



Chairman Tom Latham

*Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**Full Committee Markup – Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development Appropriations Bill
May 21, 2014
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Thank you, Chairman Rogers.

Thank you everyone. The bill before you meets our allocation of \$52.029 billion, an increase of \$1.17 billion over the 2014 enacted levels. That's the good news. The bad news is the FHA receipts are down almost \$3 billion from last year. That doesn't mean FHA is going broke – just that CBO estimates more homebuyers are financing and refinancing their homes through the private market. This scoring quirk brought some challenges, but we are determined to live within the budget deal struck last year.

Like appropriators do, we made choices and set priorities. The bill before you recommends funding levels to keep FAA air traffic controllers and safety inspectors on the job, and proposes some increases for safety programs, especially to address the challenges we are seeing with hazardous materials and railroads.

This bill provides sufficient funds to keep all families currently receiving housing assistance under the umbrella of the various HUD programs. We recommend funding the base CDBG program at \$3 billion, almost level with last year.

For the surface programs we provide funding level with fiscal year 2014, consistent with the last year of MAP-21, contingent on reauthorization. I know I don't need to remind any of you about the balances of the Highway Trust Fund, and I am hopeful the authorizers will come up with a plan to bring these critical programs into 2015.

The budget proposed, and assumed, a lot of new authorizing this year for both DOT and HUD, and we did carry a number of provisions last year. However, a whole new surface program and pages and pages of new HUD legislation are best left to the authorizers for their evaluation and judgment.

I believe we struck a good balance between housing and transportation, and the various provisions members asked us to consider. The beauty of regular order and an open process is Members and the public are able to see the bill and propose amendments. I very much appreciate Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey's commitment to bring these bills forward under regular order.

I thank Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey for their support of this bill and this process. I'd like to thank the Members of this Committee for the work that you do, for your support of this bill, and all of the bills and amendments I have sponsored over the years. In no other committee do we have the opportunity to year after year make a difference for the families

and communities we represent. I thank you for everything you have done to help me help the people of Iowa, and the people of this Nation.

Finally, I'd like to thank my Ranking Member, Ed Pastor. It has been an honor and a privilege, and I dare say fun. Those of you who have had the honor of working with Ed know he's an honest broker, a true advocate for Arizona, and a man who appreciates the humor of what comes our way. I'm lucky we ended up here.

But first let's get this bill to the floor. Ranking Member Pastor and I will have a Managers' Amendment to make some technical and requested changes to the bill, and the bill before you is a solid product worthy of your support.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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