

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

**Markup of the FY2017 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill and
the FY2017 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill**

April 21, 2016

(As prepared for delivery)

The Committee will please come to order.

We meet today to consider the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill and the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill.

We will first report the two appropriations bills. The bills and reports have been approved by the respective subcommittees and made available to Members of the Committee.

We will then turn to the Commerce, Justice, Science bill to consider any amendments to that bill. Before concluding today's session, we will then consider amendments to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill.

Before we begin, I would like to speak briefly about another matter. This Committee has been working diligently to determine whether resources are necessary to address the public health threat posed by the Zika virus. We have explored the issue in hearings and in meetings with Administration officials and other experts. While it has been difficult to obtain the detailed information necessary to thoroughly evaluate the Administration's request, we recognize that there is an urgency associated with the threat.

As chairmen of the relevant subcommittees, Senator Blunt and Senator Graham have worked with Senator Murray and Senator Leahy to develop a bipartisan Zika proposal. This proposal will provide new resources to supplement other funding that has been reprogrammed from other purposes. It is my expectation that this proposal will be offered to an appropriations measure on the Senate floor in the near future.

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