



Chairman Kevin Yoder

*Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
House Committee on Appropriations*

**Opening Statement (as prepared)
FY2019 Budget Request - Office of Compliance
April 18, 2018**

This afternoon we will hearing testimony from the Susan Grundmann, the Executive Director of the Congressional Office of Compliance. Established by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, the Office of Compliance is tasked with dispute resolution, safety and health compliance, labor-management relations, and educational offerings across the Legislative Branch. Over the past year the office has received much attention as the House has debated how best to ensure employing authorities including Members of Congress are held accountable for employee rights that are violated under their watch, as well as, making sure employees know and understand their rights and have access to a dispute resolution process that is fair, easy to navigate, and is not layered in burdensome bureaucracy.

The House has taken action in three ways to address workplace harassment; we passed House Resolution 630 which makes in-person workplace rights training required for all Members and employees; we passed House Resolution 724 which established an Office of Employee Advocacy with the mission of providing legal assistance to House employees regarding Congressional Accountability Act procedures; and finally the House passed comprehensive Congressional Accountability Act reform that continues to be debated in the Senate.

The implementation of the two passed House Resolutions has been the responsibility of the House's Chief Administrative Officer because they are House-specific and not Legislative Branch-wide. However, it has required close coordination with the Office of Compliance and will certainly have an impact on their operations moving forward.

With all of the attention the Office of Compliance has received over the last year, their profile has certainly been raised. They have seen triple-digit percentage increase in requests for training, both in-person and online, in addition to increased

service requests across the board. Also worth mentioning is, as a result of the fiscal year 2018 Omnibus the Office of Compliance's jurisdiction has been expanded to include claims submitted by employees of the Library of Congress. This expanded jurisdiction I believe is a good thing but will likely result in an increase to the Office of Compliance's annual caseload.

With all of that said, the revised budget request for fiscal year 2019 operations is \$5,410,089, which represents a 9% increase from enacted levels.

###