



February 7, 2018

Key Vote NO on the Bipartisan Budget Act

On behalf of our activist community, I urge you to contact your senators and representative and ask them to vote NO on the Bipartisan Budget Act. The bill would bust the spending caps by \$296 billion over two years, spend an additional \$80 billion or more in disaster relief, provide for \$160 billion in the defense/nondefense slush fund, and suspend the debt limit through 2018. The proposed offsets are little more than budget gimmicks that will never come to fruition. Additionally, the spending levels established under this deal will establish a new baseline for federal spending, drowning taxpayers and future generations with red ink simply because Congress lacks the political will to do the right thing.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) announced Wednesday afternoon that congressional leaders' "bipartisan, bicameral negotiations" had yielded a "significant agreement" to amend the short-term spending bill passed by the House on Tuesday to bust the Budget Control Act (BCA) spending caps for FY 2018 and FY 2019 by exorbitant amounts, and attach a number of other riders to further increase spending.

The bill passed by the House on Tuesday included an extension of government funding through March 23, with a full year of appropriations totaling to \$659.2 billion for the Department of Defense, as well as funding for various health programs the National Flood Insurance Program. The Senate was expected to take up this already less-than-ideal spending bill, which would have waived the sequestration effects of spending above the \$549 billion BCA discretionary defense spending cap. What Majority Leader McConnell is proposing, however, is far, far worse.

The questionable politics by Majority Leader McConnell of jamming the House with a deal they did not anticipate or agree to a day before the initiation of another government shutdown should a spending deal fail to be reached are the least of the concerns in this package.

The "agreement" would bust the discretionary spending caps set by the BCA by nearly \$300 billion over FY 2018 and FY 2019. Poised to spend \$153 billion over the caps in FY 2019 alone, one year under this deal would increase the caps by more than the increases over the last four years combined, which totaled just over \$140 billion.

The deal also includes \$140 billion for defense in the off-budget Overseas Contingency

Operations slush fund, \$20 billion for nondefense in off-budget emergency spending, over those two years, and between \$80 and \$90 billion in disaster relief. By supporting this deal, Republicans would be complicit in making Minority Leader Chuck Schumer's (D-N.Y.) dream come true today: throwing "the pointless and arbitrary sequester caps to the ash heaps of history." He said this of the deal, which he regards as "a genuine breakthrough."

Anything that is lauded by Schumer as a "breakthrough" is sure to be an abomination. This deal truly is. The Budget Control Act was one of the biggest successes of Republicans in Congress in the past decade, and was a deal struck by a Republican-controlled House with a Democrat-controlled White House and Senate.

When Democrats moved to increase the debt limit in 2011, House Republicans refused to comply without meaningful spending cuts that resulted in the Budget Control Act. This time however, it is Republicans leading the talks of to roll the debt limit suspension through 2018 in with this already fiscally irresponsible deal.

This is the worst-case scenario for fiscal conservatives under a Democratic president and Democrat-controlled Congress, but it is happening under a Republican president and Republican Congress. This is reckless spending, and a massive tax hike on future generations, made under the guise of "bipartisan negotiations." This is deceitful, aggressive overspending by those elected to protect taxpayers. Leaving Americans with higher budget deficits likely over \$1 trillion, and a national debt that will balloon to over \$21 trillion, is no way to govern, and its weight falls squarely on the shoulders of taxpayers.

This deal makes clear that Republicans only care about deficits and out-of-control federal spending under a Democratic president. With a Republican president and Republican control of the House and Senate, there is no other conclusion that one can possibly draw.

For these reasons, I urge you to call your senators and representative and ask them to vote NO on the Bipartisan Budget Act. FreedomWorks will triple weight the vote on our 2018 Congressional Scorecard. 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', written in a cursive style.

Adam Brandon
President, FreedomWorks