



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

**Fiscal Year Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill – Subcommittee Markup
May 18, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

I thank the Chairman for yielding, and I congratulate him on bringing the Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations bill for the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development before the subcommittee today. Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Price, and staff on both sides have worked tirelessly on this important piece of legislation.

Transportation and housing are both critical pieces of our country's economy. The legislation before us today contains \$58.19 billion in discretionary funding, an increase of \$889 million over Fiscal Year 2016. This bill keeps our nation's transportation infrastructure safe, accessible, and more efficient for all travelers. And, it ensures our Nation's most vulnerable citizens have access to affordable housing options. This bill illustrates this Committee's commitment to achieving thoughtful savings, while targeting investments to our nation's vital transportation infrastructure and creating an environment for job growth.

Late last year, Congress passed the FAST Act which allows for long-term transportation planning and focuses on the development, repair, and expansion of our Nation's transportation infrastructure. The legislation before us today funds many transportation programs at the FAST Act authorized levels. These new allocations provide the funding necessary to keep our highways, railways, and waterways running smoothly. I am pleased to see the legislation also includes funding for a number of other popular programs within the Department of Transportation, including the TIGER grant program, as well as the Contract Tower program and NextGen within FAA.

The legislation also supports programs that assist communities with planning and development activities. The HOME Investment Partnership program is provided with \$950 million, which is consistent with Fiscal Year 2016 enacted levels. Many communities across the country utilize the HOME program to partner with nonprofit groups to help build, buy, or rehabilitate affordable housing to meet the needs and priorities in their region. I am also pleased that the Community Development Block grant program is funded at \$3 billion. This extremely flexible program provides vital funding to communities so they can address their unique community development needs. Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) and the Section 4 Capacity Building program which received \$50 million in this bill. These programs help low-income families become homeowners through contributing "sweat equity" to the building process and in my rural district it has really made a difference.

I want to commend Chairman Diaz-Balart for putting together a good bill that we can all support. I urge the subcommittee to report this bill to the full Committee. Thank you and I yield back.

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