

**Chairman Ander Crenshaw**  
**Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Office of National Drug Control Policy**  
**March 24, 2014**  
**Opening Statement As Prepared**

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The Subcommittee will come to order.

I would like to welcome our witness, Acting Director Botticelli, to the Subcommittee this afternoon. This is your first time before the Appropriations Committee, and I appreciate you coming to testify and I thank you for your service. The Office of National Drug Control Policy is charged with the extremely difficult task of coordinating multiple Federal agencies' efforts to address many different drug-related issues at home and abroad. In addition, you administer some very effective drug prevention and enforcement grant programs. Today the Committee will examine the Office of National Drug Control Policy's fiscal year 2015 budget request along with your efforts to develop and coordinate our nation's drug policies.

The budget request submitted by the President has some interesting priorities within this Subcommittee's jurisdiction. While the Administration is requesting an increase of over \$1 billion for the IRS and an increase of over \$500 million for GSA, the Administration has recommended a decrease below enacted fiscal year 2014 for the High Intensity and Drug Trafficking Areas program and the Drug Free Communities program. Both of these crucial drug prevention and enforcement programs mobilize communities and increase collaboration among community law enforcement. And specifically, both of these programs have had great results in my community of Jacksonville, Florida.

While I would typically applaud proposed reductions in Federal spending, I question the motive behind these drug prevention and enforcement program reductions. Recently, the Attorney General announced that heroin overdoses are an "urgent and growing public health crisis." States are telling our children that marijuana use is okay by decriminalizing recreational marijuana, and our nation's problems with cocaine, meth, and prescription drugs have not decreased. So I find it hard to believe that the Administration feels that efforts to keep drugs away from our children and out of our communities should be reduced while proposing increases for the bureaucracy at the IRS and construction of new Federal buildings.

As the agency charged with developing our nation's drug policies, you have the difficult assignment of ensuring that the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services and numerous other agencies are all working in a coordinated manner to address our highest priority drug concerns. And I look forward to your testimony today on how the Office of National Drug Control Policy is leading these efforts on this coordinated role.

More specifically, we have heard concerns that the Food and Drug Administration does not always take law enforcement's concerns with prescription drug abuse into account when approving new prescription pain medications. We have also heard concerns that reductions in military

spending could significantly reduce counter-narcotic activities in Latin America increasing the availability of illegal drugs in the United States. And I hope to hear in your testimony today what ONDCP is doing about these major concerns.

Our nation continues to fight a drug problem that takes lives, brings about violence, and harms our communities and families, and I know that you and your staff are working hard to keep our country safe and healthy.

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