

**Statement of
Full Committee Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson**

Committee on House Administration

“Committee Funding for 2015”

February 11, 2015

12:00 p.m.

1309 Longworth House Office Building

- Thank you, Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Brady, for this opportunity to talk about committee funding for 2015.
- After successive cuts in 2011, 2012 and 2013, the Committee on Homeland Security’s budget was increased by 2%. Each year, the budget changes were absorbed between Majority and Minority according to our two-thirds, one-third share.
- After reducing the size of my staff, cutting salaries, streamlining office expenses and curtailing travel, it is fair to say that we are doing more with less.

- Last year, the Committee worked hard to see that the Department of Homeland Security received adequate Congressional oversight. We pushed for updated cybersecurity protocols.
- We forced the agency to be more responsive to Member requests.
- We called for transparency and accountability within the Secret Service after a series of lapses.
- We also worked to improve our border security and strengthen our cyber networks – work that will continue this Congress.
- These efforts and many others are taking place at a time when we must remain as vigilant as ever to protect the homeland.
- In order to do that, we need sufficient resources. I would like to be able to have staff travel and not be limited to what they can learn in the confines of Washington, D.C.

- I would like to be able to replace aging equipment later this year.
- I would also like to remain a competitive choice for bright, young staffers who have options for where they will work. Further budget cuts would complicate these goals.
- The Chairman and I agree on the goals of pushing the envelope on cybersecurity and protecting the homeland from other threats abroad, including exposure to attacks from foreign fighters who may travel to the U.S.
- In order to accomplish these goals, we will need to hire additional staff. Our request for additional funding is responsible and commensurate with the significant charge given to our Committee. We will need to attract expert staff and you can help us do that.

- Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.