

Chairman Ander Crenshaw
Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
Supreme Court Budget Hearing
March 14, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

The hearing will come to order.

Good morning. Welcome Justices Kennedy and Breyer and thank you for being here today. You have both testified before the Committee several times and we appreciate your willingness to meet with us again. We always look forward to our hearing with the Court—it's a rare occasion to have our two branches of government come together.

An independent Judiciary that has the trust and respect of all of our citizens is fundamental to our nation. A court system that is committed to fairly and expeditiously resolving difficult and controversial questions is an inherent part of our democracy. Although the Supreme Court budget is not large in comparison to other Federal programs, your role in this government is significant. Outside of the confirmation process, today's hearing is one of the few instances when the Supreme Court and Legislative Branch interact. It is, in my opinion, an important interaction as we recognize and respect the responsibilities of each Branch.

As you know the Federal government continues to operate in an environment of scarce resources. I want to commend the Supreme Court for its continued efforts at cost containment. While the Court's overall budget request totals \$86.5 million for fiscal year 2014—a \$3 million increase from its current CR level—the Court has implemented more than \$2.2 million in reductions in the areas of financial and human resources management in the last year. Most of the increases in the Court's 2014 budget request will fund restoration activities to the building's North and South façade.

Justice Kennedy and Justice Breyer, I look forward to hearing from you about the resources necessary for the operation of our nation's highest court, as well as any thoughts you may have regarding our nation's courts as a whole. We will work to make sure that the Court has the resources it needs to fulfill your constitutional responsibilities. We appreciate your efforts to reduce the Court's costs during these challenging financial times.

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