



## Additional Options for Congressionally Directed Spending Reforms

Listed below are suggestions that would go beyond or enhance those requirements that are currently required by the standing rules of the Senate and House that were approved during the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress and were in place from 2007-2010.

### Ensure Transparency

#### Require Regular Order and Deliberation:

- Prohibit the inclusion of congressionally directed spending provisions in any supplemental documents in lieu of any project not specifically being included in the actual text of the bill or report during the Appropriations Committee markup process.
- Prohibit the insertion of a congressionally directed spending provision into any appropriations bill on the floor, in an appropriations conference report, or in omnibus appropriations legislation that did not previously include that request in either of the Senate or House bills or reports reported by the committee.

Make Information Easily Available: Continue to require that all congressionally directed requests are posted both on individual lawmaker websites and a relevant, publicly accessible on an appropriate Appropriations Committee website prior to a full committee markup, including an explanation of the project. Additionally, require a list of all congressionally directed projects in appropriate legislation be published on a publicly accessible website.

### Increase Vetting

Expert Review: Professional subcommittee staff should vet potential project requests, including by soliciting comments from the executive branch agency which would implement the programs through which the project would be funded. Congressionally directed spending projects should not be added to specific programs that provide funding based on rigorous, expert peer review processes such as NIH research or accounts that fund the salaries for those agencies.

Require Authorization before Appropriation: Allow congressionally directed spending only in instances where an underlying program has been specifically authorized—which will provide an incentive for enacting authorization bills and ensure both authorizers and appropriators are engaged in the process. Conditions should also consider the number and cost of projects, state matching requirements could be specified where appropriate, and other requirements could be established.

Evaluate Spending: Congress should instruct the GAO or another suitable, independent entity to review and audit projects after funding has been allocated. A “claw-back” provision should be considered to protect taxpayers from any misuse of funds.

## **Set Limits**

Prohibit For-Profit Projects: Codify, in both the House and Senate, prohibitions for congressionally directed projects to be provided to for-profit companies and allow them only for publicly funded federal, state, local, and tribal entities. This would require an amendment to the standing rules.

Total Spending Limit: Appropriations subcommittee bills should limit project funding to keep overall congressionally directed spending at not more than 1% of total annual discretionary federal spending.

Individual Member Limit: Limit the total amount or number of congressionally directed spending requests that any member can receive.