

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
FY14 Department of Homeland Security Budget Request
April 11, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your comments and for yielding to me. Madam Secretary, thank you for being with us today to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's Fiscal Year 2014 budget request.

In the past three years, the Appropriations Committee has worked across the aisle and across the Capitol, demonstrating the commitment of Members and staff alike to regular order as well as honest and fair negotiations. I am proud to associate myself with similar comments made by Senator Mikulski, my newly minted counterpart in the other body, as well as Ranking Member Nita Lowey, about the importance of having hearings on what the federal agencies are spending, crafting bills that responsibly fund the federal government, and looking for areas in our government where we can be more efficient.

This return to regular order has culminated in a number of bipartisan Appropriations bills that have slowed the pace of government spending in historic fashion, balancing the realities of our dire fiscal situation with the need to protect our homeland and our country's most vulnerable citizens. This is the way it's supposed to work, and the way that is best for our country's economy and the taxpayer.

But, candidly, Madam Secretary, our shared task isn't made any easier with budget submissions like the one you've put before us today. I feel like Yogi Berra with déjà vu all over again:

- Once again, the Department has proposed to decimate Coast Guard and ICE funding that supports the men and women who bravely defend our homeland on the frontlines, in favor of headquarters pet projects and controversial research programs.
- Once again, the budget request uses phony, unauthorized offsets to pay for critical aviation security measures.
- Once again, the Department has failed to submit a number of plans and reports required by law, which are essential to help this Committee do its work – and do its work well.
- And once again, this budget submission would add layers of bureaucracy to the already tangled web of agencies under your purview at DHS headquarters.

Many of these proposals are recycled directly from last year's budget, and nearly all of these misaligned priorities were patently rejected by the Congress in the FY13 bills that passed both Chambers last month. These trends are becoming a sadly predictable tenet of this Administration's budgeting strategy.

Particularly where our Nation's security is involved, we need a *legitimate* budget that ties funding to results and mission requirements – unfortunately, what I see here is a largely political document which mirrors the fear-mongering tactics employed by DHS and others leading up to implementation of sequestration, especially ICE's release of several hundred detainees *prior to* these budget cuts.

Needless to say, this gives me great concern. Madam Secretary, I hope your testimony today will allay my concerns as we work together in protecting our homeland. Thank you.

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