

Statement of Hon. David Dreier

July 27, 2005

Subcommittee on the Legislative and Budget Process -
Comparative Study of International Multi-year Budgeting

Thank you, Chairman Diaz-Balart. I'd like to thank you, Ranking Member Hastings, and the other Members of the Subcommittee for conducting this hearing. I'd also like to express my gratitude to the witnesses for their knowledge and expertise they are going to share about budget systems of other nations.

I am pleased to see our Committee continuing to take an active role in examining the budget process, with the goal of making changes that more realistically reflect current realities. This Subcommittee spent last spring studying the history and evaluating the mechanics and effectiveness of our current budget process. The concept of budgeting on a biennial basis was among the litany of budget reform proposals discussed and received praise from both Democrats and Republicans.

I consider a move to a two-year budget to be a necessary component of budget process reform because it will improve

government fiscal management, programmatic oversight, increase budget stability and predictability, and make the government more cost effective. Our annual rush to complete action on budget, authorization and appropriations bills not only results in a poor budget process, but also reduces the amount of time available for consideration of non-budget matters as well. This limited amount of time for deliberation has a detrimental effect on the work product of both the executive branch and the legislative branches. Because I believe biennial budgeting deserves consideration as we evaluate comprehensive budget reform, I introduced H.R. 2664, the Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act earlier this year.

I look forward to the witnesses' testimony in order to learn from the experiences of other democracies to help strengthen our current budget process to resolve the seemingly entrenched challenges posed by the confluence of politics, procedure, and oversight responsibilities.