



July 12, 2016

Dear Members of Congress,

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) urges your support of H.R. 5499, the Agency Accountability Act (AAA), introduced by Representative Gary Palmer (R-Ala.). Representative Palmer's H.R. 5499 would increase transparency and oversight of the funds collected by federal agencies and in doing so would help to restore Congress's Article I authority by subjecting such funds to the appropriations process.

Congress has granted agencies the authority to collect fines, fees, and revenue, with a portion of those funds being used to offset appropriations. However, some of these funds do not receive Congressional oversight as to how they are spent, leaving agencies to use those funds to finance programs and functions outside of the typical appropriations process. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in 2015 the federal government collected over \$500 billion in user fees alone.

Congress's "power of the purse" is thus being usurped as billions in annual revenue from fines and fees levied by federal agencies escapes the appropriations process. For instance, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and Financial Stability Oversight Council (FSOC) receive no appropriated funds from Congress.

H.R. 5499 would work to correct such discrepancies by requiring that all fines, fees, penalties, and other unappropriated proceeds, be directed to the Treasury, thus making them subject to the appropriations process. Agencies would still receive the funds required to exercise their standard functions, but those funds would now be placed back under Congressional oversight.

H.R. 5499 is a positive measure to increase Congressional oversight over the actions of federal agencies, thus improving the overall transparency and accountability of the federal government.

I urge you to support and vote for H.R. 5499, the Agency Accountability Act.

Sincerely,

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