

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Fiscal Year 2014 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill
Full Committee Markup
July 18, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

Thank you all for being here today. I know we had a long day yesterday, so with luck and your assistance, we can get through our business in an expeditious fashion this morning.

Just last week, the New York Times noted that Appropriations is “still the place for civility.” You should all be proud to be a part of that, and I thank you for preserving that reputation.

With that in mind, let’s move onto the business of the day. We’re meeting now to mark up the Fiscal Year 2014 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill.

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Both the Chairman and the Ranking Member have done fine work in putting together this bill, and I am glad to have them at the helm of this Subcommittee. Chairman Alexander, kudos to you on your first bill as a cardinal. Job well done.

As Chairman Alexander said, this bill provides \$3.2 billion for the House and joint operations of the Legislative Branch.

Though this bill is the smallest of the 12 Appropriations bills, it funds one of the most symbolic buildings in the nation, if not the world – the U.S. Capitol. This building stands on behalf of the people, and it is a symbol of the spirit of democracy and the liberties that make this country great.

This bill provides the funding to care for the Capitol Complex, and will help ensure the safety of the thousands of people that visit and work here every day. This includes funding for the upkeep of historic buildings, so that they can endure as symbols of freedom for future generations.

The legislation also provides funding for offices and activities that keep the government running and that provide important services to all Americans, including the Library of Congress, the Government Printing Office, and the Government Accountability Office, which is essential for its accurate, nonpartisan assessment of how taxpayer dollars are spent. And it allows Members of Congress to receive the resources needed to serve those who elected us, and be their voice in the federal government.

Yet one of the greatest services we can do for our people is to make sure that every tax dollar we spend is spent wisely.

So, this bill cuts \$113 million from last year’s enacted level – ensuring a lean, more efficient legislative branch. This cut continues the downward trend of Legislative Branch spending initiated when Republicans took control of the House in 2011.

With this bill, we will have reduced our own office budgets by 17.6% over the last three years – showing that we can live within the same financial boundaries facing every agency of the federal government, and every family in the country.

Though the cuts weren't easy, we have found ways to make responsible choices with limited taxpayer dollars, choices that work to help reduce our government's dangerous deficits.

This bill is a true demonstration of this Committee's continued commitment to get our nation's fiscal house in order – and how we, as Members of Congress, must lead by example. I urge my colleagues to support this bill today.

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