

Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6315

Statement of Ranking Member Nydia M. Velázquez
Committee on House Administration Full Committee Hearing:
“Committee Funding for the 114th Congress”
February 4, 2015

Thank you, Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Brady. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the budget submission for the Small Business Committee in the 114th Congress.

As I come before you this afternoon, let me echo what I've said time and again in this forum --- small businesses are the backbone of the American economy --- and while that economy continues to recover, our work is still cut out for us.

The Committee on Small Business not only has jurisdiction over the Small Business Administration, but we are often relied upon by our nation's small businesses to look out for their best interest.

From health care to taxes, energy to capital access, contracting to technology, agriculture to trade – these are just a few of the issues that Chairman Chabot and I, along with our members, have to delve into.

I am committed to working with Chairman Chabot on these issues and more. However, the committee needs to be funded at such a level where it allows us to do our work with sufficient resources and without having to sacrifice our staff.

Historically, this committee has been underfunded, with the effects of sequestration compounding the situation. Nevertheless, the Minority continues to keep operational expenses at a minimum all the while being understaffed. The slots are there but the funds simply are not. Our 2014 allocation was spent down to 1%. A cut to our funding would be detrimental.

It goes without saying that Chairman Chabot and I, along with our committee members plan to continue working together in a bipartisan manner to fulfill our jurisdictional responsibilities. We know the task at hand that you have in reviewing the numbers but we ask that you do so with the utmost consideration.

The very modest, 3.5% increase Chairman Chabot is requesting would go a long way in helping the committee upgrade computer equipment, not to mention increase our media presence by re-designing our outdated website. Chairman Miller we are not asking for much, with the importance of technology on a global level, upgrading our IT infrastructure is a necessity.

Thank you Madam Chairman. I appreciate your time and would be happy to answer any questions that you or the committee may have.