

**Opening Statement of the Honorable John Shimkus
Subcommittee on Energy and Power and Subcommittee on
Environment and the Economy
Joint Hearing on "The FY 2013 EPA Budget"
February 28, 2012**

I want to join my colleagues in welcoming Administrator Jackson back to the committee. The Administration has requested \$8.3 billion to fund the EPA in FY 2013. Yet for such a significant amount of money there has been little detail on where these funds will be spent – both in documents this committee has been provided or in the over fourteen hundred pages of budget justification.

Members of this committee need to know exactly what this president's EPA plans to spend on important programs under our jurisdiction. Based upon what I see, only about one percent less spending is proposed from last year. With such a minimal decrease from an agency whose funding has skyrocketed under this administration, I have concerns we are not committing our maximum effort toward scaling back wasteful spending.

Whether it is Clean Air, Drinking Water, Solid Waste Disposal Act or Superfund, all these programs deserve a complete review. I hope this administration is committed to working with us to promote a transparent look into where, by statute, the dollars and cents flow at EPA. This help will go a long way toward assisting our efforts to give confidence to the American public that we are protecting human health and the environment, trimming unnecessary spending where appropriate, and eliminating duplicative programs.

Equally as important as the money we are spending is the left over money we are not spending. In this case, I am referring to billions of dollars EPA has that it will carry over from prior year appropriations. One aspect of EPA funding – which represents many millions of dollars in spending – is not even in the detailed EPA budget justification. Rather than sitting on these funds, EPA should bring down spending requests in its budget or work to spend down these funds in areas where it makes sense.

Lastly, activities by this agency – both regulatory and non-regulatory – incur public and private costs. This committee needs to know what all EPA activity is costing taxpayers directly from funding we authorize and appropriate in Congress. Even more important, especially during these economic times, is what those actions could mean in terms of jobs and the economy.

Our economy continues to struggle and one of the fastest ways for us to get back on course is by providing commonsense regulatory certainty by eliminating unnecessary and burdensome regulations. This will spark American job creators and help develop the conditions essential for economic growth and job creation in the U.S. Companies that want to stay here or come back need to be assured that we understand how to balance oversight and public health regulation with innovation and growth.

Again, I appreciate Administrator Jackson being here to help our understanding as we move forward with the FY 2013 budget. I look forward to having an open dialogue with you as we work through the process beginning with questions at today's hearing.

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