

## **Committee on House Administration: Committee Funding for the 118th Congress**

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### **Chairman James Comer Opening Statement**

Thank you, Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle, for holding this committee funding hearing today.

Ranking Member Raskin and I are pleased to submit the House Oversight and Accountability Committee's budget request for the 118th Congress.

Our budget request seeks \$29.9 million. If accepted, this is a modest increase of 2.5 percent, not adjusting for inflation. This is also a combined budget request—it will operate both the Committee and the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic. Ranking Member Raskin and the minority will receive 33 % of the budget and staff positions.

Our Committee's mission is to protect taxpayer dollars from fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, and works to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the federal government. Therefore, our budget request is an investment in oversight. It is an investment in skilled staff and a commitment to travel to conduct oversight.

To conduct fulsome oversight and meaningful investigations, the Committee needs skilled and experienced staff. The Committee has recruited and continues to recruit staff with oversight expertise and diverse skillsets. Our proposed budget will allow the Committee to not only recruit, but retain, legal and investigative staff to do our important oversight work. Our budget request anticipates 118 staff positions for the Committee, both majority and minority, with an additional 15 staff positions for the Select Subcommittee for a total of 133 staff positions.

The Committee—and the nation—has returned to in-person work. Therefore, as part of our oversight mission, we will resume conducting a significant amount of oversight outside the Capital Beltway. The Committee plans to hold field hearings, perform site visits, and conduct investigative work in our states. Our nation is a big, diverse nation. To understand Americans' needs, priorities, and concerns, we must hear directly from them. By resuming previous levels of oversight travel, we will be able to better conduct robust oversight on behalf of the American people.

Lastly, the Committee's budget includes the Select Subcommittee's budget. The Select Subcommittee will be conducting essential oversight to understand the origins of the COVID-19 virus and lessons learned from our federal government's response to the pandemic. To conduct this oversight, the Select Subcommittee will need staff with specialized scientific and medical expertise.

In closing, Ranking Member Raskin and I appreciate your consideration for our budget request. We also appreciate your commitment to our Committee's oversight mission. We are looking forward to fulfilling this important mission during the 118th Congress. Thank you.