



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

Fiscal Year 2015 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill Subcommittee Markup July 9, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared

We have before us today the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, which is funded at the discretionary level of \$30.22 billion. I would like to thank Chairman Calvert, Ranking Member Moran, and staff on both sides for their efforts to prepare for this markup today.

This bill we have before us today is a critical one since it deals so much with our nation's land management, our energy security, and, ultimately, jobs. With this bill and with the Energy and Water bill that is on the floor this week, I am proud that this committee is standing up for these jobs and against an administration which at every turn has tried to find new regulations that will hamper economic activity. This bill also ensures that the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program is extended for one year and that our fire suppression accounts within the Department of Interior and the Forest Service are fully funded. And we ensure that our obligations to our Native tribes are met, with increased funding for the Bureaus of Indian Affairs and Education as well as for the Indian Health Service.

In the last 5 years, we have seen attempt after attempt to add layers of environmental red tape to any economic development that our states, counties, and cities may undertake, such as with the new "Waters of the United States" proposal in which the EPA seeks to gain jurisdiction over most of the country by claiming authority to regulate dry beds, ditches, and anywhere water could conceivably run. In the last month, we have also seen the EPA release new standards for greenhouse gas emissions at power plants, which is an equally fruitless attempt to legislate through regulation.

Despite the promise that President Obama made in 2008 that under his plan "electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket," and the EPA's own analysis that this rule would raise electricity rates more than 6 percent in the next decade, bureaucrats in Washington have been crowing that these new rules would somehow lower energy costs. How can this be? The answer is simple: They chose to only analyze the scenario that best fit their case. They assume that states will implement "demand-side energy efficiency programs", which is bureaucratese for regulating how much energy you use and what kind of appliances you buy. They did not analyze any scenarios where such regulations may not be enacted by states, either because they could be costly to implement or politically unpalatable. Instead they would like us to believe that these new regulations will have no impact on the economy, when we know the opposite is true. More expensive and less reliable sources of fuel will drive up manufacturing costs, add more coal miners to the unemployment lines, and stretch family budgets to their limit, if not beyond.

In essence, the EPA is trying to assure us that “if you like your air-conditioner, you can keep it.” But we have heard promises like that before. The Congress must exercise its prerogative to prevent this kind of bureaucratic overreach that would be crippling for the U.S. economy. And I am proud that we are exercising that prerogative here in this bill.

I am proud that we continue to uphold our commitment to the American people to move our bills through regular order and at a quick pace. This is a good bill, and it deserves the support of each Subcommittee member.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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