

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee,
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Senator Van Hollen, and Senator Hyde-Smith:

We are an ideologically diverse coalition of organizations that have come together to preserve and promote the constitutional role of Congress, including Congress's power of the purse. We write to you to express our ongoing support for the provisions of the Financial Service and General Government (FSGG) Appropriations bill recently passed by the House that would take an important first step toward strengthening and reaffirming Congress's fundamental constitutional authority over federal spending.

While we have varying views on other parts of the legislation, several provisions would increase the transparency of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) management of federal funding, ensure the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Congress itself are better able to fulfill their responsibilities to conduct oversight, and provide more information to the public about how their tax dollars are being spent. Specifically, Sections 204, 747, 748, and 749 of the House-passed FSGG bill would:

- Require OMB to publicly disclose apportionment decisions, which are legally binding and are currently made in secret.

- Require that funding is made available with sufficient time for it to be obligated in accordance with the law and Congress's intent.
- Require executive agencies to provide budget and appropriations information promptly to GAO, and to notify Congress if delays or restrictions in apportionments of appropriations would delay or disrupt funding directives enacted by Congress.

We urge you to include these provisions in the Senate's FSGG Appropriations bill to take an important step forward in meaningfully restoring Congress's power of the purse through these enhanced transparency and reporting requirements. These provisions will help ensure the funds appropriated by these and other Appropriations legislation are used in accordance with the law and Congress's intent. These measures will also ensure Congress and the GAO have the information necessary to exercise effective oversight of taxpayer dollars.

Thank you for your consideration, and we are happy to provide assistance and answer any questions that you have.

Respectfully,

Demand Progress
FreedomWorks
Lincoln Network
National Taxpayers Union
Project On Government Oversight
Protect Democracy
R Street Institute
Taxpayers for Common Sense