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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

CHARLES KIFFER, STAFF DIRECTOR  
BRUCE EVANS, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 29, 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

Mr. Chairman,

We write to express our grave concerns with the proposed plan to circumvent the regular order in the Senate, and to forgo Committee markup of the Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

We believe that directing staff to "pre-conference" legislation that has not been considered by the House or Senate Committees on Appropriations – or on the floor of either body – is exactly the wrong approach at the wrong time.

We were not consulted prior to the initiation of this plan late last week, and we believe that such a closed door approach – which purposefully limits opportunities to offer amendments – scuttles the ability of the Senate fully and fairly to debate vital national security matters. Unfortunately, this ill-conceived plan will also serve to further undermine the American people's confidence in the appropriations process.

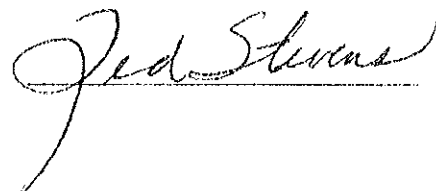
The posturing by the House on this important legislation has ensured that precious little time remains for Congress to act responsibly. The courageous men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces and diplomatic corps are in danger of running short of equipment and supplies and other means necessary to fulfill their mission of safeguarding and defending the United States at home and abroad.

Regardless of how the House proceeds, we ask that you schedule and hold a Committee markup no later than the end of this week, and that Senate leadership schedule floor time as soon as possible thereafter.

We stand ready to work with you and your colleagues to address the funding requirements of our troops, and other vital needs.

Sincerely,

  
Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member



Wayne Alford

Chris F. Bennett

Lamar Alexander  
4/29/08-APP

John King

Al Spitzer

Sam Brownback

Richard Shelby

Pat Toomey

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Jeff Bond

John Goss

cc: The Honorable Harry Reid  
cc: The Honorable Mitch McConnell