



Chairman Ken Calvert

*Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
Full Committee Markup
July 18, 2017
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to begin by thanking Chairman Frelinghuysen for his support and leadership.

And, I want to thank my good friend and ranking member, Ms. McCollum, for her partnership and work on this bill. I also want to thank our Subcommittee Members for their participation in our process, their leadership on specific issues, and for the collegiality that continues to be a hallmark of our Subcommittee's work.

The fiscal year 2018 Interior and Environment bill is funded at \$31.456 billion which is \$824 million below the FY17 enacted level and \$4.3 billion above the budget request. We have made a sincere effort to prioritize critical needs within our allocation and address Member concerns after reviewing nearly 5,200 Member requests.

The Committee has again provided robust wildland fire funding in its fiscal year 2018 bill. Fire suppression accounts are fully funded at the ten-year average level. The Committee has also provided a \$5 million increase over fiscal year 2017 for hazardous fuels reduction.

This bill also makes critical investments in Indian Country—a top priority of this subcommittee. Overall, funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Education is \$381 million above the budget request, while funding for the Indian Health Service is \$398 million above the budget request.

The bill fully funds contract support costs and tribal grant school support costs; provides funding to staff newly constructed health facilities; improves public safety; invests an additional \$15 million in fiscal year 2018 to address critical needs of schools throughout the BIE system; and invests an additional \$130 million to correct funding disparities across the Indian Health system.

This bill provides \$465 million in fiscal year 2018 for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

Overall, funding for EPA is reduced by \$528 million, or 6.5 percent, from fiscal year 2017. Several of our Members will be pleased to know that the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is maintained at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level of \$300 million.

The bill continues to invest in water infrastructure and cleaning up contaminated land. These programs help create jobs and spur economic development in communities all across the nation. The bill provides \$5 billion worth of investment in water infrastructure through funding in the WIFIA program and the Clean Water and Drinking Water revolving loan funds.

The bill also supports the Administration's priority to begin reshaping the workforce at the EPA. And the bill accelerates the cleanup of contaminated Superfund and Brownfields sites. Specifically, the bill provides a \$47 million increase for on-the-ground Superfund remedial work, and increases funding for Brownfields by \$10 million over the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

The bill also provides \$2.9 billion for the National Park Service. The bill increases the construction account by \$10 million and maintains increases provided in the fiscal year 2017 enacted bill to address longstanding park operations and deferred maintenance needs.

We have also attempted to address a number of concerns within the Fish and Wildlife Service accounts. The bill restores core programs and popular grant programs to fiscal year 2017 enacted levels. It also restores funds to combat international wildlife trafficking; protects fish hatcheries from cuts and closures; continues funding to fight invasive mussels and Asian carp; and reduces the backlog of species that are recovered but not yet de-listed.

The bill also provides \$275 million for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) programs that enjoy bipartisan support.

This markup is another step in a long process. I look forward to coming together—as we do each year—to find common ground as this process continues.

In closing, I want to thank the staff on both sides of the aisle who have worked on the legislation before us today.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

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