

**Chairman Shelley Moore Capito Statement  
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch**

**Hearing to review to Review the FY2017 Budget Request & Budget Justification  
for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and U.S. Capitol Police**

**March 1, 2016**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Good afternoon. The subcommittee will come to order. Welcome to the first of our fiscal year 2017 budget hearings for the Legislative Branch appropriations subcommittee. We have with us today the Honorable Frank Larkin, Senate Sergeant at Arms, and Chief Kim Dine, Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police.

I would like to start by congratulating Frank Larkin, as he marked his one-year anniversary with the Senate Sergeant at Arms in January. And the subcommittee welcomes back Chief Dine for his final appearance testifying on behalf of the Capitol Police, as he has decided to retire on March 19th, after more than 40 years in law enforcement. We thank you for your many years of service in law enforcement, but especially for more than three years you have given to ensuring the safety and security of the Capitol complex. Truly a crowning achievement in your career. We are of course very sorry to see you go, but certainly understand the desire after so many years in public service to reconnect with your family and your community, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

It is worth noting that the Capitol Police Board just last week announced its selection for Chief Dine's successor, Matthew Verderosa, who is currently serving as the Assistant Chief of Police for the Capitol Police and has been with USCP for 31 years. I believe the Board has made a wise selection in promoting Assistant Chief Verderosa, who obviously has a strong commitment to the Department and to the mission of protecting the Capitol complex. I look forward to working with him in the coming months.

Thank you all for being here with us today. Once again this year we are faced with a very difficult and important discussion on how the agencies you represent will move forward in the coming fiscal year, given the flat budget environment in which we continue to operate. Although a budget agreement was reached last year that provided a slight increase in total discretionary spending, that agreement increases all non-defense discretionary funding by only \$40 million in fiscal year 2017.

Needless to say, in this environment we expect the funding for the Legislative Branch to remain consistent with the fiscal year 2016 funding level, which was \$4.363 billion. Despite the fact that the two-year budget deal was reached before agencies had to lock in their fiscal year 2017 funding requests with the Office of Management and Budget, the agencies of the Legislative Branch have collectively requested an increase of \$294.2 million, or a 6.7 percent increase above the enacted level, for a total of \$4.657 billion.

While I can appreciate that “you don’t get what you don’t ask for,” I find it staggering that agencies across the board are proposing budgets that read more like wish lists than realistic spending plans. We all need to remain cognizant of the current budget environment, realize that funding increases are not in our future, and work together to find the best path forward for the many competing concerns within this bill.

The Sergeant at Arms (SAA) total request is \$201 million, an increase of approximately \$2 million, or 1 percent above the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. The request includes \$72.5 million for salaries and benefits, which would allow the SAA to fill four vacant positions for a total on-board strength of 846, within the current authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) level of 892. The request for the expenses account is \$128.5 million, a decrease of \$1.5 million, or 1.1 percent below the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. The requested increases and offsets within the SAA budget support the need for information technology (IT) improvements to support cyber security initiatives; upgrades to Senate Recording Studio equipment; and a constituent mail system upgrade.

Finally, the Capitol Police request totals \$409.6 million, an increase of \$34.6 million, or 9.2 percent above the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. Of the funding requested, \$333 million is for salaries and benefits to cover fixed cost increases for pay and benefits of the existing staff, and an additional 72 sworn officers and 51 civilians, for a total force of 1,895 sworn officers and 424 civilians. The request for the expenses account is \$76.5 million, an increase of \$10.5 million, or 15.8 percent above the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. This increase would support security systems outfitting at the Alternate Command Center, as well as lifecycle replacement of information technology (IT) systems, equipment and training.

I notice a theme among each of your agencies’ requests: prioritization of increased personnel and funding for information technology (IT) systems and equipment. I look forward to exploring these needs with you and the other members of the subcommittee today and over the next several months as we move through the fiscal year 2017 process.

And now, I’d like to turn to my Ranking Member, Senator Schatz, for any opening remarks he may like to make.

