



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

**Full Committee Markup – FY 2017 Agriculture Appropriations Bill
April 19, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Thank you both for your hard work on this bill.

Before I continue, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge in particular the contributions of the Ranking Member. As he embarks on his final full committee markup as Ranking Member of the Agriculture Subcommittee, I would like to thank him for his service to the Appropriations Committee over his years in Congress. We will miss him when he heads to greener pastures – pastures made a little bit greener thanks to his work on this subcommittee.

So congratulations to you, Chairman Aderholt, and your subcommittee on developing a fair, balanced Agriculture bill.

In total, the bill provides \$21.3 billion – a \$451 million reduction below FY 2016 levels. This reflects thoughtful, responsible reductions to inefficient or lower-priority programs. No doubt, some difficult decisions had to be made, but the end result is a bill that prioritizes activities that provide the most benefit to the American people: critical food and drug safety programs; important rural development programs; and effective agricultural research and support programs.

These investments recognize the widespread importance of these efforts – that every American, every day expects and deserves safe and nutritious food on their table.

To ensure that our food supply remains healthy, the bill increases funding for the FDA's food safety programs by over \$33 million. The bill also provides an increase for USDA food safety and inspection services.

In addition, the bill targets funding toward fighting the animal and plant pests and diseases that put our food supply at risk. This year, funding has been increased to help address the devastating effects of citrus greening, avian influenza, and other diseases plaguing our commodities.

American farmers and ranchers are the backbone of a strong nation, and our rural communities are the lifeblood of the U.S. economy.

The USDA plays an essential role in the economic development of America's rural areas – and so the legislation funds these initiatives at nearly \$2.9 billion – a 30 percent increase since fiscal year 2013. This funding helps support basic rural infrastructure, balance the playing field in local

rural housing markets, and provide loans for rural businesses and industries – all to help build stronger regional economies across the country.

The bill contains several measures that will rein in unnecessary and burdensome regulations that harm our food and drug industries. The bill also fights waste, fraud, and abuse in nutrition programs to help make sure that every taxpayer dollar is spent appropriately and efficiently.

Lastly, I am pleased with the good work this bill does to keep our pharmaceutical industry on the cutting edge – while also providing necessary resources to continue the fight against prescription drug abuse. And I would like to highlight the \$10 million we included for the FDA to combat Zika and Ebola outbreaks by expediting the development and availability of medical products targeted toward these diseases.

Again, I want to thank Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Farr, and the subcommittee for bringing this bill before the Committee today. You have done a great deal with your funding – making smart choices, prioritizing critical programs, and helping to grow the American economy.

I urge the Committee to support this bill.

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Fiscal Year 2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill

April 19, 2016

Opening Statement As Prepared

I want to commend you both on the balanced and responsible approach you took in this bill.

Totaling \$37.5 billion, this bill targets funding toward two of our most critical priorities: a strong national security, and robust energy and water infrastructure. This represents a \$259 million increase over current levels for these activities.

First, the bill directs solid increases for national security investments, including our nuclear weapons programs. Given the volatility across the globe, it's vital we keep the country at the pinnacle of nuclear security preparedness. The world looks to us – and we must ensure our stockpile is secure, ready, and up-to-date. In total, funding for nuclear security programs is increased by \$327 million above FY 2016 levels.

Secondly, the bill protects funding for critical national and regional waterways that foster economic growth and commerce. The Army Corps of Engineers is funded at \$6.1 billion – rejecting the President's proposed \$1.5 billion in cuts that would have hampered the development of functioning and safe water resources.

The bill also promotes funding for an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy – helping our nation work toward energy independence and economic security. This strategy certainly includes fossil energy technologies. Funding for research and development into these technologies is increased by \$13 million to total \$645 million – acknowledging their importance to America's energy present and future. The bill also invests in science research that will help reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil and boost our economic competitiveness.

I am pleased that, in addition to making these investments, the bill also pushes back on many of the Administration's most egregious regulations that aim to eliminate coal as a part of the equation – including the Administration's efforts to change the definition of “fill material,” and preventing the Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA from moving forward with the “Waters of the United States” rule.

This type of regulatory overreach ignores the potential of one of our nation's greatest natural resources, and threatens to shutter American businesses and eliminate countless jobs in the process. It is critical that Congress protect against these overly burdensome rules and requirements, and I'm glad we were able to do so in this bill.

To sum up – this is a very good bill that invests in the programs and infrastructure needed to promote a more secure and prosperous future for our nation, and I urge the Committee to support it today.

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House Committee on Appropriations

**Fiscal Year 2017 Revised Interim Suballocation of Budget Allocations
April 19, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Our last order of business today is to revise the Committee's 302(b)s.

The report before you today provides new allocations for three additional subcommittees. In addition to the allocation for Military Construction, which we approved last week, this report covers: Agriculture; Energy and Water; and Legislative Branch.

We are taking these steps today to do everything we can to get our bills ready for the floor, even though a FY 2017 Budget Resolution has not been adopted.

While we have been operating under the \$1.070 trillion level that is the law of the land, the fact is we need an official 302(a) allocation from the Budget Committee to move forward – at least until May 15th.

We are proceeding step by step – developing these bills and updating our numbers as we go along until the larger budget issues get resolved, one way or another.

This report will allow the bills we have already considered and approved, as well as the upcoming Legislative Branch bill, to be brought to the floor – keeping us on a timeline that gives us a chance at finishing our work by the end of the current fiscal year.

I ask for your support.

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