

Chairman Jerry Moran Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Markup of the FY2019 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill

June 12, 2018

(As prepared for delivery)

Welcome to today's subcommittee mark-up of the fiscal year 2019 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies bill. I want to begin by thanking Senator Shaheen and her staff for their partnership on crafting this measure. This is the first spending bill that we have collaborated on together, and I believe that this mark reflects a strong bipartisan product. There is no shortage of contentious issues connected to this bill, and I appreciate Senator Shaheen's willingness to find common ground to make certain that the appropriations process continues to move forward.

The recommendation before us is consistent with the subcommittee's funding guidance of \$62.995 billion in discretionary spending. This level is \$3.395 billion above the fiscal year 2018 enacted amount. I believe that we have achieved a careful balance between the many competing priorities within this bill. This Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies measure funds activities related to law enforcement; national security; economic development; scientific research; space exploration; and more.

The bill funds the Department of Commerce at \$11.57 billion. We provide an increase of over \$1 billion above the fiscal year 2018 enacted level for the Census Bureau, which is equal to the administration's request.

The 2020 census is entering a critical development phase and the funding we have provided allows the census to prepare to execute this constitutional duty. The data from the census delivers important information to help facilitate the distribution of billions in federal funding for grants supporting states, counties and municipalities, determines the population for congressional apportionment and provides valuable data for continued economic growth.

Additionally, our bill ensures that the National Weather Service has adequate funding to provide timely warnings for severe weather and supports the department's ongoing weather satellite efforts. The timely data accumulated and distributed by the National Weather Service provides valuable information that helps keep Americans safe and helps members of our agricultural community such as those in Kansas plan and prepare.

Critical to our nation's competitiveness and growth, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) within the Department of Commerce bolsters the capacity of individuals, businesses, and communities by maximizing local talent and institutions to innovate and create jobs.

Likewise, NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program is strongly supported in the business community as a positive example of a public-private partnership that leads to innovation and job creation.

Representing a rural yet multifaceted state like Kansas, I continue to support these programs, which allow states and localities to steer priorities to address their specific economic development needs.

This committee continues its strong support of science and innovation by crafting a balanced space program within NASA. The bill funds NASA at \$21.3 billion, which allows critical ongoing science and exploration missions to continue. Furthermore, the bill renames NASA's Office of Education to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Opportunities in order to continue to inspire and harness the excitement of our future science and engineering leaders.

The bill maintains strong funding for the Department of Justice at \$30.698 billion. This measure includes an approximate two percent increase for most federal law enforcement agencies and their operations to support the men and women who keep us safe.

The CJS bill before us also supports the president's request to increase funding for the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). This funding will support the hiring of 75 additional immigration judge teams on top of the 100 teams provided in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus.

These immigration judges and their support staff will help reduce the current backlog of immigration cases, which has grown to a staggering number in recent years – nearly 700,000 as of March 2018.

The bill also includes \$25 million for EOIR's technology modernization, which will enable EOIR to move from a paper to an electronic case management system to assist in reducing the case backlog.

Additionally, this bill fully funds the STOP School Violence Act, which was passed in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus at \$100 million. Of this amount, \$75 million is provided to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for evidence-based school safety programs and \$25 million is provided to the Community Oriented Policing Services Office for security measures related to school safety.

Finally, I want to point out that this bill provides \$4.436 billion in disbursements through the Crime Victims Fund, or CVF.

We have a transparent product and have worked in a bipartisan manner to accommodate member priorities to address the needs of our nation. I urge my colleagues to support moving this bill out of the subcommittee this afternoon, and to vote for the CJS bill at the full committee mark-up on Thursday.

I now turn to Senator Shaheen for any comments that she may have.

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