

Rep. Fred Keller – Budget Committee Member Day Testimony

May 17, 2022

THANK YOU CHAIRMAN YARMUTH AND RANKING MEMBER SMITH FOR HOLDING TODAY'S HEARING AND FOR ALLOWING ME TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

EVERY AMERICAN WHO EARNS A PAYCHECK UNDERSTANDS THAT RAISING A FAMILY OR RUNNING A BUSINESS REQUIRES YOU TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT ENSURE YOUR EXPENSES DO NOT EXCEED EARNINGS. WITH INFLATION RECENTLY HITTING A 40 YEAR HIGH AND AMERICANS PAYING HISTORICALLY HIGH PRICES FOR THINGS LIKE GAS, GROCERIES, AND AIR TRAVEL, WE IN CONGRESS NEED TO MAKE GOVERNMENT WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY AND GET SPENDING UNDER CONTROL – JUST LIKE FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES DO WITH THEIR OWN BUDGETS.

YET, AFTER SEEING PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023, IT'S CLEAR THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE A CLUE HOW TO BUDGET RESPONSIBLY, LIKELY BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN IN WASHINGTON SINCE 1973.

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BUDGET WILL SPEND 73 TRILLION DOLLARS OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS AND GROW AMERICA'S DEBT TO 45 TRILLION DOLLARS BY 2032.

THAT ALONE SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO ABANDON THIS WHOLE PROPOSAL AND RAISE A RED FLAG FOR WASHINGTON DEMOCRATS WHO ARE FACILITATING THIS KIND OF RECKLESS SPENDING.

AMERICANS HAVE ALREADY SEEN THE REAL COST OF PRESIDENT BIDEN'S TAX-AND-SPEND POLICIES AT THE PUMP, IN THE GROCERY STORE, ON THE FARM, AND ON MAIN STREET AMERICA.

IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL, TO DATE, DEMOCRATS IN THE HOUSE HAVE YET TO RELEASE A BUDGET RESOLUTION FOR FY23. THE NATIONAL DEBT IS NEARLY 30 TRILLION AND HALF DOLLARS AND 7 MONTHS INTO FY22, THE DEMOCRATS HAVE NO SOLUTION? THIS IS POOR

PLANNING AND – QUITE FRANKLY - AS IRRESPONSIBLE AS IT GETS.

MEANWHILE, WHERE ARE WE WHEN IT COMES TO PROVIDING OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED BY THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN? HOW MUCH FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE HAS COME FROM THE LAW AND HOW EFFECTIVE HAVE THOSE DOLLARS BEEN AT PROVIDING THE STATED PURPOSE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC RELIEF? IT IS ESTIMATED THAT ONLY 9 PERCENT OF ARPA FUNDS WENT DIRECTLY TO COMBATTING COVID-19, THIS RAISES SERIOUS CONCERN.

SINCE IT APPEARS THAT MANY STATES ARE HOLDING ONTO THEIR RECOVERY FUNDS, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THAT THESE FUNDS ARE BEING SPENT RESPONSIBLY AND ARE ACTUALLY TIED TO THE PANDEMIC – WITH ROUGHLY 1 TRILLION DOLLARS OF UNSPENT FUNDS STILL REMAINING, IT MIGHT BE TIME TO CONSIDER REEVALUATING WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PANDEMIC RELATED AND ELIMINATE SOME OF

THE SPENDING THAT HAS CAUSED THIS FISCAL MESS AND RESULTED IN RECORD-HIGH INFLATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, ROUGHLY 2 BILLION DOLLARS HAVE BEEN DIVERTED FROM COVID-19 VACCINES AND TESTS TO HOUSE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS DUE TO PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BORDER CRISIS. ADDITIONALLY, OUR TEAM RECENTLY DISCOVERED THAT SPONSORS WHO HOUSE UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN OR U-A-Cs ARE NOT REQUIRED TO BE LAWFULLY PRESENT IN THE COUNTRY THEMSELVES – ON TOP OF THAT, ACCORDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, ONLY ABOUT HALF OF U-A-Cs ACTUALLY SHOW UP FOR THEIR REQUIRED COURT HEARINGS.

THIS IS CONCERNING ON MANY FRONTS, BUT BEGS THE QUESTION – HOW MUCH TAXPAYER MONEY IS GOING TO FUND CHILD TRAFFICKING AND OTHER ILLICIT ACTIVITY BY THOSE HERE ILLEGALLY SPONSORING U-A-Cs? ONE WAY TO PROVIDE BETTER ACCOUNTABILITY OVER THESE PROGRAMS IS

FOR THIS COMMITTEE TO PRODUCE A BUDGET RESOLUTION
THAT PUTS US ON A PATH TOWARD FISCAL SANITY.

IT'S TIME WE STOP LEAVING A FINANCIAL DISASTER FOR THE
NEXT GENERATION AND PUT TOGETHER A BUDGET THAT
MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, NOT THE NEEDS
OF PRESIDENT BIDEN AND SPEAKER PELOSI.

THANK YOU. I YIELD BACK.