

**Statement of The Hon. John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member, Committee on
the Judiciary, for the Hearing on the Committee's 2013 Budget Request
before the Committee on Administration**

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at 2:15 p.m.
1310 Longworth House Office Building**

Chairwoman Miller, Ranking Member Brady, and Members of the Committee, it is my pleasure to appear before you today with Chairman Goodlatte to present our 2013 budget request for the House Judiciary Committee.

I join with my colleague Chairman Goodlatte in requesting that your Committee consider allocating the maximum amount of budget funding possible to the Judiciary Committee.

To begin with, this request reflects the fact that the Judiciary Committee is responsible for some of the most critical issues facing our Nation and is among the most active committees in the House.

For example, during the 112th Congress, our Committee reported 77 substantive bills and resolutions, with 1 in 8 of the legislative measures introduced in the House referred to the Committee. In addition, the Judiciary Committee had a jurisdictional interest in 40 of the bills signed into law during the last Congress.

In the 112th Congress, the Judiciary Committee held more than 150 subcommittee hearings, 20 full Committee hearings, and approximately 50 full committee markups.

Our Committee plays a major role in dealing with diverse legislative and oversight issues that have nationwide significance and affect every American.

In any one session of Congress, we consider legislation dealing with immigration reform, the prevention of gun violence, copyright enforcement, amendments to the constitution, voting rights, and criminal law, to name just a few.

The Committee's responsibilities also include oversight of the Justice Department, as well as the federal court system.

Examples of the Committee's other oversight responsibilities range from the examination of the constitutional issues presented by the use of unmanned drones in the fight against terror, to the complex issues presented by proposed billion dollar mergers, intellectual property disputes and the federal regulatory process.

Such extensive responsibilities obviously require the Committee to expend extensive time and resources, and require a well-qualified and experienced staff.

Given the number and range of nationally important issues within our jurisdiction, it is very likely that the Committee workload will only increase in the 113th Congress.

For example, Chairman Goodlatte has proposed an ambitious hearing and legislative schedule during which the Committee will continue to work on immigration policy, criminal law issues, and patent and copyright concerns, among many others.

In addition, several of these hearings will necessitate travel expenditures, particularly with respect to immigration issues.

As your Committee considers budget allocations for this year, I urge you to prioritize the Judiciary Committee's budget request based on our extensive legislative responsibilities.

I am concerned that any further funding reductions could jeopardize the Committee's ability to retain its highly qualified staff who possess the institutional knowledge and expertise to support the work of the Committee.

As detailed in the budget submission, a cut of 11% from our 2012 Committee allocation may require me to reduce the number of Democratic staff, who already are working long hours and are stretched thin.

Given the severe negative ramifications that could result from fewer staff, I urge your Committee to minimize to the greatest extent possible any further reductions to the Judiciary Committee's budget.

Chairman Goodlatte and I have submitted a budget request before you today that reflects our shared commitment to retaining and building a highly qualified staff to support the ambitious and significant work of the Committee.

I am pleased that Chairman Goodlatte has committed to working cooperatively with me in an effort to minimize the impact of any further funding reductions.

We are working together on the overall salary allocation and Committee expenses and I am confident that we will come to the fairest arrangement.

Members of the Committee, I appreciate your attention to our request, and am happy to respond to any questions you might have.