

Chairman Ander Crenshaw
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
House Committee on Appropriations
Oversight Hearing on District of Columbia Courts and the Court Services and Offender
Supervision Agency
March 18, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

The hearing will come to order.

Today's hearing is on the District of Columbia Courts and the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency. Similar to how a State government funds State court systems, The National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 have made these agencies the responsibility of the Federal government. The budgets of these agencies are not considered by the Mayor or DC Council, but instead, are proposed and transmitted with the President's budget request. Three-quarters of the Federal funding this subcommittee provides for D.C. is for these important agencies that serve to protect the citizens of the District of Columbia.

Today, I would like to welcome Chief Judge Washington of the Court of Appeals; Chief Judge Satterfield of the Superior Court; and Director Nancy Ware of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency.

Thank you all for being here today and testifying. An independent judiciary that all citizens can trust and respect is essential to our Nation, democracy and to our rule of law. Equally important is each citizens' right to a fair trial in any legal dispute. The D.C. Court system does an incredible job of ensuring this for their citizens. The Moultrie Courthouse sees about 10,000 visitors a day. In addition, CSOSA also has a huge caseload of its own, supervising over 25,000 offenders, annually.

I am interested in hearing from you the impact that sequestration is having on your operations. As I have said before, operating the government under continuing resolutions and sequestrations is not the right way to do it. I think the Congress should be funding priority programs well and reducing or eliminating wasteful ones. I hope, and I know Mr. Serrano agrees with me, that we get back to regular order in FY 2014.

Although crime rates in DC have dropped within the past few years, we are still faced with dangers that all big cities are challenged with. These agencies are absolutely crucial to protecting those who work, live and visit our Nation's capital. We appreciate your hard work and look forward to hearing your testimony.

I would now like to recognize my friend and colleague, Ranking Member Serrano.

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