

May 6, 2019

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
United States House of Representatives
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative McMorris Rodgers:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write in support of H.R. 2505, the Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act. This sensible proposal would help empower Congress to better exercise its power of the purse by requiring the periodic authorization of federal programs. We strongly believe this legislation will bring fiscal sanity back to the budget process and we urge Congress to swiftly pass the USA Act into law.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, for fiscal year (FY) 2019, Congress has appropriated \$306.8 billion to 971 programs and activities that are no longer authorized. That equates to nearly one-quarter of the discretionary budget. Regardless of the merits of these programs, it is undeniable that they are being funded without sufficient oversight and accountability. The USA Act would create a mechanism that forces congressional committees to take charge of the expenditures within their jurisdiction. After the enactment of this bill, unauthorized programs would see their budgets reduced by 10 percent in the first year, and 15 percent in each of the following two years, after which they would be completely sunset. These spending reductions would be applied to the overall federal discretionary budget.

Congress is already required by rule to authorize programs before appropriating funds. However, due to widespread and longstanding waivers of this rule, the two oldest unauthorized programs date back to the 95th and 96th Congress. The USA Act would help end the longstanding neglect of the authorization process.

Your legislation also includes important accountability measures that pertain to mandatory spending, which comprises nearly two-thirds of the federal budget. It would create a Spending Accountability Commission tasked with conducting comprehensive reviews of federal programs funded by mandatory spending. In the event Congress cannot agree on whether an unauthorized program should continue, the commission could propose reductions in mandatory spending to offset any unauthorized programs remaining on the books. This mechanism would provide Congress with additional flexibility as it seeks to improve the effectiveness of government spending.

Again, we commend you on your thoughtful approach to increasing accountability, which will result in reducing unnecessary federal spending. Our organizations are pleased to endorse the USA Act, and we hope all Members of Congress will join you in working toward its swift passage.

Sincerely,



National
Taxpayers Union



60 Plus
Association



American Commitment



Americans for a
Balanced Budget



Americans
for Limited
Government



Americans for Prosperity



Americans for Tax Reform



Campaign for Liberty



Coalition to Reduce Spending



Competitive Enterprise Institute



Council for Citizens Against Government Waste



FreedomWorks



Generation Opportunity



Hispanic Leadership Fund



Independent Women's Voice



R Street Institute



Taxpayers for Common Sense



Taxpayers Protection Alliance



Tea Party Nation



Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity



ALEC Action