

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH EANNELLO, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, UNITED
STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**REGARDING: TIMELINESS OF APPROPRIATIONS MATERIALS ON CONGRESS.GOV,
AND THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS STATUS TABLE**

March 9, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Valadao, Ranking Member Espaillat, Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. My name is Joseph Eannello. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity, drawing on my background in federal Appropriations policy. I am a Partner and Legislative Director at Capitol Counsel LLC in Washington, D.C., where I chair the firm's Appropriations practice, assisting a range of clients in their engagement with the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. This testimony reflects my own views and not those of the firm or any of its clients.

My perspective on this matter is grounded in nearly two decades of experience in federal policy, the majority of it focused on Appropriations. I spent over a decade on Capitol Hill, including time as a congressional staffer working on Appropriations matters in connection with the House Republican Conference. Since leaving the Hill, I have continued to work on Appropriations issues in an advisory capacity, and that cumulative experience, spanning both the congressional and outside perspectives, directly informs the observations I offer here.

COMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP ON TRANSPARENCY

Before turning to the policy matter at hand, I want to express genuine appreciation for the standard of transparency the House Appropriations Committee has set under the leadership of Chairman Cole with the support of Chairman Valadao, and to acknowledge the constructive engagement of Ranking Member DeLauro and Ranking Member Espaillat in sustaining the bipartisan character of that work.

The Committee's website, clear and well-organized approach to Community Project Funding documentation, accessibility of amendment text as it becomes available during full committee markups, and proactive posture heading into both the FY 2026 and FY 2027 cycles collectively represent a model for how the Appropriations process should function. These are not incidental features. They reflect a deliberate institutional commitment to accessibility, and they have real consequences for participation, oversight, and public accountability.

When the Appropriations process functions at this level, the benefit extends well beyond immediate participants. Taxpayers deserve to know that the congressional decisions driving federal expenditures are being made with careful deliberation and meaningful oversight. A well-run, transparent Committee process is one of the clearest signals that the power of the purse is being exercised responsibly and that the public trust placed in Congress is being honored with the seriousness it warrants.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY ACCESS TO APPROPRIATIONS MATERIALS

The matter I wish to address concerns the timeliness with which Appropriations bill text and committee report language are reflected in the CRS Appropriations Status Table, available at <https://www.congress.gov/crs-appropriations-status-table>. In my experience, this resource is

among the single most useful tools available for tracking the actions of the Appropriations Committees at each stage of the legislative process. The Status Table consolidates in one place the information that practitioners, agency officials, and engaged members of the public need to follow Appropriations legislation as it moves through subcommittee, full committee, and floor consideration. It is, put simply, an indispensable reference. The feedback I offer here is not a criticism of the resource or of CRS's stewardship of it. It is offered in the spirit of improving an already valuable tool, and with the hope that a targeted adjustment to current practice can bring the Status Table even closer to its full potential.

The Appropriations process moves quickly, and the window for meaningful engagement at critical junctures is narrow. When a subcommittee or full committee proceeds to markup, the bill text and accompanying report language are the primary documents that inform advocacy, agency planning, oversight activity, and public participation. Delays in accessing those documents, even delays measured in hours, can impair the ability of Members' offices, agency officials, and outside stakeholders to engage at precisely the moment engagement is most consequential.

At present, CRS updates the Appropriations Status Table with links to bill text and report language only after those materials have been transmitted to and published by the Government Publishing Office (GPO). In practice, this means links are often not available until after full committee approval, at which point the most critical stages of the markup process have already concluded. The lag between a document's public release by the Committees and its appearance in the Status Table represents a gap that the current process does not adequately address.

This gap stands in notable contrast to the Committee's own practices. As the record of this Committee demonstrates, Appropriations materials are routinely posted to committee websites and announced through official channels well in advance of GPO transmission, often before

subcommittee proceedings begin. CRS, by tying its Status Table updates to GPO publication, is operating on a slower timeline than the one the Committees themselves have established. Closing that gap would bring CRS's practices into alignment with the transparency standards the Committees have already set.

REQUESTED ACTION

I respectfully urge the Subcommittee to include report language directing CRS to update the Appropriations Status Table with links to bill text and report language at the earliest point those materials are made publicly available by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, including materials released before subcommittee or full committee proceedings, rather than waiting for GPO publication. CRS should monitor official committee announcements and websites for this purpose and should update official with GPO links as those become available.

This direction would align CRS's practices with the transparency standard the Committees have already established, maximize the utility of a widely used resource, and ensure that Congress.gov reflects the public record in real time. The implementation burden would be modest. The benefit to congressional users and the public would be significant.

PROPOSED REPORT LANGUAGE

Appropriations Status Table Updates.--The Committee commends the Congressional Research Service (CRS) for its work in maintaining the Appropriations Status Table, which provides an important resource by tracking the progress of Appropriations legislation and linking to relevant bill text and report language. To further enhance its utility, the Committee directs CRS to incorporate links to Appropriations materials at the earliest point they are publicly released by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, including materials released before

subcommittee or full committee proceedings, rather than waiting for publication by the Government Publishing Office (GPO). CRS shall monitor official Appropriations announcements and committee websites to ensure that the Appropriations Status Table reflects the most current publicly available information, thereby maximizing the timeliness and usefulness of the resource for congressional users and the public. CRS shall update links as official GPO versions become available.

CONCLUSION

The House Appropriations Committee, under the leadership of Chairman Cole, has demonstrated that meaningful transparency is achievable and sustainable. The CRS Appropriations Status Table, maintained by the Congressional Research Service on behalf of Congress as a whole, is one of the clearest expressions of that broader transparency in action, and I am grateful for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of making it even more responsive to the needs of those who rely on it. I thank the Subcommittee for its continued commitment to a process that serves Congress and the public with the rigor and openness the Appropriations process demands.

Respectfully submitted, Joseph Eannello, Washington, D.C., March 9, 2026