



February 14, 2019

## **Key Vote NO on the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Conference Report to H.J.Res. 31**

On behalf of our activist community, I urge you to contact your senators and representative and ask them to vote NO on the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Conference Report to H.J.Res. 31. The text of the 1,169-page bill, which contains funding for the remaining seven appropriations bills that Congress has thus far failed to pass for Fiscal Year 2018, was released overnight. It spends profligately as Congress recklessly attempts to cover for itself being nearly six months late on doing its job.

In the new House Democrat rules package, Democrats tried to sell the idea that leadership under them would be different than leadership under former Speaker Paul Ryan. One change made to sell this lie was expanding the “three-day rule” meant to require ample time for members to consider legislation before voting on it to a full 72 hours. Unsurprisingly, this rule hasn’t been adhered to very frequently thus far into the 116th Congress, and this spending package is no exception.

Just as House Republican leadership in March 2018 dropped the text of a 2,232-page omnibus spending bill less than 24 hours before forcing members to vote on it — waiving the three-day rule in the process — House Democratic leadership is today doing the same. Likely fewer than 12 hours will have passed between members laying eyes on this bill and members casting their votes on it. This means that nobody will have read it and nobody will be fully aware of what is in it, but, of course, members will be told they need to support it or be blamed for another shutdown.

This is simply no way to govern.

After signing the 2018 omnibus spending package, President Trump realized this. He promised he would never again sign another bill like it. Yet, this bill totals well over 1,100 pages and

would have to be passed and signed in under 48 hours to avoid a shutdown. Congress should learn from its past mistakes and allow for adequate time to debate the contents of this monstrosity. If they do not, President Trump should make good on his promise and veto this bill. Additionally, this legislation — in all of its profligate glory — spends and spends and spends taxpayer dollars, with no regard for the looming fiscal crisis our country faces. Just this week, we reached \$22 trillion in national debt. Republicans who claim to be for fiscal responsibility should bow their head in shame if they choose to support hundreds of billions of dollars of spending at such a time. As national security leaders have consistently pointed out over the past few decades, our growing national debt is a dire threat to the wellbeing of our country, not only domestically but also abroad.

Finally, not only does the bill spend too much — likely well over \$300 billion — but it also spends on the wrong things, and in some cases, fails to spend on the right things. For example, the bill includes a total of \$73.5 billion in funding for the supplemental nutrition assistance program, or food stamps, despite the failure to enact conservative reforms to this program in 2018. Also, it includes \$12.258 billion for disaster relief funding, when at the end of 2018, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Relief Fund still had \$27.6 billion unspent.

Notably, for President Trump's agenda, the bill entirely fails to provide appropriations for one of his greatest legislative victories thus far in his term — the First Step Act. Last December, he signed a transformative criminal justice reform bill into law, and just a few weeks ago he spent a large portion of his State of the Union address featuring this success and the individuals already impacted positively by these reforms. It is unacceptable that Congress should not find it important to fund this massive legislative victory, while it simultaneously has no problem funding above and beyond for wasteful programs.

FreedomWorks will count the vote on the Conference Report to H.J.Res. 31 when calculating our Scorecard for 2019 and reserves the right to score any related votes. The scorecard is used to determine eligibility for the FreedomFighter Award, which recognizes Members of the House and Senate who consistently vote to support economic freedom and individual liberty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Brandon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Adam Brandon  
President, FreedomWorks

