



Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart

*Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill
Full Committee Markup
July 17, 2017
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Today I am pleased to present the fiscal year 2018 THUD bill to the Committee for your consideration, with the goal of a favorable motion to the House.

The bill we are considering today provides \$56.5 billion in discretionary budget authority. We are \$1.1 billion below the enacted level, but \$8.6 billion above the budget request. We have targeted funding in this bill to essential investments in safety, infrastructure, and housing assistance for our most vulnerable populations. This includes the elderly, the disabled, and our veterans.

This bill includes \$17.8 billion in discretionary appropriations, and \$76.7 billion in total resources for the Department of Transportation.

The Federal Aviation Administration is funded at \$16.6 billion, an increase of \$435 million above the budget request. We provide this increase to keep advancing NextGen programs with over \$1 billion, and to advance the safe operation of our Air Traffic Control system. We made sure we provided funding to support the men and women who work every day to ensure we maintain U.S. leadership as the safest, most complex air traffic system in the world. This has been a top priority for this subcommittee for a number of years, and clearly one for me as well.

Through the federal-aid highways program, the bill delivers \$45 billion in road and bridge funding from the Highway Trust Fund, which is almost \$1 billion above the fiscal year 2017 level. This funding will provide much needed growth and improvements within America's highway system.

The bill provides \$2.2 billion to the Federal Railroad Administration to continue our commitment to rail safety and to make critical infrastructure investments.

The bill also addresses the repair backlog on the Northeast Corridor with a \$500 million investment in the Federal-State Partnership to the State of Good Repair Grants.

We didn't agree with the Administration's proposal to shut down the Transit Capital Investment Grant program, and instead we provide funding to keep projects moving through the pipeline.

For housing programs, we worked to ensure that we continue assistance to our most vulnerable populations. The bill includes \$38.3 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The bill includes significant increases to keep pace with inflation – almost \$1 billion above last year for direct rental assistance to maintain housing for those who are currently served.

The bill places a priority on Homeless Assistance programs, and Housing for Opportunities for Persons with AIDS – funding these programs at the enacted level and significantly above the budget request.

The bill restores a number of community development programs that were proposed for elimination in the budget request – CDBG, HOME, and Capacity Building. We listened to our Members from both sides of the aisle, who made sure we knew this was a priority. These programs support decision making where it should happen – at the local level.

Finally, I'd like to thank the talented and hardworking staff who have helped put this bill together. The subcommittee staff is led by our clerk and staff director, Doug Disrud, and the rest of the subcommittee staff Cheryle Tucker, Carl Barrick, Jenny Hollrah, Matt Anderson and Amber McCray, and Cesar Gonzalez and Miguel Mendoza on my personal staff. I'd also like to thank Joe Carlile and Angela Ohm with the Minority, and Sean Maxwell in Mr. Price' personal office.

We have made some tough choices, but place a priority on safety, infrastructure, and assistance to the most vulnerable among us.

With that, I hope the committee will report this bill favorably to the House and I yield back.

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