

## Opening Statement

February 7<sup>th</sup> hearings

Office of Congressional Workplace Rights

The Open World Leadership Center

I'm pleased to welcome everyone to our first Legislative Branch hearing for the fiscal year 2020 budget. We have lots of new faces – four new subcommittee members as well as new majority professional staff. We even have a new name for one of the agencies appearing today. A special welcome to our new Ranking Member, Ms. Herrera Beutler. She and I share the rookie status of being first-time Chair and Ranking Member for a subcommittee.

Let me quickly introduce our subcommittee staff to the Members. On our side, we have David Reich as our clerk, Sue Quantius, and Faye Cobb. Jenny Panone continues on the subcommittee as minority clerk.

Though small in size, our subcommittee has important responsibilities in trying to provide Congress with the resources it needs to properly and independently perform its legislative functions, and to make its work accessible to the people we represent. We also should remember that several of our agencies, such as the Library of Congress and the GPO,

provide important services to the nation as a whole as well as to the Legislative Branch. Our bill even supports some unusual functions for a legislature – the U.S. Copyright Office and library services for the blind.

This morning our first hearing will be with the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (formerly called the Office of Compliance). After that is concluded, we will have our second hearing with The Open World Leadership Center.

One bit of housekeeping: I intend to follow what's pretty standard procedure in appropriations subcommittees for questioning witnesses. For those Members present at the beginning of the hearing, I will recognize Members for questions in order of seniority, alternating between majority and minority. For those Members who arrive after the hearing has started, I will recognize them in order of arrival, alternating between majority and minority. This order will continue through all rounds of questioning. I will try hard to observe the five-minute rule for questions and answers.

I know there are always conflicting Appropriations hearings and I understand that Members may have to come and go. But we're lucky that the Legislative Branch budgets come to us unencumbered by OMB review, and we already have requests in hand for most of our agencies. We may be

able to nearly finish our FY20 budget hearings before the President submits his budget for the executive branch.

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So let's get started with our first hearing of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.

We are pleased to welcome today Ms. Susan Grundmann, the Executive Director of the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights.

Ms. Grundmann, it's fitting that we begin with the OCWR because it is integral to the high priority Congress has placed on the effective protection of workplace rights in its passage of the congressional accountability reform act last December. We know that it has been quite an active period for you since you testified here last year. At that time, Congress was considering the reform legislation, and last year's hearing moved away from budget questions and into opinions about how the reform legislation should be changed. Now that the legislation is enacted, with an effective date in June, 2019, I hope we can get back to a more budget-oriented session, which, of course, will include discussion of the resources your Office needs to implement the new law.

Before we start, I'll turn to our ranking Member, Ms. Herrera Beutler, for any opening comments she may wish to make.

I would now like to yield to the Chairwoman of the full committee, Mrs. Lowey, if she has any opening comments she would like to make. Mrs. Lowey, we're pleased that you can join us for our first hearing of the year, with all other appropriations hearings that are occurring at the same time.

Ms. Grundmann, please proceed with your oral remarks. We will include your written opening statement in the record.