



Chairman Frank Wolf

*Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**Full Committee Markup – FY 2015 Commerce, Justice, Science Bill
May 8, 2014
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Today, I am pleased to bring to the Committee the fiscal year 2015 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Before I summarize the highlights of the bill, I want to first thank the Ranking Member, Mr. Fattah, and all the members of the Subcommittee for their participation and assistance.

We have worked together in a bipartisan fashion to incorporate priorities and perspectives from both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Fattah, I appreciate the open and cooperative relationship we have enjoyed.

I would also like to thank Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey for providing us with a fair allocation, and for allowing us to forge ahead under regular order to accomplish the work of the Committee.

Finally, I want to recognize the Subcommittee staff, including the clerk Mike Ringler, Leslie Albright, Jeff Ashford, Diana Simpson, Colin Samples and Taylor Kelly, and also Bob Bonner and Matt Smith from the Minority staff for their work in preparing the bill before us today.

The recommendation we bring to the Committee includes \$51.2 billion in discretionary spending, a reduction of \$398 million or 0.8 percent below the current fiscal year.

We have done our part to control discretionary spending. The bill includes several reductions from lower priority programs and rescinds over \$469 million from prior year balances in the Justice Department.

Meanwhile, the bill also restores damaging cuts to Federal law enforcement and NASA that were proposed in the President's request.

We have focused limited resources on the most critical areas: fighting crime and terrorism, including cyber attacks; improving weather forecasts and warnings; and boosting U.S. competitiveness and job creation by investing in science, space, exports and manufacturing.

For the Department of Commerce, the bill includes \$8.4 billion.

Severe weather events, like the recent devastating tornadoes in Arkansas, Mississippi and elsewhere, often result in loss of life and economic ruin. The bill provides funding above the request for National Weather Service operations, weather research, and NOAA's two flagship weather satellite systems that will result in more timely and accurate warnings and forecasts.

Simply put: these investments save lives. They saved lives in Arkansas and Mississippi, and they will save lives wherever the next severe weather event strikes.

The bill makes critical investments in manufacturing, export promotion and job creation, including a Commerce Department task force to incentivize U.S. companies to bring their manufacturing and services activities back to the United States.

The bill also includes \$130 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program to help advance job growth in the manufacturing sector.

The bill also features important investments in scientific research programs, including \$856 million for NIST and \$7.4 billion for the National Science Foundation. Basic scientific research is a key to long-term economic growth and competitiveness, and is the foundation for the economic security of future generations.

Preparing tomorrow's STEM workforce is also critical to American competitiveness. More than \$1 billion is provided through science agencies in the bill for science education programs.

For NASA, the bill includes \$17.9 billion, including an increase of \$100 million for aeronautics research vital to the competitiveness of our aviation industry, and to improving airspace safety

The bill includes \$4.2 billion for space exploration. This amount will allow NASA to meet upcoming flight milestones for the new Orion Crew Vehicle and the Space Launch System.

The President's request for NASA Science programs would have inhibited progress on planetary science goals, including missions to Mars and Europa. This bill includes \$5.2 billion for NASA Science, restoring those cuts.

Last year, at the Committee's direction, the National Academy of Public Administration conducted an external review that found troubling vulnerabilities in NASA's security controls and practices.

We recommend funding in this bill for NASA to protect its cutting edge technology with improved IT security, export control training, additional counterintelligence staffing and the operation of a new Foreign National Access Management program.

The bill calls for NAPA to submit a follow up report by the end of FY15 on NASA's progress in implementing the recommended improvements.

For Justice, the bill includes \$27.8 billion. Defending the Nation from internal and external threats is the top mission priority of the Justice Department.

The bill includes \$8.5 billion for the FBI, an increase of \$125 million above FY14 to continue counterterrorism activities, investigations of cyber intrusions, and task force work to investigate and eliminate violent gang crime.

Federal Prisons operations are funded at \$7 billion. The bill maintains staffing levels to ensure safe and secure operations.

The bill continues funding for the Chuck Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections, which will make recommendations for systematic reforms to increase public safety, improve offender accountability, reduce recidivism and control costs in the Federal Prison System. This ongoing effort will distill lessons learned from recent innovations at the State level, and set the stage for these and other reforms to take hold in the Federal system, and in corrections systems nationwide.

The bill includes \$2.1 billion for Justice grant programs, including Byrne Justice Assistance Grants; SCAAP; missing and exploited children programs; and Prescription Drug Monitoring.

This is a landmark bill for reducing violence against women and strengthening services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. The bill includes funding above the current level and above the President's request for these programs.

Likewise, the bill represents a breakthrough in addressing the horrific crime of trafficking in persons. Funding for victim assistance and law enforcement task forces totals \$45.4 million, an increase of \$31 million above FY14.

The problem of DNA testing backlogs at crime labs and at law enforcement agencies nationwide demands action. This bill includes \$125 million for existing DNA programs, and an additional \$36 million to address the backlog of sexual assault kits at law enforcement agencies.

The bill also includes \$58.5 million for programs to improve State records submissions to the NICS background check system for keeping firearms out of the hands of prohibited persons, and \$75 million to continue the comprehensive school safety initiative begun last year.

Whenever there is a terrorist attack, we must never forget our responsibility to victims and survivors. There is language in the report directing the Office for Victims of Crime to provide all appropriate assistance to the survivors and families of the victims of the November 2009 terrorist attack at Fort Hood, and report back to the Committee on what assistance has been provided.

Finally, we have included report language directing the Justice Department to assist the democracy advocates, including those from IRI and NDI, who were tried and convicted in Egypt, simply for carrying out U.S. Government-funded democracy programs. These convictions should not be recognized in the United States or elsewhere, and these individuals should not have to suffer any further negative consequences.

I look forward to working with our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee and others to make sure that any necessary legislation is enacted this year.

That is a summary of the recommendation before the Committee today. The bill recognizes our fiscal realities, controlling overall spending, while prioritizing critical Federal functions.

I urge all Members to support the bill and I yield back to the Chairman.

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