

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Fiscal Year 2014 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill
Full Committee Mark Up
May 22, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

The meeting will come to order.

Welcome, everyone. It might feel like you just left this room, so I thank you all for coming back and being on time today.

We meet now to consider the Fiscal Year 2014 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill. This bill is the second step toward getting all 12 of our Appropriations bills through this committee, which I intend to do in a timely fashion and under regular order. We made great progress yesterday, and I look forward to continuing our hard work today.

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I want to thank Chairman Carter and Ranking Member Price for their efforts crafting this legislation. After serving as this Subcommittee's Chairman for several years, I know well the trials that the Chairman, Ranking Member, and Subcommittee faced as they drafted this bill, and I think they did an excellent job prioritizing critical security spending and weeding out excess.

This bill represents tough decisions to prioritize spending that saves American lives – supporting adequate frontline protection, terrorism prevention and response, ample disaster recovery assistance, and a strong and secure border.

First, I'd like to reiterate my condolences to those in the region reeling from the damage wrought by recent tornadoes, especially our Appropriations colleague Tom Cole, and the people he represents.

It should be noted that as of yesterday the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund had \$11.6 billion on hand. In addition, the bill before us contains \$6.2 billion for the FEMA DRF for fiscal year 2014. While we do not know what the cost of this tragedy will ultimately be, as a fuller picture of the damage becomes clear, we stand ready to reassess outstanding needs and to provide a helping hand to those recovering communities.

Terrible natural disasters like these, as well as manmade disasters like the attack on the Boston Marathon, serve as reminders that we must work to protect and preserve our way of life.

Readiness is key. Within this bill, we strengthened frontline security operations, including intelligence and threat-targeting activities, to help protect against attacks like the one on Boston.

Grants for the brave first responders who put themselves in harm's way to save lives have been increased above the President's request. We're securing our borders with increases for ICE that

preserve 34,000 detention beds – the highest capacity in history And we have increased Bombing Prevention programs to reduce the threat of explosive attacks down the line.

But, as I've said before, these are grim budget times. We don't have carte blanche for even our most important security programs. So this bill trims excess spending to help save precious taxpayer dollars wherever possible, and makes cautious reforms that will streamline spending and encourage greater efficiency.

Every single one of us in this room can agree that it is our duty as Members of Congress to do all we can to keep this country great, and that begins with protecting our homeland. I urge my colleagues to support this bill today.

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