



Chairman Ken Calvert

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

**FY19 Subcommittee Markup
Opening Statement (as prepared)
May 15, 2018**

The Committee will come to order.

Good afternoon and welcome to the Subcommittee markup of the fiscal year 2019 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies bill. I want to thank our colleagues—especially Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey—for joining us today.

Before we get into the details of the bill, I want to take a moment to thank my good friend and our ranking member, Ms. McCollum, for her partnership and work on this bill. I also want to thank each of our Subcommittee Members for their active participation in our hearing process this year.

The fiscal year 2019 Interior and Environment bill is funded at \$35.252 billion which is equal to the FY18 enacted level and \$7 billion above the budget request. We have made a sincere effort to prioritize critical needs within our subcommittee allocation and in reviewing over 5,200 Member requests.

The bill provides robust wildland fire funding totaling \$3.9 billion. It fully funds the 10-year average for wildland fire suppression costs and provides an additional \$500 million in suppression funds for the Forest Service. The Committee has also provided a \$30 million increase over fiscal year 2018 for hazardous fuels accounts.

This bill also makes critical investments in Indian Country—a top priority of this Committee. Overall, funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Education is \$689 million above the budget request, while funding for the Indian Health Service is \$484 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; significantly increases economic development; invests an additional \$16 million in fiscal year 2019 to address critical needs of schools throughout the BIE system; and invests an additional \$82 million to correct funding disparities across the Indian Health system.

This bill provides \$500 million in fiscal year 2019 for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, a top priority for many Members on both sides of the aisle.

Overall, funding for EPA is reduced by \$100 million from fiscal year 2018 with reductions aimed at research and regulatory programs. Several of our Members will be

pleased to know that the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is maintained at the fiscal year 2018 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 funds to leverage over \$10 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 provides \$3.2 billion for the National Park Service. It maintains—and builds upon—critical investments made in the fiscal year 2018 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 popular grant programs to fiscal year 2018 enacted levels and provides a \$2 million increase for wetlands conservation. 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. We've also increased funds for the Recovery Challenge program, which we started in 2018 to challenge non-Federal partners to take a more active role in recovering endangered species.

The bill also provides \$360 million for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) programs that enjoy bipartisan support.

In closing, I'd like to make one additional observation: As a result of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, the Committee has been able to make significant investments toward critical deferred maintenance, construction, and infrastructure needs within the Department of the Interior, Forest Service, Indian Health Service, Smithsonian, as well as critical air and water infrastructure within the EPA. Through the bill before us today—and the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018—the Committee has invested nearly \$3.8 billion over a two-year period addressing longstanding deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs.

This markup is the beginning of a long process, and I look forward to continuing to work with Ms. McCollum and the Members of the Subcommittee.

Before yielding, I need to remind Members that our Committee requires that copies of the bill and report remain in the room at the conclusion of today's markup.

With that, I'm now happy to yield to Ms. McCollum for any opening remarks she would like to make.

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