

Statement of The Hon. John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member, Committee on the
Judiciary, for the Hearing on the Committee's 2015 Budget Request before the
Committee on Administration

Wednesday, February 4, 2015, at 11:15 a.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 2015 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.

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 113th Congress, 1 in 7 of the legislative measures introduced in the House last Congress were referred to our Committee.

In the 113th Congress, our Committee held more than 95 subcommittee and taskforce hearings, 30 full Committee hearings, and 54 full committee markups.

The Judiciary Committee reported 47 bills and resolutions, and was involved with the House passage of 79 bills and resolutions.

Because of our Committee's broad jurisdictional interest, we were involved in about 11% of the legislative measures signed into law during the last Congress.

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

We consider legislation dealing with terrorism and national security, immigration, criminal law, copyright enforcement, patent rights, antitrust, constitutional issues, including voting rights and civil liberties, and many others.

The Committee's responsibilities include oversight of the Justice Department, the federal court system, and the federal regulatory process.

We also examine the constitutional issues presented by the government's domestic surveillance programs, including the NSA's bulk collection of telephone metadata and the DEA's license plate reader program.

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

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

For example, Chairman Goodlatte has proposed an ambitious hearing and legislative agenda focusing on immigration policy, addressing the problems of over-criminalization and over-incarceration, and improving the patent and copyright system.

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

As you consider 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 not increasing the Committee's budget allocation will jeopardize the Committee's ability to retain its highly qualified staff who possess the institutional knowledge and expertise critical to the work of the Committee.

I urge you to maximize to the greatest extent possible the Judiciary Committee's budget allocation.

We 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.

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