



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

FY 2016 Interior, Environment & Related Agencies Appropriations Bill Subcommittee Markup June 10, 2015 Opening Statement As Prepared

Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding.

We have before us today the Fiscal Year 2016 appropriations bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, which is funded at the discretionary level of \$30.170 billion. I would like to congratulate Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum on bringing this bill forward today, and I thank the Subcommittee Members and their staff for their hard work on this important piece of legislation.

The bill we are considering today touches nearly every aspect of our nation's economy. It has a significant impact on the stewardship of our natural resources, our nation's energy security, the health of the environment, and of course, jobs. I am pleased that this Subcommittee has worked hard to ensure that our natural resources and environment are protected, while scrutinizing overly burdensome regulations that have the potential to hamper economic activity.

Among its many important provisions, this bill extends the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program for one year, fully funds wildfire suppression accounts, and takes care to ensure that our responsibilities to Native Americans are met. This bill contains increased funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education and the Indian Health Service, including funding for the construction of two schools. In addition, this legislation includes \$53 million in targeted increases for the National Park Service, as it prepares to celebrate its 100th year in 2016.

Over the last several years, we have seen countless attempts to burden our States, cities and counties with onerous regulations that add tremendous costs to any type of economic development they may pursue. In fact, the Administration has finally acknowledged the damaging effects of its regulatory onslaught in coal-mining communities throughout the country with the Power Plus proposal which accompanied this year's budget request. The subcommittee has re-tooled and refined the President's proposal regarding abandoned mine lands and put forward a thoughtful alternative to help communities struggling under the weight of these regulations reinvigorate their economies, and I am proud of these efforts. But, unlike the President, this committee realizes that these targeted economic development investments must be accompanied by commensurate regulatory relief. One such regulation is the Waters of the United States rule, by which the EPA seeks to expand its jurisdiction by regulating any place that water could conceivably run. Despite projections of severe economic consequences and staggering job losses, EPA continues to move forward with establishing new standards for greenhouse gas emissions at power plants as well. Of course, EPA would have us believe that these regulations will not negatively impact our economy, when evidence suggests that the opposite is true. These regulations will devastate the production of coal, our nation's cheapest and most dependable source of energy, meaning that we will come to rely on more expensive and less reliable sources

of fuel. This will result in higher manufacturing costs, higher unemployment, and higher utility bills for families across the country. Congress must exercise its prerogative to prevent this kind of bureaucratic overreach, and I am proud that we are doing so in this bill.

This bill pushes back on wrongheaded attempts to legislate through regulation, and establishes the right priorities for the management and protection of our natural resources. I am proud that this Committee continues to quickly move our bills through the process in regular order, and this Subcommittee is no exception. This is a good bill, and it deserves the support of each Subcommittee member. Thank you, and I yield back.

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