would like to recognize a person of great importance to this Committee. As many of you know, Bill Inglee, my staff director who came on board with me when I became chairman, is leaving us. This is his last Committee mark up. I want to thank Bill for all his hard work, sacrifice, and his constant and wholehearted support of this Committee and what we do every day. We couldn't have come this far over the last three years without him. So Bill, I offer you our thanks and best wishes in your next chapter of life.

#####