

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) The Whistleblower Protection Coordinator shall have direct access to the Inspector General as needed to accomplish the requirements of this subsection.”.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES OF CIGIE.—Section 11(c) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION.—The Council shall—

“(A) facilitate the work of the Whistleblower Protection Coordinators designated under section 3(d)(C); and

“(B) in consultation with the Office of Special Counsel and Whistleblower Protection Coordinators from the member offices of the Inspector General, develop best practices for coordination and communication in promoting the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures, allegations of reprisal, and general matters regarding the implementation and administration of whistleblower protection laws, in accordance with Federal law.”.

(c) REPORTING.—Section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by amending paragraph (20) to read as follows:

“(20)(A) a detailed description of any instance of whistleblower retaliation, including information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation; and

“(B) what, if any, consequences the establishment actually imposed to hold the official described in subparagraph (A) accountable;”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) whether the establishment entered into a settlement agreement with the official described in subsection (a)(20)(A), which shall be reported regardless of any confidentiality agreement relating to the settlement agreement; and”.

(d) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 117 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-199; 126 Stat. 1475) is repealed.

(2) RETROACTIVE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on November 26, 2017.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VA SENIOR EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2772) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for requirements relating to the reassignment of Department of Veterans Affairs senior executive employees, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Department of Veterans Affairs Senior Executive Accountability Act of 2018” or the “SEA Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. SEMIANNUAL REPORTS ON REASSIGNMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SENIOR EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 727. Reassignment of senior executives

“(a) APPROVAL OF REASSIGNMENTS.—No individual employed in a senior executive position at the Department may be reassigned to another such position at the Department unless such reassignment is approved in writing and signed by the Secretary.

“(b) SEMIANNUAL REPORTS REQUIRED.—(1) Not later than June 30 and December 31 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the reassignment of individuals employed in senior executive positions at the Department during the period covered by the report.

“(2) Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall describe the purpose of each reassignment and the costs associated with such reassignment.

“(3) For purposes of paragraph (2), costs associated with a reassignment may only include the following:

“(A) A salary increase.

“(B) Temporary travel expenses for the individual or the family of the individual.

“(C) Moving expenses.

“(D) A paid incentive.

“(c) SENIOR EXECUTIVE POSITION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘senior executive position’ has the meaning given such term in section 713(d) of this title.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 725 the following new item:

“727. Reassignment of senior executives.”.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1415

SERGEANT ERNEST I. “BOOTS”
THOMAS VA CLINIC

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4687) to designate the health care center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Tallahassee, Florida, as the Sergeant Ernest I. “Boots” Thomas VA Clinic, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the title of the bill.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee submit a copy of the bill to the desk.

Does the gentleman seek to withdraw his request?

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the unanimous consent request is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

SPENDING CUTS TO EXPIRED AND UNNECESSARY PROGRAMS ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 923, I call up the bill (H.R. 3) to rescind certain budget authority proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to the Congress by the President on May 8, 2018, in accordance with title X of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act 1974, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 923, the amendment printed in part C of House Report 115-712 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act”.

SEC. 2. RESCISSION OF BUDGET AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the special message transmitted by the President on May 8, 2018, to the House of Representatives and the Senate proposing the rescission of budget authority under section 1012 of part B of title X of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 682 et seq.), the rescissions described under subsection (b) shall take effect immediately upon the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) RESCISSIONS.—The rescissions described in this subsection are as follows:

(1) Of the unobligated balances identified by the Treasury Appropriation Fund Symbol 12X1600, \$148,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(2) Of the unobligated balances identified by the Treasury Appropriation Fund Symbol 12X1004, the following amounts are permanently rescinded:

(A) \$143,854,263 of amounts made available in section 2601(a)(5) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79).

(B) \$146,650,991 of amounts made available in section 2701(d) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246).

(C) \$33,261,788 of amounts made available in section 2701(e) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246).

(D) \$12,960,988 of amounts made available in section 2701(g) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246).

(E) \$7,447,193 of amounts made available in section 2510 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246).

(F) \$155,332,698 of amounts made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the wetlands reserve program.

(3) Of the unobligated balances identified by the Treasury Appropriation Fund Symbol 12X1072, \$50,000,000 of amounts made available under the heading “Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) are rescinded.

(4) From amounts made available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Rural Housing Service—Rental Assistance Program” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) that remain available until September 30, 2018, \$40,000,000 are rescinded.

(5) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Rural Housing Service—Rural Community Facilities Program Account” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts, \$2,000,000 are rescinded.

(6) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Rural Business-Cooperative Service—Rural Cooperative Development Grants” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts, \$14,705,229 are rescinded.

(7) Of the amounts made available by section 9003 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79), \$36,410,174 are rescinded.

(8) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Rural Utilities Service—High Energy Cost Grants” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts, \$13,275,855 are rescinded.

(9) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Rural Utilities Service—Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program Account” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts, \$37,000,000 are rescinded. No amounts may be rescinded under this paragraph from amounts that were designated by the Congress as an emergency or disaster relief requirement pursuant to the concurrent resolution on the budget or the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(10) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Agriculture—Forest Service—Land Acquisition” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts that were derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, \$16,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(11) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Commerce—Economic Development Administration—Economic Development Assistance Programs” from prior year appropriations, \$30,000,000 are rescinded.

(12) Any unobligated balances of amounts provided by section 129 of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 110-329) for the cost of direct loans as authorized by section 136(d) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140) are rescinded.

(13) Of the unobligated balances made available by section 1425 of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (Public Law 112-10) for the cost of loan guarantees for renewable energy or efficient end-use energy technologies under section 1703 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15513), \$160,682,760 are rescinded.

(14) Any unobligated balances of amounts made available under the heading “Department of Energy—Energy Programs—Title 17—Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program” in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) for the cost of guaranteed loans authorized by section 1705 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 are rescinded.

(15) Of the unobligated balances available from section 301(b)(3) of Public Law 114-10 and pursuant to section 2104(m)(2)(B)(iv) of the Social Security Act, \$5,149,512,000 are rescinded.

(16) Of the amounts made available in section 1115A(f)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act, \$800,000,000 are rescinded.

(17) Of the amounts deposited in the Child Enrollment Contingency Fund for fiscal year 2018 under section 2104(n)(2) of the Social Security Act, \$1,865,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(18) Of the unobligated balances available in the Nonrecurring Expenses Fund established in section 223 of division G of Public Law 110-161, \$220,000,000 are rescinded.

(19) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Public Indian Housing Programs—Public Housing Capital Fund” in the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 113-235), \$1,192,287 are rescinded.

(20) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Public Indian Housing Programs—Public Housing Capital Fund” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-113), \$5,243,222 are rescinded.

(21) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Public Indian Housing Programs—Public Housing Capital Fund” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31), \$31,980,121 are rescinded.

(22) Of the unobligated balances available until expended under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Public Indian Housing Programs—Public Housing Capital Fund”, including from prior year appropriations, \$518,885 are permanently rescinded.

(23) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Justice—Legal Activities—Asset Forfeiture Fund”, including from prior year appropriations, \$106,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(24) Any unobligated balances of amounts made available in section 1899K(b) of division B of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) are rescinded.

(25) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of State—Complex Crises Fund” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (114-113), \$30,000,000 are rescinded.

(26) From amounts made available under the heading “Millennium Challenge Corporation” in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) and prior Acts, \$52,000,000 are rescinded.

(29) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Transportation—Federal Highway Administration—Appalachian Development Highway System” in the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (Public Law 105-66) or any other Act, \$45,240,246 are rescinded.

(31) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of Transportation—Federal Railroad Administration—Capital Assistance for High Speed Rail Corridors and Intercity Passenger Rail Service”

in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) \$53,404,128 are rescinded.

(32) Of the unobligated balances available for Transit Formula Grants from fiscal year 2005 and prior fiscal years, \$46,560,000 are permanently rescinded.

(33) Of the unobligated balances available in the Treasury Forfeiture Fund established by the Treasury Forfeiture Fund Act of 1992 (31 U.S.C. 9705), \$53,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(34) Of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Department of the Treasury—Departmental Offices—Community Development Financial Institution Fund Program” for the Bank Enterprise Award Program from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) \$22,787,358 are rescinded.

(35) From amounts made available to the Capital Magnet Fund for fiscal year 2018 pursuant to sections 1337 and 1339 of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 4567 and 4569) \$141,716,839 are permanently rescinded.

(37) Of the unobligated balances available in the “National Service Trust” established in section 102 of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, \$150,000,000 are permanently rescinded.

(38) Of the amounts made available in section 9 of the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-92), \$132,612,397 are rescinded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader or their respective designees.

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to present H.R. 3, the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act. This package of rescissions withdraws nearly \$15 billion in funds previously appropriated to various Federal programs and agencies. These funds are rescinded from programs and agencies that no longer need or cannot spend the money or from programs that no longer exist. When such funding goes unused for years, those funds should be returned to the Federal Treasury, as taxpayers should expect.

Sweeping up these extra funds will not cause undue harm or hardship to the essential activities at these Federal agencies. In fact, year after year, rescissions are included in our regular appropriations bills, and dozens of such rescissions have previously received bipartisan support.

The bottom line is that it is not in the interest of the taxpayers to let outdated, unnecessary dollar balances sit idle, especially when the Nation is facing such high debt and deficits.

As I have said many times, Congress controls the power of the purse, and it is up to us to keep our fiscal house in order in order to reduce wasteful spending, unnecessary spending, whenever possible.

Such rescissions are not new. Over the past 20 years, there have been hundreds proposed and approved in both Democratic and Republican administrations.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to this Republican rescission package.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump and congressional Republicans are trying to take deconstructing government to a new level. They are proposing to take \$15 billion in Federal funds away from the citizenry and investment in our economy budgeted for the Children's Health Insurance Program, medical innovation, advanced manufacturing, infrastructure projects, and the list goes on.

Why?

They are doing so to pay for a tiny fraction of their \$1.5 trillion tax cut for the rich. This is just another example of their irresponsible governance.

What is on the chopping block?

With this rescission package, the majority would cut the balances in the Children's Health Insurance Program by \$7 billion, simply send them back to the Treasury. They would cut funding when we should be investing in critical services for children and families.

They would cut funding that helps workers who have lost their jobs due to trade access health insurance.

They would cut funding for AmeriCorps and prevent more people from serving vulnerable populations in their communities.

They would cut funding for critical healthcare infrastructure projects.

Just a few months ago, we used these funds to replace the Biosafety Level 4 laboratory at the Centers for Disease Control. This lab is necessary for handling the most highly pathogenic organisms, such as Ebola, other hemorrhagic fevers, and smallpox. This is a critical piece of public health infrastructure. Why do Republicans want to cut its source of funding?

They would cut funding for programs that rural America depends on, rural housing programs, rural water programs. For example, it would rescind \$15 million from the Value Added Producer Grant Program, a vital lifeline for small businesses in rural America.

Well, I want to remind Americans that the President and his House allies are betraying the promise they made to the American people, Mr. Speaker.

In March, we agreed to historic and urgently needed funding for our families. The omnibus funding bill for 2018 made important investments in health, education, and job programs. It made critical investments that boost the middle class.

It was not easy. We worked hard to come to an overwhelmingly bipartisan agreement that benefits the people of this country. And now, months later, the Trump administration and House

Republicans are violating the spirit of that agreement. It is not a serious way to govern.

This is money for our children, not for the President to claw back to placate fervent conservatives who maintain their drumbeat on Twitter and TV.

And what do Republicans get for breaking their word, going back on their promises and taking from children?

Well, according to the Congressional Budget Office, Mr. Speaker, the actual impact of this rescission package would amount to \$1 billion over 10 years. That is less than 1 percent of the Republicans' \$1.5 trillion tax scam for the rich. In fact, it is one one-hundredth of a percent.

If Republicans are so worried about spending, why not rescind the money from the tax giveaway to corporations that are using it to buy back stock? They are not raising wages.

Well, they appear to be beholden to the lobbyists and the insiders who have profited so exorbitantly from that gift. And according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 83 percent of the tax scam benefits will go to the top 1 percent.

And those big boosts to paychecks? They have not materialized.

You look at Walmart. They spent \$20 billion on stock buybacks for their shareholders; yet, according to the Roosevelt Institute, had Walmart instead dedicated that money to workers, they could have raised wages to more than \$16 an hour. They did not.

Mr. Speaker, budgets, spending, appropriations, and rescissions reflect our values, and it is clearer than ever that President Trump, Speaker RYAN, and the Republicans in the Congress value corporations and the wealthy, not people who work for a living or those who are the most vulnerable. They rig the rules for the rich and rob from the poor to pay for it.

Congress must reject President Trump's proposal and put forth policies that work for the middle class and families and for those who are most vulnerable, not balance the budget on their backs.

The American people would be far better served if Congressional Republicans joined with Democrats to fund critical investments in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and protecting our retirement programs.

When teachers are protesting across the country for fair pay, Republicans want to go backwards. When Americans are stuck in jobs that do not pay enough to live on, Republicans want to go backwards. When 40 percent of households cannot afford the basics of a modern, middle class lifestyle, Republicans want to go backwards.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable, and the American people deserve better.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the

gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority whip.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Appropriations Committee for yielding.

I rise in strong support of this rescissions package.

I want to commend President Trump for bringing this bill to Congress, a bill that would, once passed, be the largest rescissions package in the history of our country. This is a process that has been used by Republican and Democratic Presidents alike over decades, and it is an important process to make sure that we keep our fiscal house in order.

Mr. Speaker, I know some of my colleagues on the other side are feigning concern over the Children's Health Insurance Program, and most of them, by the way, voted against the funding for the CHIP program in the first place when that bill was before Congress due to a full funding. In fact, we overfunded the CHIP program, and so, as that surplus money was identified, we made sure that that money is going to be able to be used to help reduce the deficit and go to other things.

This letter from the Congressional Budget Office confirms that not one child will lose insurance when this bill is passed because we overfunded the CHIP program.

Mr. Speaker, I include this letter from the Congressional Budget Office in the RECORD.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 8, 2018.

Re Proposed Rescissions for the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Majority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. LEADER: At your staff's request, the Congressional Budget Office has reviewed the Administration's proposed rescissions R18-15 and R18-17 for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) that were transmitted to the Congress on May 8, 2018. The proposals would rescind approximately \$7 billion. Of this, \$5.1 billion would be rescinded from the unobligated balances made available by section 301(b)(3) of Public Law 114-10, and \$1.9 billion would be rescinded from amounts made available for fiscal year 2018 under the Child Enrollment Contingency Fund, section 2104(n)(2) of the Social Security Act.

Specifically, you asked for our assessment of the proposed rescissions' effect on federal spending and insurance coverage. Authority to distribute the funds to states made available under section 301(b)(3) expired in 2017. In addition, based on information from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CBO projects that the rescission from the Child Enrollment Contingency Fund would not affect payments to states over the 2018-2028 period. For these reasons, CBO estimates that rescinding the unobligated balances would reduce budget authority by \$7 billion, but would not affect outlays, or the number of individuals with insurance coverage.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that, as there was a

concern about a potential Ebola outbreak, we were able to go back and work with our OMB Director, Mick Mulvaney, who worked really closely with us to make sure that this bill was put together properly to address what the President wanted, while also making sure that we were able to respond to any potential Ebola crisis.

I especially want to thank my colleagues JEFF FORTENBERRY and General DON BACON from Nebraska for making sure that we will, with this bill's passage, still be able to respond to any possible Ebola outbreak. Hopefully, we don't have one, but we will be prepared in that event thanks to the hard work of Congressmen FORTENBERRY and BACON.

So, overall, Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill to help us reduce the deficit, keep our fiscal house in order, while properly funding those programs like CHIP that were so important to so many of us who did vote for it. I am glad that my colleagues who voted against it are now realizing it is an important program. Maybe they will support it next time.

But, in the meantime, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for this bill, and then I further encourage the Senate to take this bill up quickly because it only requires 51 votes to pass, not 60. I would urge full passage. Let's get this on the President's desk.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

But the gentleman hasn't told us that the money they take from CHIP is not going into programs for children. It is going back to the Treasury, so we will take a look at cuts to Head Start, maternal child health programs, childhood immunization, newborn screening, child lead poisoning prevention, and many others. Tell the whole story.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

□ 1430

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, it is outrageous that we are beginning this appropriations season by debating President Trump's rescissions bill, which fails the American people, hurts children and families, and injects needless partisanship into Congress' important appropriations work.

First and foremost, this bill fails the American people by eliminating funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Just months after exploding annual deficits, to the tune of \$1.5 trillion, and lavishing massive tax breaks to big corporations with their tax scam, Republicans are now proposing to make children and families pay with a \$7 billion cut from CHIP.

Targeting CHIP for a rescission prevents Congress from reinvesting in other priorities like child and maternal health, early childhood education, biomedical research, and our community health centers.

Additionally, the nearly \$15 billion in rescissions cut numerous efforts to cre-

ate jobs, grow our economy, and strengthen our communities. It cuts funding for the Economic Development Administration and for community development financial institutions, both of which create jobs in rural areas and distressed communities.

Treasury was prepared to announce 114 awards from CDFI's Bank Enterprise Award Program. This isn't merely spring cleaning by sweeping old funding up under the rug that would never be spent; it is taking investments away from local communities. It slashes billions of dollars from Federal loan programs that foster innovation and create clean-energy jobs.

Eight projects are in the pipeline through the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program, two of which would create 2,400 manufacturing jobs and an \$890 million investment in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The Republican raw deal would rescind these funds and prevent economic growth.

I am also profoundly disappointed that Republicans are willing to bring forward legislation that undermines 2 years of bipartisan spending agreements. This bill includes cuts to funding that was appropriated under the fiscal year 2017 omnibus, which was negotiated just over a year ago. And it reneges on the bipartisan budget agreement from February by further restricting CHIP amounts that could be reinvested in future years. Upending bipartisan agreements poisons the well and makes future negotiations more difficult.

Finally, I must express my strong objection to the rushed process by which Republicans have considered this rescissions bill. The White House submitted its final version of the rescissions bill less than 48 hours ago. We have had no hearings, no markups, or even any debate at all on this bill in the Appropriations Committee, and we are considering it with no opportunity to debate the merits of each of these rescissions on their own.

Mr. Speaker, this is not regular order, and, frankly, it is no way to make such a consequential decision.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, instead of rubber-stamping President Trump's rescissions package, Congress should conduct rigorous oversight to determine why the Trump-Pence administration has not spent these funds, even as they mispend tax dollars on first-class flights, fountain pens, and luxury dining sets.

Spending cuts that hurt American families should be carefully considered, not rushed through to score political points or help the majority's whip count on other bills. I urge Members to vote "no."

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the

gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER), the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense.

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3, the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act.

We must always be careful stewards of the taxpayers' hard-earned money. That is why I was proud to sign on as an original cosponsor of President Trump's rescission package.

As a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, I understand more than most that President Trump's proposal rescinding nearly \$15 billion is necessary.

It is common sense that money sitting in Federal coffers and not being spent should be returned to the Treasury. This bill is a welcome step to cut wasteful spending and will restore fiscal sanity to Washington.

Importantly, the rescissions package on the floor today no longer rescinds Ebola funding. Sadly, that horrible disease has recently returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It also no longer rescinds funding for Hurricane Sandy victims.

I hope the Senate will pass this bill as soon as possible so that the President can sign these historic spending cuts into law. I urge all Members to support this commonsense proposal.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the proposed rescission package, the so-called Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act.

I do not think these are unnecessary programs. They are vital programs, and our rural communities all across America rely upon them.

For example, the administration is proposing a rescission of \$37 million to the Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program at USDA. This program provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and stormwater drainage to households and businesses in rural areas.

With all due respect, that does not seem unnecessary to me. In fact, we in Congress provided a special appropriation of \$500 million for this program in fiscal year 2017, in addition to regular program funds, to begin to address the backlog in this program.

Even after the 2017 bill was enacted, the National Rural Water Association estimated there was a remaining backlog of more than \$2 billion. This rescission will only push us back down the hill in our efforts to address the needs for clean water and wastewater disposal in rural areas.

This package also takes away nearly \$15 million from the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development

Grant program; \$40 million from the Rural Housing Service rental assistance program; \$14.7 million from the Rural Cooperative Development Grant program; and \$147 million from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. And that just names a few. There are even more cuts across agriculture, rural development, energy, and conservation programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, in total, the rescission is more than \$15 billion. I cannot emphasize enough how much this bill will hurt our farmers, our ranchers, and all those who live in rural America.

I ask my colleagues to join me in standing up for rural communities by rejecting this unconscionable rescission bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), the chairman of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee on Appropriations.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

Originally, I have to say, I was skeptical when the administration raised the idea of rescissions, not because I am against saving money—I think we need to do a lot more of that around here—but because I thought this might undo the bipartisan agreement that the administration and our leadership had negotiated.

Frankly, this bill does nothing of the kind. And I want to compliment the President and OMB Director Mick Mulvaney, our former colleague, for using a tool that has not been used in 20 years. They did the right thing. They did it in the right way.

This is the largest rescission package ever in the history of Congress. It will save almost \$15 billion. But where are those savings coming from? They are coming from funds that we, frankly, didn't use or we overappropriated.

My friends talk a lot about CHIP. The authorization for \$5 billion of that money ran out. You can't even legally spend it. Why would you leave it in the account?

Another \$2 billion is taken from an account for when States go beyond their spending limits. We have never spent more than \$350 million of that money, and we actually left \$500 million in the account. Why not reclaim the savings and return them to the Treasury?

You can go on and on.

There was \$4.3 billion for the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program that nobody has applied for or has not been used since 2011.

Again, there is example after example. It is a wise thing to reclaim unused money and spending authority and re-

turn it to the Treasury of the United States.

I am very proud to cosponsor the legislation. I am very supportive of it and would urge its passage.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), the ranking member of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

I have a lot of respect for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I do wonder sometimes if we are living in the same country, because when I look at a package like this, I look at the general philosophy over the course of the last year and a half, with the tax cuts that will at the end of the day cost our country \$2.3 trillion—that money we are borrowing.

And we are going to borrow a lot of that money from China, Mr. Speaker. And they are going to get interest on that money, and China is reinvesting back into their country. They are building islands in the South China Sea. They are building bases in Africa. They are making investments in wind, solar, battery-powered cars, AI, additive manufacturing. They are moving and shaking around the globe.

And we gave a \$2.3 trillion tax cut, which we saw just last month \$200 billion of it went for stock buybacks. Apple got it, put \$100 billion back into stock buybacks.

Who is investing in this country now? That is the main issue that we are talking about—yes, battery-powered cars; yes, Economic Development Administration; yes, rural issues that the gentleman from Georgia just talked about.

College costs are going up. We need more STEM people graduating from our colleges. We are not a healthy country. And in this bill we are going to take kids off of their healthcare, disinvestment in economic development. And our country is getting left behind the global economy.

You could talk about low unemployment all you want. The anxiety level in our country has not gone down. You could talk about the stock market all you want. Sixty-six percent of the people in this country make less than \$40,000 a year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of OHIO. Mr. Speaker, we have 50-some percent of the people in this country who can't withstand a \$500 emergency.

Our pension system is collapsing. Our financial aid system is collapsing.

We have got to make a decision to reinvest back in this country. And the Republican leadership here is disinvesting in the United States. We are seeing it with the stock buybacks, we are seeing it with the tax cut, and now we are seeing it with the rescissions package.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GRAVES), the chairman of the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee on Appropriations.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the majority leader, Mr. MCCARTHY, for his leadership in shepherding the largest spending-cut package through the House on behalf of President Trump.

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This is a remarkable package.

Getting back to the topic at hand, this is about taking back money, or rescinding money, that will not be spent, \$15 billion of unnecessary spending. This is an important step to getting our fiscal house in order.

Now, I note that every dollar in this package either can't or won't be spent at all. Regardless of what you might hear from the other side of the aisle, this is money that just will not be spent for the purposes for which it was originally budgeted.

Now, when I think about where we are today and I think about this package and I hear the arguments that just preceded mine, I don't understand why they wouldn't support saving some additional money and putting a downpayment here on our deficit.

For example, this bill cuts \$4.3 billion from the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program, which has only made five loans—that is five—since 2007 and has been untouched since 2011. That is 7 years ago. It is a dormant fund with \$4 billion in it, but the other side rejects taking that back and using it elsewhere.

This is just good government; rescinding these funds is good government. And it is a signal to the American people that President Trump and congressional Republicans are serious about getting our house in order and protecting our kids and our grandkids from this unsustainable and out-of-control national debt.

To that point, another step we are taking with the President's example in leadership here today is a fund we have created in the Financial Services bill, in which I chair. It is a fund for America's kids and grandkids, and we are putting additional savings in it. We have put \$585 million into this fund. It is a 2½ percent cut from our spending level.

We are sending a signal to the American people that just because we can spend it doesn't mean we have to spend it. So, today, here, with this \$15 billion and what we are doing here in the next couple of weeks, I look forward to getting my bill across as well and continuing on the progress we have here today.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), who is the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, first, let me say I heard the gentleman from

Georgia's argument that this money wasn't needed. I heard that argument a month ago; Ebola money was not needed. Guess what? Ebola money was needed.

I rise in opposition to this rescission bill, Mr. Speaker, which I think is a sham, period. It is a shameless attempt by the majority to gloss over the tremendous deficits that have been incurred by its tax law.

Republicans are hoping they can fool the American people with a pretense of phony fiscal responsibility, but the American people can see right through it. They can see more than \$1 trillion a year in deficits for the next decade and a future for our children and grandchildren mired in debt. And for what? To give tax breaks to the wealthiest while raising taxes on many in the middle class.

We have before us, Mr. Speaker, a bill that the majority hopes will make it appear fiscally responsible. But the CBO says it would just save over \$1 billion. Now, that is a lot of money, but guess what? In the next bill, without any committee hearing, the majority has added \$1 billion. So they have already spent their savings of outlays of \$1 billion.

The CBO says that it would save just over that amount, compared to the \$1.8 trillion deficits that Republicans incurred with their tax laws. I wonder if the majority intends to bring another 1,800 bills to this floor just like this one, because that is what it would take to make up for the tax bill they passed without a single hearing and without any citizens having the opportunity to testify.

In fact, this bill rescinds less funding than Republicans just added, as I just said, to their Military Construction bill without a single vote being cast in the full Appropriations Committee, Mr. Speaker.

But this bill is also dangerous and irresponsible for another reason. It is based on the glib assertion that these funds will never be used and no one will be hurt if they are taken away. But we have already seen that to be a false promise.

The previous package, as I just said, cut funding to combat Ebola. I was told by the majority leader that we don't need those funds, which Republicans, however, now admit is very necessary to protect public health.

The same goes for children's health, I would suggest to you. Just because we haven't used these funds yet does not mean they won't be needed. It is a contingency to make sure that children aren't left out in the cold.

Oppose this rescission package.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK), who is the chairman of the Budget Committee.

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this commonsense request from

President Trump to responsibly rein in wasteful government spending.

While the budgetary rescissions tool has not been utilized by the White House for some time, the President's decision to use this approach today should be commended. It importantly sheds light on the need for fiscal responsibility. The amount of this proposed rescission should also help us scale the challenge that is before us.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the Nation's debt is in excess of \$21 trillion. And that is not a stagnant figure; it is rapidly growing. It has grown in the short time that I have been at this microphone. This process helps us in Congress confront wasteful spending and draw back unspent funds on the discretionary side of our budget.

However, in order to slow down spending and actually have a chance at paying down any debt, we have to acknowledge what is actually driving the majority of this spending.

For years, Mr. Speaker, spending on mandatory programs has been on autopilot. It grows unchecked every year. Unsurprisingly, mandatory spending, including interest on the national debt, comprises the largest share of Federal spending.

It might surprise a lot of people who listen to this program or read these remarks that, in the pie of Federal spending, mandatory spending accounts for 70 percent of that amount. Without reform, in the next 10 years, it will grow to nearly 80 percent of all Federal spending.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker: There is a critical need for mandatory programs and the benefits they provide for vulnerable people. But unless we come up with real solutions, safety net programs like Social Security and Medicare will cease to exist.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Arkansas an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. WOMACK. So programs like Social Security and Medicare that people rely on now and those that they will rely on in the future will see those benefits quickly dwindle, CBO says, as early as 2026.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this modest effort on the discretionary side, but I caution that a sustainable and prosperous fiscal future is contingent on addressing the mandatory side of spending. The longer Congress takes, the more difficult those decisions will be.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), who is the ranking member of the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3 today, particularly because it is incredibly deceptive. The

Trump-GOP rescissions measure manages to have Republicans bundle their most damaging and misguided budget priorities into one badly flawed bill.

For starters, the deception includes the ludicrous notion that all the money that is being repealed and pulled back wouldn't be used otherwise.

This bill eliminates billions of dollars in funding for children's health insurance, which will prevent Congress from making smart, compassionate reinvestments in biomedical research and other child and maternal community health programs, which we could do if this bill were not here on the floor being forced down our throats.

What is worse is this bill cuts job creation funds while millions of families in rural and distressed communities struggle to make ends meet.

But this reckless rescission stunt doesn't stop there. It includes additional cuts to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation and cuts badly needed funds for rural water programs.

Just to prove that no sector is spared, it also cuts transportation improvements in rural Appalachia and national and community service programs, as well as funding for energy efficiency and advanced technology loan programs that we know are surefire job creators. Neglecting these health, energy, and job needs is a policy failure on all fronts.

This rescissions bill ignores families struggling to put food on the table tonight. It neglects to make smart reinvestments that would benefit workers and taxpayers in the coming months and years ahead. And it shamelessly pretends to put this Nation's fiscal house in order, while still leaving future generations saddled with crushing debt.

It is rich that Republicans are suggesting that they are protectors of our deficit when they pushed through into law a tax scam bill that added more than \$1.5 trillion to our annual deficits and that gives massive handouts to corporations and the wealthy.

Budgets are a financial expression of our values, and this Trump rescissions bill just confirms that Republicans care more about the wealthiest among us while the rest of America must fend for itself.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), who is the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I was in small business for 21 years. My wife and I were small-business owners and operators and had to meet a bottom line and pay the bills and all. I know our Speaker was in the accounting world. To me, this is basic accounting and a small business sort of set of principles.

You have money there that can't be spent because it is no longer authorized to be spent. Much of it is being just accumulated. And then somebody comes

in the backdoor and maybe tries to grab a little here and there and spend it on things it is not authorized for or whatever.

But the long and the short of it is that I can speak specifically to the Children's Health Insurance Program, because I have been a big advocate for it. I have voted for it every time it has been up.

As chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, I led the effort to not only fully fund children's health insurance for 5 years, but then we were able to do it for 6 years. And, at the end, the package that was sent down to President Trump that he signed into law fully funded children's health insurance for 10 years. That is double the length of time that had ever been done before.

In my own State, that is 122,700 children and moms who are going to get coverage for health insurance. There is now certainty in this program, more than in its entire history—double the certainty.

So that resulted in some funds that were left behind that have been used when we get up against these cliffs and States maybe had overpayments here or there. They needed all this sort of emergency funding, and then there were some other programs, none of which is needed now because we brought certainty to the Children's Health Insurance Program, the longest extension in its history—10 years.

So the authority to use some of these funds expired last year. The authority expired last year. You can't spend it. The remainder of these funds simply aren't necessary, and they sit unused in a contingency fund that has an ample balance.

There has been a question about would this affect enrollment, would this affect beneficiaries. We asked the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office that question, and they said, "CBO estimates that rescinding the unobligated balances would reduce the budget authority by \$7 billion but would not affect outlays or the number of individuals with insurance coverage."

They also say that it does not affect what happens with the States. That is because we did our work. We did our work. Republicans led on this issue time and again. And it is now law. So the Children's Health Insurance Program is fully funded, and kids will have access to insurance and other coverage that extends 10 years.

So what we are doing here is taking surplus money that can't be spent on these programs anymore and is not authorized to be spent on these programs anymore and applying it toward deficit reduction. The lifeline remains strong under this rescissions program. This is just good business practices, and I think it is really important to do.

By the way, the other Republican proposals we have passed in this House have resulted in one of the strongest economies in modern history and 1 million new jobs since the tax cuts took effect.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good process. This is fiscally responsible. I urge passage.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN), who is a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the cuts to programs for working families that House Republicans seek to pass today.

Earlier this year, Congress did something responsible when it rejected President Trump's budget request to make devastating cuts to programs on which many Americans rely. Congress came together to make an investment in American communities and solve some pressing issues with an agreement by Democrats and Republicans.

However, these cuts today suddenly go back on that agreement, with a rescissions package that will hurt working families—all because they are saying that government is spending too much money.

Republicans caused that problem last year when they were grossly irresponsible and passed the GOP tax scam, a multitrillion-dollar giveaway to their donors, billionaires, and big corporations that they falsely sold as middle-class tax relief.

The majority's decision to blow a hole in the deficit and balloon our Nation's debt did very little to benefit working families, with 83 percent of the benefits going to the top 1 percent.

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The Republican rescissions package will hurt the American people and make \$7 billion in cuts to children's health insurance, \$800 million in cuts to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, and \$40 million to rural housing programs, just to name a few.

While GOP donors, millionaires, billionaires, big corporations, and members of Mar-a-Lago still get their gift of tax cuts in the GOP tax scam, Republicans are committed to taking away what little they gave hard-working American families. That is apparently the priority of the majority Republican Party today. With actions like this, they will likely be the minority party of tomorrow.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader of the House.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We are approaching the end of spring, but there is still enough time for a good spring cleaning. For families, that may mean doing yard work, cleaning out a closet, or maybe even giving unused items to charity. For Congress, it means tackling long-overdue budgetary spring cleaning.

There are billions and billions of taxpayer dollars originally set up to fund different programs and projects that cannot or will not be used for their intended purpose. Tonight, the House

will do something about it. We will take a first step in cleaning up the Federal Government's accounts by voting on the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act.

We aren't talking about taking spare change here. We are talking about something more than just that. Tonight, we have the opportunity to return \$15 billion, with a B, to the Treasury.

As Members, we are charged with being good stewards of taxpayer money. Mr. Speaker, it is a responsibility we all have and claimed on this floor many times. It shouldn't be a partisan exercise. Historically, it hasn't been.

Mr. Speaker, you can look at many Members who have been here for quite some time. Congress accepted 214 of Ronald Reagan's rescissions. The majority party on the floor was different than it is today. It accepted 111 of Bill Clinton's rescissions.

President Trump's spending cut request is a straightforward and smart way to trim a bloated Federal budget.

So, where do these savings come from, I know many of you might ask. Have you ever heard of the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program? It is an Obama-era subsidy program to green-car companies like Fisker Automotive, which defaulted on its \$192 million loan. Just think Solyndra, but for luxury cars. This failed subsidy program hasn't issued a loan since 2011. Mr. Speaker, that is 7 years ago. Yet, it has \$4.33 billion sitting unused in an account.

Can any Member think of a good reason why that money should continue sitting in that account, where it cannot and will not be used or just be wasted on another non-related government program?

I would really love to hear the reason, but I doubt one will be coming.

So, what else does this bill clean up?

It also brings back expired funds from CHIP. Before anyone claims Republicans are cutting CHIP funding, which is children's health insurance, Mr. Speaker, we debated this on the floor many times this year where one side of the aisle, the majority, passed it. Not only did they pass it while the other side in the minority, Mr. Speaker, voted against it, we passed it and made history.

How did we make history?

We signed the longest reauthorization of CHIP, guaranteeing its funding for 10 years, a full decade. A full decade, Mr. Speaker, Members of this floor had the opportunity to vote for it. Unfortunately, it wasn't one time, Mr. Speaker, that the other side voted no, and it wasn't just two times.

But, thankfully, Mr. Speaker, for all the children across America that use this program, Republicans were able to reauthorize it for 10 years—a decade—the longest ever. Republicans have made sure that CHIP isn't going anywhere. We have removed any uncertainty about the stability of the funding of that program.

The funds we are rescinding tonight were appropriated long ago and will not be used for their intended purpose now. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Democrats voted to rescind those exact CHIP funds just 2 months ago. They know they can't be used for their intended purpose.

I would like to remind my colleagues that the minority whip said he would not oppose "money laying in an account that has not been spent for 1, 2, 3 years." He even called it "a reasonable thing to do."

So instead of partisan rhetoric and doomsday speeches, let's see this bill for what it really is: a smart approach to cleaning up unused accounts in the Federal budget, which has been done many times before under President Clinton and President Reagan.

Before tonight's vote, each and every Member of the House should consider this question: If this body cannot be trusted to reclaim money that will not or cannot be used for its intended purpose, can we really be trusted to save money anywhere else?

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of opposition from First Focus Campaign for Children, the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Committee for Education Funding, National Housing Conference, Service Employees International Union, faith organizations, and other national organizations.

FIRST FOCUS CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, June 7, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan national organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of our nation's children, to express our strong opposition to H.R. 3, the so-called "Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act."

Unfortunately, the proposed rescission of \$15 billion in spending authority included in H.R. 3 targets children in about half of all the cuts. Moreover, of all the thousands of programs in hundreds of departments and agencies across the federal government, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which just went through a nearly two-year reauthorization process that was finally passed more than four months past its expiration date, is targeted for more than \$7 billion of the proposed cuts.

Over the two-decade history of CHIP, it has—in tandem with Medicaid and private health insurance—cut the uninsured rate for children by more than two-thirds. During this recent reauthorization process, a nationwide poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 88 percent of Americans felt that Congress should make the extension of CHIP funding a top priority. The program has always had strong bipartisan support, as it did this year.

CHIP is financed as a block grant, which means that its funding is arbitrarily capped and fails to adjust to changes in unforeseen or unanticipated need, such as economic recessions, epidemics, changes in funding to the program to improve access to care, or natural disasters. Consequently, in the early years of CHIP, the program faced some difficult moments whereby some states imposed waiting lists and enrollment freezes when federal funding failed to meet the needs of children. Those indefinite waiting lists and enrollment freezes were imposed

without regard to disability or need, including children with cancer, cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, and other life-threatening or severe conditions.

In recognition of the fact that waiting periods and enrollment freezes were threatening the lives and well-being of children, Congress revamped CHIP's financing in a number of ways, including the creation of CHIP's Child Enrollment Contingency Fund in 2009. The CHIP contingency fund is set at 20 percent of overall CHIP spending and acts as a critically important backstop that protects against unforeseen or unanticipated federal funding shortfalls that threaten the health of children.

During the lengthy two-year most recent bipartisan reauthorization of CHIP that culminated in a six-year extension and a subsequent addition of four more years for a total of 10 years, there was no discussion or debate about changing the CHIP Child Enrollment Contingency Fund, as it has worked to protect the health of children. And yet, the Administration is now proposing and Congress is considering H.R. 3, which would slash the CHIP contingency fund by \$1.9 billion, or nearly 80 percent, and undermine its very purpose.

In making this proposal that targets CHIP for the bulk of its proposed cuts, the Administration argues that the contingency fund "will likely not be spent" and points to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) score that the cut doesn't save any money as confirmation that it probably won't be harmful to children. And yet, during the lengthy CHIP reauthorization process, the Administration never proposed slashing the Child Enrollment Contingency Fund from 20 percent of the allotments to just 3-4 percent, as the rescission would do.

Even worse, the proposed rescission of the contingency fund fundamentally fails to understand the very purpose of a contingency that, by definition, is "a future event or circumstance that is possible but cannot be predicted with certainty." Neither the Administration nor CBO can guarantee that there will not be an economic recession, a health epidemic like Zika, or a natural disaster, which are all more likely during the forthcoming summer months. In fact, CBO doesn't "score" such events for that very reason.

As a result, the proposed rescission or raid of the CHIP contingency fund by \$1.9 billion, or 80 percent, undermines the very reason for the fund, which is to protect the health coverage of children against unanticipated or unforeseen circumstances, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, or even Hawaii's currently unanticipated erupting volcano.

Another critically important point to make is that the proposed rescission to the CHIP Child Enrollment Contingency Fund would not save money. The contingency fund is set at 20 percent of the overall CHIP allotment each year, so any money raided from the fund this year is automatically restored in the following year. In other words, over a two-year period, this proposed rescission would not save a single penny because any money raided from the contingency fund this year would be restored in the following year.

Consequently, the only effect of the proposed \$1.9 billion rescission the CHIP contingency fund would be to needlessly put the health and well-being of our nation's children at risk. In other words, H.R. 3 unnecessarily gambles with the health of our children under the guise that there probably won't be unanticipated or unforeseen events that might cause a state or states to need to tap into the contingency fund.

It is also important to point out that the CHIP extensions, including the CHIP contingency fund, that were passed just a few months ago were fully paid for. In fact, ac-

cording to CBO, the CHIP reauthorization saved billions of dollars. Therefore, CHIP should not be the target of a rescission package, and yet, it shockingly accounts for 46 percent or almost half of all the proposed reductions in H.R. 3.

For these reasons, we stand with more than 500 other national, state, and local organizations from across the country that wrote a letter to Congress in opposition to the CHIP cuts proposed in H.R. 3. As the letter reads, "The nine million children and families who depend on CHIP have already faced months of uncertainty, when its funding expired before Congress took long-overdue action to extend CHIP funding for ten years. After breathing a short sigh of relief, however, the long-term stability and protection these families fought to ensure is once again in jeopardy. Our organizations urge you to protect children and families, and to reject any proposed cuts to the Children's Health Insurance Program."

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,
President.

OPPOSE ATTEMPT TO RAID THE FARM BILL THROUGH RESCISSIONS

DEAR CHRISTIAN: With the introduction of rescission legislation in both the House and Senate, the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) urges your office to oppose any effort to bring rescission legislation to a vote, and to vote no if such a vote occurs.

If the rescission package were to become law it would devastate farm bill conservation and rural development programs. The package, as proposed, would eliminate previously appropriated funding for the Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program and cut over \$650 million from farm bill conservation programs.

The rescissions proposal would strip funding from three different conservation assistance areas: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and emergency watershed and flood protection programs, preventing USDA from entering into contracts to support farmer conservation efforts. Cuts to these programs would mean fewer voluntary conservation opportunities for farmers and ranchers who are seeking to improve their operations and be stewards of the land. Farm, conservation, and wildlife organizations across the country voiced strong opposition to the proposed conservation cuts.

The proposal to eliminate \$15 million from the VAPG program would mean that USDA is able to fund just a fraction of the 379 currently pending applications for business planning and development grants. A recent Economic Research Service report found that VAPG is facilitating job creation and long-term business survivability in rural America. Cuts to the program would mean less economic growth and fewer enterprise development opportunities for farmers and ranchers around the country.

For more information on how farmers and rural communities would be impacted by this rescission package, please see our recent blog on the topic.

Sincerely,

GREG FOGEL,
Policy Director,
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

COMMITTEE FOR
EDUCATION FUNDING,
Washington, DC, May 14, 2018.

Hon. RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee,
Washington, DC.
Hon. RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN SHELBY AND FRELINGHUYSEN: On behalf of the 110 national education organizations and institutions that are members of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), we write to urge you to reject the Administration's proposal to rescind \$15.4 billion that Congress has already approved. The rescission package will cut \$7 billion that would otherwise be available for education programs and other services funded through the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 2019. The rescission package also rescinds funding for educational awards for AmeriCorps volunteers who have completed their terms of service. CEF is also very concerned that the Administration has announced its intention to submit additional proposals to rescind funding Congress just enacted for fiscal year 2018, undermining bipartisan support to make and keep its agreement to raise the level of non-defense discretionary funding.

Congress and the Administration approved increases in the spending caps for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 with the understanding of the needs facing the nation and with the intention to use the available resources to meet them. Congress regularly rescinds funding that is not ultimately needed for the programs it has enacted, and then reinvests the savings in other programs serving similar needs in the same funding bill. Enacting large rescissions outside of the regular appropriations process—one that is well underway already for fiscal year 2019—not only reduces the resources available to appropriators but also reduces flexibility to reprogram funding as needed.

CEF, the nation's oldest and largest education coalition, is a non-partisan organization reflecting the entire continuum of the education community. Our long-term "5¢ Makes Sense" campaign supports the goal of increasing education investments from the current two percent of the federal budget to five cents on the federal dollar. CEF urges Congress to reject proposals to rescind funding provided through bipartisan negotiations, and to instead continue efforts to wisely invest resources where they are most needed, including for education programs, which are still below the fiscal year 2011 level when adjusted for inflation.

Sincerely,

JEFF CARTER,
President.
SHERYL COHEN,
Executive Director.

NATIONAL HOUSING CONFERENCE,
Washington, DC, May 21, 2018.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, MINORITY LEADER SCHUMER, SPEAKER RYAN AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: The National Housing Conference and the undersigned organizations write to you to express our strong opposition to the rescission proposal from the White House and Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The package requests over \$234 million in rescissions from housing and community development programs including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Public Housing Capital Fund, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's (Treasury) Capital Magnet Fund and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rental Assistance program and Rural Community Facilities program.

According to a recent HUD study, the public housing capital backlog reached \$26 billion in 2010 and has grown by approximately \$3.4 billion per year. Assuming a continued growth of \$3.4 billion per year, the current estimated capital backlog is over \$50 billion. Public housing capital funds are awarded slowly as contracts are negotiated and work is completed. Public housing agencies are able to save their capital funds over three years in order to pay for more expensive projects like new roofs that they would otherwise not be able to afford from a single year's allocation. The rescission would also impact funding for Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency grants and the Jobs-Plus grants, including a complete elimination of all Jobs-Plus grants for FY 2017. These are critical grant programs that allow residents of public housing to work toward increased self-sufficiency, something in which the administration has expressed great interest. Rescinding over \$31 million from a program with such dire needs jeopardizes the initial investment made by taxpayers to build public housing as well as the residents who live in public housing. Ultimately, it is "penny-wise, pound-foolish."

Treasury's Capital Magnet Fund has a proven track record of success. The 2010 awardees of the Capital Magnet Fund leveraged over \$20 for every \$1 of public funding to create more than 13,300 affordable homes, far beyond the required 10.1 leverage ratio. The Capital Magnet Fund is funded through a fee assessed on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac business, not taxpayer dollars. The \$151 million proposed for rescission was only made available to the Treasury on May 1, 2018, and will most likely be spent before the end of the calendar year, providing it is not rescinded. The Capital Magnet Fund has created thousands of jobs and provides much-needed affordable housing throughout the country.

USDA's Rental Assistance and Rural Community Facilities programs provide access to housing and essential community facilities such as police stations and medical clinics. Combined, the administration proposes rescinding \$31 million from these accounts. Through a public-private partnership with landlords, USDA's rental assistance funding ensures that low-income renters in rural America have access to an affordable home. The FY 2017 spending bill specifically appro-

priated \$40 million to be spent in FY 2018. The patchwork of continuing resolutions that Congress has passed to fund the federal government has made it difficult for USDA to renew contracts with private landlords in the rental assistance program. In response, Congress has decided to future fund the account to help alleviate the contract renewal process. OMB cites the fact that as of the beginning of FY 2018 on October 1, 2017, there was \$40 million left in the account. It is premature, at best to determine as of October 1, 2017, that those funds have gone unspent and are therefore unneeded.

The proposed rescissions will do little to reduce the national debt while doing significant damage to people and communities throughout America. We ask that you reject the proposed rescissions from these programs and to do so in a timely manner so that the agencies can continue to manage their budgets responsibly. If Congress does not vote to reject the rescissions, these accounts will be frozen for 45 legislative days, which will create damaging disruptions well into the fall.

Sincerely,

AHC, Inc.; American Association of Service Coordinators; Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc.; Bodaken & Associates; Charleston Housing Authority; Cinnaire; Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation; Citizens' Housing and Planning Association; Clarksville Housing Authority, Arkansas; Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio; Consumer Mortgage Coalition; Cook County, Illinois; County of Butler, Pennsylvania; Crowell Housing Authority, Texas; Curtis + Ginsberg Architects LLP; Dover Housing Authority, Arkansas; Economic Mobility Pathways, Inc.; Enterprise Community Partners; Habitat for Humanity International; Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County, Illinois.

HAI Group; Housing Development Corporation MidAtlantic; Housing Assistance Council; Housing Authority of Cook County, Illinois; Housing Authority of Indiana County, Pennsylvania; Housing Authority of St. Mary's County, Maryland; Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville, Texas; Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, Missouri; Housing Authority of the County of Beaver, Pennsylvania; Housing Authority of the County of Warren, Pennsylvania; Housing Merit; Housing Partnership Network; IDP Housing, LP; Janis Smith Executive Communications, LLC; Jo Daviess County Housing Authority, Illinois; Lemle & Wolff, Inc.; Leviticus Fund; LINC Housing Corporation; Local Initiatives Support Corporation; Make Room.

National Affordable Housing Management Association; National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders; National Development Council; National Housing Conference; National Housing and Rehabilitation Association; National Housing Trust; Network for Oregon Affordable Housing; New York Housing Conference; New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc.; Opportunity Finance Network; Pennsylvania Association of Housing & Redevelopment Agencies; Piedmont Housing Alliance; Prosperity Indiana; Public And Affordable Housing Research Corporation; Public Housing Authorities Directors Association.

Philadelphia Housing Authority; Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.; Rebuilding Together, Inc.; Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County, Pennsylvania; Rural Ulster Preservation Company; Seasoned Partners; Selfhelp Community Services; Somerset Development Company; Springfield Housing Authority, Illinois; Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future; The Community Builders; University Neighborhood Housing Program; Wilkes-Barre Housing Authority, Pennsylvania; York Housing Authority, Pennsylvania.

SEIU,

Washington, DC, June 7, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 2 million members of the Service Employees International Union ("SEIU"), I write to oppose H.R. 3, the legislation that would violate the bi-partisan funding agreement and compromise reached as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. In what appears to be a continuing escalation of a war on families and children by the Administration and Congressional Republicans, H.R. 3 will result in cuts in investments in health, housing, job, and other supportive services that are vital to our communities around the country. Perhaps most disturbing is that this package raids funding that could be used to provide health and other essentials for working families and children in the name of so-called "fiscal responsibility," even though those supporting these cuts passed a \$1.5 trillion tax cut that mostly benefits corporations and the wealthy.

A significant portion of the cuts included in H.R. 3 are from the Children's Health Insurance Program ("CHIP"), which helps kids get the healthcare they need. Some of these funds make sure that states have enough resources to provide care in case of emergencies that may create increased CHIP enrollment; for example, natural disasters—like hurricanes, wildfires, and volcanic eruptions—economic downturns, public health epidemics or other unexpected events. In addition, the funding in question also supports investments in other services and programs that are vital to our local communities' economies and social infrastructure. Furthermore, H.R. 3 eliminates \$800 million from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation ("CMMI"), which is tasked with developing models that improve the quality of care for Americans, undermining efforts to improve systematic efficiencies without harming patients.

Unfortunately, it is not surprising that a Congress and Administration so intent on sabotaging US healthcare is now trying to use money designated for health and other supports for our communities to offset the windfall for corporations included in the tax bill. In addition, this bill breaks the agreement reached in the Bi-partisan Budget Act. If those in Congress cannot trust the promises and agreements they make to each other and break the commitments that they make to Americans, it is no wonder that the public has such low confidence in the institution. Americans have been demanding that Congress work together across party lines, and after passing a landmark budget agreement with both Republican and Democratic support, some have retreated to partisan-driven policy making. H.R. 3 demonstrates that the Administration and congressional leadership are unable to negotiate in good faith, putting at risk future deal making and potentially bringing our legislative system to a standstill at the expense of our futures.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose H.R. 3. We may add votes on this legislation to our legislative scorecard.

Sincerely,

JOHN GRAY,
Legislative Director.

JUNE 6, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DELAURO: We, the undersigned 18 organizations, representing various religious denominations, urge you to vote NO on H.R. 3, the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act. As currently written, this measure contains a harmful provision that would rescind \$7 billion in funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program ("CHIP"). As people of faith we believe that healthcare is a human right and that care for children is a sacred

responsibility. If enacted, this rescission to CHIP would threaten the health and well-being of the 9 million children who utilize the program every year.

We are especially concerned with the \$2 billion in cut, to the CHIP contingency fund. This fund has consistently been used in times of economic downturn, natural disaster, and other uncertain times to ensure that children can have access to healthcare. More recently, the fund was used when Congress was unable to pass a CHIP funding bill before individual state funding for the program ran out. If this fund was not available during the reauthorization process last year, thousands of children would have lost healthcare while Congress failed to act. Congress should not take away this vital security measure for the health of our children.

Recent Congressional action to pass a 10-year extension of CHIP was a major success for the 115th Congress, but this risky rescission could undercut the program and undermine this success. CHIP, as it is currently funded, is projected to decrease the deficit by \$6 billion over 10 years. The health of our children is too important to be used as additional means to pay down the deficit. It is especially relevant to protect our children from additional cuts after the passage of the tax bill provided enormous benefits to the wealthy and large corporations while adding over \$1.7 trillion to the deficit. Children must not pay for the enrichment of the wealthiest in our nation.

CHIP has enjoyed bipartisan support and success for more than 20 years. It has proven to be an effective investment in the health of our children and should be protected and supported. Our faith traditions teach us to protect the most vulnerable people, especially children. We believe that a rescissions package that threatens to take healthcare away from children does not live up to our moral obligation. We urge you reject and refuse a vote on H.R. 3, until and unless these harmful CHIP cuts are removed.

Sincerely,

American Muslim Health Professionals; Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Faith in Public Life; Franciscan Action Network; Hadasah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.; Interfaith Worker Justice; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Council of Churches; National Council of Jewish Women; NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; Poligon Education Fund; Religious Institute; Union for Reform Judaism; Unitarian Universalist Association; Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice; Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation; United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, 6 months ago, Congress passed a tax cut that cost almost \$2 trillion that overwhelmingly benefited corporations and the wealthy. Today, the Republicans are asking struggling children and families to foot the bill.

Nearly half of the \$15 billion in cuts in the Trump-GOP recessions package targets the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. While \$7 billion may be a rounding error in the corporate tax cut, eliminating this funding from CHIP will jeopardize its ability to en-

sure access to healthcare for the children and families who depend on the program every year.

The bill contains an 80 percent cut to the CHIP contingency fund. That is particularly shortsighted and dangerous. The need for healthcare assistance is greatest when our Nation experiences unexpected challenges, including recessions, public health emergencies, and national disasters. Hopefully, that money will not be needed, but we should not be stealing from the fund that provides vital care for children and families when their communities are confronted by these unforeseen but inevitable challenges.

In addition, the bill also includes cuts to the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, health infrastructure, rural water programs, and many other small but important programs that protect our citizens, create jobs, and grow the economy.

In an attempt to give taxpayers the illusion of fiscal responsibility, my colleagues have once again revealed their misguided priorities. We should not be paying for the irresponsible tax cuts by making even more reckless cuts to the investments in our future.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), chairman of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Agriculture Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, it is a bit disconcerting to hear a lot of my friends on the other side of the aisle say that any funds left over in the executive branch account should not be returned to the U.S. Treasury, which would reduce Federal borrowing; but instead, Congress should find some way to spend that money.

This really, I think, is an indication of the serious problem of overspending that we have here in Washington, a problem that I think so many of our constituents sent us here to address.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is running an annual deficit. I think people know that. These repeated annual deficits have combined to create a staggering national debt, which currently stands at more than \$21 trillion. These deficits are not free, but costly, because of the interest our country has to pay on these borrowed dollars.

Today, with this legislation, we mark a return to a legislative tool that both Republicans and Democrats alike have utilized to clean up accounts that went underutilized. The rescission tool that is being used in this legislation was commonly used in the 1970s, when it was established, all the way through the 1980s and 1990s, as a way to return unused, unobligated tax dollars to the U.S. Treasury.

To recap, the rescission bill we have before us today returns unspent dollars to the Treasury. Every dollar returned is a dollar that we don't have to borrow. Every dollar that does not need to be borrowed does not incur interest payments.

While I understand there is no perfect bill, this bill is an important step in restoring a measure of fiscal restraint. I am proud to stand with the President to clean up some old accounts and prevent waste as well as abuse.

Let me add that some of these accounts are worthwhile, but this is not a debate about individual accounts. This is about doing the necessary steps to clean up the executive branch's balance sheets.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions about whether this line item or that line item might be something to rescind or not. To them, I would point out that we are in the middle of an appropriations process. We can work on these issues and we can address them. It doesn't mean that they are left off the table.

So I stand ready to continue to work with my colleagues as we face the challenges facing this Nation as we continue working on the Appropriations Committee, and I welcome the input of my colleagues as we continue on for FY 2019.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, the majority leader said a couple of moments ago that \$15 billion was spare change.

Let me tell you what he apparently means by spare change. It means cutting food assistance for working families and taking \$7 billion from the Children's Health Insurance Program. I guess that is spare change.

The previous speaker just said he was alarmed at the prospect that on the precipice of borrowing we were now going to cut back on our borrowing capacity as it relates to savings. After the same political party borrowed \$2.3 trillion over 10 years to pay for a tax cut for people at the top, the strongest in America.

Those are the priorities. The priority is: Let's cut taxes for the strongest and the wealthiest. And let's pay for it by taking money from people who need it most in America.

We have seen time and again they are more focused on the needs of the wealthiest and the well-connected. We should be addressing the challenges of the middle class in this session and making sure that they have ample assistance.

Now they are after healthcare for children. Now they want to propose \$7

billion for their healthcare plan. Let's be clear: that priority, as long as I have been in this Congress, has been taking care of the strongest and the most powerful at the very top.

On January 19, 2001, when Bill Clinton said good-bye to the country, there was a \$5.6 trillion surplus. They cut taxes by \$1.3 in 2001. They cut taxes again by another \$1 trillion in 2003.

So there was \$2.3 million worth of tax cuts, two wars, a million and half new veterans. The answer to that, of course, was: let's have more tax cuts. That is precisely what they did with their tax cut plan. There was \$2.3 trillion borrowed to provide for a tax cut for people at the very top.

They call themselves conservatives. They pronounce that they are disciples of balanced budgets. It has been reckless spending that we have watched them embrace time and again, and this is but another example of that endeavor.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3, the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act.

These spending cuts, or rescissions, address the desire by President Trump and many in Congress to begin the long overdue process of reigning in government spending. This package is important because, as an engineer, businessman, and former State treasurer, I know you can't build a strong economy on debt and borrowed money.

Spending money we don't have on things we don't need increases our unsustainable \$21 trillion national debt and mortgages the future for our kids and grandkids. But reducing the size and scope of government isn't about budget number, it is about returning freedom and liberty to the American people. It is also common sense.

Kansas families have to live within their means. Our Federal Government should be no different. H.R. 3 is a great first step.

□ 1515

Today's spending cuts will save the taxpayers \$15 billion, the largest rescission package since the tool was adopted in 1974, which comes from programs that have expired or can no longer be used.

If we don't pass this rescission bill, it is like leaving cash lying around the kitchen table, the silverware drawer, or in the corner. It may leave the money available for use, but it is a poor way to manage the taxpayers' dollars. Returning the money to our treasury allows us to make investments in other needed areas without raising taxes or spending money we don't have.

Over the past 2 years, Republicans in Congress have jump-started our economy through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and slashing government red tape and regulation. This has helped our economy reach the lowest unemploy-

ment rate in nearly 20 years. However, now is the time we need to get serious about cutting spending, and today's vote is a great first step.

I look forward to passage of H.R. 3 and to identifying even more ways to cut spending, as well as reforming entitlements and quasi-entitlements and growing our economy in the future.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), the chair of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act.

This bill strips \$7 billion from the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP. Mr. Speaker, \$7 billion for sick kids.

It is really unbelievable if you stop and consider it. Republicans are asking children to pay for their tax break to the rich.

This is just another illustration of the GOP's convoluted priorities. Mr. Speaker, \$1.5 trillion goes to corporations and special interests; and when the budget comes up short, Republicans dip into healthcare for children to make up for their recklessness.

It doesn't have to be this way. CHIP was, for decades, a bipartisan piece of legislation because, despite any policy differences we may have or may have had, Democrats and Republicans were always able to come together and agree that CHIP is a fundamentally important program for our Nation.

What changed? Where did your consciences go?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans want to talk about spending. Let's talk about the Republican tax cut. It was rigged for the rich. It gave 83 percent of the tax cuts to the wealthiest 1 percent. They raised taxes on 86 million middle class families. It cost \$1.5 trillion.

We have a staggering national debt. They want to reduce that deficit. Well, then why don't they go ahead and rescind the money from the tax giveaways to the corporations? The corporations are just using it to buy back stocks and not to raise any wages.

What we ought to be doing is reinvesting: create jobs; help children and families, not millionaires and billionaires.

If they wanted to do something about the CHIP program, they would have made it permanent or they would take that money and reinvest it in programs that have to do with children, not send it back to the treasury. What they ought to do is to find those resources from their rich donors and others and put them back into where they belong, to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support H.R. 3, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member LOWEY for yielding and for her tireless leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this shameful bill—H.R. 3—that would cut vital life-saving programs and hurt the American people.

Just months after the ink is dry on our nation's largest tax scam in history—Republicans are balancing their \$1.5 trillion deficit on the backs of struggling families.

This is a disgrace.

This shameful bill eliminates funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by \$7 billion.

Mr. Speaker, this bill literally steals health care from the most vulnerable children in America.

H.R. 3 also deeply cuts funds for programs that create jobs, help the grow the economy, and lift more families out of poverty, like the Community Development Financial Institute.

And, this bill continues Republicans' assault on the climate change and green energy. By slashing billions of dollars from Energy Efficiency Programs, Republicans are not only hurting our environment, they're also hurting our economy.

I thought Republicans wanted to create jobs, Mr. Speaker? Then why are we voting on a bill that will take jobs away?

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. Instead of pulling the rug out from under from the most vulnerable, we should be creating jobs, boosting our economy and lifting more families out of poverty.

But this bill does just the opposite. So, I urge my colleagues to vote 'no' on this cruel and mean-spirited bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as the founder and chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and as a mother, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3, the "Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act."

I oppose this legislation because it would eliminate \$7 billion for children's health insurance without allowing for Congress to reinvest the funds into healthcare services for families and children.

I also oppose this bill because it undermines the Bipartisan Budget Agreement we only just passed last year.

Instead of wasting time on their partisan agenda, House Republicans should be bringing to the floor legislation that addresses the real challenges facing the American people such as: (1) tax reform; (2) DACA and immigration; (3) restoring the Voting Rights Act; (4) healthcare; (5) and education.

Yet here we are rushing through another piece of legislation that will do harm to millions of Americans, mostly children and working families, without proper discussion or deliberation.

It is very clear that H.R. 3 has been pushed to the floor today without debate in the Appropriations Committee because of all the harm it will inflict on the American people.

H.R. 3 undermines our nation's ability to improve and promote health, safety and environmental standards and provide much-needed protections for the American people.

But perhaps most deceitful of all are the cuts in funding for the Children's

Health Insurance Program, a program which plays such a critical role in our nation's health care system.

Together, CHIP and Medicaid cover 39 percent of children in the United States.

This is over 9 billion children, whose lives the opposition has decided to quit investing in.

When CHIP was first passed in Congress over two decades ago, this was a bipartisan movement that not only strengthened the ties between the parties, but also ensured coverage for so many lower income families who do not qualify for Medicaid.

Without such a vital program, the number of children covered, and the number of treatments they would be covered for, would vastly decrease, in a most harmful and debilitating way.

Not only this, but if the funds were to be rescinded, Congress could be prevented from reallocating those funds into early childhood education, health-related research, and other initiatives that only improve the quality of life for our constituents.

Given that we have experienced multiple health and safety disasters in communities across the country in recent years, it is the wrong time to thwart the progress of programs that are beneficial to so many Americans.

It is no wonder that leading children's organizations such as First Focus, along with 500 national, state, and local organizations across the country, are urging Congress to reject any cuts to the Children's Health Insurance Program.

The value of the contingent funding is in its ability to protect children's health coverage in the event of unforeseen circumstances or unexpected disasters, such as Hawaii's overwhelming volcano eruption or Hurricane Harvey, which devastated the state of Texas just last year.

The Administration and CBO cannot guarantee that there will not be an economic recession or health epidemic for which contingency funding would be necessary and yet they are still willing to gamble with our children's lives.

It is time for the Trump Administration and House Republicans to abandon their crusade to balance the budget on the backs of the poor and vulnerable.

We should be investing in our children's futures, not risking their chances of having one at all.

I urge my colleagues to vote NO on this reckless, irresponsible, and cruel measure.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that the government has a spending problem. We have a moral responsibility to take every opportunity to help right the ship. In recent years, rescissions have been used as budget gimmicks to hide higher spending in appropriations bills. Today, the rescissions of unspent funds will instead be used for deficit reduction for the American taxpayers.

At the Republican Study Committee, we have been working with the Office of Management and Budget on these spending cuts since last Fall. I am glad that those conversa-

tions led to something tangible in the form of the largest rescissions package in American history.

I commend President Trump, Director Mulvaney, and House Leadership for their efforts in developing this package and securing the votes to bring this across the finish line.

True, today's package is just a drop in the barrel of our total debt but this should be just the first of many rescissions packages. The members of the Republican Study Committee hope that this is true and that as we pass several rescissions packages, we can begin to bend the trajectory of our spending curve in the right direction.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following letters in opposition to H.R. 3:

MAY 22, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The undersigned 151 national organizations strongly urge you to reject the \$15.3 billion rescissions package proposed by the Trump Administration as well as other rescissions messages that may be subsequently offered. These cuts would violate the agreement enacted in the Bipartisan Budget Act, by eliminating funds that make fairer levels of domestic appropriations possible, so that unmet needs in public health, education, job training, housing, and other essential areas may be addressed.

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is targeted for nearly half the cuts in the rescissions package. Nearly \$2 billion of the rescinded funds could reduce CHIP's capacity to respond if enrollment unexpectedly rises, as in the aftermath of a disaster, large layoffs due to plant closures, or an overall economic slowdown. Congress just enacted a long-overdue 10-year reauthorization of CHIP; it should not undermine that bipartisan agreement either by tampering with CHIP in this package. Another \$5 billion would renege on the two-year Bipartisan Budget Act agreement, which in part counted on the availability of unspent CHIP funds to pay for needed increases in other services of importance to children and families.

The rescissions package also includes an \$800 million cut to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, a program which according to the Congressional Budget Office will save \$3 for every \$1 spent between 2017 and 2026. It makes no sense to end such a cost-effective investment. Nor does it make sense to describe this package of cuts as putting "... our Nation on a sustainable fiscal path" when the recently enacted tax cuts, mainly for the wealthy and corporations, impose a \$2 trillion cost.

Congress made important progress in the FY 2018 Omnibus appropriations bill because its bipartisan agreement allowed for increases in child care, opioid treatment, and other services. Congress should now turn its attention to building on this progress in FY 2019. Reneging on the hard-won bipartisan agreement now will make further gains extremely difficult. With the limited number of legislative days before you, please do not be distracted by undoing past progress.

We cannot emphasize enough that basic needs programs have lost ground after years of reductions, making it extremely important that you do not undermine the agreement to start to reverse these downward trends. Adult and youth job training has been cut nearly 15 percent since FY 2010, adjusted for inflation. If we are serious about helping people to get good jobs, we must undo these cuts. Many other services need rebuilding, such as home heating and cooling assistance (cut nearly 38 percent since FY 2010), juvenile justice programs (cut more than 40 percent), maternal and child health

programs (cut 14 percent), and special education funding (cut between 7–11 percent since FY 2010). In an analysis of more than 180 human needs programs, the Coalition on Human Needs found that nearly 70 percent are still at lower levels than in FY 2010.

Please reject this rescissions package, and turn instead to your real responsibility: to provide adequate resource to address the unmet needs for education and training, child care, housing, health care, and other essential services.

Sincerely,

Action on Smoking and Health; ADAP Advocacy Association; Advance CTE; African American Health Alliance; AFSCME; AIDS United; Allied Progress; American Association of People with Disabilities; American Association on Health and Disability; American Federation of Teachers; Americans for Democratic Action (ADA); Asian Americans Advancing Justice—AAJC; Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges; Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs; Autism Society of America; Autistic Self Advocacy Network; Bend the Arc Jewish Action CAEAR Coalition; Campaign for Youth Justice; Center for Community Change Action; Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO).

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP); Center for Popular Democracy Action; Center for Public Representation; Ceres Policy Research; Child Care Aware of America; Child Welfare League of America; Children's Defense Fund; Children's Leadership Council; Children's Advocacy Institute; Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation; Coalition for Health Funding; Coalition for Juvenile Justice; Coalition on Human Needs; Community Access National Network (CANN); Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces; Council on Social Work Education; Disciples Center for Public Witness; Dominican Sisters Conference; Dominican Sisters of Peace; Ecumenical Poverty Initiative.

Equal Rights Advocates; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Every Child Matters; Faith in Public Life; Families USA; Family Focused Treatment Association Food & Water Watch; Food Research & Action Center (FRAC); Forum for Youth Investment; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Friends of the Earth—US Girls Inc.; Grounded Solutions Network; Health Care for America Now; Healthy Teen Network HEAR US Inc.; Hispanic Federation; HIV Medicine Association; Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA—JPIC Housing Works, Inc.; International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW; Justice in Aging; Lakeshore Foundation; Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

League of Women Voters of the United States; LIFT; Main Street Alliance; Mom2Mom Global; MomsRising; NAACP; NARAL Pro-Choice America; National Action Network; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Alliance of HUD Tenants; National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities; National Association of Counsel for Children; National Association of Regional Councils; National Association of Social Workers; National Association of State Head Injury Administrators; National Association for Bilingual Education; National Black Justice Coalition; National Coalition for the Homeless; National Coalition of STD Directors; National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low income clients).

National Council of Jewish Women; National Crittenton; National Disability Institute; National Domestic Workers Alliance; National Education Association; National Employment Law Project; National Employ-

ment Lawyers Association; National Housing Trust; National Indian Education Association; National Juvenile Justice Network; National Low Income Housing Coalition; National Network for Youth; National Network to End Domestic Violence; National Organization for Women; National Urban League; National WIC Association; National Women's Health Network; National Women's Law Center; New Progressive Alliance; North American Passionists, JPIC; People Demanding Action; People For the American Way.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Poligon Education Fund; Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator (Viatorians); Public Advocacy for Kids; Public Citizen; Rachel Carson Council; Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition; Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need; RESULTS; Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition; Safer Foundation; School Social Work Association of America; Service Employees International Union; Sinsinawa Dominicans; Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership; Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Sisters of Mercy South Central Community; SocioEnergetics Foundation; Somerset Development Company; SparkAction; StopTheDrugWar.org; Strategies for Youth, Inc.

Students or Sensible Drug Policy; The Arc of the United States; The Children's Partnership; The John Leary Organization; The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society; Transportation Learning Center; Treatment Action Group; Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance; UnidosUS; United Church of Christ; United Methodist Women; Voices for Progress; W. Haywood Burns Institute; WildWest Institute; Woodhull Freedom Foundation; Woodstock Institute; Workplace Fairness; Young Invincibles; Youth Service America; YWCA USA; ZERO TO THREE.

MAY 21, 2018.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER,
Minority Leader, Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, MINORITY LEADER SCHUMER, SPEAKER RYAN, & MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the 68 undersigned organizations, we are writing to express our opposition to the Administration's proposal in its fiscal year (FY) 2018 rescission package to recapture \$151 million in funding for the Capital Magnet Fund (CMF).

We respectfully request that Congress promptly reject this rescission to enable the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) at the Department of Treasury to distribute the next round of funding of this highly successful program as soon as possible. Organizations are deploying these funds to address the housing affordability crisis among our nation's seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities, and families.

The origin and intent of the rescission mechanism in the Congressional Budget Impoundment and Control Act is well-established. Namely, it was designed and has uniformly been used to return unspent funds in appropriated accounts from prior fiscal years to taxpayers, typically for programs that are poorly performing or have been eliminated entirely. The Administration's effort to claw back CMF funding by means of rescission flies in the face of this practice.

First, CMF is not an appropriated program. Rather, it was created by Congress through the bipartisan Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA) of 2008, an early federal response to the nation's growing housing and financial crisis. HERA funded the CMF through a small fee on total new business purchases of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (collectively, the Government-Sponsored Enterprises or GSEs) to create an enduring program to generate new investment in affordable housing and other economic development projects in underserved communities across our nation through the housing finance system and not be reliant entirely on the annual Congressional appropriations process.

Second, CMF funds have not been sitting unspent at the CDFI Fund. Rather, these funds were not released to the Treasury Department by the GSEs until May 1, 2018, and if prior year CMF rounds are predictive, the entire amount of funds will be obligated to awardees before the end of calendar year 2018.

Finally, one would be hard pressed to find a program where taxpayers are getting more "bang for the buck" than the CMF. The innovation at the heart of CMF is that it provides direct, entity-level investments in high capacity CDFIs, nonprofit housing developers, banks and public sector agencies.

This structure is designed to attract private capital and maximize return on investment. Organizations that receive the grants are required to leverage their funding 10:1 with other sources of capital. The CMF multiplies the impact of awards many times over because grant recipients are also required to redeploy CMF-supported loans in new projects throughout the grant term.

By any measure, CMF has succeeded. Earlier this year, the CDFI Fund released new data that illustrates the powerful impact of the FY 2010 funding round of CMF. The 23 awardees from 2010 have used the \$80 million in grants to attract \$1.8 billion in other investment by the public and private sector, a 22:1 ratio; have produced 13,325 affordable homes and have created or retained 16,000 jobs across America.

The CMF is poised to continue its strong track record. The 2017 award round of \$120 million will enable 40 grantees to serve 41 states and the District of Columbia. Collectively, awardees are projected to create approximately 17,000 additional jobs, produce 21,000 affordable homes and attract more than \$3.2 billion in additional investment, with 78% (\$2.5 billion) expected to come from the private sector.

The need for affordable housing—and for CMF funding—is greater today than ever before. Although the economy has improved since 2008, the number of renter households that pay more than half of their income in rent is near an all-time high of 11.4 million families, 3.7 million more than in 2001 and one in four of all renters in the United States.

The CMF has proven to be a highly cost-effective resource for creating affordable housing and improving communities. In 2017, the CDFI Fund received applications for more than 3.5 times the amount awarded. The nation would be better served if the Administration deployed the \$151 million in available CMF funds as quickly as possible to meet the demand for this flexible, effective program rather than targeting it for rescission.

We urge Congress to reject this rescission request.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Abode Communities; ACTION-Housing, Inc.; Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc.; Better Housing Coalition; Capital Impact Partners; Capitol Hill Housing; Century Housing Corporation; Chicago

Community Loan Fund; Chicanos Por La Causa; Cinnaire; Clearinghouse Community Development Financial Institution; Coastal Enterprises, Inc.; Community Development Corporation of Utah; Community Development Financial Institution Coalition; Community Housing Partners; Corporation for Supportive Housing; EAH Housing; Eden Housing; Enterprise Community Partners; Fahe.

Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation; Grounded Solutions Network; Habitat for Humanity; Homeport; Homes for America; Homewise, Inc.; Housing Channel; Housing Development Fund; Housing Partnership Network; Idaho-Nevada CDFI; IFF; Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership; Leviticus 25:23 Alternative Fund, Inc.; Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC); Low Income Investment Fund; Maine Affordable Housing Coalition; Mercy Housing, Inc.; Mercy Loan Fund; Mission First Housing Group; Montgomery Housing Partnership.

National Affordable Housing Management Association; National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders; National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders; National Coalition for the Homeless; National Council of State Housing Agencies; National Development Council; National Housing Conference; National Housing Resource Center; National Housing Trust; National Low Income Housing Coalition; National NeighborWorks Association; National Stabilization Trust; New Community Corporation; New Jersey Community Capital; NHS of Chicago; NYC Housing Partnership; Ohio Capital Finance Corporation; Opportunity Finance Network; Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc. (POAH); Project for Pride in Living.

Prospera Housing Community Services; Reinvestment Fund; Self-Help Ventures Fund; Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership; St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center; Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future; The Community Builders, Inc.; Volunteers of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 923, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to House Resolution 918 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5895.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1522

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, with Mr. MITCHELL in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 5895, the first set of the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bills: Energy and Water, the Legislative Branch, and the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.

I am pleased that the House is considering three appropriations bills this afternoon. These bills provide funding to rebuild our military infrastructure, support military families, improve nuclear security, support our Nation's energy and water infrastructure, and assure the smooth and safe operations of the legislative branch.

To highlight a few of these important investments:

The Energy and Water bill, under Chairman SIMPSON's direction, funds our national security and supports the energy and water infrastructure that keeps our economy moving and America open for business.

In total, his bill provides \$44.7 billion in discretionary funding. To support a strong nuclear national security strategy, particularly at this time of rapidly shifting global dynamics, his bill provides targeted increases that will maintain an effective nuclear arsenal, preserve our Nation's nuclear-powered fleet, and keep nuclear weapons out of the hands of those who would misuse them.

Beyond these critical responsibilities, the bill also directs \$7.28 billion to the Army Corps of Engineers for projects and activities that will improve America's ports and waterways and promote public health and safety.

The bill also further supports economic growth by investing in the Department of Energy's programs to advance the goal of an all-of-the-above solution to energy independence. This includes funding to continue congressional efforts for the safe, secure storage of nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain.

Next, the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill under Chairman YODER's

lead provides \$3.8 billion in funding for the operation of Congress and its support agencies, excluding Senate-only items. It may be the smallest of the 12 appropriations bills, but it is very important to the operation of our great democracy.

This total represents a small increase above current enacted levels. These increases are directed to critical programs that make our Capitol complex more secure and more efficient. This includes supporting our wonderful and dedicated Capitol Police force, which keeps the complex safe for Members and visitors.

Lastly, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill, led initially by former Chairman DENT and now by Chairman Judge CARTER, provides a total of \$96.9 billion in discretionary funding at a crucial time for our Armed Forces and the VA. This includes \$11.3 billion for military construction projects, a 3.8 percent increase above fiscal year 2018 levels, recognizing the need to rebuild our military infrastructure. This funding will enable our troops to fight current and emerging threats around the globe, as well as provide them with peace of mind and care for their families.

This bill also includes \$85.3 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest total amount for the VA in its history. These additional funds will be directed to critical priorities within the Veterans Administration: improved access to healthcare; quicker claims processing; and support for crucial health programs like suicide prevention, mental health, and opioid abuse prevention. This also includes \$1.2 billion for the new VA Electronic Health Record system to accelerate the progress on this long-awaited project.

Accompanying these funding increases are strong oversight provisions that will increase accountability at both the Pentagon and the Veterans Administration and ensure that precious tax dollars go where they are most needed.

I want to thank the chairs and ranking members and all the staff who worked on these bills that all Members should be proud to support.

These bills received bipartisan support in committee because they focus on universal priorities: national security, care for our veterans and military families, and essential infrastructure.

I am extremely disappointed to read and hear the minority has directed its Members to oppose this appropriations package, despite the fact that all of these bills were constructed as they always have been: in a bipartisan manner. If there is no minority support for this package, those Members will be turning their backs on this House's historic support for our veterans and their families and for modernizing our military installations around the world, which include medical facilities, new barracks and mess halls, playgrounds, schools, and family housing.

I want to thank Chairman SIMPSON, Chairman YODER, former Chairman