



# **Chairman Hal Rogers**

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## **House Committee on Appropriations**

**FY 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Bill  
Subcommittee Markup  
July 7, 2016  
Opening Statement As Prepared**

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I thank the Chairman for yielding, and I congratulate him on bringing the Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education before the subcommittee today. Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, and staff on both sides have worked tirelessly on our twelfth - and final - bill to be marked up in subcommittee this year.

The fiscal year 2017 bill includes discretionary appropriations of \$163 billion. It is a testament to this Committee's commitment to achieving thoughtful savings by reducing nonessential or inefficient programs, while targeting investments to proven and effective programs that support workforce development, education, biomedical research, and public health. The bill also includes a number of legislative provisions to rein in the out-of-control regulations that hurt our economy and job growth.

Most notably, this legislation provides historic federal support to combat the opioid and heroin epidemic affecting our country. For over a decade now, I've tried to marshal support on all levels of government to holistically target the problem and take back our communities. Operation UNITE in Kentucky and other local, state, and regional efforts have shown that coordinated enforcement, treatment, and education efforts can produce tangible success and save countless lives.

Before diving into the promise of this year's bill, it is important to note what Congress has already been doing in this space. Despite the misleading PR campaign by the Administration, which would have the American public believe that Congress has been sitting on its hands, the FY16 Omnibus provided more than \$8.1 billion in enforcement, prevention, treatment, recovery, and research funding to respond to this epidemic. I sincerely appreciate the time the President has dedicated to this issue in recent months, but for those of us who have been working on this issue for decades, we understand that adding response funding to our already out-of-control mandatory ledger is neither realistic nor responsible. This Committee and Congress at large are charged with ensuring that the initiatives we support are funded at sustainable levels. We must be nimble enough to adjust as time and evaluation inform us what works and do so without endangering the security of other essential programs across government.

Building upon the significant investment in the Omnibus, I am thrilled with the work Chairman Cole has done this year to place the weight of the federal government further behind our local, state, and regional partners and responsibly support them with discretionary dollars. This bill allocates \$1.8 billion to the Substance Abuse Block Grant, with which states can tailor their response to the epidemic to their specific needs. It also provides \$581 million – more than a tenfold increase over FY16 – to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the first

ever comprehensive grant program to target the epidemic nation-wide. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) receives \$90 million – a \$20 million increase – to expand evidence-based efforts and roll out its landmark Prescriber Guidelines around the country. The President has asked for \$1.1 billion over two years, and the bill before us today not only matches - but far exceeds - that request so that our country can turn the tide on opioid addiction and save lives. Today, this Committee continues to step up to the plate in a major way.

I am also incredibly proud of the investments we've made in medical research. This legislation funds the National Institutes of Health (NIH) at \$33.334 billion – \$1.250 billion above the fiscal year 2016 level – increasing support for key research programs including Alzheimer's disease research, the Precision Medicine Initiative, and the Brain Research through Application of Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) initiative.

In addition, this legislation includes resources to fight the Zika virus and prevent it from spreading. The bill includes \$390 million for the CDC to support Zika response and control efforts. A new Infectious Diseases Rapid Response Reserve Fund is allocated \$300 million to enable the CDC Director to take immediate action to combat future infectious diseases without having to wait for a congressional supplemental bill.

Finally, the bill also provides ample support for important education initiatives. Funding for special education state grants is \$12.4 billion, which is \$500 million above the FY16 enacted level. GEAR UP and TRIO, programs that help disadvantaged students prepare for and complete college, receive a 6.7 percent funding increase in the bill. Finally, to help make sure the most vulnerable children are ready to begin school, Head Start is funded at \$9.3 billion.

I thank the subcommittee chairman for his hard work, and I wholeheartedly support this legislation. I urge the subcommittee to promptly report this bill to the full Committee. Thank you, and I yield back.

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