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February 11, 2015

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**GRANGER OPENING STATEMENT: OVERSIGHT HEARING-FUNDING TO PREVENT, PREPARE FOR, AND RESPOND TO THE EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE OUTBREAK**

The Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs will come to order.

I want to welcome all the Members to the first subcommittee hearing for the 114th congress. The purpose of today's hearing is to oversee funding within the State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee's jurisdiction to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the Ebola outbreak.

I would like to welcome our three witnesses:

- Ambassador Steve Browning, Special Coordinator for Ebola at the Department of State
- Mr. Dirk Dijkerman, U.S.A.I.D. Executive Coordinator for the Ebola Task Force
- Mr. Jeremy Konyndyk, Director of U.S.A.I.D.'s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

Thank you all for being here.

Although the international response was slow at the beginning of the Ebola crisis, the level of effort by the United States has been unprecedented. More than a thousand American troops are currently deployed. The C.D.C. has public health professionals in the affected countries. Our diplomats continue to work with governments to contain the outbreak, and U.S.A.I.D. leads the response on the ground. There are also hundreds of brave health care workers, many of them Americans, who have been mobilized by non-governmental organizations to respond to the disease.

The results of the response effort are staggering and much different than expected. In September, scientific models predicted that by January of this year, there would be 550,000 Ebola cases in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Those of us who watched the progression of this disease from the beginning and witnessed its devastating effects, are all thankful that the actual caseload was nowhere near what was predicted.

Over the weekend, the press reported 124 confirmed cases in West Africa last week, one of the lowest levels since the outbreak began, and the total cases reported in those countries is approximately 22,000. This is a fraction of what was predicted. But the fight is not over. As our troops come home, the difficult work of eliminating the disease will fall even more on the shoulders of aid workers on the ground. Effectively addressing this next phase of the epidemic is critical. As we all saw last year when the disease came to our own shores, just one case can have devastating effects. Last fall, my home state of Texas experienced the disease directly.

The Fiscal Year 2015 Appropriations Act included \$2.5 billion of emergency funding in this subcommittee's jurisdiction, representing a clear commitment by Congress, on behalf of all Americans, to fight the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and prevent the further spread of the disease. It is this subcommittee's responsibility to oversee funds provided to fight the disease, to ensure there is a sound plan for spending resources, and guarantee that any lessons learned from this crisis can be applied to future global health emergencies.

I hope the witnesses can give us an update on how funds have been spent, and how remaining funds will be prioritized to eliminate the threat of Ebola. We would also appreciate your thoughts on how we can respond more quickly and efficiently in the event of another international health emergency.

We commend the U.S. military and government agencies who have responded to this crisis, but we must ensure there has not been unnecessary duplication of effort. If so, we need to change course now and not wait for the next crisis to get it right.

I want to close by expressing our sincere appreciation for the health care workers who have fought the Ebola outbreak and cared for those in need. They take risks every day that many of us never have to face. They are heroes, and some of the stories I have heard are truly remarkable.

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