

April 27, 2021

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Chairman, House Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
204-E Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jason Smith
Ranking Member, House Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
507 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Yarmuth and Ranking Member Smith:

As members of the Power of the Purse Coalition, we would like to thank you for your continued leadership on reasserting the legislative branch's constitutional authority over the nation's tax and spending policy; in other words, the power of the purse. This is a bipartisan, bicameral issue that impacts accountability and integrity within our governmental system. As a coalition of diverse organizations from across the ideological spectrum, we strongly support reforms that will help Congress reassert its rightful prerogative over the power of the purse.

The upcoming April 29, 2021, committee hearing, "Protecting our Democracy: Reasserting Congress's Power of the Purse," is a welcome step toward determining what Congress should do to take back its spending power and to bring more accountability and transparency to the executive branch. We thank you for holding the hearing and examining the relevant issues.

The Congressional Power of the Purse Act, which was introduced on April 28, 2020, is a strong bill that would provide much needed reforms aimed at restoring Congress's power over tax and spending decisions and reining in an increasingly unfettered and unaccountable executive branch. The Founding Fathers purposely separated the power of the purse from the executive branch's power of the sword to ensure that the branch of government closest to the people—Congress—would be the most powerful actor in the system.

We were encouraged to see a number of our coalition's priorities included in the Congressional Power of the Purse Act. Top among these priorities include bringing more transparency to the apportionment process; strengthening the ability of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to monitor executive branch compliance with budget and appropriations laws; and reining in the nearly unilateral executive authority in the use of emergency powers. We enthusiastically applaud these reforms and support the reintroduction and advancement of the Congressional Power of the Purse Act in the 117th Congress.

If enacted, this bill would go a long way toward restoring the proper balance between Congress and the executive branch. Recalibrating the growing imbalance is crucial in moving toward a more accountable and transparent federal government that acts responsibly with the American

people's hard-earned tax dollars and in addressing the public's persistent concern about government corruption.

Thank you for your leadership, and we would be happy to assist you however possible in this effort.

Respectfully,

Demand Progress

FreedomWorks

National Taxpayers Union

Project On Government Oversight

Protect Democracy

R Street Institute

Taxpayers for Common Sense