

July 9, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman, House Oversight and Reform
Committee
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Comer
Ranking Member, House Oversight and Reform
Committee
2105 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Comer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing millions of Americans and good-government advocates across the country, we urge you to support inclusion of H.R. 3830, the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act, in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).¹ We appreciate your Committee's work to pass the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act through the House of Representatives earlier this year, and we believe that this bipartisan legislation merits inclusion in the FY 2021 NDAA.

The bipartisan, bicameral Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act would ensure that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) finishes its work on creating a public and regularly updated inventory of federal programs, a requirement first passed into law a decade ago. The legislation builds on efforts by a bipartisan group of lawmakers, who last year asked OMB to implement the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010.² Senators James Lankford (R-OK), Mike Enzi (R-WY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) have introduced the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act as an amendment to the Senate's version of the FY 2021 NDAA, and we strongly support its inclusion in both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2021 NDAA.³

Broadly speaking, it is past time that the federal government developed such an inventory. Policymakers and advocates across the political and ideological spectra agree that our government should know how many federal programs exist. It is just as critical that lawmakers be able to evaluate the purposes and objectives each federal program serves for their constituents, especially as Congress has appropriated trillions of additional dollars to new programs fighting the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19.

The Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act will also support and improve the legislative branch's constitutional power over the purse. There is a growing, bipartisan movement interested in reversing the decades-long trend of Congress abdicating its federal tax and spending authority to the executive branch. A great place for Congress

¹ Government Publishing Office. (June 29, 2020). "CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE." (Page S3689). Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/116/crec/2020/06/29/CREC-2020-06-29-pt1-PgS3658.pdf#page=32> (Accessed July 1, 2020.)

² United States Senate Committee on the Budget. (July 17, 2019). "Bipartisan Group of Senators Push White House Budget Office to Publish Comprehensive List of Federal Programs." Retrieved from: <https://www.budget.senate.gov/chairman/newsroom/press/bipartisan-group-of-senators-push-white-house-budget-office-to-publish-comprehensive-list-of-federal-programs> (Accessed July 1, 2020.)

³ Lautz, Andrew. "Seven Good Government Groups Urge Inclusion of Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act in NDAA." National Taxpayers Union, July 1, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.ntu.org/publications/detail/seven-good-government-groups-urge-inclusion-of-taxpayer-right-to-know-act-in-ndaa> (Accessed July 8, 2020.)

to start reclaiming its constitutional authority is to ensure OMB takes a detailed inventory of the thousands of programs that exist across the executive branch.

We thank you for your consideration of our request, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act reaches the President's desk.

Sincerely,

National Taxpayers Union
Demand Progress
FreedomWorks
Project on Government Oversight (POGO)
Protect Democracy
R Street Institute
Taxpayers for Common Sense (TCS)
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

CC: Chairman Jim McGovern, House Committee on Rules
Ranking Member Tom Cole, House Committee on Rules
The Honorable Tim Walberg
The Honorable Jim Cooper
The Honorable Ben McAdams
The Honorable Jim Costa
The Honorable Abigail Spanberger
The Honorable Jeff Van Drew