Opening Statement of Congressman José E. Serrano

Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee

Hearing on the Supreme Court FY 2012 Budget Request

April 14th, 2011

Thank you Madam Chair. I would also like to warmly welcome Justice Breyer and Justice Kennedy back before this subcommittee. Seeing as they have both been here before, I must really commend them, knowing what they may be in for.

As I have said in past years, this is one of the rare opportunities for our two branches to interact. Because of this, our questions sometimes range beyond strict appropriations issues. As our nation's highest court, many of us look to you for important insights into issues affecting the federal judiciary as a whole.

There is no question that these are difficult budget times. However, as we look for savings, we must be careful not to affect the ability of our federal judiciary to hear cases and dispense justice in a fair and timely manner. We must also be sure to provide the Supreme Court, as both the final authority on our Constitution and the most visible symbol of our system of justice, with sufficient funds to undertake not just your judicial functions, but your public information functions as well.

I look forward to your testimony.

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