

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

**Consideration of 302(b) Subcommittee Allocations
Markup of the FY2020 Department of Defense Appropriations Act
Markup of the FY2020 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act**

September 12, 2019

(As prepared for delivery)

The committee will come to order. Today, the committee considers the 302(b) spending allocations for each of the subcommittees, as well as the FY2020 appropriations bills for the subcommittees on Defense and Energy and Water Development.

Together, the Defense and Energy and Water bills account for 54 percent of total discretionary spending.

By advancing them through the process today, we will take a significant step toward funding the government and strengthening our national security.

We had planned to mark up the Labor-HHS and State-Foreign Operations bills today, as well.

Unfortunately, the threat of poison pill amendments delayed their consideration because they would have prevented Senate passage and drawn the President's veto.

I am hopeful we can resolve these matters and move forward on both measures soon.

Such poison pills are expressly prohibited by the terms of the budget deal, which were agreed to by the President and Congressional leaders on both sides.

The terms of the agreement also prohibit new policy riders and changes to transfer authorities, unless all parties agree otherwise.

The purpose of these conditions is to eliminate the usual roadblocks to getting appropriations bills signed into law.

They are modeled after the Shelby-Leahy agreement from FY2019.

That agreement facilitated more productivity and comity in the appropriations process than we had seen in two decades.

As appropriators, we should all want to extend that bipartisan success, not relapse into the partisan bickering that left us lurching from crisis to crisis.

As Chairman of this committee, I am determined to keep the budget agreement intact and the appropriations process on track.

Therefore, where we are able to advance appropriations bills consistent with the budget agreement, we will do so.

Where we cannot, we will not. It's that simple.

The time for haggling over the terms of the budget agreement has passed.

The time to get our work done is upon us, and it is running short.

With that being said, I now turn to today's business. We will first consider the 302(b) spending allocations for the subcommittees. We will then consider the Defense and Energy and Water bills.

Regarding the allocations, I understand the Vice Chairman will offer an alternative proposal.

I will speak to the Chairman's proposal first and then turn to Vice Chairman Leahy to speak to his alternative proposal. Both proposals are now on the table before Members.

With respect to the Chairman's proposal, total base discretionary spending amounts to \$1.288 trillion for FY2020. Of this amount, \$666.5 billion is designated as defense spending and \$621.5 billion is designated as non-defense spending.

These levels are consistent with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019, including the caps on defense and non-defense discretionary spending, OCO funding, and CHIMPs. I urge Members to support this proposal.

I also want to briefly address the reasons we were unable to reach a bipartisan agreement on the allocations at this stage in the process.

My colleagues on the other side believe the proposed allocation for Labor-HHS is too low and the allocation for Homeland Security is too high.

Yet the 1.04 percent increase for Labor-HHS in the Chairman's proposal is equal to that which the subcommittee received in FY2019, taking into account the base allocation for the bill and CHIMPs.

Comparison to the FY2020 House allocation provides additional perspective.

House Democrats increased the Labor-HHS allocation by more than \$16 billion over the FY2019 level.

That increase alone is \$2 billion more than the entire effective increase in non-defense spending provided in the budget agreement.

By effective increase, I mean the remaining increase in non-defense spending, once VA Mission and Census costs are paid.

Relative to FY2019 enacted and House FY2020 levels, the proposed allocation is entirely reasonable, particularly at this point in the process.

Comparison to the FY2020 House bills is similarly useful with respect to the allocation proposed for Homeland Security.

The House did not provide any increase at all for the subcommittee on the non-defense side.

Even with the crisis we have seen on the border, the House flat funded the very department on the front lines.

Instead, the Chairman's proposal acknowledges the reality of the situation on the ground and accounts for investments in border security that are necessary to address it.

All in all, I believe that the Chairman's proposal is entirely reasonable, given where we are in the process.

Despite certain areas of disagreement, I believe these levels will enable us to report several of the FY2020 bills to the full Senate with bipartisan support.

So, again, I ask my colleagues to support the Chairman's proposal so we can move the process forward.

Before turning to Vice Chairman Leahy, I want to clarify for Members that after his remarks, we will vote on the Vice Chairman's alternative proposal first and then on the Chairman's proposal.

I also want to say to Vice Chairman Leahy: you and I have served together on this committee for decades.

We have track record of shared success, and I have the utmost respect for you.

Even though our paths have diverged in certain areas at this point in the process, I know that we will continue to search for a way forward together.

And I remain hopeful that we will ultimately find success again. With that, I turn to you, Vice Chairman Leahy.

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