

**Chairman Richard Shelby Opening Statement  
Senate Committee on Appropriations**

**Markup of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Humanitarian Assistance and  
Security at the Southern Border Act, 2019**

**June 19, 2019**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

The Committee will come to order.

Today the Committee considers legislation to address the ongoing humanitarian and security crisis along our southern border.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, more than 675,000 illegal immigrants have been apprehended or encountered at ports of entry so far this fiscal year.

Making this crisis even more acute, we are seeing a dramatic spike in the number of children and families making the dangerous journey north to the U.S.

Our personnel on the ground are doing everything they can to secure the border and care for these vulnerable populations.

But their determination has outstripped their resources.

Last week in the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security stated the following:

*“The volume and composition of populations arriving at the southern border are simply unsustainable. Unless Congress acts, the situation will continue to deteriorate – with grave consequences.”*

The situation is past the breaking point. We must act.

I say to my colleagues, today the Appropriations Committee will act.

I am pleased that we will do so in a bipartisan manner, and I want to thank Vice Chairman Leahy for working with me to find common ground.

The legislation we bring before the Committee today contains a total of \$4.59 billion to address the border crisis.

Of this amount, \$2.9 billion is provided for the Department of Health and Human Services, which is tasked with caring for unaccompanied children and placing them in suitable homes.

The legislation also includes \$1.3 billion for the Department of Homeland Security to provide basic necessities – food, shelter and medical care – to adult migrants they detain.

An additional \$145 million is provided for the Department of Defense, which has mobilized to help respond to the crisis.

And finally, \$220 million is included for the Department of Justice, to help process immigration cases and detain dangerous individuals.

This package does not include everything I wanted.

It does not include everything Vice Chairman Leahy wanted.

But most importantly, it does not include poison pills from either party.

I ask for my colleagues' cooperation in holding any such amendments until this package reaches the Senate floor – just like we did during the FY19 process with such great success.

In addition, I ask my colleagues to refrain from offering any amendments that pertain to broader immigration policy.

The appropriate venue for such amendments is the authorizing committee, and Chairman Graham is marking up immigration legislation in the Judiciary Committee tomorrow.

So I urge my colleagues interested in broader immigration policy to discuss their ideas with Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein.

By adhering to this framework I believe that we will be able to move forward together with a strong bipartisan vote here today.

Our border security professionals and the children and families in their care cannot afford further delay, and I am hopeful that a strong bipartisan vote will provide the momentum needed to assist our folks on the front lines.

Before I turn to Vice Chairman Leahy to offer his remarks and make a motion, I want expand briefly on the importance of moving forward together – not just on this package, but on fiscal year '20 appropriations bills.

Coming to an agreement on topline numbers is very important, and I am working with Leader McConnell, Secretary Mnuchin, Speaker Pelosi and Vice Chairman Leahy on that front.

But we also need to have agreement on keeping poison pills out of our process in fiscal year '20.

That was the foundation of our success in fiscal year '19.

And that is what is allowing us to move forward together here today.

I believe that my colleagues agree it should also be the basis for our work ahead.

If we show that critical mass is still behind this simple and proven framework, we can move bills quickly once we have topline numbers.

But if we start chipping away at it, I fear we will return to the old frustrations and failures of previous years.

Something none of us wants. I know I don't.

And with that, I turn to my good friend and Vice Chairman, Senator Leahy, to offer his opening remarks and make a motion.

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