



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Norm Dicks, *Democratic Ranking Member*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, July 6th, 2011

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Statement of Rep. Norm Dicks FY 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 6 -- House Appropriations Committee Ranking Democratic Member Rep. Norm Dicks made the following comments after release of the FY2012 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill text:

“Once again the Republican leadership has presented us with a completely irresponsible and inadequate subcommittee allocation and, in this case, a bill that makes cuts at the expense of jobs and the safety of our communities.

“Among the cuts in this bill that will cause the most harm are huge reductions in State and Local Law Enforcement Grants as well as in the federal program that assists local police agencies to put more cops on the street – the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. The legislation proposed by the Republican leadership completely eliminates the COPS effort in the Justice Department – another example of the absurdity of the Republicans’ bogus “cut and grow” economic theory. State and local police departments are already operating under exceedingly tight budgets and this cut just stretches them even further.

“The bill also slashes funding for the Commerce Department’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in a way that will widen gaps in weather data coverage and diminish our ability to anticipate hurricanes and other natural disasters. Funds requested by the Obama Administration are essential for continued development of NOAA’s weather satellite programs, and the huge reduction contained in this bill will delay these efforts and worsen the nation’s weather data collection ability. Curtailing these critical investments is remarkably shortsighted, especially when lives are at risk.

“The cut in the Federal Bureau of Prisons budget is so large that the agency won’t have enough funding to operate its current facilities for the entire year. The Bureau will not even have funds to hire the staff needed to open three new prisons that were recently constructed at taxpayer expense, but it will have to pay for the crews to maintain those empty facilities. This is classic penny-wise/pound-foolish budgeting, with correctional officers guarding unoccupied prison cells.

“The cut to the Legal Services Corporation would mean as many as 235,000 Americans who can’t afford legal counsel would not receive services. Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and those impacted by natural disasters disproportionately rely on the legal services funded through the LSC, and with a weak economy, this is the wrong time to reduce these services.

“With the funding for so many vital programs and agencies at irresponsible levels, I cannot support this bill and urge my colleagues to oppose it.”

Below is a brief summary of funding amounts and other key provisions in the Commerce, Justice, Science bill:

Total Allocation: \$50.24 billion | **\$3.09 billion below** the FY2011 enacted level | **\$7.43 billion below** the President’s FY2012 Request.

State and Local Law Enforcement Grants: The bill provides **\$1.75 billion** total, **\$1.05 billion below** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$1.3 billion below** the President’s request. It should also be noted that level represents a reduction of \$1.96 billion over the past two years -- a 53 percent cut.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS): No funding for cops hiring or the COPS office. These grants support local law enforcement agencies with hiring, technology, training and security equipment for schools.

Federal Prison System: The bill provides **\$6.3 billion** total, **\$30 million above** the FY2011 enacted level but **\$412 million below** the President’s request. At this funding level the Bureau of Prisons would be unable to open three new prisons that have been built at taxpayer expense.

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA): The bill provides **\$1.98 billion** total, **\$40 million below** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$56 million below** the President’s request.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms: The bill provides **\$1.11 billion** total, **equal to** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$35 million below** the President’s request.

NASA: The bill provides **\$16.8 billion** total, **\$1.6 billion below** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$1.9 billion below** the President’s request.

National Science Foundation: The bill provides **\$6.9 billion** total, **equal to** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$907 million below** the President’s request.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): The bill provides **\$4.48 billion** total, **\$103 million below** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$1 billion below** the President’s request.

Procurement, Acquisition and Construction: The bill provides **\$1.7 billion** total, **\$370 million above** the FY2011 enacted level and **\$350 million below** the President’s request. The vast majority of the funding in this account is essential for continued development of

NOAA's weather satellite programs, and the large cut below the request will delay these efforts and worsen anticipated gaps in future weather data coverage.

Operations, Research and Facilities: The bill provides **\$2.73 billion** total, ***\$452 million below*** the FY2011 enacted level and ***\$650 million below*** the President's request. This account funds an array of important activities related to weather forecasting, environmental protection, ocean and atmospheric research, and fisheries management.

Legal Services Corporation (LSC): The bill provides **\$300 million** total, ***\$105.8 million below*** the FY2011 enacted level and ***\$150 million below*** the President's request. A cut of this magnitude would result in 235,000 fewer Americans receiving LSC services.

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