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WASHINGTON- House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rep. Norm Dicks made the following comments after release of the FY2013 Financial Services Appropriations bill text:

"After reneging on the bipartisan Budget Control Act, Republican leadership decided to reserve the very worst austerity for the last few discretionary appropriations bills. We are now beginning to see the harsh details of Ryan Budget austerity for domestic priorities in FY2013.

"Unfortunately, House Republicans still haven't retracted from their contradictory 'cut and grow' economic agenda, though leading economists and even Mitt Romney has stated that drastic austerity in the near term would undermine our fragile economic recovery.

"This Financial Services bill has an insufficient allocation that is $1.8 billion below the Senate and doesn't provide for the policy objectives tasked to the agencies within its jurisdiction.

"The IRS budget in this bill is completely inadequate. I'd suggest to my Republican colleagues that if they are serious about deficit reduction, they should not exacerbate our fiscal problems by underfunding the agency in charge of collecting revenue. The IRS now estimates the "tax gap", or the amount of tax liability not paid on time, to be $450 billion dollars per year. In short, honest tax payers are burdened with a disproportionate and growing share of the tax burden while tax cheats go unnoticed due to fewer and less stringent audits.

"The best way to reduce the tax gap is with taxpayer support services and enforcement which is precisely where Republicans have made the deepest cuts in this bill. Every dollar invested in the IRS yields $200 in revenue. At the funding level in this bill, however, the IRS would have to initiate another round of employee buyouts, further expanding the tax gap and continuing the decline in services to taxpayers with information requests.

"I also find it unfortunate that in the immediate aftermath of a record trading loss at JPMorgan and a botched Facebook IPO, Republican leadership continues to opt for a 'self-regulatory' approach with Wall Street. It's disappointing that after the worst financial collapse since the Great Depression, Republicans remain steadfast in underfunding financial reform efforts. To correspond with the drastic cut proposed to the CFTC in the Agriculture bill released today, the SEC - an agency that protects investors; maintains fair and efficient markets; and funds itself entirely through collected fees - is 12% below the President's request.

"The cuts in this bill were not distributed universally. I do appreciate the increased funding for the Small Business Administration including additional investment in the PRIME and Microloan programs that aid businesses in underserved communities. This is welcome news, though it seems to be singled out for a 26% increase over last year at the expense of nearly every other program in this bill.

"Although the bill does not contain nearly as many riders as last year, there are several legislative items that will increase partisan tension as we move forward with consideration. These riders will inevitably be removed in conference negotiations but, in the meantime, only serve to make regular order more difficult.

"In closing, I remain dedicated to working with my good friend, Chairman Rogers, to advance this year's appropriations bills and get our Committee back to regular order. However, I won't refrain from voicing my strong opposition to the Republican leadership's domestic discretionary strategy of short-sighted budgeting combined with partisan legislative riders."

Below is a brief summary of funding levels in the FY2013 Financial Services Appropriations bill

Total Allocation: $21.15 billion | $376 million below the FY2012 enacted level | -$2 billion below the President's FY2013 request.

IRS: The bill provides $11.8 billion total, equal to the FY2012 enacted level and -$945 million below the President's request. Through buyouts and attrition, the IRS cut staffing by 5,000 employees last year. This funding level would make another round of buyouts necessary. This cut would reduce revenue and increase the deficit by $4 billion per year, costing much more in out-years than it saves.

Taxpayer Services: The bill provides $2.24 billion total, equal to the FY2012 enacted level and -$13 million below the President's request.

Enforcement: The bill provides $5.3 billion total, equal to the FY2012 enacted level and -$402 million below the President's request.

Operations Support: The bill provides $3.95 billion total, equal to the FY2012 enacted level and -$529 million below the President's request.

Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC): The bill provides $1.37 billion total, $50 million above the FY2012 enacted level and -$195 million below the President's request.

Small Business Administration (SBA): The bill provides $1.159 billion total, $239 million above the FY2012 enacted level and $43 million above the President's request.

Judiciary: The bill provides $6.5 billion total, -$23 million below the FY2012 enacted level and -$209 million below the President's request. The Judiciary has already reduced staffing by 1,200 in the past year. This cut would mean further staff reductions including probation officers and pre-trial staff.

Election Assistance Commission: The bill provides $5.8 million total, $5.8 million below the FY2012 enacted level and -$5.8 million below the President's request.

POLICY RIDERS

Abortion: Prohibits DC local funds from being used for abortions.

Online Disclosure of Broadcaster Political Ad Files: Prohibits the FCC from implementing a rule requiring television broadcasters to make their public political advertisement files available online.

Czar Language: Contains highly partisan and constitutionally questionable language that blocks funding for a select list of vacant positions in the Administration.

Affordable Care Act Transfer Prohibition: Prohibits HHS from transferring funds to the IRS to implement the Affordable Care Act.

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