



# **Chairman Hal Rogers**

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## **House Committee on Appropriations**

### **Subcommittee Markup – Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill May 7, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared**

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Today we consider the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations bill for the Departments of Transportation and Housing & Urban Development. I would like to begin by thanking Chairman Latham, Ranking Member Pastor, as well as staff on both sides, for the important work they've done to bring this job-creating legislation before the subcommittee today. I also want to make a special mention that this will be the last subcommittee markup on this bill for both the Chairman and Ranking Member on this subcommittee. I am grateful to you both for all you have done for this Committee over the years.

As we have seen from the stagnation in our economy in recent years, the overspending, overtaxing, and over-regulating that this Administration continues to advocate is a drag on job creation. Millions of people in this country have simply pulled out of the labor market altogether. The bill before us today is yet another example of this Congress' – specifically this Committee's – commitment to restoring restraint and thoughtfulness to the budgeting process, while targeting investments to our nation's critical transportation infrastructure and creating an environment for job growth.

The legislation before us contains \$52.029 billion in discretionary funding, and will help ensure that our highways keep moving, our airways remain safe, and our nation's most vulnerable citizens have access to affordable housing options.

Unquestionably the development, repair, and expansion of our nation's surface transportation infrastructure is critical to our economic competitiveness and there is near universal recognition that we're woefully behind. I'm hopeful that our colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee can devise a way to fix the problems facing the Highway Trust Fund before that account runs into the red this summer. Allowing those funds to run dry will only add to the uncertainty in our economy.

This bill before us also rejects the Administration's attempt to move highway programs onto the mandatory side of the ledger. This is a common request from this Administration. But taken as a whole, mandatory spending continues to rise at an unsustainable rate. It is unconscionable that the Administration would continue to try to grow the mandatory budget, considering the fact that such spending ties the hands of Congress and the People, and puts even the most basic, critical programs at risk. I am glad to see that this bill upholds Congress's constitutionally endowed power of the purse.

I am proud that we continue to uphold our commitment to the American people to move our bills through regular order and at a quick pace. This is a good bill, and it deserves the support of each subcommittee member. Thank you, and I yield back.

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