



AMERICANS
for TAX REFORM

March 20, 2017

The Honorable Luke Messer
United States House of Representatives
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Messer,

I write to express support for your bill, the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act of 2017. The legislation, H.R. 1065, offers a new approach to solve Washington gridlock, and promote efficiency in federal spending.

The 1978 Budget Act has created a broken system that is rigged toward higher spending. In the last 40 years, the appropriations process has been completed just four times. Within the last 20 years, it has been completed just once. Congress has even failed to pass a budget in 9 of the last 18 years.

H.R. 1065 would reform the budget and appropriations cycle by extending it from one to two years, aligning the budget process with Congressional terms. This would allow Congress ample time to allocate how it spends taxpayer dollars and conduct oversight over federal programs. Lawmakers would be required to complete the budget process in non-election years, so they are not impeded by campaign responsibilities.

By using election years to focus on studying long-term budgetary and economic effects, your legislation will ensure strong oversight over federal spending. In turn, this will allow Congress to better understand and highlight how much money an agency or program needs based on the economic implications it would produce. Wasteful or unnecessary programs can then be better identified and cut.

A biennial budget process like the one created by H.R. 1065 could reverse current practices that are biased towards waste, not prudence. Agencies are rarely able to plan effectively in the shortened budget windows created by stopgap measures. As a result, the current system encourages federal agencies to abide by a “use it or lose it” mentality, in which they spend billions during the last few weeks in order to avoid having their budget reduced for the next year.

It is clear that our current budget system does not work. Your legislation recognizes that and implements key reforms that aim to streamline the budget process to allow Congress to better conduct oversight and combat waste. I urge your colleagues to support H.R. 1065, the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act.

Onward,

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

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