

**Chairman Steve Daines Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch**

Markup of the FY2019 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act

June 14, 2018

(As prepared for delivery)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Legislative Branch bill, as advanced from the subcommittee, provides \$4.79 billion for Congress and its support agencies.

We've made thoughtful decisions about where to prioritize investments for Fiscal Year 2019. The funding provided allocates resources in a responsible way to maintain current services and allow for critical investments in numerous priorities across the bill.

Three particular priorities that we make significant investments in and take actions on are transparency, security, and good government.

Lastly, I'd note that the Managers' Package includes a provision providing additional funding to the Senate personal office account for the voluntary compensation of Senate interns by Senate offices. This would ensure the broadest possible pool of intern candidates have the ability to serve. I'd like to thank those Senators involved in this effort.

One year ago today, we witnessed tragedy strike on a baseball field in Alexandria, where the lives of our colleagues and their family and friends at that practice were put into imminent danger. The unfortunate reality is that the Capitol complex and its occupants face an evolving and growing threat environment. This bill makes investments that will help meet the security needs of the Capitol campus and ensure the operations of the legislative process.

This bill also addresses cybersecurity threats by providing funding for the continued cybersecurity initiatives of the Sergeant at Arms for Senate networks. Further, a provision is also included demanding rigorous review before any telecommunications equipment from companies linked to Russia, China, Iran, or North Korea can be acquired by Legislative Branch agencies.

The bill also makes investments in improving oversight, and promotes efficiencies in government operations. The bill provides increased funding for the Government Accountability Office to hire

additional staff to further aid Congress in its oversight role, and promotes enhanced transparency of the Congressional Budget Office. Further, the bill includes a provision, known as E-File, which increases public transparency and access to Senate campaign filings. This provision enhances government transparency, reduces unnecessary bureaucratic red tape, and would save taxpayer dollars by having candidates directly file to the Federal Election Commission, instead of the current practice.

These are just a few of the highlights of the bill. I'd like to thank my Ranking Member, Senator Murphy, for his contributions and for working with me to craft this legislation.

Finally, I am encouraged by the progress we are making by reporting bills out of Full Committee, I hope we will continue to move the process forward, bringing the bills to the floor for final passage and not go down the path of a year-end omnibus.

I appreciate the support of the Full Committee in reporting the Legislative Branch appropriations bill to the Senate for consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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