

News from Representative Randy Hultgren

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Dear Friend,

The House finished up its final week of business for the year by passing a spending bill to fund most of the government through September 2015. Along with the Republican delegation in Illinois, I supported the bill because I think it was the right thing to do, and I believed it was the best tool available with limited options to stop President Obama's executive overreach.

Since I've been in Congress, I have repeatedly opposed governing by crisis and last-minute spending bills. I have found that the best ideas for legislation come from right here in the 14th District, but governing by crisis prevents these ideas from becoming law. I believe we must return to the normal legislative process where the House carefully considers legislation through the committee process and listens to the opinions of everyone, especially their own constituents.

Leading up to this vote, the Senate majority had passed zero appropriations bills—the House had passed seven. This, combined with a Senate majority that continues to run interference for the President until the end of the year, made our options to fund the government very limited. I believed the alternatives of yet another short-term continuing resolution (CR) or even a government shutdown were poor tools and unlikely to reverse the President's executive actions on immigration, a severe overreach which is opposed by a majority of Americans. Further, I have consistently opposed short-term CR's because they cede further control to the executive branch and drive up the debt.

By passing an appropriations bill that encompassed most departments and agencies in government rather than another CR, Congress was able to make substantive reforms and put limits on how, where and when government spends taxpayer dollars. I believe the new Republican majority will begin next year's budget process in an orderly and responsible fashion, and can use its full weight to hold the administration accountable and pursue its

priorities on tax reform, energy, government transparency, and many other areas. The funding bill abides by the Ryan-Murray budget agreement—a vital provision for keeping spending caps in place. With a unified Congress next year, I look forward to stopping the President's overreach and providing proper oversight over the executive branch.

And this administration needs plenty of oversight. I have consistently opposed the President's executive actions on immigration which reward and encourage unlawful entry at the expense of those who have patiently waited years in line to lawfully pursue the American Dream and citizenship. This week, I was the only Member of Congress from Illinois to support the Mulvaney amendment to stop the President's executive actions. I believe Members should have been put on the record to say whether or not they supported this effort. Unfortunately the amendment was not included in the final bill and did not receive a vote in the House as a similar provision did in the Senate.

As a backup plan, the funding bill addresses the President's executive overreach by only funding the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees immigration enforcement, through February 2015. This sets up Congress to offer a solution to the President's actions and to take votes that challenge the President's overreach. The Constitution is clear: it's Congress who makes the laws, and the President executes them.

Included in the bill were key priorities of mine and of our fine State of Illinois that will benefit the people of the 14th District. Here are some highlights of the bill:

- It includes text of the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation (RAMI) Act, legislation I cosponsored which passed the House to help Illinois manufacturers expand and train an advanced manufacturing workforce through a network of regional institutes.
- It allows qualified individuals who do not have a high school diploma or a GED to be eligible for financial aid for higher education after I advocated these 'Ability to Benefit' provisions be included.
- It scales back EPA regulations that are not supported by science, including those targeted at farm ponds and irrigation ditches, and it trims the agency's budget for the fifth year in a row.
- It maintains all existing pro-life policy and funding provisions including the Hyde Amendment and adds three new provisions, including requiring Obamacare healthcare plans to tell customers if they provide abortion services.
- It includes no new funding for Obamacare, prohibits funds for Obamacare Risk Corridors and cuts the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) by \$10 million.
- It prohibits IRS targeting organizations based on their religious beliefs or for exercising

their First Amendment rights.

- It provides \$2.5 billion for processing VA disability claims to end the backlog and rescinds \$41 million in performance bonuses at the VA following well-documented mismanagement.
- It included provisions from my legislation which makes sure farmers and manufacturers have reliable and affordable access to the financial products they rely on to deal with fluctuating energy prices and other uncertain events. This fix will help make sure they can purchase necessary products from people and institutions they have relationships with—the people they trust.
- It prioritizes the most promising scientific research in areas such as supercomputing to map the brain, and ground-breaking high energy physics carried out at Fermilab and other National Labs.
- It includes \$10 million for site remediation and environmental cleanup of West Chicago radiological sites.
- It allows air traffic controller applicants who have "aged out" of the process to reapply next year. I have made passenger safety a priority with the introduction of H.R. 5675, the SAFE TOWERS Act.

Your views matter to me. Please don't hesitate to contact me or my office and let me know what you think about this or upcoming legislation. I want to hear from you.

With a unified Congress next year, I look forward to checking the overreach of the executive branch and pushing forward the priorities of the American people.

As always, thank you for the honor and privilege of serving you.

In Your Service,



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