



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee Markup – Fiscal Year 2015 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill June 17, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared

Thank you for yielding, Madam Chairwoman. I congratulate you and Ranking Member Lowey for bringing forward the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations bill for the Department of State and foreign operations. Along with staff on both sides, you have worked tirelessly to bring this important legislation before the subcommittee this evening, and I'm pleased that as a Committee, we're continuing to move forward with our work in an open, transparent and regular process.

As we've worked collaboratively to reduce federal discretionary spending, we've had to make some tough decisions about our domestic and foreign priorities. I'm incredibly pleased that this bill strikes an appropriate balance in that respect: shaving roughly \$708 million from Fiscal Year 2014 spending levels while meeting our most critical international security priorities, supporting the promotion of democracy across the globe, and continuing our country's strong tradition for humanitarian aid and public health.

First, the bill aims to ensure that our dedicated men and women serving overseas remain safe and well-equipped to perform their important duties – providing a \$46 million increase above the request for embassy and diplomatic security. The legislation also provides critical security assistance to our valued international partners like Israel and Jordan in the Middle East, Mexico and Colombia in Central and South America, and the Philippines. With growing and alarming instability in the Middle East, the ongoing threat of a nuclear Iran and the potential for regional instability, and a humanitarian crisis in Syria – it is absolutely vital that our partners in that region are well-supported and assured of American collaboration.

In addition, the escalating challenge of unaccompanied alien children entering our country through the Southwest Border also demands our attention. While there are certainly some domestic policies that are driving the unprecedented influx of Central and South American children, I wholeheartedly agree with Chairwoman Granger that we can help mitigate this problem by promoting border security and economic development in Mexico and south of the Mexican border. I'm proud that this bill restores proposed cuts in the region and also requires a quarterly update on border security. I would also like to note that the legislation provides \$215 million above the request to support the people of Ukraine and the region during this time of need. This funding will help provide security and democracy assistance as tensions with Russia continue to escalate.

This bill will also help build democracy and promote international development with targeted U.S. investments abroad. Critical humanitarian aid programs are maintained at Fiscal Year 2014 levels and global health programs, and polio and HIV/AIDS initiatives are funded above the

President's request. We also reject the President's ill-conceived cuts to international programs that increase access to clean water and for conservation activities.

Finally, during this time of monumental deficits and skyrocketing debt, this bill terminates many programs and focuses on oversight and management. And for many programs, funds are only made available after tough conditions have been met. The Chairwoman's emphasis on supporting national security, promoting democracy and maintaining our development and humanitarian aid abroad is the right approach for addressing our international interests. I urge that the subcommittee promptly report this bill to the full Committee.

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