

**The Honorable John Carter
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations**

FY 2015 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security

Witness:

Secretary Jeh Johnson

**4:00 PM | Tuesday | March 11, 2014 | 2359 RHOB
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Hearing is called to order –

Today, we welcome Secretary Johnson for what marks his very first appearance before our Subcommittee. Mr. Secretary, we thank you for being here and look forward to your testimony on the President's budget request for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2015.

Mr. Secretary, budgets are policy documents....documents which reflect the Administration's priorities.

So, when we look at your budget proposal for FY15, what jumps off the page is a blatant disregard for critical security and law enforcement functions and priorities that truly defy logic.

Either this Administration does not see homeland security and law enforcement as important, or it is trying to game Congress and hope we will bailout unjustified and truly harmful cuts to essential frontline operations.

Either way, as Chairman of this Subcommittee, I'm obligated to call you on it and I won't tolerate it... we all know a political, election-year budget proposal when we see one and I'm afraid that's what we have here before us today.

Specifically, your budget proposes....

- ⇒ A 12% cut to CBP's Air and Marine Operations, which includes a cut of more than 30% in flight hours;
- ⇒ A cut of nearly 5% to ICE, which includes an arbitrary \$30 million dollar cut to investigations and a decrease of nearly 3,500 detention beds, or a more than 10% reduction in your detention space; and
- ⇒ A cut of more than 4% to the Coast Guard, including a cut of nearly 30% to critical acquisitions and a cut of more than 17% to fixed wing flight hours.

So, what we have here is a budget proposal that – if ever enacted – would result in more drugs on our streets, more illegal border incursions, more mariners in distress, and more transnational crime including more instances of human smuggling and trafficking as well as child exploitation ... outcomes that are simply unacceptable.

Then, this budget proposes to actually increase the spending for management and headquarters by nearly 3%.

To make matters worse, the budget also proposes about a billion dollars in new fees that are not even authorized. So, your budget assumes enormous offsets that simply do not exist.

The budget then proposes the creation of a new, costly political program that does not adhere to the Ryan-Murray plan enacted into law just months ago and that has no plan or justification.

This so-called “Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative” is little more than a political wish list that has been presented to the Congress and this Committee in an amateurish and wholly inadequate manner.

Finally, your budget simply does not comply with the law as it is missing more than 20 reports and expenditure plans required to be submitted with the budget. Frankly, this failure is offensive – “late” and “incomplete” do not comply with the law nor meet this Subcommittee’s standards for budget submittals.

Mr. Secretary, this Subcommittee deals in matters of reality—meaning we enforce the law as it is written, not how we’d like it to be.... and, we only deal with laws and offsets that are real, not some false fiction of fees.

And, that is why this Subcommittee has adhered to three core principles since it was established more than eleven years ago by Chairman Rogers:

1. Unwavering support for our frontline personnel and essential security operations;
2. Clear alignment of funding to results; and
3. True fiscal discipline – meaning, that we provide every well-justified dollar needed for homeland security, but not a penny more.

Mr. Secretary, I know you are new. I know you inherited this ill-conceived budget. So, we’ll work with you in the coming months.... Lord knows, we can only improve this so-called proposal and I give you my word I will do just that.

Mr. Secretary, I think it is clear that we have a lot to cover today. Before I recognize you for your testimony, let me turn to our distinguished Ranking Member and former Chairman for any remarks he wishes to make.

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