

**Chairman Richard Shelby Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

Hearing to review the FY2016 funding requests and budget justifications for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Marshals Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

March 12, 2015

Welcome to the open session of today's Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee hearing on the Department of Justice Fiscal Year 2016 budget request for federal law enforcement agencies.

I want to welcome our four witnesses: FBI Director James Comey, U.S. Marshals Service Director Stacia Hylton, DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart, and ATF Director Todd Jones. They will each testify about their agency's 2016 budget request.

I want to begin by thanking the men and women of the FBI, the Marshals Service, DEA, and ATF who work every day to protect this nation. We are all indebted to them and grateful for their service and sacrifice.

In particular, I want to express my condolences to the family of deputy U.S. Marshal Josie Wells who was killed in the line of duty on Tuesday while participating in a fugitive task force in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Deputy Marshal Wells was attached to the Marshals Southern District Office in Mississippi, and had dutifully volunteered for this recent task force. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends and the entire Marshals Service community for their loss.

The constantly changing landscape of criminal activity at home and abroad has challenged the Justice Department's ability to deal with emerging threats. We expect our federal law enforcement agencies to be more nimble and sophisticated than the criminals and terrorists they pursue.

The goal of this joint law enforcement hearing is to determine how the 2016 budget would give each law enforcement agency the tools and capabilities needed to tackle these changing threats, whether they are cyber- attacks, drug trafficking, financial fraud, or terrorism.

I believe our federal law enforcement agencies must work together – particularly in tough budget environments – to target limited resources in a manner that safeguards taxpayer dollars while preserving public safety.

The FBI's mission includes protecting and defending the United States against terrorism and foreign intelligence threats, fighting cyber-crime, as well as tending to traditional criminal activities such as violent crime, public corruption, and white-collar crime.

In order to carry out these priorities, the FBI's 2016 budget request is \$8.5 billion, which is an increase of \$47 million above the 2015 enacted level.

In the past year, we have seen new terrorist threats and increased cyber-attacks.

It is imperative that the FBI appropriately balances the Bureau's diverse responsibilities while targeting the highest needs and criminal threats facing our nation.

The Marshals Service has the honor of being America's oldest federal law enforcement agency. The Marshals provide judicial security, apprehend fugitives, and protect witnesses and transport prisoners among other important duties.

The 2016 budget request of \$2.7 billion for the Marshals Service is \$100 million less than the 2015 enacted level of \$2.8 billion. The funding reductions are largely isolated to the Federal Prisoner Detention account.

I want to hear how the 2015 budget request will allow the Marshals Service to continue its critical missions for the pursuit and arrest of fugitive sex offenders who are targeting children.

The Drug Enforcement Administration's 2016 budget request totals \$2.5 billion.

The agency serves a central role, working with domestic and international partners, in the enforcement of controlled substance laws and regulations of the United States.

In addition, the DEA's Diversion Control Program prevents, detects, and investigates the diversion of controlled pharmaceuticals and listed chemicals.

This mission is critical, with prescription drug abuse arguably being the country's fastest growing drug problem.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is tasked with combating the illegal use and trafficking of firearms, the illegal use and storage of explosives, and acts of arson and bombings – among other crime-fighting roles.

ATF's 2016 budget request is \$1.3 billion, which is \$60 million above the 2015 level. I am interested in how the agency would use this increased funding, particularly in light of recent complaints from hunters and sportsmen who believe that ATF overstepped its authority by attempting to ban certain ammunition from recreational use.

I look forward to hearing the views and explanations of our four witnesses regarding the details of their 2016 funding goals, and working with our subcommittee members to prioritize necessary funding for our federal law enforcement agencies in the 2016 bill.