



U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

PRESS RELEASE

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Remarks of Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski

June 20, 2013 Full Committee Markup

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, focused on the importance of the Committee approving a topline of \$1.058 trillion for its twelve fiscal year 2014 bills at today’s Full Committee markup. The following are Chairwoman Mikulski’s remarks, as prepared for delivery:

“Congress must pass a budget resolution by April 15, in order to establish a limit on spending for the coming fiscal year. The Senate passed its budget resolution on March 23, but it has been three months without an agreement between the House and Senate. In the absence of a budget resolution it is essential that the Committee adopt a spending allocation so that we can begin marking up our fiscal year 2014 bills.

“The allocation I am offering totals \$1.058 trillion. This is the same level as the topline established by the American Taxpayer Relief Act that the Senate approved on a bipartisan vote of 89-8 just five months ago. This allocation is \$116 billion below the fiscal year 2010 level. Including Overseas Contingency Operations funding for the war, this allocation is \$45 billion below the fiscal year 2013 level, not including the sequester.

“An allocation of \$1.058 trillion is needed to: promote a thriving economy; provide for our national security; educate our children; train a competitive workforce; invest in medical breakthroughs; care for our veterans; promote energy independence; and build a resilient infrastructure that can support a growing nation.

“An allocation of \$1.058 trillion is consistent with: the American Taxpayer Relief Act; the budget resolution that passed the Senate on March 23; and is more than \$1 billion below the President’s request. For those who say \$1.058 trillion is excessive, that we should spend less, I say, cuts have consequences for the American people.

“Since 2011, Congress has agreed to cut discretionary spending by \$1.4 trillion over 11 years. I do not believe it is responsible to impose even deeper cuts just five months after the Senate voted 89-8 for the spending levels that are assumed in this allocation

“I am not willing to accept that sequester is “the new normal.” The \$967 billion ceiling in this alternative spending allocation and the Ryan budget is the sequester level for fiscal year 2014. It does not meet the needs of a growing nation.

“Just look at the House bills that are being reported based on the \$967 billion budget to understand the damage that will be done. The House underfunds the WIC nutrition program by \$415 million, which means 202,000 fewer women, infants, and children will receive critical nutrition.

“The House cuts Community Development Block Grants by \$1.6 billion, a 50 percent cut from fiscal year 2013, and \$800 million lower than when the program was established during the Ford Administration in 1975. The House cuts Amtrak by 33 percent, the lowest level since 2002. There are 31 million riders who rely on Amtrak.

“The House reduces funding for health, education, and job training programs by 23 percent, to the lowest levels since 2002. We all want to promote energy independence in this country, yet the House cuts renewable energy programs by over \$1 billion, or 57 percent.

“The \$1.058 trillion provided in my spending allocation is the same as in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of just five months ago. The Senate-passed budget resolution does not acknowledge that sequester is the new normal. My allocation assumes that we will work together, across the aisle, across the Dome, and across town with the White House, to find a solution to sequester before our final bills are enacted.

“The American people expect and deserve a Congress that can put aside its differences and work on their behalf. To be frugal but not heartless. To accomplish good in the national interest. I regret that we disagree on our spending allocation and I look forward to moving bipartisan bills through this Committee in the spirit of cooperation and collegiality.”

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