



Chairman John Carter

*Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations*

Full Committee Markup FY 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill Opening Statement As Prepared

I thank the distinguished Chairman.

It is my honor to present to the Committee the fiscal year 2015 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

Similar to our Subcommittee's work over the past few years, this bipartisan bill is about our Nation's security and fiscal priorities...and getting them both RIGHT.

Mr. Chairman, ordinarily, my opening remarks explain how we were once again given an inadequate and poorly justified budget request from the Administration and how our bill and report rectify the flaws within the President's FY15 budget proposal.

That is certainly the case again this year and Ranking Member Price and I worked together to overcome such flaws and produce the solid product in front of all of you today.

But, what is different this year is that we received an even more shameful excuse for budgeting after our Subcommittee-unanimously reported out our bill...

Not an official budget amendment, but rather a poorly drafted OMB letter sent to us on the Friday night two days after our Subcommittee markup that pleads with the Committee to include, "...appropriate flexibilities" to fund the costs associated with the spiraling influx of unaccompanied alien children transiting our Southwest border...and this letter included no underlying facts, no analytical justification, and no way to fund or offset these growing costs.

Now, this budgetary gimmick from OMB would be sad if it wasn't so tragic – what we have here is an Administration that has failed to adequately address this humanitarian disaster and law enforcement realities along the Southwest border.

Tens of thousands of children being smuggled by profiting criminal organizations, descending upon Texas' Rio Grande Valley, their families exploiting our immigration system, and the entire situation stressing our law enforcement agencies beyond their breaking points.

So, this bill before you today – coupled with our forthcoming, bipartisan Manager's amendment – seeks to fully address, as well as offset, all of the known and projected costs associated with the necessary legal processing, transport, and immediate care of these children.

Furthermore, the Manager's amendment, which we wrote in full collaboration with our minority, also includes necessary oversight to ensure our Committee obtains a full accounting of all such costs in the future.

Ranking Member Price and I are committed to trying to appropriately address the UAC issue and I appreciate working collaborative on what we think is a smart, tough, and reasonable solution that had to be forged in less than a week.

And, let me clear about this – our bipartisan solution is about the management of the influx of these children. Stopping the flow – and enforcement of the law as means to do so – is a separate issue that we perhaps disagree on.

From where I sit, enforcement is a necessary, but sadly lacking component of the solution; and, with the sizeable increases to enforcement we provided in FY14 and that are recommended within this FY15 bill, the Administration has no excuse but to enforce the law, deter this illegal migration, and stop the money flowing to the cartels and smuggling organizations.

As for the rest of this \$39.2 billion dollar bill, let me provide a few noteworthy details about the bipartisan product in front of all of you—

- ⇒ A nearly half a billion dollar increase to ICE to sustain and improve all aspects of enforcement;
- ⇒ Substantial increases to DHS's counternarcotics, interdiction, and border security capabilities;
- ⇒ Full funding for E-Verify;
- ⇒ Full funding for the Department's cybersecurity programs;
- ⇒ Restoration and sustainment of Secret Service investigations;
- ⇒ Restoration and sustainment of FEMA's First Responder grants;
- ⇒ Full funding for all projected disaster relief requirements; and
- ⇒ Funding to support the completion of NBAF.

But, the bill also invokes real fiscal discipline and efficiency, including—

- ⇒ Substantial cuts to headquarters and sizable reductions to ineffectual offices and programs;
- ⇒ Denial of all unauthorized proposals to increase fees on the traveling public; and
- ⇒ Substantial oversight requirements including withholdings and statutory reporting requirements. And, these requirements deal with critical issues including: ICE detainers, acquisitions, professional misconduct, and the purchase, inventory, and usage of ammunition and weapons.

I must note that, once again, DHS failed to comply with statutory requirements enacted into law in FY14—those failures are assertively addressed in the bill.

We are serious about compelling the Department to both enforce the law and comply with the law. And, we will not tolerate further failures in this regard—a point I think we make clear through the zeroing out of the Office of Legislative Affairs and the inclusion of new statutory oversight.

In closing, let me first sincerely thank Ranking Member Price. He has been a true partner on this bill. I sincerely thank him and his dedicated professional staff for their notable contributions.

In addition, let me thank the thoughtful Members of this Committee—your input was critical to our oversight over the past few months as well as the production of this bill.

I know that my staff and I made every effort to accommodate virtually every Member submission we received and that has only made the product in front of you stronger.

Finally, I must thank the distinguished Chairman and Ranking Member of the full Committee, Chairman Rogers and Ms. Lowey—your input and support for this bill are genuinely appreciated.

I sincerely believe this bill reflects our best effort to address our Nation's most urgent needs—security and fiscal restraint. I urge my colleagues to support this measure and look forward to working with you as we move this bill through the legislative process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

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