

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Authorization and Oversight Plan

118th Congress



Chairman Bruce Westerman

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to clause 2(d)(1) of Rule X of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources (Committee) adopted the following Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 118th Congress. The Committee will conduct rigorous oversight of the Executive Branch to strengthen America's environment and economy, promote access to public lands and natural resources, and enhance conservation through innovation. The Committee will review all laws and programs within its jurisdiction to assess their application, administration, execution, and effectiveness while providing transparency and accountability. Through such examination, the Committee seeks to eliminate waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

Congress has a responsibility to keep the Executive Branch accountable to the American people and ensure decisions by agencies are open and transparent. The adopted Authorization and Oversight Plan identifies agencies and programs with lapsed authorizations that received appropriations in the previous fiscal year and agencies or programs with permanent authorizations that have not been subject to a comprehensive review in the prior three Congresses. The Authorization and Oversight Plan also outlines the initial and primary focuses of the Committee and additional oversight activities are expected to arise throughout the first and second sessions of the 118th Congress.

The Committee will consult, as appropriate, with other committees of the House that may share jurisdiction on any of the oversight activities the Committee may consider.

REGULATORY REVIEW

Committee oversight activities will assist in the collection of relevant information to support the Committee's legislative agenda, monitor the implementation of public policy, and ensure the government's performance in subject matters within the Committee's jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Committee will examine the effectiveness of natural resources laws. Oversight focus will also be provided on how laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Wilderness Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and others may exceed their regulatory purposes resulting in costly litigation and other adverse consequences to American taxpayers.

ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

The Committee will conduct thorough oversight of ethics compliance at the federal departments and agencies under its jurisdiction. The Committee will review the operations of departmental ethics offices, ethics training, guidance, and conflicts of interest compliance, among other considerations to ensure that administration officials and employees who violate ethics rules and the law are held accountable.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY AND GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY

The need to ensure scientific integrity at the agencies and bureaus within the Committee's jurisdiction will include the oversight of various government funding recipients. The Committee will conduct oversight of federal grants awarded by the agencies and bureaus within its jurisdiction to ensure a grantmaking process that is efficient, fair, and transparent.

ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Budget and Spending Review – The Committee will review the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for federal land management programs and agencies under its jurisdiction, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The Committee will review agency spending to ensure the proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars. In particular, the Committee will examine whether the Biden administration is allocating sufficient resources to permit oil, gas and coal development, as well as spending at the USGS and under the Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Expanding Domestic Energy Production – Americans are facing the most expensive heating bills in 25 years, food prices are up 10.9% from the previous year, gas prices in November 2022 were the highest ever, and nearly 34% of American households reduced or skipped basic expenses to pay energy bills. The Committee will focus on the importance of increasing American-made energy to meet the growing energy demand, create more high-paying jobs here at home, increase our economic competitiveness, reduce energy costs for American families, reduce carbon

emissions and improve U.S. national security and energy security for our allies –all while displacing foreign sources and reducing global emissions.

Onshore Oil and Natural Gas Programs – The Biden administration has leased fewer acres for oil and gas production offshore and on federal land than any presidential administration in its early stages since the end of World War II. In the 118th Congress, the Committee will examine the lack of oil and natural gas leasing on federal lands in the western United States, including focusing on administrative actions that have created permitting delays and disincentivized production on federal lands. The Committee will work on streamlining onshore energy permitting and ensuring compliance with the quarterly lease sale requirements of the Mineral Leasing Act. The Committee will also conduct oversight regarding implementation of the over \$4 billion allocated under the IJA for cleanup of orphaned and abandoned wells to ensure efficient use of such funds.

Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Natural Gas – The Committee has jurisdiction over the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and will work to ensure safe and responsible production of America’s offshore oil and natural gas resources. The Biden administration has canceled planned lease sales and has failed to publish a new five-year plan for offshore leasing, even though the previous plan expired in June 2022. The Committee will work to ensure certainty in the offshore five-year planning process, direct specific offshore lease sales, and promote new safety and environmental efforts through innovation while ensuring multiple use on the OCS.

Renewable and Alternative Energy – In the 118th Congress, the Committee will conduct oversight over current solar, geothermal, and wind programs operated by the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service. The Committee will continue to examine ways to streamline the leasing and permitting of renewable energy as well as the required infrastructure for those energy sources. The Committee will also continue to conduct oversight of the Biden administration’s actions that would significantly hinder renewable energy and infrastructure development.

Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) – The Committee will conduct oversight of the ONRR to ensure accountability of accurate and appropriate collection of energy and mineral revenues. The ONRR collects an average of over \$10 billion in annual revenue, making this office responsible for collecting one of the federal government’s largest sources of non-tax revenue.

Mineral Security – The Committee will conduct aggressive oversight of domestic hardrock mineral resources, including critical minerals, especially in regard to the nation’s current and planned production on federal lands. The Committee will also review ways to responsibly increase production through legislation. To further these goals, the Committee will examine the steeply rising global demand for hardrock minerals, our nation’s insufficient rate of domestic production to meet this demand, and the resultant risks to our mineral supply chain brought by overreliance on foreign sources. As a necessary part of ensuring mineral security, the Committee will conduct oversight of the Biden administration’s actions to withdraw, delay, and otherwise stymie hardrock mineral development on federal lands. Additionally, the Committee will closely

monitor the actions of the Department of the Interior’s Interagency Working Group on mining reform, as well as the implementation of the hardrock abandoned mine lands program established by the IJA.

Coal Mining Regulations and Leasing – The Biden administration and the Department of the Interior continue to wage a war on coal. The Committee will conduct extensive oversight of the Biden administration’s actions regarding the federal coal program, such as the reinstatement of the leasing moratorium and protracted delays in permit issuance, that have stifled coal mining, production, and use. The Committee will also track the implementation of the \$11.3 billion in additional funding for the Abandoned Mine Lands Program allocated under the IJA, including an examination of departmental guidance regarding the use of such funds.

United States Geological Survey (USGS) – The Committee supports programs at the USGS for the accurate siting of hardrock minerals and other resources, such as the Earth MRI program, as well as mapping programs to support hazard risk assessment and land use planning. The Committee will examine growing concerns about the unauthorized creation and expansion of certain USGS programs, including significant mission creep and lack of transparency. Particularly of concern are the growing non-resource or hazard programs at USGS and other Department programs, including vast expansions of unauthorized funding for climate related programs and the potential duplication of geospatial data and other mapping efforts. The Committee intends to closely examine the current operations of USGS and may consider action to consolidate and streamline the focus of the agency to reduce waste and duplication.

FEDERAL LANDS

Budget and Spending Review – The Committee will review the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for federal land management programs and agencies under its jurisdiction, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The Committee will identify areas to eliminate waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement and ensure the proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars. In particular, the Committee will examine spending under the Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure IJA.

Forest Health and Wildfires – Across the nation, more than one billion acres are identified as at risk for wildfire and millions of acres continue to burn in catastrophic wildfires every year, particularly in the West. The Committee will conduct oversight on forest health, wildfire prevention and suppression, and the need for more active management of our national forests. The Committee will continue to monitor USFS’s progress towards meeting its goal of treating an additional 20 million acres of federal land over the next 10 years through the “Confronting the Wildfire Crisis” strategy. Additionally, the Committee will investigate how failure to manage federal forests results in unnecessary pollution and emissions, economic damages, loss of life and property, destruction of wildlife habitat, and degraded air and water quality.

Deferred Maintenance at our National Parks and Public Lands – Despite historic investments in deferred maintenance through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), maintenance backlogs at the federal land management agencies continue to increase exponentially. Nowhere is this issue more acute than at NPS, which saw its backlog increase from roughly \$11.9 billion in 2018 to over \$21 billion in 2022. This nearly \$10 billion increase in the backlog over the past four years is indicative of greater underlying problems in how we manage our parks and deserves renewed attention and oversight.

Federal Land Acquisition – The Committee will conduct oversight of the federal land acquisition process, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the growing size of the federal estate. Proposals for expanding the federal estate will be examined with due regard for the merits of the proposal, spending constraints, input of local stakeholders, our national need for access to vital resources, and the protection of private property rights. The Committee will work with local and state stakeholders to identify lands in the federal estate that the federal government no longer wants or needs, particularly in states and counties predominately comprised of federal lands.

30x30 – The Committee will conduct oversight of the Biden administration’s 30x30 Initiative (also referred to as the “America the Beautiful” initiative) which seeks to preserve 30 percent of the nation’s lands and waters by 2030. This will include continued oversight of spending from the \$1 billion America the Beautiful Challenge Fund.

Access and Recreation – The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to expand access to our national parks, national forests, and public lands for recreational and sportsmen’s activities. The Committee will evaluate proposals to ensure greater access to, and enjoyment of, the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities offered by our public lands.

Conservation versus Preservation – The Committee will conduct oversight on promoting conservation with a purpose that ensures our public lands provide secure domestic sources of energy, food, fiber, minerals, jobs, and recreation under appropriate conservation standards. The Committee will conduct oversight of preservation and unilateral land designations, such as national monument designations under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and mineral withdrawals, that usurp the authority and will of Congress, State, and local stakeholders. The Committee will conduct oversight of the BLM and USFS to ensure the agencies follow their multiple use and sustained yield mandate.

Grazing – When managed properly, grazing of federal lands can enhance rangeland health and reduce the build up hazardous fuels. As one of the most effective wildfire reduction tools, grazing can also help conserve habitat for wildlife species like the Greater Sage Grouse. The Committee will examine ways in which grazing can benefit the economy and the health of federal range lands, and ways to better protect the practice against frivolous litigation and unnecessary regulation.

Sustainable Funding Sources for Conservation Programs – The Committee will conduct oversight on the longevity of revenue streams for conservation funds, including LWCF, the Historic Preservation Fund, and the National Parks and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund, especially due to recent efforts to ban new oil and gas leases on federal lands and waters. These

proposed bans unquestionably undercut the GAOA and threaten the long-term solvency of important conservation programs.

Natural Climate Solutions – From planting trees to incentivizing innovative grazing practices, public and private lands must play a large role in future discussions on responsible, commonsense solutions to climate change. The Committee will continue to review new innovative practices that benefit the environment without sacrificing rural jobs and our nation’s overall economic health. This includes engaging with stakeholders to identify new frontiers in research and development that should be explored and further opportunities to support American innovation.

Park Partnerships – To truly enter the 21st Century, the NPS should adopt more market-based solutions and engage in public-private partnerships to maximize agency resources and enhance visitor services. The Committee will continue to seek out examples of successful partnerships to learn from their successes and encourage the NPS to actively promote new partnership opportunities.

Checks and Balances – The Committee will examine administratively imposed activities and designations to ensure that these actions fully respect the interests and culture of the affected local people and do not infringe on authorities that more properly belong to elected officials in Congress and local government.

WATER AND POWER

Increasing Water Supplies – Visionary leaders developed much of the western water supply infrastructure that urban and rural communities have depended upon for generations. These existing water storage and delivery projects continue to serve millions of ratepayers and food consumers nationwide, but many of their water supply and delivery and hydropower generation operations are impacted by drought, regulations, litigation and other factors. The Committee will examine ways to improve water supplies through an all-of-the-above approach, including the protection and promotion of new water storage, to help achieve a policy of water abundance. The recent storm events in California are illustrative of the need to capture more water that could ultimately be conveyed to farms, cities and the environment.

Budget and Spending Review –The Committee will examine the Bureau of Reclamation’s current spending and proposed annual budget requests. The Committee will examine spending under the Inflation Reduction Act and the IIJA. In particular, the Committee will examine whether the agencies are being accountable to American taxpayers, water and power ratepayers, and other beneficiaries to ascertain whether they are fulfilling their core missions.

Colorado River Basin – The Committee is aware of the ongoing, serious drought impacting communities throughout the seven-state Colorado River region. The Committee plans to work with the Executive Branch, tribes, the seven Colorado River Basin states and their congressional delegations and stakeholders to focus on the need to help mitigate and resolve this situation.

Power Marketing Administration Budgets – The Committee will conduct oversight of the four Power Marketing Administrations, which include the Bonneville Power Administration, the Western Area Power Administration, the Southwestern Power Administration, and the Southeastern Power Administration. These agencies sell and deliver hydropower generated at federal dams when water is available at these facilities. Many municipal, rural electric cooperatives and tribes depend on this hydropower and the thousands of miles of electricity transmission needed to deliver it. The Committee will examine the agencies’ proposed budgets and the opportunities and challenges they are facing in fulfilling their core missions.

Protecting and Promoting Hydropower as a Clean, Renewable Energy Source – The Committee will examine ways to protect and promote large-scale and small-scale hydropower generation at existing and potential facilities within its jurisdiction. Hydropower is an emissions-free renewable energy that provides baseload and peaking power for millions of electricity consumers nationwide. Hydropower also serves as a backup electricity resource for intermittent renewable power. Federal hydropower resources have provided the above benefits for generations. Drought, federal regulations, and litigation have curtailed some of these hydropower producing dams. In addition, federal agencies under this Committee’s jurisdiction have imposed mandatory operating conditions when it comes to licensing and re-licensing non-federal hydropower facilities. Such conditions can decrease hydropower generation and impose higher costs that are borne by ratepayers. Meanwhile, the Department of Energy reported in 2012 that over 12 gigawatts of hydropower could be generated at existing non-powered dams in the United States. Additionally, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that over 1.41 gigawatts of new hydropower could be generated at existing canals and water pipelines.

Indian Water Rights Settlements – The Committee has longstanding jurisdiction over Indian Water Rights Settlements, which can be beneficial to Indian and non-Indian settling parties and can provide some water supply certainty for these parties. Since American taxpayer dollars are authorized in many of these settlements, the Committee will continue to examine how each settlement meets the Department of the Interior’s longstanding criteria and procedures relating to these matters.

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

Budget and Spending Review – The Committee will conduct oversight of the current spending and proposed annual budget requests of the National Marine Fisheries Service, certain programs of the Department of Commerce’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under the Committee’s jurisdiction, and the Department of the Interior’s U.S Fish and Wildlife Service. The Committee will examine how the agencies utilized regular appropriations and additional funding provided through the IJA and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) – The Committee will examine the efficacy and modern-use of the ESA. The ESA is frequently weaponized in litigation to prevent active management and critical multiple use on federal lands. In addition, the ESA is used to prevent access to critical water resources for the West, harming human health, agriculture, and the environment. The Committee will conduct oversight hearings to consider proposals to update and modernize the ESA. The Committee will also continue to monitor the Convention on International Trade in

Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora which governs international activities related to the ESA.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act – The Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) is the primary statute regulating commercial and recreational fishing in federal waters. The MSA was last reauthorized in the 109th Congress. While the Committee passed a partisan MSA reauthorization bill in the 117th Congress, no oversight hearings were held. Any reauthorization must first provide for robust consideration by the committee with an examination of policy issues related to reauthorization and opportunities for stakeholders and the regional fishery management councils to provide input.

30x30 – Ocean conservation is not mutually exclusive to ensuring that our federal offshore waters simultaneously remain a vital, sustainable, working, and recreational resource for communities and fishermen. The Committee will continue to exercise oversight of expansions of Marine Protected Areas and Marine National Monuments in order to meet the Biden administration’s arbitrary 30x30 goals.

Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper – NOAA recently published its final rule to implement catch limits and recreational data calibration framework actions for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper. NOAA’s flawed rule is intended to prevent overfishing by modifying each state’s annual catch limits (ACLs) for red snapper. This new formula will require calibrating states’ high-quality data to the low-quality Federal Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data. The new calibration required by the rule could significantly impact some of the states’ red snapper quota this year. The Committee will conduct oversight of NOAA as the agency moves forward with calibrating this data.

Protecting Salmon from Sea Lions – In 2018, Congress amended the Marine Mammal Protection Act to allow for states and tribes to remove California and Steller sea lions from a management zone on the Columbia River and its tributaries where they prey on at-risk salmon and other species. The Committee will examine and pursue ways to enhance the removal of these predators to protect tribal and other fishery stocks in the Columbia and other basins.

Offshore Wind Impacts to Fisheries and Protected Species – The Committee will examine the potential effects and mitigation of offshore wind energy development on fisheries and protected species.

Aquaculture – The Committee will examine ways to develop aquaculture opportunities in the United States.

Public Access and Management within the National Wildlife Refuge System – The Committee will conduct oversight of access to, and management of, the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System. This will include proposals, such as a proposed lead ammunition and fishing equipment ban, that could restrict such access and be cost prohibitive for some in the hunting and fishing communities.

Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) – NOAA has proposed unprecedented regulatory burdens in the name of protecting whales on the Atlantic Coast. These actions impose a huge risk to industry and private citizens alike. The Committee will examine whether these regulations are based in sound science and reasoning.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Budget and Spending Review – The Committee will examine the budget request and staffing levels for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Indian Health Service (IHS), Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BFTA), and other agencies, offices and functions relating to Indian and Alaska Native affairs. The Committee will conduct oversight of agency programs with expired authorizations, to determine whether such programs warrant reauthorization, updating, or termination.

Federal Barriers to Economic and Energy Development on Indian Lands – The Committee will examine how best to remove federal restrictions on Indian lands so that tribes may have greater control over their own affairs. Certain federal laws and policies governing public lands are applied to lands held in trust or restricted status for tribes and individual Indians. Many activities occurring on tribal land are often subject to approval of the Secretary of the Interior. Indian tribes have and continue to demonstrate that they are best suited to manage their land and resources contained therein.

Tribal Forestry – In 2018, Congress passed certain provisions of the Resilient Federal Forest Act which provided tribes the authority to participate in federal Good Neighbor Authority projects. Tribes are good stewards of the environment and have the knowledge to better manage their forests. Unfortunately, severe fires throughout the United States have impacted many tribal nations. The Committee will conduct oversight to analyze and determine what additional tools for tribes will benefit forest management activities and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire on tribal and non-tribal lands. The anticipated release of the Indian Forest Management Assessment Team’s 2023 report will provide opportunities for Congress to work with Indian tribes on solutions to improve the health of Indian forests.

Natural Resources Management – The Department of the Interior holds approximately 56 million acres of land in trust or restricted status for tribes and individual Indians. In 2018, Congress passed the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2017. The Committee will review the implementation of the Act, its furtherance of the goal of increasing tribal self-governance and economic development opportunities, and ensure tribes are able to develop their resources on their lands should they choose to do so.

Land Buyback – In 2010, the Claims Resolution Act provided a one-time direct appropriation of \$1.9 billion to the Department of the Interior for the consolidation of highly fractionated Indian land, pursuant to the Indian Land Consolidation Act. By 2017, nearly all of the \$1.9 billion was spent yielding little progress on reducing land fractionization. Beginning in 2021, the Biden administration began requesting new funding for Indian land consolidation. The Committee will conduct oversight of the operation of the land consolidation program to ensure federal expenditures of funds for this program are efficient and effective.

Fee-to-Trust Issues – The Committee will conduct oversight of the Department of the Interior’s fee-to-trust policy. The Supreme Court’s 2009 *Carcieri v. Salazar* decision significantly impacted judicial actions concerning Indian lands and tribal recognition since 1934. The Department failed to provide information related to which tribes and lands are affected by *Carcieri*. The Department’s failure obstructed potential bipartisan legislative action to reform and improve the process of acquiring lands for Indians in a balanced manner that reflects contemporary land use and ownership among tribal and non-Indian communities in 21st century America.

Alaska Natives – The Committee will review the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and other laws pertaining to Alaska Natives (including the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980) and the Biden administration’s related actions to place land into trust in Alaska.

Law Enforcement in Indian Country – The Committee will conduct oversight of the implementation and impact of current law, policy, and agency action concerning the safety of indigenous people, including laws meant to address issues regarding missing and murdered indigenous people. The Committee will also examine law enforcement in Indian Country and tribal jurisdiction provisions, such as those included in the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization. In addition, the Committee will review federal policies and programs related to law enforcement in Indian Country and determine whether such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Indian Health Care Improvement Act Implementation / Indian Health Service – The Committee will review the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, with a focus on the delivery of medical services to Indian people, particularly those in remote reservations where access to health care is difficult and costly. Congress has increased Indian health funding nearly each year since fiscal year 2010. Despite these funding increases, reports from the U.S. Government Accountability Office continue to reveal that standards for the quality of care in federally operated Indian health care facilities are absent. Additionally, there continues to be a shortage of health care professionals throughout the twelve IHS areas. To ensure efficient program operation and modernize Indian health policy, the Committee will conduct oversight of Indian health programs.

Indian Gaming – According to the National Indian Gaming Commission, in fiscal year 2021 the Indian gaming industry generated \$39 billion in revenues from 510 gaming operations owned by 243 federally recognized tribes pursuant to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988. Indian gaming is inextricably linked with fee-to-trust and tribal recognition. It must be addressed in the context of the Committee’s continued review of fee-to-trust issues, including issues related to the *Carcieri* decision. The Committee may conduct hearings specifically on gaming to ensure that appropriate enforcement and oversight by the National Indian Gaming Commission, Department of the Interior, and Department of Justice is being conducted.

INSULAR AFFAIRS

Budget and Spending Review – The Committee will conduct oversight of the budget of the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) within the Department of the Interior. The OIA serves a critical mission as territories rely heavily on the funding they receive from federal grants and OIA for their economic stability. Each U.S. territory should exercise its own self-determination, rather than Congress imposing a “federal government knows best” approach on the Insular areas.

Energy Resources in the Insular Areas – Federal efforts should ensure affordable and reliable energy systems are in place that meet the individual needs of each Insular area, rather than forcing a federally mandated transition to renewable energy sources without regard for each territory’s particular circumstances and needs.

Oversight of the Office of Insular Affairs – The Committee will review the fundamental issues facing each of the territories and freely associated states such as, support and development of self-government and self-determination, economic development and self-sufficiency through the private sector, accountability of federal funds, implementation and enforcement of federal laws, implementation and funding for the Compacts of Free Association, and management of limited land and water resources.

Freely Associated States – The Committee will conduct oversight of the implementation of the Compacts of Free Association and assistance provided by the Department of the Interior’s OIA. The Compacts of Free Association entered into by the United States with three Pacific island nations, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia, will expire in 2023 and 2024. These compacts continue a long-standing relationship between the United States and these nations, and enables mutually beneficial defense and economic connections between nations.

Health and Economic Well Being of the Territories – The Committee will conduct oversight of the programs that support the U.S. Insular Territories of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Such programs are intended to increase the health, wellbeing, and economic activity of the territories. The Committee will examine the programs’ efficacy and efficiency for residents and citizens of the territories and for U.S. taxpayers.

Puerto Rico – The Committee will continue to conduct oversight over the implementation of the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA), and the ongoing debt restructuring efforts. In addition, the Committee will review actions conducted by the Financial Oversight Board established under the Act.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Foreign Influence – During the 115th Congress, the Committee initiated an investigation into the effect of environmental and natural resources lawsuits filed by special interest groups on U.S. national security interests. The investigation revealed excessive litigation’s adverse impact on

military training, testing activities, and accessibility. The Committee will continue to investigate the potential foreign influence on U.S.-based environmental organizations that utilize laws within the Committee's jurisdiction to hamper U.S. national security interests.

Border Security and the Environment – The Committee will continue oversight of the challenges faced by U.S. Border Patrol agents on federal borderlands and the environmental impact of illegal border crossings and drug smuggling. Large portions of federally owned borderland offer remote locations popular for drug and human smugglers. Stakeholders reported that bureaucratic regulations and policies related to federal natural resources laws slow or impede Border Patrol's operations on federally owned land. Moreover, the increased illegal activities on the border deprive the public of access to federally owned lands and cause significant damage to local environments. The Committee will continue to examine the significant environmental, economic, and social consequences on federal borderlands caused by illegal immigration and promote appropriate solutions.