



## **Chairman John Carter**

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*Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
House Committee on Appropriations*

***Subcommittee Markup – FY 2018 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill***

**July 12, 2017**

**Opening Statement As Prepared**

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The subcommittee will come to order—

Today we are marking up the fiscal year 2018 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security. The mark stands in sharp contrast to past recommendations primarily because the new Administration's budget request represents a major shift in policy for how DHS secures the border and enforces immigration laws.

As a consequence, some of the recommendations in this mark will very likely be opposed by our Ranking Member, Mrs. Roybal-Allard, and others on the subcommittee. While I regret not having a unified subcommittee mark, I respect the right of the minority to assert reasonable and honest dissent.

More importantly, I know that Mrs. Roybal-Allard and everyone on this subcommittee share the same objective for DHS – to ensure a homeland that is safe, secure, and resilient against terrorism and other hazards. Therefore, I want to thank the Ranking Member for being willing to collaborate constructively as the mark evolved, knowing that we would diverge in the end.

I also want to acknowledge our very able subcommittee staff, Darek Newby, Matt Smith, Robin Ellerbe, Kris Mallard, Laura Cylke, Chris Romig, Leonardo Finaldi, and Valerie Baldwin, and our personal office staff, Adam Sachs and Grady Bourn. We appreciate their contributions moving this bill through the appropriations process.

This year, the subcommittee had more than 2,160 requests, including 194 from you. Almost all of them were accommodated. For those of you with amendments, however, thank you for waiting until full committee to offer them.

The recommendation for the fiscal year 2018 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill is \$42.5 billion in nondefense, discretionary spending, \$1.9 billion in defense spending, and \$6.8 billion for disaster relief, for a total of \$51.1 billion, which is \$333 million above the President's request and \$1.8 billion above the fiscal year 2017 baseline. I want to thank Chairman Frelinghuysen for the generous increase in the 302(b) allocation over the existing baseline despite a topline for nondefense discretionary funding that is lower than fiscal year 2017. Without this increase, the recommendations in this mark would not have been possible.

The subcommittee mark includes:

For CBP: \$1.6 billion to fully fund the President's request to build three segments of wall and fence in San Diego and in South Texas, which are areas the Border Patrol says are vulnerable to cartels, traffickers, illegal migration, and terrorists; and \$440 million to buy almost all the critical enablers CBP needs to do their jobs safely and effectively, including things like sensors, trucks, better roads, communications equipment, radars, sensors, and aviation assets. As requested, the mark supports increasing Border Patrol by 500 agents.

For ICE: \$7.0 billion for 44,000 detention beds, an increase of 4,676 over fiscal year 2017; \$18 million above the request to expand the Visa Security Program to two additional high-threat, overseas locations; and \$186 million to increase the investigative and support staff by 1,600, as requested.

For FEMA: \$3.0 billion for FEMA grant programs, an increase of \$939.7 million above the request, which includes a \$25 million increase to the Nonprofit Security Grant Program; and \$7.3 billion, as requested, for the Disaster Relief Fund.

For the Secret Service, \$1.9 billion to ensure they are paid for the work they do.

For TSA: Full funding for Transportation Security Officers to support aviation security and keep wait times low.

For Coast Guard: \$19 million is provided for the heavy icebreaker to continue program management activities and design work required to award a production contract in fiscal year 2019; \$500 million for the production of the first Offshore Patrol Cutter and long-lead materials for OPC #2; and \$95 million for a fully missionized C-130J to enhance long-range surveillance capabilities; and

For Cybersecurity and Infrastructure protection, \$950 million is provided to secure government networks and prevent cyber attacks, and \$380 million is for infrastructure protection programs, including the electrical grid and emergency communications systems.

Finally, the E-Verify system – which enables businesses to check whether their employees are eligible to work in the United States – is fully funded at \$131.5 million.

Colleagues, this is a good bill, and I ask you to support it. I am happy to answer any questions about the mark, but before I do, our Ranking Member, Mrs. Roybal-Allard is recognized, and then our full Committee Chairman and Ranking Members for any comments they would like to make.

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