

**Chairman James Lankford Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch**

**Review of the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Request
for the Congressional Budget Office and Government Accountability Office**

June 21, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

Good afternoon. The subcommittee will come to order. I would like to welcome everyone to the second of our fiscal year 2018 budget hearings for the agencies under the jurisdiction of the Legislative Branch appropriations subcommittee.

Today we have with us the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), Dr. Keith Hall; and the head of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Comptroller General Gene Dodaro.

I appreciate the willingness of the witnesses to appear before the subcommittee today and look forward to their testimony.

The total Congressional Budget Office request for FY 2018 is \$49.9 million, an increase of \$3.4 million above the FY 2017 enacted level.

This funding request supports the current full-time equivalent (FTE) level of 237, and an additional four analysts devoted to the areas of health care policy, dynamic scoring requirements, and appropriations. It also includes funding required to move CBO's data center.

The total Government Accountability Office (GAO) request for FY 2018 is \$590.7 million, an increase of \$46.2 million above the FY 2017 enacted level.

This funding request supports an increase in FTE from 3,000 to 3,100, which would continue progress toward GAO's multi-year plan to rebuild its staff capacity to an optimal level of 3,250 FTE.

Each of your agencies provide vital support services to us as legislators. As the non-partisan watchdog, and the scorekeeper of legislation, your agencies provide reports and analysis that can have far reaching policy implications.

That analysis requires highly trained and skilled staff, a need which is reflected in each of your budget proposals. Personnel expenses account for more than 80% of your budgets, which creates a unique challenge in a year where available resources must be stretched among many priorities, and increases will be difficult to accommodate.

Given this challenge, I look forward to our discussion today during which I hope to gain a better understanding of your agencies' priorities for the coming year.

And now, I'd like to turn to my Ranking Member, Senator Murphy, for any opening remarks he may like to make.

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