

Richard Stern

Director, Grover M. Hermann Center for the Federal Budget

The Heritage Foundation

Though many of the witnesses here plan to ask for more taxpayer funding for this program or that one, I am here today to ask that we reduce spending levels. While few benefit from each of the programs listed in my testimony, all 334+ million Americans suffer from the economic ills caused by runaway federal spending and overregulation of our lives.

Americans have faced the scourge of inflation, seen their mortgage rates spike and their purchasing power drop. The domino that began this chain is a spending trajectory that aims to grow the federal budget to a quarter of our economy in a decade. This same reckless fiscal policy has ballooned our debt from \$5.75 trillion to \$31.46 trillion in just the last 23 years – almost 82% of our national debt was created in less than a generation while tax revenues have been at historic highs as a percentage of our economy. The debt now stands at almost a quarter of a million dollars per family - The federal debt has truly become America's second mortgage.

Every dollar spent by the government is a dollar taken from the hard-working Americans that earned it. Government spending redirects the fruits of the labors of all Americans through the hands of bureaucrats. This destructive crowding out takes the oxygen out of the room, starving the economy of the investments that create job opportunities, grow wage levels, and that allow us to produce the goods and services that enrich our lives.

Though mandatory spending has driven most of this disastrous run up in spending, it is not the only cause. Since FY 2017, the annual level of discretionary budget authority has increased 66% faster than the economy and by \$604 billion, far more than even the \$374 billion increase in annual federal spending levels on mandatory healthcare programs.

Further, it is imperative that Congress use its power of the purse to block overregulation and executive branch abuses of power. The Founders envisioned Congress' appropriations power as more than merely setting funding levels. They gave Congress the power to protect the American people from the abusive overreach of government.

I urge this subcommittee to write more limitation provisions into the base text of their bill to push back on the reckless regulatory practices of the Biden administration – especially those that threaten rights to life and conscience.

If we are to restore America's economic vitality, end the scourge of inflation, and avoid triggering a debt crisis, we must cut the growth of federal spending and reduce the size, scope, and burden of the federal government. We must honor the dignity and hard work of hundreds of millions of Americans and leave them with the fruits of their labors and protect their freedoms and their other God-given rights.

Below are just a few programs and accounts that would be ripe for reining in spending, as well as proposed deregulation efforts that can be achieved through limitation provisions.

Eliminations and Significant Reductions:

- *Labor - Employment and Training Administration, [Training and employment services](#)* - Should be eliminated, especially [WIOA and Job Corps](#). (\$4.14 billion in savings)
- *[Labor - Job Corps](#)* - Should be eliminated (\$1.76 billion in savings)
- *[CDC](#)* - Funding should be cut by at least \$3 billion. We should reduce funding for diseases receiving disproportionate shares (such as HIV/AIDS, TB), and reduce or eliminate funding for “social” diseases and reduce or eliminate global health funding.
- *[National Institutes of Health](#)* - We should reduce funding by at least \$20.3 billion, including elimination of the Center for Minority Health and the Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, and defunding of “alternative medicine” throughout the CDC.
- *[HHS - Community Services Block Grant](#)* – Funding should be eliminated (\$804 million in savings).
- *[HHS - Health Resources and Services Administration](#)* - Reduce funding by at least \$2.4 billion, including elimination of the anti-life Title X family planning program.
- *[HHS - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)* - Reduce funding by at least \$1.6 billion from programs that are duplicative of CDC and HUD efforts.
- *[Corp for National and Community Service](#)* - Funding should be eliminated (\$1.31 billion in savings).
- *[Corp for Public Broadcasting](#)* - Funding should be eliminated (\$535 million in savings).
- *[Institute of Museum and Library Services](#)* - Funding should be eliminated (\$295 million in savings).

- [Endowments of the Arts and Humanities](#) - Funding should be eliminated (\$207 million in savings).
- [Smithsonian Institution](#) Funding should be reduced by \$715 million.
- [Education](#) - Reduce by at least \$20.5 billion from programs focused on giving handouts to state and local governments. (for a complete four and a half page list, please see [here](#))

Excessive Growth – These are programs that have wildly outgrown a FY 2017 inflation adjusted baseline. Excessive growth figures here reflect their portion of spending that is in excess of their enacted FY 2017 inflation adjusted level:

- Child Care and Development Block Grant. Excess growth: \$4.68 billion.
- Refugee and Entrant Assistance. Excess growth: \$8.66 billion.
- Indian Health Services. Excess growth: \$593 million.

Potential Limitation Provisions:

- Maintain the long-standing pro-life appropriations provisions, such as the Hyde, Helms, Smith, Dornan, and Weldon amendments.
- Prohibition on funding being used in contravention of any guidance issued by the Trump administration that allowed states to deny Medicaid funding to entities based on whether they performed abortions.
- Prohibition on funding being used to create or maintain HHS's Reproductive Healthcare Access Task Force.

- Prohibiting funding being used to facilitate the interstate commerce of abortion pills through states with restrictions on such pills.
- Prohibition on funding being used to enforce Biden's [Executive Order 14076](#) to encourage federal agencies to facilitate abortions. - (Rep. Clyde from the 117th Congress [H.R. 8835](#)).
- Prohibition on funding being used to require Title X grant recipients to refer people to abortion providers.
- Prohibition on funding being used to reimpose this Obamacare [Section 1557's](#) prohibition of discrimination on the basis of "termination of pregnancy" - (Rep. Cline from the 117th Congress [H.R. 8702](#)).
- Prohibition on funding being used to lease, or otherwise provide or make available, federal land, buildings, or other assets to entities that perform, or facilitate in any way the performance of abortions.
- Prohibition on funding being used to provide, or facilitate the provision of, transportation or other services that perform, or facilitate in any way the performance of abortions.
- Prohibition on funding being used to make any federal asset available to perform or facilitate in any way the performance of abortions.
- Prohibition on funding being used by the federal government to advertise, or otherwise disseminate information related to, entities that perform, or facilitate in any way the performance of abortions or to advertise, or otherwise disseminate information in any manner that could facilitate in any way the performance of abortions.