

Statement of Ranking Member Nydia M. Velázquez
Committee on House Administration Full Committee Hearing:
“Committee Funding for the 115th Congress”
February 15, 2017

Chairman Harper and Ranking Member Brady, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 115th Congress budget submission for the Committee on Small Business.

Small businesses create two-thirds of new jobs in the U.S. economy and are critical drivers of innovation. For these reasons, I often say there is no Republican or Democratic issue when it comes to small business; and fortunately, Chairman Chabot leads the committee with the same mindset – working in the best interest of America’s small businesses.

While the chairman and I may not agree 100% on all matters, one thing is certain, we are both committed to working together. This means a funding level that provides sufficient resources for committee members to focus on legislation, hearings, and roundtables covering the numerous issues facing small business.

Chairman Chabot generously allows the Minority full control of 1/3 of the funding to cover salaries and operating expenses. Recruiting and retaining staff is a challenge many committee offices face, and again, funding is vital in order to attract experienced, specialized personnel. Since our committee covers a wide range of policy issues, we employ experts in procurement, tax, financial services, and regulation, to name a few. This requires the resources to attract and retain qualified personnel.

At the end of last year, the Minority was left with approximately 1.4% of our allocation. Unfortunately, this did not allow us to upgrade the computer equipment but we are hopeful we’ll have enough funding to purchase new computers this year.

Chairman Harper, if a modest 4% increase is not foreseeable, we respectfully ask you consider flat-funding the committee so that we can move forward with all the work that lies ahead of us these next two years.

The members of the Committee on Small Business are committed to working together in a bipartisan manner, which is something Chairman Chabot and I always strive for. We ask for full and fair consideration when determining our funding for the 115th Congress.

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