

**Statement of the Honorable John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member,  
Committee on the Judiciary, for the Hearing on the Committee's  
2017 Budget Request before the Committee on House  
Administration**

**Thursday, February 16, 2017, at 12:15 p.m.**

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Chairman Harper, Ranking Member Brady, and Members of the Committee, it is my pleasure to appear before you today with Chairman Goodlatte to present our 2017 budget request for the House Judiciary Committee.

I join with my colleague Chairman Goodlatte in urging your Committee to consider this budget request favorably for several reasons. To begin with, this request reflects the fact that the Judiciary Committee is responsible for some of the most critical issues facing our Nation and is among the most active committees in the House.

Our Committee plays a major role in dealing with extremely important legislative and oversight issues that have nationwide significance. The Committee's responsibilities include oversight of the Justice Department and the Nation's criminal code as well as the federal court system. It also examines complex issues presented by proposed billion dollar mergers, intellectual property disputes, and the federal regulatory process, which affects all facets of our society.

Such extensive responsibilities obviously require the Committee to expend extensive time and resources. For example, during the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1 in 5 of the legislative measures introduced were referred to

the Judiciary Committee. Our Committee reported 69 substantive bills and resolutions. And, the Committee had a jurisdictional interest in 22 of the bills signed into law during the last Congress. The Judiciary Committee held over 60 subcommittee hearings and 25 full Committee hearings as well as 40 full committee markups.

It is also very likely that the Committee's workload for the current Congress will increase. Chairman Goodlatte has proposed an ambitious hearing and legislative schedule during which the Committee will continue to work on immigration policy, criminal law issues, and patent and copyright concerns, among many others. In addition, several of these hearings will necessitate travel expenditures, particularly with respect to policing and intellectual property reform.

Accordingly, I urge you to prioritize the Committee's budget request and to consider our request in full. Absent an increase in funding, the Committee will be unable to attract and retain highly qualified staff who are crucial to support the work of the Committee. As detailed in the budget submission, the 12% increase from our 2016 Committee allocation will ensure that the Democratic staff - who are working long hours and are stretched thin - can keep up with the Committee's ambitious agenda.

I am pleased that Chairman Goodlatte has committed to working cooperatively with me in an effort to ensure that the Committee meets a

sufficient level of funding. Given the severe negative ramifications that could result from an underfunded Committee staff, I believe it is imperative that adequate Committee staff resources be available for our issues. I urge the Committee on House Administration to increase the Judiciary Committee's budget.

Chairman Goodlatte and I have submitted a budget before you today that reflects our shared commitment to retaining and building a highly qualified staff to support the ambitious and significant work of the Committee.

Members of the Committee, I appreciate your attention to our request, and am happy to respond to any questions you might have.