



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee Markup – Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill May 28, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared

Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding. I want to congratulate you and Ranking Member Price, as well as staff on both sides, for bringing forward the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security. As you know, this bill is near and dear to my heart, and I appreciate that you have maintained the spirit of bipartisanship and collaboration that has always been the touchstone of this subcommittee in the work you've completed this year.

Funded at \$39.22 billion, this bill emphasizes fiscal discipline and oversight while addressing a number of cross-cutting flaws in the President's budget request. By placing a priority on operations and enforcement, this bill provides the Department with sufficient support to focus on two of our biggest challenges: counternarcotics and border enforcement. The budget request would have left the Coast Guard at a five-year low for drug interdiction at a time when our country is confronting a precipitous rise in heroin overdoses. I'm pleased that we've restored some of these cuts to Coast Guard's operations, including a 5% increase in aviation and cutter hours to continue our battle against illicit drug trafficking in the Caribbean. The bill also supports our men and women on the frontlines at Customs and Border Protection, restoring significant cuts to Air & Marine Operations by providing \$79 million above the request, and including an additional \$50 million for border security technology.

With this bill, we've also taken strides to address the emerging but critical challenge of unaccompanied alien children. In the last several years, there has been an exponential rise in the number of undocumented alien children from 6,600 in 2011 to an estimated 66,000 for fiscal year 2014 to a projection of more than 127,000 children in FY15 – but, sadly, no leadership from the Administration in addressing this trend in the budget. This subcommittee has included \$76.9 million above the request so that ICE personnel can safely transport these children for their referral to HHS' Office of Refugee Resettlement.

All the while, the bill makes the best use of taxpayer dollars, and holds DHS accountable for these resources with spend plan and reporting requirements, staunch acquisition oversight, and a number of staffing requirements.

I urge the subcommittee to promptly report this bill to the full Committee. Thank you and I yield back.

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