



March 5th, 2021

Re: Support “Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act”

Dear Member of Congress:

I write in support of the “Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act,” legislation re-introduced by Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.). This legislation would empower lawmakers to shrink the size and scope of the federal government and reassert congressional authority over the power of the purse.

For years, Congress has failed to pass a budget on time and instead relies on short-term continuing resolutions bills. To avoid missing holidays at home, lawmakers end up passing one giant omnibus bill in December, often hours after releasing thousands of pages of legislative text. This broken process leads to a lack of accountability and encourages overspending. In fact, even before the Coronavirus pandemic, government spent \$1 trillion more than takes in.

One part of this broken process is unauthorized spending programs, which make up nearly [30 percent](#) of the government’s discretionary budget. For years, Congress has ceded its authority to fund these programs and they are rolled over each year with little scrutiny or oversight.

Congress typically establishes federal programs via authorization bills. These programs can be authorized to operate for a specific period of time or indefinitely. After the programs are established, Congress then appropriates money to fund federal programs. However, Congress routinely appropriates money to programs that are no longer authorized.

The USA Act fixes this problem by implementing several reforms.

The USA Act would defund these zombie programs by putting all unauthorized programs on a pathway to sunset in 3 years. After the first year, an unauthorized program’s budget is reduced by 10 percent. In the second and third year, its budget decreases by 15 percent until sunset at the end of the third year. If Congress decides to reauthorize the program during this three-year period, the program ceases to sunset and remains fully funded.

The USA Act also establishes the “Spending Accountability Commission” (SAC), to establish authorization schedules for all discretionary programs, to conduct rigorous oversight over discretionary spending, and to suggest areas to cut.

By setting a three-year reauthorization schedule and creating this commission, this law would hold Congress accountable by ensuring that it continues to review the validity of federal programs, keeping spending on programs under better control.

Congress must work on streamlining and reducing government spending as much as possible. Rep. McMorris Rodgers’ USA Act is an important piece of taxpayer-friendly legislation that sets Congress back on a path of fiscal accountability. **All members of Congress should support this legislation.**

Onward,

Grover G. Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

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IWV Supports the Unauthorized Spending Accountability Act

March 2, 2021

Independent Women's Voice, which fights for policies that enhance people's freedom, opportunities, and well-being, is proud to support the Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act, sponsored by Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers.

If enacted, the USA Act will put unauthorized federal programs on a pathway to sunset in three years. It will also create a Spending Accountability Commission (SAC) to establish an authorization schedule of all discretionary programs, conduct a review of all mandatory spending programs, and assist Congress in finding ways to cut spending. This will increase government accountability and reign in unnecessary federal spending, preventing the waste and misuse of taxpayer dollars.

Unauthorized spending are the dollars spent by federal agencies that have no authorization by Congress. To ensure that money is being spent well, funding for these programs should be reviewed periodically. And if Congress does not have the time to periodically review a program, then it is not worth taxpayer funding.

The USA Act could save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. In fiscal year 2020, the Congressional Budget Office calculated **\$332 billion** in federal funding being spent despite their original Congressional authorizations having expired. This means that the government needlessly spent billions of dollars on programs that were most likely intended to operate and be funded for a limited period of time.

IWV is proud to support the Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act and thanks Representative McMorris Rodgers for her leadership on this important issue. Given that our federal debt is soaring to unprecedented and alarming levels, it is more critical than ever that we work to eliminate wasteful spending and protect taxpayers. We urge all Members of Congress to work toward the bill's swift passage and take a meaningful step towards restoring fiscal accountability in government.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hadley Heath Manning".

Hadley Heath Manning

Director of Policy

Independent Women's Voice