



# Chairman Hal Rogers

---

## House Committee on Appropriations

### Subcommittee Markup – FY 2016 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill June 3, 2015 Opening Statement As Prepared

---

Thank you for yielding, Madam Chairwoman. I congratulate you and Ranking Member Lowey for bringing forward the Fiscal Year 2016 appropriations bill for the Department of State and foreign operations. You and your respective staff have worked tirelessly to bring this important legislation before the subcommittee today, and I'm pleased that our Committee is continuing to move forward with our work in an open, transparent and regular process.

Given the constraints facing our Committee as a result of the strict discretionary caps in the Budget Control Act, we've had to make some difficult decisions about our domestic and foreign priorities. I'm incredibly pleased that this bill strikes an appropriate and responsible balance in that respect: shaving roughly \$1.4 billion from Fiscal Year 2015 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 Nation's diplomats serving overseas at more than 275 posts remain safe and well-equipped to perform their important duties. We fully fund the requested amount for embassy security so that the State Department can continue implementing the recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board report.

Second, the legislation ensures that we maintain our commitment to our international partners and allies – particularly those engaged with us in the fight against ISIL. 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. To that effect, the bill provides much-needed security assistance to Israel and Jordan - and prioritizes funds to bolster anti-terrorism programs as well as critical international security efforts that help keep Americans and our international partners safe.

Shifting from that region to the crisis in Ukraine, I am proud that we've provided much needed funding to support her people in their response to Russian aggression. This funding will help provide security and economic assistance as tensions continue to escalate under President Putin.

I am also pleased that this bill will help build democracy and promote international development with targeted U.S. investments abroad. Global health programs including polio and HIV/AIDS initiatives are funded above the President's request. This legislation also prioritizes funding for

critical humanitarian aid programs and programs to combat the global crisis of human trafficking.

Finally, at a time when our country is facing monumental deficits and crushing debt, this bill eliminates many programs and focuses on oversight and management. And for many programs, funds are only made available after tough conditions have been met. I commend the Chairwoman for her emphasis on national security, promoting democracy, strengthening our relationships with our allies, and maintaining our development and humanitarian aid abroad. I urge that the subcommittee promptly report this bill to the full Committee.

#####