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Congress of the United States

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
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Testimony of
The Honorable Sam Graves (MO-06)
Chairman, Committee on Small Business
Hearing on Committee Funding
Committee on House Administration
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Thank you, Chairman Lungren and Ranking Member Brady, for the opportunity to appear before the Committee to report on the Small Business Committee's budget.

As of October 31st, the Small Business Committee had spent 69 percent of its total allocation for 2011. This is good news as it indicates that the Committee has been able to live within its means and still do the work required of us, even with the five percent cut we sustained this year.

To date, the Committee has held 37 hearings in Washington and four field hearings. The Committee also has conducted five mark ups and participated in several roundtable events in Members' districts. Other oversight activities conducted outside of the hearing room have also yielded positive results.

This activity reflects the Committee's narrow legislative authority and broad oversight jurisdiction, as well as our priority of bringing the Committee directly to our constituents back home.

We have also invested in outreach through technology and launched a new feature on our website called "Open Mic" that allows small business men and women to communicate their concerns and ideas directly to the Committee. The Committee's success is reflected in the awards that have been received for both the website and social media communications this year.

As a Committee with one of the smallest budgets and staff in Congress, we are proud of these accomplishments.

In reviewing the Committee's budget, it is important to note that 2011 is somewhat of an anomaly. The change in majority status required many staff changes at the beginning of the year. For the majority, this meant a gradual hiring of staff over the first few months and significant personnel savings early in the year when our staff was small. Those savings will not be realized in 2012.

Further, our plan was to add more staff, but we stopped hiring in mid-2011 when we learned of the potential for further cuts in 2012. Additional staff would be dedicated to oversight and regulatory review, which are important priorities for our Committee. This staff could help us further the goals of cutting waste out of government and reining in regulation to provide a better environment for our job creators. We will continue to evaluate our personnel to ensure we are maximizing resources under the budget constraints.

While we have been forced to make adjustments to our plans and projections in anticipation of the 6.4% cut in 2012, we will continue to prioritize effective oversight, travel to Members' districts, and technology that provides greater transparency and access for the public.

We believe that with proper planning, we will have the resources next year, even with the 6.4% cut, to make the investments that will allow us to meet the Committee's objectives.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions.