



Committee on Appropriations – Democrats

NO MONEY SHALL BE DRAWN FROM THE TREASURY BUT IN CONSEQUENCE OF APPROPRIATIONS MADE BY LAW. U.S. CONSTITUTION ARTICLE I, SECTION 9, CLAUSE 7



Congresswoman Nita Lowey,
Ranking Democratic Member

“Puntagon” Spending Package: Summary and Key Points

“The Republican majority continues to lurch from crisis to crisis of their own making. This partisan and irresponsible package fails to advance the safety and prosperity of American families and communities and leaves no path to accomplish urgent and bipartisan priorities by the end of the year.”

Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)

Ranking Democrat, House Appropriations Committee

Background

For six months, Democrats have warned Republicans that inadequate spending caps must be increased in order to enact responsible Appropriations law that invests in American families and communities.

For six months, Republicans have kept their heads in the sand, passing partisan Appropriations bills through the House that cannot be enacted into law.

Now, instead of engaging with Democrats to reach a real budget agreement, allowing Congress to enact responsible federal funding law, the majority is advancing a “Puntagon” - a full year of funding for only the Department of Defense exceeding spending caps, while punting every other federal service and investment to an uncertain fate.

American families and communities would suffer from the Republican majority’s decision to abandon nondefense services and investments.

This package also does nothing to address other critical, bipartisan priorities that should be done by the end of the year, including a bipartisan reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), emergency funding to fight the opioid epidemic, protecting DREAMers from deportation, and saving endangered pensions.

Summary of “Puntagon”

- **Division A: Continuing Resolution**

- Extends the end date of the current Continuing Resolution, scheduled to expire on December 22nd, through January 19th for 11 out of 12 Appropriations bills.
- Eliminates defense sequestration by directing that any sequestration order issued by the Office of Management and Budget for defense spending shall have no force or effect.
- Delays the Office of Management and Budget from implementing sequestration on non-defense spending, but does not eliminate nondefense sequestration.
- **Division B: Defense Appropriations**
 - FY2018 Defense Appropriations bill (H.R. 3219), as passed by the House of Representatives on July 27, 2017.
 - 187 Democrats voted against this bill, which includes a \$28.6 billion slush fund for the Pentagon to spend without transparency or direction from Congress.
 - \$4 billion in emergency supplemental spending for Missile Defeat and Defense Enhancements.
 - \$673.5 million in emergency supplemental spending for repairs to the USS Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain.
 - \$1.18 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding for increased U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan.
- **Division C: Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Community Health Centers**
 - Includes HR 3922 which extends funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program for five years, and funding for other health programs like Community Health Centers, Special Diabetes, and PREP for 2 years.
 - The costs for these policies are offset with harmful provisions affecting health coverage for beneficiaries across federal health programs, including raising premiums on Medicare beneficiaries, continuing GOP efforts to sabotage the ACA by kicking hundreds of thousands of hardworking Americans off their health insurance in the marketplaces, and making steep cuts in later years to safety net hospitals, as well as hurt public health programs by cutting \$6.35B from the Prevention Fund.
 - HR 3922 was opposed by 174 members on the House Floor on Nov 3.
- **Division D: Veterans Choice**
 - \$2.1 billion to provide a short-term patch for the Veterans Choice Program, established by the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.

Neglecting Domestic Needs

This package places on auto-pilot - for the third time in three months - services and investments that are critical to American families and communities, including:

- Scientific and biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, NASA, Department of Energy, and much more.
- Schools, teachers and administrators working in early childhood education, elementary and secondary schools, and higher education.
- Job training initiatives, apprenticeships, and other initiatives critical to preparing a 21st century workforce.
- Local infrastructure like roads and bridges, rail and transit systems, and water infrastructure that are crumbling and inadequate to support growing communities.
- Affordable housing, rural broadband and waste and water, and community development initiatives.
- Ensuring communities have access to clean and safe air and water.

Ignoring Critical Aspects of National Security

While the majority claims this bill prioritizes national security, the safety of American families and communities depends on more than solely our Armed Forces. This package fails to provide the certainty and robust funding needed for:

- Homeland Security grants to improve prevention and response to terrorism, benefitting states and municipalities like New York City, the nation's highest target for terrorism, which has experienced two terrorist attacks in the last two months.
- Veterans' health services and other benefits that those who served have earned.
- Diplomacy and international security assistance to help our allies around the world fight ISIS, human trafficking, narco-terrorism and other threats.
- The FBI, Customs and Border Protection, the Coast Guard, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Marshals Service and other federal law enforcement.
- Public health funding to stop the spread of infectious disease and help prepare for bioterrorism threats.
- U.S. attorneys and federal courts to prosecute terror suspects and other criminals.

No Plan to Address Other Critical, Bipartisan Priorities

The majority continues to drift without direction with no plan to address urgent and bipartisan priorities that are critical to American families and communities, including:

- **DREAMers:** Congress must pass the DREAM Act to protect young Americans from the risk of deportation to a country they have never known.
- **Opioid funding:** Communities urgently need resources to fight the opioid epidemic, affecting American families in every part of the country.
- **CHIP and Community Health Centers:** Congress must immediately reauthorize these critical initiatives in a way that does not take from the health care of other children.
- **Saving endangered pensions:** The pensions that millions of Americans have earned are at risk, and Congress must ensure promises made to employees are fulfilled.