

Hearing: Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress “Member Day”

Hearing Date: Tuesday, March 12

Staff: Dom

Background: On July 9, the House adopted the third title of the Rules package, which created the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (Passed 418-12).

LEGISLATIVE JURISDICTION.—The Select Committee **shall not have legislative jurisdiction** and shall have **no authority to take legislative action** on any bill or resolution. **INVESTIGATIVE JURISDICTION.**—The sole authority of the Select Committee shall be to investigate, study, make findings, hold public hearings, and develop recommendations on modernizing Congress, including recommendations on: (A) Rules to promote a more modern and efficient Congress; (B) Procedures, including the schedule and calendar; (C) Policies to develop the next generation of leaders; (D) Staff recruitment, diversity, retention, and compensation and benefits; (E) Administrative efficiencies, including purchasing, travel, outside services, and shared administrative staff; (F) Technology and innovation; **FINDINGS:** The committee must publish its finding, which must receive 2/3 approval, by the end of the Congress.

Joint Select Ideas:

- **Authorize before Appropriating**
- **Facts:** There is over \$712 billion of unauthorized appropriations for fiscal year 2018 spanning 30 laws and 11 authorizing committees. More than 90 authorizations of appropriations, totaling over \$5 billion, are set to expire by the end of fiscal year 2019.
 - Establish a four-year budgetary level reduction schedule with respect to unauthorized programs funded through the annual appropriations process identified in the Congressional Budget Office's annual report
 - For the first year after a program's authorization has expired, the budgetary level is to be reduced by [2.5%] of the funds appropriated for the program in the expiring fiscal year.
- **Deficit Reduction Targets**
- **Facts:** In 1965, mandatory spending accounted for only 34% of the federal government's budget. In 2016, it has crept up to nearly 70%. In 2040, mandatory spending is projected to swallow 81% percent of the federal government's massive 4 trillion dollar budget.
 - For example: in the January 2017 Budget and Economic Outlook , publicly held debt to GDP was projected to rise from 76.99% of GDP in FY 2016 (actual) to 77.37% in FY 2018 (projected) and 88.9% of GDP in FY 2027.
 - So, the increase was 0.38 percentage points of GDP in the first two years and 11.9 percentage points of GDP over 10 years. In terms of projected FY 2018 GDP, that equates to \$75.5 billion of required minimum savings over 10 years to account for the first two years of debt savings
- **No Budget No Recess**
- **Facts:** Congress has not followed regular order regarding the congressional budget and appropriations process since fiscal year 1995, the last time Congress passed a budget conference agreement followed by all of the separate appropriations bills before the beginning of the fiscal year.
- **Fiscal to Calendar Year**
- **Facts:** Since 1977, there have only been four instances when all 12 appropriations bills have passed by the start of the fiscal year. We need to move the Fiscal year to calendar year and begin Budget process without President's submission
- **Eliminate CHIMPS**
- **Facts:** CHIMPS are provisions in appropriation bills making changes in mandatory spending programs, usually to reduce or limit mandatory spending. The savings are then available to be used to offset an increase in discretionary spending. Over \$20 billion in CHIMPS in 2016
- **Balanced Budget Amendment**