

DISSENTING VIEWS OF
HONORABLE ROBERT A. BRADY

Committee Democrats believe that we should look for all opportunities to alleviate the impact of the automatic sequestration cuts. Unfortunately House Resolution 115 fails in this regard and as a result I must oppose this resolution.

We imposed the equivalent of a sequester on House committees for the last two years, first by imposing a 5% budget reduction in the first session of the 112th Congress with House Resolution 147, and then an additional reduction of an average of 6.4% during the second session with House Resolution 496. To continue piling on with additional cuts without looking at ways to minimize damage to the functionality of House committees to operate is irresponsible.

Testimony at our oversight hearing by both chairs and ranking members confirmed the impact that the last two years of defunding have imposed on committees. There have been significant hardships in paying the salaries of staff, conducting oversight hearings, items that are essential in conducting the people's business.

Committee Democrats argued for a more balanced approach, freezing each committee's authorization for this year and next year at last year's level. Every committee knows that it can work with these figures and fulfill its responsibilities to the House as each committee has been living with the current numbers since 2012. This approach of a three year freeze was offered by Committee Democrats during mark-up and unfortunately was defeated. The Democratic substitute would not only have frozen funding but would have added a requirement for committees to report back at the end of the year on how much the agencies had saved.

Not only was this more common sense approach and more effective means at reporting cost savings rejected but allowing a freeze on at least one of the committees that will be looking at a more vigorous workload was also rejected. Rep. Lofgren offered an amendment to freeze Judiciary committee funding as it faces comprehensive immigration reform, gun violence prevention, regulatory reform, job creation and commercial competitiveness.

The minority staff levels for the judiciary committee had to be reduced last Congress from 26 to 22 and as a result they are already currently short-staffed. The type of work performed by the Committee commands staffers with a legal background but with further reductions the more experienced staff may be forced to leave because of financial constraints.

Make no mistake the last thing that we should want is to lose highly trained and experienced staff when it could be avoided with a more balanced common sense approach.

I urge the defeat of House Resolution 115.

Robert A. Brady