

**CHAIRMAN MIKE QUIGLEY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

“JUDICIARY BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 2021”

FEBRUARY 26, 2020

Good afternoon.

I would like to welcome the Honorable John W. Lungstrum (Lung-strum), Chair of the Judicial Conference Committee on the Budget, and James C. Duff, Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Thank you both for joining us today.

Before getting started, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues on the subcommittee, who worked closely with me on a 2020 bill I think we can all be proud of. And I would like to especially thank Tom Graves for what will be more than a decade of service to the House when he departs in January.

I look forward to working with each of you again this year to address the priorities of your constituents and find bipartisan consensus whenever it is possible.

Since this is our first hearing of 2020, I would like to remind everyone that, as with prior FSGG hearings, we will follow the five-minute rule for opening remarks, questions, and comments.

Members will be recognized in order of seniority based on who is seated at the beginning of the hearing, going back and forth between the parties.

Late-comers will be recognized in the order of their arrival, going back and forth between the parties.

I'll keep my opening statement brief, so we can get right into questions.

Last year Justices Alito and Kagan met with us to discuss the Supreme Court's 2020 budget request. I was interested in their thoughts on creating a more transparent and accountable Third Branch.

As I have said before, we in Congress, whether we like it or not, are generally on camera in our hearings. This keeps us accountable for what we say and reflects a democratic process in action for the people we serve.

It should be no different in our courts. I'm interested in your thoughts on making court hearings more accessible to the public.

Turning to the budget, the Judiciary's fiscal year 2021 request of \$7.8 billion is a \$329 million increase over the 2020 enacted level.

I know the Judiciary continues to implement branch-wide cost containment initiatives, and we thank you for your judicious use of U.S. tax dollars.

However, even with these measures, there are some notable budget increases in the 2021 request.

For example, the Federal Defender Services Program requests a 6.6 percent increase, funding 237 more federal defender positions to uphold our Sixth Amendment's right to counsel.

Another significant increase is 94 additional staff in the Probation and Pretrial Services Offices to assist with post-release supervision.

I look forward to discussing the justification for these budget increases as well as how Congress can help the Judiciary meet its growing caseloads.

I hope this afternoon we can also explore other Judicial Conference priorities which include the request to extend temporary judgeships, increased funding for Courthouse construction and renovation projects, and the Judiciary's Capital Security Program.

This subcommittee recognizes that an effective Judicial branch is critical to upholding our democracy, and my colleagues and I will work together to provide assistance where possible.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention my concerns regarding the Judiciary's efforts to ensure a safe, working environment for all staff. The Judiciary's new Office of Judicial Integrity arose from criticism that workplace misconduct persists and that employee complaints were not properly handled.

We want to know more about the impact this office has had and what other actions the Judiciary is taking to improve the situation and what Congress can do to help.

Thank you both again for joining us this afternoon, and I look forward to discussing these issues in more detail.

Before I turn to Judge Lungstrum and Director Duff, I would like to recognize Mr. Graves for his opening remarks.

(Mr. Graves statement)

I would now like to recognize Ms. Lowey, Chairwoman of the Full Appropriations Committee, for any opening statements she would like to make.

(Ms. Lowey statement)

I would now like to recognize Ms. Granger, the ranking member of the Full Appropriations Committee, for her testimony.

(Ms. Granger statement)

Thank you Ms. Granger. I would now like to recognize Judge Lungstrum for his testimony.

(Judge Lungstrum statement)

Thank you Judge Lungstrum. I would now like to recognize Director Duff for his testimony.

(Judge Duff statement)