

Joint Statement before the Committee on House Administration
Budget Request for the 115th Congress
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Jason Chaffetz, Chairman
Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member
February 16, 2017

Chairman Harper, Ranking Member Brady, we are pleased to be here today representing the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The mission of our Committee is to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the federal government and all its agencies.

As the principal oversight and investigative committee in the House, we provide a necessary check on the role and power of the Executive branch.

Genuinely good government oversight requires a commitment to expose mismanagement, waste, fraud, and abuse.

Our task is to identify problems, shine a light on them, and propose meaningful reforms to make government work better for those it serves.

We believe we have an opportunity this Congress to pay particular attention to the reform component to our work.

Already this Congress, we introduced comprehensive, bipartisan postal reform legislation and are hopeful we can work together in similar fashion to craft reforms related to the federal workforce, empowering Inspectors General, promoting strong federal cybersecurity, and other areas within our jurisdiction and expertise.

As we look at reforms, we will be sure to look at each problem we encounter through the lens of the authorizing and appropriating Committees and to work collaboratively with them throughout the process.

We will continue efforts to strengthen relationships with our oversight partners at the Government Accountability Office and throughout the community of more than 70 inspectors general.

We are unwavering in our commitment to the inspectors general.

We highlighted their importance and priority by once again making them the focus of our first hearing to start the Congress.

Billions of dollars are wasted each year by the federal government, and the IGs are the taxpayers' first and most crucial line of defense.

We want to ensure they are able to perform their duties efficiently, independently and without interference.

Organizationally, this Congress, we reoriented the Committee's six subcommittees.

We have a new subcommittee - the Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs.

It has legislative and oversight jurisdiction over the relationship between the federal government and states and municipalities, including unfunded mandates, federal regulations, grants, and programs.

We also expanded the focus of the Interior subcommittee and renamed it the Interior, Energy and Environment Subcommittee.

The Committee is comprised of 42 Members, and is allocated for 118 staff personnel slots.

As has been the case since the 108th Congress (2003-04), our minority receives 33% of the staff and budget funds to be used at the discretion of the Ranking Member.

In our budget request, we are asking for a 3% increase.

This modest increase will help us provide for the staffing and other resources necessary to carry out the important work before us this Congress.