

OPENING STATEMENT

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations

Hearing on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works
FY 2013 Budget Request
March 7, 2012

I'd like to call this hearing to order. Good afternoon, everyone. Our discussion today will be on the fiscal year 2013 budget request for the civil works program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

I'd like to welcome our witnesses, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy and Acting Chief of Engineers Major General Bo Temple.

General, this will be your first appearance before this subcommittee in your capacity as the Acting Commanding General of the Corps of Engineers. I understand you will be retiring later this year after more than 37 years of service. You've had a long and impressive tenure, both domestically and internationally,

and I'd like to personally thank you for your service to the nation both here at home as well as abroad in wartime.

Unfortunately, both you and Secretary Darcy will be on the receiving end of some frustration on my part today. The Administration is once again avoiding the tough choices necessary to provide adequate resources for your critical missions, perhaps assuming that Congress will do it instead. While this same process happens year after year, Administration after Administration, the disconnect between annual funding levels and the budget request level makes a challenging job even more so for the military and civilian professionals of the Corps who serve the interests of this nation so well.

And this has been a challenging year for the nation and for the Corps. The floods of 2011 devastated large swaths of the Midwest, South, and Northeast. The Corps had some tough decisions to make, decisions that were at times controversial. This Committee worked hard to ensure you have the necessary resources to protect public safety and guard against future floods. I expect you'll be able to give us an update today on how those efforts are proceeding.

As you know, I firmly believe that the projects and activities of the Corps of Engineers are necessary for a robust and thriving economy. The Administration has

grossly underfunded you again this year – the request before us underfunds even dam safety programs!

However financially limited we find ourselves each year, we must find the right balance of investments into our most critical infrastructure needs, with an eye towards those that protect our nation, and support and improve our economy, and yes, provide jobs! Congress partially addressed this problem last year by providing \$429 million of additional non-emergency resources to fill holes that the Administration created in such critical programs as dredging and flood control.

We also directed you to report back precisely on which projects you would prioritize for funding, and why. Now, the Corps refuses to provide us with the transparency we need to understand how it makes its funding decisions. This disregard of congressional direction is simply unacceptable. If we're going to have any confidence that the right balance of investments is being achieved, the Administration must stop making decisions without providing full rationale.

Again, I'd like to welcome our witnesses to the subcommittee. Secretary Darcy, please ensure that the hearing record, questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the Subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than four weeks

from the time you receive them. Members who have additional questions for the record will have until close of business tomorrow to provide them to the Subcommittee office.

With that, I'll turn to Mr. Pastor for his opening comments.