



# **Chairman Hal Rogers**

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## **House Committee on Appropriations**

**Full Committee Markup:  
FY 2015 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Bill  
FY 2015 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill  
& Report on the Interim Suballocation of Budget Allocations  
April 9, 2014  
*Opening Statement As Prepared***

Good morning, and welcome to our First Full Committee markup of the Fiscal Year 2015 Appropriations process.

Before I start, let me first express my sympathy to the victims and families of last week's shooting at Fort Hood. Mr. Carter is in Texas today for the memorial ceremony, and we send our thoughts and prayers to all those affected by this terrible tragedy.

Turning to the business at hand, I am pleased that we can be here today at one of our earliest full committee markups in decades.

This would not be possible without your hard work, flexibility, and commitment to this expedited schedule. And I know it was not without a great deal of effort and many scheduling sacrifices. By the end of this week, our subcommittees will have conducted more than 90 hearings over the past couple of months. In some cases, we've had up to 25 hearings in a single week. This is far and away the most of any Committee in the House – and it is no small task.

These hearings are an important part of our process – allowing us to conduct the necessary oversight and ask the serious questions needed to draft quality bills like the ones we have before us today. And it's truly impressive that you were able to get this all done within such a short time frame.

I believe our Ranking Member Mrs. Lowey shares my gratitude to each of the members of this Committee – not only for your hard work, but also for your good attitudes, and respect for the process and each other.

This includes your ongoing dedication to keeping to our Committee tradition of comity.

While I believe the budget deal passed last December has helped us get on the same page, we will inevitably deal with some differences of opinion, both today and in the future. However, the

principles of collegiality and the spirit of bipartisanship have always been hallmarks of this committee, and I thank you all for remembering that today.

Moving forward, I'd like to reiterate my commitment to working under regular order, and to finishing our appropriations work in a timely fashion – passing all bills through the Committee by the end of June, and passing all the bills off the House floor before the August recess.

Regular order allows us to produce the best bills possible, and helps us provide some certainty to the federal government and those who it serves – the people of this great nation.

On a final note before we get started... it's that time of year again, and the Committee "Flower Fund" is running low. For those new members or those that have forgotten, this fund is used to provide flowers to Members of the Committee experiencing significant life events: the birth of a child, death of a close family member, etc. Mr. Valadao on the Republican side, and Mr. Owens on the Democrat side are our "Flower Fund" co-chairs. I am asking you to be generous and provide these gentlemen with a donation today so that we can keep this wonderful committee tradition going.

With that, we'll get started on our agenda today. First, we will consider the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill; next, the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill; and lastly, the FY15 302(b)s for these two bills.

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