

March 5, 2013

**Budget Request for the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress to the Committee on House Administration  
Joint Statement of Chairman Darrell Issa and Ranking Member Elijah Cummings**

Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Brady: we would like to thank you for allowing us to testify today on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee's budget for the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. We are submitting joint testimony to you today because of the importance of adequately funding the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Our Committee's primary function is to expose and address waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement in our federal government. Our Committee is a unique body with a specific mandate to seek out and identify areas where our government is mismanaging or wasting the American people's tax dollars. We do not oversee just one federal agency or even a handful – we oversee the entire federal government and workforce.

As has been exhaustively documented, our federal government wastes billions of dollars each year, either through mismanagement or through outright stupidity. One of the most respected IG's, Earl Devaney, who the President appointed to oversee stimulus spending, testified before our Committee that based on a report published by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), US organizations including government lose 7 percent of revenues to waste, fraud and mismanagement.

Over the past two years, the Oversight Committee, working with whistleblowers, the GAO, and the Inspectors General community have identified billions in federal tax dollars that can be better utilized or used to reduce the federal debt.

Last Year, the Committee became aware of gross overpayments being made through Medicaid and through aggressive oversight forced a

resolution to the overpayments. This resolution is estimated to save federal taxpayers billions of dollars.

When we became aware that the General Services Administration was spending lavish amounts of taxpayer funds on travel to conferences held in Las Vegas and other locations, our Committee's oversight made a real and immediate difference. Following our actions, the White House issued an executive order requiring agencies to reduce spending on travel and conferences to 20 percent below FY 2010 levels. Although the President's actions are welcomed, the problem of excessive conference spending has not been resolved. Our Committee remains committed to uncovering conference spending waste that is still pervasive throughout the federal government.

The bottom line is we need more oversight, not less. In recent years, this Committee has absorbed budget cut after budget cut – yet again, we are being asked to try and do more with less, which only compounds the challenges of conducting our oversight function.

At a time when the national debate is about saving money and spending wisely, can anyone really make a credible case for cutting oversight resources? After all, a key distinction is that we are not a spending Committee, we are a savings Committee.

The Oversight Committee is in a unique position in that for every dollar you invest in us, we return it one hundred--or perhaps one thousand--times over in potential savings.

Because of the enormity of our mission, it is imperative that we have the resources needed to do our job to keep pace with the growth in government spending.

Over the past Congress, we have had to reduce our spending – primarily through staff attrition. The fewer staff we have means fewer oversight and investigative activities we can pursue. While some people

may be okay with a scaled down Oversight and Government Reform Committee – it's the American people who pay the price.

The House's investment in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will lead to cost-savings and real reform for the American taxpayer.

We thank you for your time, and we look forward to taking your questions.