



Chairman John Culberson

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations

FY 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill – Subcommittee Markup

June 29, 2017

Opening Statement As Prepared

Good afternoon. Today I am pleased to present the fiscal year 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill to the Subcommittee for your consideration and approval.

I'd like to begin by thanking Ranking Member Jose Serrano. I appreciate Mr. Serrano's approach to the Committee's work and his input has improved the bill. I know that he believes there should be additional funds in certain areas and I look forward to working closely with him and all Members of the Subcommittee as the bill moves forward.

I'd also like to thank Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey for their help in putting this bill together. I appreciate Chairman Frelinghuysen's guidance and thank him for providing a fair allocation for our Subcommittee. We are also lucky to have Chairman Rogers, former Chairman of this Subcommittee and, of course, the former Full Committee Chairman. We are grateful his expertise is on the Subcommittee.

As you know, this Subcommittee has jurisdiction over a diverse group of agencies which are responsible for combating terrorism, espionage, gangs, and cybercrime; enforcing trade laws; forecasting the weather; managing fisheries; exploring space; and advancing science.

The bill we are considering today provides \$54 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$2.6 billion below fiscal year 2017. The allocation is sufficient to fund priority programs while reducing funding for activities that are less essential to the operations of the Federal government.

One of the main priorities of the bill is funding for law enforcement. The bill provides the FBI with \$8.8 billion, which is \$92 million over the budget request. These critical resources are necessary to counter cybercrime, terrorism, and espionage. The threats against our security are real and evolving. The FBI must have sufficient resources to address them.

The bill also provides increases across the Federal law enforcement agencies to enhance their capabilities to combat immigration and violent crime and go after opioid traffickers. These increases include: funds for 65 new Immigration Judge teams to reduce immigration case backlogs; a \$22 million increase for US Attorneys; an \$88 million increase for the US Marshals; a \$98 million increase for DEA; and a \$35 million increase for ATF.

We have also increased funds for priority State and local law enforcement programs such as: Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs; the Byrne JAG program; and the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program.

The bill provides \$19.9 billion for NASA, which is a \$218 million increase. The bill advances space exploration and ensures our nation remains the world's leader in space exploration and technology, aeronautics research, and discovery in space and science. The bill provides for the development of the Space Launch System that will send astronauts beyond low-Earth orbit in the Orion crew vehicle. It also increases funding to Planetary programs, including the Europa mission.

The bill does not adopt the proposed cut to National Science Foundation funding for Research and Related Activities. Funding basic science research is critical to our nation.

Funding for NOAA prioritizes improving weather forecasting, weather research, ocean exploration and fisheries management.

In order to live within our allocation, we had to reduce funding in some areas. We eliminate programs that are no longer necessary or are not critical to the operations of the Federal government. We also froze or reduced funding for several agencies and programs that can operate with a little less.

The bill also includes numerous oversight provisions to protect hard-earned taxpayer dollars, such as: requiring each agency to submit a spending plan; capping life-cycle costs for poorly performing programs; requiring agencies procuring sensitive IT systems to conduct supply chain risk assessments in consultation with the FBI; and requiring additional performance reporting from troubled agencies such as the Census Bureau and the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Finally, the bill includes Second Amendment protections and language prohibiting the transfer or housing of GTMO prisoners in the United States.

I want to thank all of the Subcommittee Members for their input into the bill and their participation in our hearings this year. We've tried to address your concerns and priorities in this bill whether through funding levels or with report language.

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