

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations**

**Consideration of Funding Guidelines
Markup of the FY2018 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill
Markup of the FY2018 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill**

July 20, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

The Committee on Appropriations will come to order.

The Committee meets today to continue consideration of the fiscal year 2018 appropriations bills.

We will first vote on funding guidance for the 12 subcommittees. We will then vote to report the Agriculture appropriations bill and the Energy and Water Development appropriations bill, each subject to amendment.

We will then return to the Agriculture appropriations bill to consider amendments, and will conclude today's session by considering amendments to the Energy and Water Development appropriations bill.

Our first order of business is adoption of subcommittee funding guidance. The proposed guidance is on the table before each Committee member.

These subcommittee allocations provide the same total funding for Defense and non-Defense programs as was approved for fiscal year 2017. They total \$1.07 trillion in base funding and \$104 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations.

In developing these allocations, I have consulted with each of the subcommittees. Adjustments have been made for technical changes that affect scoring across subcommittees. The allocations also take into account large cost increases for activities such as veterans' health care and the renewal of low-income housing contracts.

Negotiations within Congress and with the President may eventually produce a new budget agreement. Until such time, however, it is reasonable that we move forward using FY 2017 funding levels.

I urge the Committee to adopt the proposed allocations.

At this time I will turn to my Vice Chairman, Sen. Leahy, for any remarks that he wishes to make.

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