

Chairman Robert Aderholt
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Fiscal Year 2014 Subcommittee Markup
June 5, 2013
Opening Statement As Prepared

Good morning.

Today before the subcommittee we have the Chairman's mark for the fiscal year 2014 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Our discretionary 302(b) allocation in budget authority is \$19.450 billion, and the bill before us is right at that number. Discretionary spending in this bill is \$1.3 billion, or 6.2 percent below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level, and is \$516 million, or 2.6 percent below the President's budget request. It should be noted that the President's request did not include funding for the P.L. 480 – Food for Peace program in this bill.

Mandatory spending in the bill totals \$120 billion, an increase of \$1.1 billion above the fiscal year 2013 level, and a decrease of \$2.1 billion below the budget request.

America's farmers, ranchers, and producers are vital to our nation's economy and are the most competitive in the world. They create jobs in our communities, produce food for our tables, export products around the globe, and diversify our nation's energy supply. The funding provided in this bill will help keep America's agricultural research cutting edge, maintain vibrant rural communities, provide nutrition to those most vulnerable, and keep our markets competitive while maintaining the safest food and drug supply in the world. The bill ensures that the Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission have adequate resources to complete their missions successfully and demonstrates our commitment to good stewardship of taxpayers' limited dollars.

Some of the items in the legislation before us today that demonstrate this commitment include a directive to increase oversight of WIC vendors to help rein in food costs. There also is a requirement for the Secretary to report to the committee on strategies being implemented to help weed out fraud, waste, and abuse in SNAP, such as banning fraudulent vendors. Language is included that prohibits advertisement or outreach to foreign governments to promote SNAP benefits. Continuing on this theme of being good stewards of taxpayers' limited dollars, there is a requirement that the Secretary certify that any newly approved payment, loan, grant, subsidy, or insurance claim within the Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency programs is not provided to individuals or entities that have been permanently debarred from participating in USDA programs.

We held 11 hearings covering all mission areas within the subcommittee's jurisdiction with the exception of the Farm Credit Administration, which is financed through assessments on member institutions.

Our colleagues' interest in this bill remains at a high level. We received more than 3,100 requests from 289 Members for various funding and language items. We have tried to address these requests by providing programmatic funding or by including language in the bill or report in accordance with House rules. There are no earmarks in the legislation before us today.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Lowey, I would just like to state for the record that this subcommittee has 5 new members this year, and yours truly as the new subcommittee chairman. I can tell you that we had robust hearings, and all of our members participated. I want to say that the selections that you made for this subcommittee have paid off.

In that regard, I want to commend all subcommittee members for their efforts. For the majority: Mr. Latham; Mr. Nunnelee; Mr. Yoder; Mr. Fortenberry; Mr. Rooney; and Mr. Valadao. On the minority side, my good friend and Ranking Member, Mr. Farr; Ms. DeLauro; Mr. Bishop; and Ms. Pingree.

Now, I will ask my good friend and ranking member of the Subcommittee, Mr. Farr, for his opening remarks, and then we will turn to the distinguished Chairman of the full Committee, Mr. Rogers, and the distinguished Ranking Member of the full Committee, Mrs. Lowey, for any remarks they may have.

#####