

Statement of Ranking Member José E. Serrano at Subcommittee Markup of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill for FY2012

"This Financial Services and General Government bill funds programs that touch the lives of nearly every American, as consumers, as investors, and as taxpayers.

"Although Chairwoman Emerson worked cooperatively with me and our staff throughout this process, the allocation our Subcommittee received is simply inadequate. As a result, the bill that we are considering today will force agencies to decrease performance below the minimum levels that the American public expects.

"I would like to take a moment now to highlight some of the most troubling reductions and what they will mean to both the agencies and to the people they serve.

"The Securities and Exchange Commission, which will receive \$222.5 million less than the 2012 request, will be unable to carry out its new financial oversight responsibilities under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. It will also hinder their ongoing efforts to prevent financial crimes by effectively decreasing the number of agents able to pursue incoming tips.

"With a recommendation for the Judiciary of \$529.7 million below the fiscal year 2012 request, there will be a weakening of the equitable and efficient administration of justice in the Federal courts. More than 5,000 support staff, including probation officers, will be laid off, a staffing loss equal to 25% of the workforce.

"Providing IRS funding at \$11.5 billion for fiscal year 2012 will cause as many as 4,100 employees, mostly enforcement agents, to be furloughed. This will have a significant impact on the ability of the IRS to find tax cheats and result in an increase in the tax gap. Even more troubling is the fact that this cut to IRS funding will actually increase our deficit by about \$4 billion a year beginning in 2013. Every dollar invested in enforcement resources brings in \$5 in tax revenue. This is exactly the sort of short term cut that will do much greater harm than good in the long term.

"I am also particularly distressed that this bill once again interferes in DC's local affairs by imposing social policy restrictions on how the District can spend its own funds. This micromanagement is not the proper role of Congress.

"The General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Building Fund will see a cut of more than \$2.2 billion from their fiscal year 2012 request, which will result in the elimination of 16,000 private-sector construction jobs and 40,000 janitorial and maintenance jobs in existing buildings.

"The Election Assistance Commission will receive only \$6.9 million in funding, which essentially guts the agency. They will no longer be able to help states improve their election practices and equipment to ensure fair and well-run elections in our nation.

"There are numerous other cuts as well that will cause an erosion of consumer protections and assistance to disadvantaged communities. At these funding levels, there will be significant harm to America's consumers, investors, taxpayers, workers, businesses, judiciary, the security of our elections, and even our deficit, and I will be unable to vote for the bill.

"Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the majority and minority Subcommittee staff for all of their hard work. They have been given a very difficult allocation, and I understand they have done the best they can with the hand they were dealt. Throughout this process they have been open and accommodating, and I thank them for that. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of my personal staff."

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