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FY 2021 APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY

Chairman Quigley, Ranking Member Graves, and members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to provide input on the FY 2021 Appropriations process on behalf of the residents of California's 39th Congressional District.

My district is one of many across this nation that relies on federal funding under your jurisdiction to support small businesses, keep our communities safe from drugs, and assist taxpayers. I want to take this opportunity to highlight just a few examples of the programs under your jurisdiction that benefit my district.

First, I urge you to provide strong funding levels for Small Business Development Centers (SBDC). Since 2003, my constituents have greatly benefitted from the free and low-cost assistance to small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs provided by the SBDC at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). The CSUF SBDC has been highly effective at helping individuals in my district expand and start new businesses, driving local economic growth and job creation in our region. The individualized consulting services, business plan reviews, and marketing assistance advances innovation in a wide range of industries. Last year, the nearly 1,000 SBDCs nationwide helped generate \$7 billion in new sales, representing a return on the federal investment of \$2.16 to \$1. The President's budget request of \$87.9 million will limit the number of small businesses that can be helped by SBDCs and stifle innovation. I urge

you to reject this proposal in instead provide \$150 million for the program, the same level provided by this Subcommittee in the House-approved bill last year.

Additionally, I hope you will reject the President's proposal to eliminate funding for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program. In my district, the HIDTA program has helped support effective and highly coordinated narcotics enforcement, investigation, and prosecution in close coordination with the Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino County Sheriffs' offices. In an era of limited funding to combat the narcotics threats our police officers face, the HIDTA program supports coordinated law enforcement strategies that enable law enforcement officials to maximize available resources and reduce the supply of illegal drugs in our community. Additionally, the HIDTA program supports the highly successful Los Angeles Regional Criminal Informational Clearinghouse or LACLEAR. This nationally recognized program supports real-time "officer safety" related events and deconfliction services, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reduced federal funding for the HIDTA program would only serve to increase the number of drugs on our streets and reduce proven officer safety support models.

Further, I urge you to provide strong funding levels for the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Taxpayer Services programs. Whether it is the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, Tax Counseling of the Elderly program, National Taxpayer Advocate program, or Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic grants, my constituents rely on these services to confidently file returns without fear of being scammed. The programs are critical to helping vulnerable taxpayers – particularly those who are low-income or who have limited English proficiency – better understand their rights and responsibilities. For example, CSUF has hosted a VITA

program on its campus for over ten years that provides assistance in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. These Taxpayer Services programs have helped thousand of my constituents and should receive continued support.

I hope you will continue your support of the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI). This important program helps generate economic growth and opportunity in our most distressed communities and allows federal investments to complement private capital to create businesses, jobs, and homes. In particular, my region has benefited from the Bank Enterprise Award (BEA) program, which awards banks for increasing their investments in CDFIs through grants, stock purchases, loans, and deposits. In 2019, First General Bank in Rowland Heights received \$245,547 under the program to support community development activities. The BEA program has proven to be a strong incentive for increased investments and economic development in the most distressed communities in our area.

Finally, I want to thank this Subcommittee for your bipartisan support of funding to help state and local entities keep our elections safe and secure from outside interference. Time and time again, our intelligence community has confirmed that foreign actors are seeking to undermine confidence in democratic institutions, sow divisions, weaken alliances, and promote their own agendas by tampering with our election systems. We cannot leave our state and local election officials alone to deal with this existential threat to our democratic institutions. I urge your continued support for Election Security grants to support ongoing cybersecurity and related threat management activities in my district and nationwide.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I hope you will keep this testimony in mind as you craft the FY 2021 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Acts.