

**Representative Robert J. Wittman, VA-01
Budget Committee Members' Day Testimony
March 23, 2021**

Chairman Yarmuth and Ranking Member Smith,

Thank you for allowing me to testify before you and the members of the Budget Committee today. I am honored to highlight some of the perspectives I, as well as my constituents, have to improve the operations of the United States Congress and the Budget Process.

In order to craft a responsible budget plan that addresses the needs of the United States, Congress must make the difficult, but essential, decisions about spending and challenging head-on the fiscal threats we face. Our repeated failure to control federal spending and address our mounting debt truly is the greatest long-term danger to this nation. Congress should fulfill their constitutional duty to produce a budget resolution that puts our nation on a fiscally sustainable path.

Sound fiscal footing fosters an environment for a strong economy, opportunities for growth, and prosperity for all people. If we keep letting our debt spiral out of control, we put our country at risk of a financial crisis.

The federal government has an outstanding public debt of more than \$28 trillion. Every year, since 1997, Congress has failed to maintain a fiscally responsible budget and, instead, has relied too much on raising the debt ceiling.

Our current normal of not passing a balanced budget is irresponsible and poses a major national security threat. Both parties have failed to restore regular order in the budget and appropriations process and have become comfortable to passing irresponsible continuing resolutions and omnibus spending legislation.

To address this issue, I have introduced multiple pieces of legislation.

No Budget, No Pay Act:

The No Budget, No Pay Act would prohibit members of the House or Senate from receiving pay if their respective chamber does not pass a budget by April 15, 2021. You cannot continue to budget on this step-by-step process and create the certainty necessary for the federal agencies and the American people.

Inaction Has Consequences Act:

The Inaction Has Consequences Act mandates that if Members don't complete appropriations bills by the end of the fiscal year, their pay is withheld. If Members of Congress cannot get their most basic responsibility of funding our government done, we must be held accountable.

Stay on Schedule Resolution:

Finally, the Stay on Schedule Resolution changes congressional procedure to prohibit the House from taking a recess in August, unless it has passed all twelve appropriations bills individually by July 31, 2021.

This Resolution, in conjunction with my other legislation – the No Budget No Pay Act and the Inaction has Consequences Act – will put the proper accountability measures in place to ensure Congress gets its primary job done on time.

It's time to finally pass measures, like mine, that will hold Members to a higher standard and complete the work of the people.

Chairman Yarmuth and Ranking Member Smith, thank you for allowing me the time to testify before you today. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the committee to restore America's fiscal footing.