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## Key Vote NO on FY 2016 Omnibus Appropriations

Ever since John Boehner's parting "gift" in August, another horrible, bloated omnibus spending package was pretty much inevitable. Now, with days to spare before the new year, we can see the result. Predictably, friends of limited government won't like it much. The spending increases alone are bad, but the combination of policy riders that did and did not make the final bill sealed the deal. **Thus, on behalf of our millions of activists nationwide, FreedomWorks opposes this year's omnibus spending bill, and will score against it on our Online Congressional Scorecard for 2015.**

Before getting into the multitude of bad parts of the omnibus that have led us to oppose its passage, it is only fair to acknowledge a few of its positive attributes.

- It continues the prohibition on sending any more taxpayer dollars to ObamaCare's Risk Corridors program, ensuring that health insurance companies won't receive a bailout on your dime. As ObamaCare continues to fall apart, struggling insurers will just continue asking for more bailouts to compensate, so stopping the bleeding now is crucial.
- It gets rid of the long-obsolete ban on U.S. oil exports should be a good help to our economy and should help generate some economic growth and job creation. Another nice win here.
- It prevents the IRS from advancing an expected rule that would have more strongly regulated what 501(c)4 non-profit organizations can do and say with regard to politics.

These things are great, but they shouldn't be mistaken for a win in the context of the rest of this behemoth spending bill. First, there are the riders that didn't make it into the bill, including but not limited to:

- Most of the limits on EPA regulations that were passed during the appropriations process this year were stripped from the final bill. That means no stopping the massively destructive new and existing coal power plant rules, the ozone rule, or the "waters of the United States" rule.
- The bill fails to defund other harmful regulations, including the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule that has been fairly described as "ObamaCare for your IRA".
- Major amendments to protect Americans against abuses of government surveillance authority were stripped from the bill for the second consecutive year. These included limitations on the government's content collection authority under section 702 of FISA, and a prohibition on the NSA working with the National Institute of Standards in Technology to weaken internet encryption standards.

And then there are the new bits. First and foremost, the base spending level of the bill alone is unacceptable, fulfilling Boehner's final betrayal this August by adding \$80 billion in new spending over two years. Our total national debt approaches \$19 trillion, deficits are already slated to start rising again, yet Congress' priority is to spend tens of billions more. Beyond the numbers, there are many specific new items that conservatives should abhor, including:

- \$1.2 billion in new funding for the Department of Education, including over half a billion in new funding for the ineffective Head Start Pre-K education program. It is hard to make progress with reining in the Department of Education's top-down manipulation of our children's education when Congress insists upon massively increasing its resources.
- What amounts to a bailout of the International Monetary Fund, by increasing the U.S. quota for that fund. This means the IMF will have access to even more of our taxpayer dollars to fund bailouts of irresponsible state actors such as Greece.
- The Cybersecurity Act of 2015. To begin with, this nearly 140-page, brand new program should be considered on its own, not tucked into a massive bill no one really has time to fully read. This bill is the final product of mashing together the Senate's CISA bill and the House's two bills, and manages to contain most of [the worst provisions](#) of each of them. This new cyber information sharing program won't stop hackers from stealing your data, but it certainly will allow federal law enforcement and surveillance programs to capture way more of your data without a warrant. Just this portion of the bill alone is a solid reason to oppose the omnibus.

This isn't a comprehensive list of the good, bad, and ugly of the omnibus, but it should suffice to explain why FreedomWorks cannot but oppose the latest annual big government spending frenzy. Negotiated behind closed doors, released to Congress with two days to process its over 2,000 pages, this is another exhibit of the worst that Congress has to offer.