

Chairman Ed Royce
Statement before the House Committee on Administration
March 5, 2013

Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Brady, Committee Members, Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Foreign Affairs Committee's work.

I am the *new* Chairman of the Committee; my colleague, Mr. Engel is the *new* Ranking Member. We are new to our positions, but not to each other. Having served together for many years, and having spent much time together on our recent CODEL, I'm confident we'll have the strong working relationship needed to be an effective committee.

Madam Chairman, as a member who has always acted and voted in a fiscally conservative manner, I'd like to commend the Committee for taking a close look at how 2012 Committee funds were spent, before considering our 2013 funding. Budgets are tight for all Americans, and we must continue to set an example of fiscal discipline.

As a new Chairman, I didn't put together the 2012 budget. However, I have reviewed the numbers and believe that the Committee was fiscally responsible. As you can see from the informational packet we provided to your staff, for 2012 we spent 98.13% of our budget authorization. On the breakdown of actuals spent, funds were put to sound use in our budget categories. We responsibly returned a surplus of over \$157,000. The past Chairman was a good steward.

In addition to being good stewards, we have an obligation to effectively carry out our Committee's responsibilities. Key among those is oversight of the State Department, other government departments and agencies, and grant programs funded with taxpayer money. Tens of billions of dollars are spent in these areas, and it's our job to make sure that it's all accounted for and that it's being spent judiciously.

Following oversight, the Committee plans on being extremely active legislatively, including producing bills to sanction Iran and North Korea, reform the Broadcasting Board of Governors, reauthorize the State Department, increase our economic competitiveness by reforming export controls, and improve embassy security. Our investigative team continues to look at lessons learned from Benghazi. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of crisis in the world demanding our attention.

Field hearings are also important to the Committee meeting its responsibilities. Southern California is home to one of the nation's largest Taiwanese American populations. With the restart of U.S.-Taiwan trade negotiations, a field hearing to hear from this community on how to boost economic ties with Taiwan is particularly warranted. Seven Committee members are from

this area. We plan on holding a similar field hearing in Florida to look at trade with Latin America

Another fact to consider is that we are a “must stop” for innumerable foreign officials and political figures. They want to come to the U.S. Congress and talk with Committee Members about U.S. relations with their home countries. We want to be there for them, and our leadership expects us to be. We recently hosted the UN Secretary General -- an expense, but a worthwhile one. Nearly thirty of our Members attended.

So, my concern is that with a potential loss of 11% of our 2013 funding --over \$900,000 in 2013 alone—we will **not** be able to carry out these responsibilities in the manner in which they should be carried out. Strong oversight requires high caliber staff with experience in intelligence, law enforcement and private sector fields. I have attracted such staff: one individual with extensive CIA field experience and another with time spent at a major investment bank. These individuals took pay cuts to join our staff; I would like to be able to retain them, and attract others.

But the committee currently has 6 unfilled positions that we will not be able to fill if we were to absorb an 11% cut. Also, in anticipation of budget cuts in 2013, we eliminated a subcommittee (a reduction of 3 majority subcommittee staff positions), as well as an administrative staffer. So we are working to reduce costs, and streamline our Committee’s organizational structure.

I would also like to express my concern that the budget of this committee includes the salary and administrative expenses for the House Democracy Partnership and the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. I believe that both of these entities should be funded independently. But for now, please account for that fact that our Committee provides considerable support to these two groups.

In conclusion, Member Engel and I are raring to go. We organized earlier than ever, have held several important hearings, and last week introduced the Royce-Engel “Nuclear Iran Prevention Act”. We are asking you for the resources we need to succeed.

Thank you Madame Chairman, and each of your committee Members, for the time that you are giving this very important task.