



# APPROPRIATIONS ALERT

BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET, REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

B-71 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Representative Paul D. Ryan, *Ranking Republican*

Phone: (202)-226-7270  
Fax: (202)-226-7174  
Augustine T. Smythe, *Republican Staff Director*

## CONTINUING RESOLUTION/LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS CONGRESS TAKES CARE OF ITS OWN H.R. 2918

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Having failed to send the President even one completed appropriations bill so far this year, Congress nevertheless has made sure to fund itself while other agencies contend with temporary funding in a continuing resolution [CR]. Fiscal year 2010 starts at midnight next week Thursday, and without a CR non-essential government activities would shut down at that point.

The measure, brought to the House floor today, is attached to the conference report for Legislative Branch appropriations. Agencies funded by all 11 remaining appropriations bills – with a few exceptions noted below – will be funded at fiscal year 2009 levels for one month, through 31 October 2009. The legislation also contains stopgap funding for the United States Postal Service.

The situation surrounding this legislation reverses the approach advocated by the previous Democratic President. In October 1995, when only two of 13 appropriations had been completed, President Clinton vetoed the Legislative Branch conference report that Congress sent him. His veto message said in part:

[I]t would be inappropriate to provide full-year regular funding for Congress and its offices while funding for most other activities of Government remains incomplete, unresolved, and uncertain.

As I said two months ago, I don't think Congress should take care of its own business before it takes care of the people's business. I stated that if the congressional leadership were to follow through on its plan to send me its own funding bill before finishing work on the rest of the budget, I would veto it. I am now following through on that commitment.

In his last year in office, President Clinton also vetoed the fiscal year 2001 Legislative Branch appropriations bill under similar circumstances. Such a response is not expected from the current President.

Division A of the conference report provides \$4.7 billion in funding for the fiscal year 2010 Legislative Branch appropriations bill, some \$254 million, or 5.7 percent, more than last year's scored level. The bill funds House and Senate operations, committees, and Member offices, as well as support agencies such as the Congressional Budget Office [CBO], the Library of Congress, and the Capitol Police.

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Authorized by ..... Paul D. Ryan, Ranking Republican

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Division B of H.R. 2918 provides funding for other government agencies through the end of October at current 2009 levels, including all 2009 supplemental appropriation levels for overseas military operations. Other details include the following:

- The CR will effectively cover the 11 remaining fiscal year 2010 appropriations bills that have not been enacted. The bill funds most discretionary Federal programs and activities at the 2009 level under the same terms and conditions as the enacted bills.
- On an annualized basis, the CR combined with the fiscal year 2010 Legislative Branch conference report will total \$1.174 trillion in budget authority [BA], according to CBO estimates.
- There are several exceptions to the 2009 funding level. Veterans medical accounts and the census would be funded above the 2009 levels. In addition, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program [LIHEAP] would be funded essentially at the level provided in the fiscal year 2010 Labor-Health and Human Services appropriations bills.
- H.R. 2918 provides fiscal year 2010 war funding at a rate that includes all 2009 supplemental appropriation levels for overseas military operations.
- The CR also includes one-month current law extensions for several expiring authorization programs, including (but not limited to) the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users [SAFETEA-LU]; the Federal Aviation Administration; flood insurance and pre-mitigation; Child Nutrition; and E-Verify.
- Section 163 of the CR includes language that is virtually identical to H.R. 22 (the United States Postal Services Financial Relief Act of 2009) as passed by the House. Under normal scoring conventions, this language would score at \$4 billion in fiscal year 2009 in on-budget BA and outlays against the Appropriations Committee's 302(a) and 302(b) allocations. The House Majority has, however, resorted to a gimmick to score \$4 billion in fiscal year 2009 off-budget savings to the provision, netting the cost to zero for purposes of enforcing its own fiscal year 2010 budget resolution.