



Chairman Kevin Yoder

*Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
House Committee on Appropriations*

FY2019 LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS

FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP – May 8, 2017

CHAIRMAN YODER’S OPENING STATEMENT (as prepared)

The recommendation for the fiscal year 2019 Legislation Branch Appropriations bill provides \$3.8 billion, excluding Senate items, which historically are left to the Senate to determine. This is an increase of \$132.6 million from currently enacted levels.

The bill and report were developed in a bi-partisan fashion and I appreciate the input from Ranking Member Ryan and his staff. In addition to the 9 hearings we held this year, we were able to incorporate 140 Member requests, 123 of which came from Democratic Members.

The House of Representatives, where we all serve, welcomes thousands of visitors each day as we conduct legislative business. The Capitol building alone is said to host 3-5 million people each year according to statistics from the Architect of the Capitol. It’s a working museum of history and art, and its facilities and support services carry on seamlessly as millions come and go.

Details of the bill and report have been shared with the Committee. I will provide a summary of the recommendations before us today.

House of Representatives

This is also a place of fiscal discipline. Our bill continues to hold spending within the House at more than 10 percent below 2010 funding levels.

The bill includes \$1.23 billion for the operations of the House, which is an increase of \$32 million. The increased level of funding for Member’s Representational

Allowances will allow for authorized levels as approved by the Committee on House Administration. Increases will also go towards enhanced cybersecurity, workplace rights training, the employee advocacy office and improved customer service.

Language in this bill also continues the policy of denying pay increases to Members of Congress for the tenth consecutive year.

Capitol Police

One of the most important components of this bill is the security of the capitol grounds, especially the visitors, Members, and staff. Just about a year after the attack on the Republican Congressional Baseball Practice, our House Sergeant at Arms has testified that Members have received an “unprecedented number of threats.” Since June of 2017, it’s known that 260 of 435 members of Congress added extra security equipment to District Offices.

On a day to day basis here in Washington, the U.S. Capitol Police are responsible for defending the Capitol and all those working and visiting there. They have new directives to combat potential terrorist threats, and are the first line of defense at events with multiple members of congress here in D.C. Further, they coordinate with local law enforcement in our districts and provide intel and threat assessment.

\$456.358 million is provided for the Capitol Police, an increase of \$29.8 million over enacted levels. This funding will provide the necessary resources for the Capitol Police to fund officers hired last year and hire additional officers to staff garage security and limited prescreening.

These men and women defend all of us and our constituents every day. We're so grateful for their service.

Congressional Budget Office

The bill includes \$50.7 million for the Congressional Budget Office. These funds are meant in part to allow CBO to continue to provide the Congress with budget and economic information that is objective, insightful, and timely.

Architect of the Capitol

The bill includes \$642 million for the Architect of the Capitol, excluding Senate items. This is an increase of \$31.5 million over the fiscal year 2018 enacted level.

The Subcommittee recognizes the continuing challenge of preserving and maintaining our infrastructure and prioritizing critical projects.

After numerous hearings, briefings, and tours of various portions of the Capitol Complex since January, we've determined the bill appropriately includes funds to include:

- \$62 million for the restoration and renovation of the Cannon House Office Building. As many of my colleagues know phase 1 is expected for completion at the end of this Congress.
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- \$32.7 million for Phase IV of the Rayburn House Office Building Garage Rehabilitation project
- \$21 million for Phase IV of the cooling renovation at the Capitol Power Plant
- \$8.3 million for barrier lifecycle replacement and security kiosk replacement

Library of Congress

The Library of Congress is a treasured institution of Congress and the American people. We're dedicated to their mission here in congress and have demonstrated that with our commitment to their funding here in this bill.

The bill includes \$709.9 million for the Library of Congress, which is \$40 million above currently enacted levels, and further greater than \$3.8 million over the Library's budget request. New funding will go towards IT improvements Library-wide, as well as specific Copyright modernization initiatives.

Additionally, funding is provided to:

- hire additional FTE's for the Congressional Research Service in an effort to increase responsiveness and expanded analytical capacity;
- hire additional FTEs for the Copyright office in an effort to reduce the current recordation back-log;

- the total expansion of FTEs at Copyright and CRS is near 50
- and finally, \$20 million is provided towards the visitor experience project at the Thomas Jefferson Building. This is the second installment of 3 needed to fulfill this “top priority” project for the Library. As my colleagues know, this is a public private partnership which will have received half of its needed total funding after this fiscal year. It’s expected that \$20 million will be raised privately and \$10 million in further federal contribution will be made in the next year.

I know this project will be an educational and uplifting experience for Americans and especially for children. We’re thrilled to make an investment in this public private partnership which the Library has marked as their top priority.

According to this mark, we expect the library will be able to fulfill their needs for approximately 75 total FTEs across their programs and fulfill their requirements for mandatory cost of living increases for their employees. From 2014 to 2018 we have exceeded the needs of the library to fulfill their COLA by approximately 10%.

Government Publishing Office

The bill includes \$117 million for the Government Publishing Office, which is the agency’s full request. We commend the GPO for their ability to do more with less, their funding has slightly decreased which is a testament to their adoption of technology and extremely hard work.

Government Accountability Office

The bill includes \$579 million for the Government Accountability Office. Their funding is steady from fiscal year 2018 and will allow an increase of 80 FTE to continue to assist Congress in making smart policy decisions.

Member Initiatives

In crafting this bill and report the Legislative Branch Subcommittee took into consideration the thoughtful feedback of Members throughout this Committee and this body. Various initiatives are included which we can all be proud of which help us serve our constituents and produce efficiencies and transparency in the way Congress operates.

Transparency

Continuing our success in opening CRS reports to the public we have focused our efforts on continued policies to make Congress more open to the public. Some of these new provisions in our bill include creation of a consolidated hearing calendar for both the House and Senate, digitization of various forms and pieces of data throughout the legislative branch, like the Members Bio-guide.

Further Highlights

- Member requests to expand the Wounded Warrior program, allowing members expanded ability to hire veterans, increasing the total slots available to 110 (more than 22% increase over the existing 54 fellowships)

In closing, I would like to thank Ranking Member Ryan for his role throughout the process as well as appreciation to all the members of the Subcommittee for their participation in the process this year.

Finally, thank you to our full committee Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey for their work in getting this bill to full Committee today. This is a good bill and I urge all Committee members to support it.