

**Statement of Full Committee Ranking Member Rep. Norm Dicks**

June 19, 2012

*As Prepared for Delivery*

“Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

“After reneging on the bipartisan Budget Control Act, Republican leadership decided to reserve the very worst austerity for the last few discretionary appropriations bills. And unfortunately, the Agriculture Appropriations Bill is a victim of this poor allocation.

“The legislation we are considering today underfunds financial reform, the Food and Drug Administration and nutrition programs while also containing several special-interest policy riders.

“The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) is **cut 41% below** the President’s request and represents another attempt by Republican leadership to underfund financial reform efforts in the wake of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Recent press stories have reported that the CFTC would be using its new authority under Dodd-Frank Act for the very first time to investigate the record trading loss at JPMorgan. This investigation is a timely example of why the law was necessary and why the agency should be fully funded.

“In addition to cutting funding for FDA in 2013, the Republican bill takes away \$48 million in funding provided previously for the agency. This rescission could come from a range of sources including prescription drug, medical device or tobacco user fees; or salaries and expenses of FDA employees. This is a very bad precedent.

“Last year, Republicans made numerous attempts to cut nutrition programs which would have left low-income women, children and the elderly to fend for themselves during a harsh recession. Fortunately, Democrats were able to beat back these attempts in budget negotiations, making sure those who were eligible could still get the help they needed. This bill cuts the Commodity Supplemental Food Program \$14 million below the budget request and would mean that 43,000 participants, most of them elderly, would not receive needed food packages. Needless to say, Democrats will once again defend nutrition programs from irresponsible cuts.

“As I’ve said many times, I will continue to work with my good friend, Chairman Rogers, in returning the committee to regular order and passing this year’s appropriations bills. However, I will also continue to urge my Republican colleagues to abandon their short-sighted budgeting and controversial legislating on appropriations bills.

“Thank you, Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back.”