

June 12, 2018

Open Letter to the U.S. Senate: Oppose Efforts to Retreat on Spending Restraint

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing millions of Americans, we strongly urge all Senators to **oppose Senator Cotton's (R-AR) amendment #2321** to S. 2987, the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019.

This short-sighted amendment would eliminate the 2011 Budget Control Act's (BCA) sequester mechanism for all discretionary spending (both defense and non-defense), rendering the spending caps unenforceable and reneging on Congress' promise to deliver \$1 trillion in deficit reduction by 2021.

Despite repeated budget agreements that amended the BCA's caps, the BCA has nonetheless been an essential check on the congressional impulse to overspend. The BCA has generated significant savings for taxpayers, established a lower budget baseline, and forced much-needed waste reduction and prioritization of programmatic needs across federal agencies.

The annual Defense authorization act is an improper vehicle to unwind the BCA. Any discussion of repealing or changing the caps ought to be done in the context of other significant reforms that would generate real savings for taxpayers – both now AND in the future.

As the BCA has successfully demonstrated, even modest spending reductions now will positively affect our fiscal outlook for years to come, particularly on the mandatory spending side of the ledger. These savings couldn't be more urgent. The most recent Budget and Economic Outlook report from the Congressional Budget Office estimates that deficits will once again exceed \$1 trillion beginning in FY19 as the the national debt soars to historic levels.

Repealing the BCA in the absence of a comprehensive plan to restrain our out-of-control spending would represent yet another failure of Congress to exercise the fiscal restraint that our economy urgently requires.

Sincerely,

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