



May 15, 2024

Dear Chairman Arrington, Ranking Member Boyle, and members of the committee:

We encourage all members of the House Budget Committee to support H.R. 8195, the Strengthening Administrative PAYGO Act of 2024. Executive branch officials must not substitute their judgment for the will of the people's representatives in Congress.

Congressional deliberation is the heart of American democracy. The vital task of balancing competing interests and priorities for our great nation is only truly possible through the push and pull of legislators contending, collaborating, and discovering consensus.

Weighing the allocation of resources and the commensurate raising of revenue to accomplish national goals belongs properly to Congress. Only Congress has the legitimate power to raise revenue, and the federal government is barred from expending funds unless Congress makes appropriations by law.

The Strengthening Administrative PAYGO Act of 2024 would take useful steps toward Congress reclaiming its prudential and constitutional role as the principal policy-making body of the federal government. It would require the Office of Management and Budget to explain how and why it proposes deviations from the spending baseline. It also would repeal the sunset so these requirements would continue indefinitely beyond the end of calendar year 2024.

Congress could build on this legislation in at least two ways. First, it could apply the provisions to revenue policies to keep the White House from, among other things, expanding the costs of tax expenditures through loose rulemaking. Second, it could prohibit any deficit-increasing changes to the baseline from taking effect unless and until Congress affirmatively approves them.

We commend Representative Bergman for proposing H.R. 8195. We urge all members to support it as a step toward reclaiming Congress' proper role in our system of government.

Sincerely,

Kurt Couchman
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