



COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

CHAIRWOMAN BARBARA A. MIKULSKI

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Contact: Vince Morris w/Appropriations: (202) 224-1010

Opening Statement of Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski

May 22, 2014 Full Committee Markup

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, today opened the fiscal year 2015 markup process by promoting a return to regular order and the need to roll back next year’s planned sequester. The Committee voted on the subcommittee allocations for fiscal year 2015 as well as the fiscal year 2015 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies (MilCon-VA) bill and the fiscal year 2015 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies bill.

The following are Chairwoman Mikulski’s remarks, as prepared for delivery:

“I’m pleased to hold our first Full Committee markup of the year. This morning’s agenda includes adoption of the 302 (b) spending allocations, pursuant to Senator Murray and Congressman Ryan’s (Murray/Ryan) Bipartisan Budget Act; reporting the FY 2015 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bill and reporting the FY 2015 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

“This Committee is governed by the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the land and the rules of the United States Senate. The Constitution says that there should be a review of federal expenditures. That is what our Committee will do as we meet today to mark up our first two appropriations bills.

“We have difficult decisions to make. I am determined that these decisions will be made by consulting with all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to produce bipartisan, fiscally-responsible bills that meet the needs of the American people.

“While we will have differences of opinion on this Committee, our debate will always be characterized by a tone of civility and collegiality. I look forward to building on the progress we made last year when we passed an Omnibus spending bill that complied with the Bipartisan Budget Act’s topline.

“We left no bills behind and made careful choices for the American people. There will be no more government on auto-pilot if I can help it and I hope by next year we will have replaced sequester.

“If we take the time to respect and listen to each other, we can work to get more bang out of our bucks. We can have a stronger economy and be frugal without being heartless by eliminating or reforming programs that prove wasteful.

“I am honored to lead a committee with Members who have so much expertise with excellent Subcommittee Chairmen and Ranking Members.

“I am going to ask the Committee to approve the spending allocation that is before each Member. That allocation totals \$1.014 trillion, which is the precise level agreed to in the Murray/Ryan Bipartisan Budget Act with a bipartisan vote last December.

“Even though we will likely have some small disagreement today on the spending allocation, I look forward to working with Senator Shelby and all of my colleagues to produce bipartisan bills and complete our markups in early July.

“Senator Reid has committed to providing floor time in both June and July so all Members will have an opportunity to be heard.

“For the benefit of all our Members, I want to outline the process for today’s markup. In this order, we will: debate and vote on the spending allocation; vote to report the Milcon-VA bill subject to amendment; vote to report the Agriculture bill subject to amendment; debate and amend the Milcon-VA bill and finally debate and amend the Agriculture bill.”

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