



Chairman Tom Latham

*Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

Subcommittee Markup – Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill

May 7, 2014

Opening Statement As Prepared

The subcommittee is called to order. Today, we are marking up the fiscal year 2015 appropriations Act for DOT and HUD. The bill and draft report are before you, and your staff was given the opportunity to view both prior to this meeting.

Thanks to the budget deal and to Chairman Rogers we are able to hold our mark up early in the year. Our allocation under the \$1.014 trillion deal is \$52.029 billion, an increase of \$1.17 billion over the 2014 enacted levels. That's the good news. The bad news is the FHA receipts are down almost \$3 billion from last year. That doesn't mean FHA is going broke – just that CBO estimates more homebuyers are financing and refinancing their homes through the private market.

Like appropriators do, we made choices and set priorities. The bill before you recommends funding levels to keep FAA air traffic controllers and safety inspectors on the job, and proposes some increases for safety programs, especially to address the challenges we are seeing with hazardous materials and railroads.

This bill provides sufficient funds to keep all families currently receiving housing assistance under the umbrella of the various HUD programs. We recommend funding the base CDBG program at \$3 billion, almost level with last year.

For the surface programs we provide funding level with fiscal year 2014, consistent with the last year of MAP-21, contingent on reauthorization. I know I don't need to remind any of you about the balances of the Highway Trust Fund, and I am hopeful the authorizers will come up with a plan to bring these critical programs into 2015.

The budget proposed, and assumed, a lot of new authorizing this year for both DOT and HUD, and we did carry a number of provisions last year. However, a whole new surface program and pages and pages of new HUD legislation are best left to the authorizers for their evaluation and judgment.

I believe we struck a good balance between housing and transportation, and the various provisions members asked us to consider. The beauty of regular order and an open process is Members and the public are able to see the bill and propose amendments. While the Full Committee has not yet noticed up the meeting to mark up this bill, we anticipate being ready for

such notice the week of the 19th. If you have ideas or amendments, I would ask that you hold those amendments until the Full Committee mark up. I know Chairman Granger is holding a hearing in about an hour across the hall.

Before I recognize Mr. Pastor for his comments, I'd like to thank him for his hard work on this subcommittee, the Committee, and the Congress, and on behalf of the people of Arizona. I've very much enjoyed working with you. And I'd like to thank all the Members of this subcommittee for your participation, your interest and support on this bill, and all the bills we've had the privilege of doing in this great Committee. It's been fun, at times maddening, but at the end of the day, when you see a program we've funded or made better make a positive difference for a family back home, you remember why we signed up for this job in the first place. Thank you.

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