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**Statement of Rep. Elijah E. Cummings**  
**Ranking Member, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform**

**Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations and  
Procurement Hearing on "Unfunded Mandates and Regulatory Overreach, Part II"**

**March 30, 2011**

Thank you, Chairman Lankford and Ranking Member Connolly.

The original purpose of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, which was passed in 1995, was "to make Congress more accountable when imposing new Federal mandates on states, local governments, and tribal governments without providing adequate funding to comply with such mandates."

As a former member of the Maryland House of Delegates, I am sensitive to the budgetary pressures facing state governments. I believe it is important for Congress and agencies to carefully evaluate and balance potential impacts before imposing costly new requirements on state, local and tribal governments.

I look forward to today's testimony, particularly from the witness who represents state government. I hope to hear her assessment of how the Act has performed to date and how it might be improved.

I think we should be careful, however, not to use this review as a vehicle to unfairly criticize regulations that affect the private sector. In the three months since this Committee has been operating under the Republican majority, this Committee has already held hearings titled, "Assessing Cumulative Impact of Regulation on U.S. Manufacturers", "Regulatory Impediments to Job Creation" and "Regulatory Impediments to Job Creation: The Cost of Doing Business in the Construction Industry." Today's hearing, in fact, is part II of "Unfunded Mandates and Regulatory Overreach."

The titles of these hearings imply that regulations are to blame for injuring the private sector. So far, our hearings have ignored the economic and social value that regulations have in protecting the health, welfare, and safety of the American public. As I have said in the past, I fully support a comprehensive review of regulations to ensure that they are effective and efficient. But it is important that we base such a review on facts rather than rhetoric.

The fact is that state and local governments are often the direct beneficiaries of federal regulation. Ensuring that industry addresses its own waste and pollution, for example, can save local governments from significant expenses that they should not have to bear.

Mr. Chairman, I hope we can all work together to identify additional ways that we can help create jobs and support the work of our state and local governments.

With that, I thank you for calling today's hearing and yield back the balance of my time.