



Congressional Progressive Caucus Statement of Principles on Sequestration and Year-End Government Funding Legislation

The current budget negotiations offer Congress an opportunity to pass a budget that invests in America. It is time to turn away from the counterproductive austerity budgets and extreme partisanship that has inhibited job creation, common-sense investments, and wage growth since the passage of the Budget Control Act of 2011. For too long, our economy has failed to provide the opportunities American families need to get ahead. A continuation of the senseless cuts imposed by sequestration is unsustainable and unacceptable. A good budget deal will support our teachers and first responders, create new medical breakthroughs, and provide better health care for our veterans and seniors.

It is clear that the votes of Democrats will be needed to pass a long term budget. The CPC will adhere to the following principles in considering its support of any agreement:

- The CPC will oppose a long-term government funding bill that fails to address the cuts on non-defense discretionary spending imposed by the Budget Control Act's sequestration. A government funding bill that continues sequestration is not a clean spending bill. Any two-year agreement should bring about a return to pre-sequester spending levels, which would require at least \$74 billion in relief for non-defense discretionary spending.
- The CPC believes arbitrary spending caps must not dictate our federal budget policy. As such, their removal should not require an offset. Recent bipartisan bills, including tax extenders legislation and the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, were not budget neutral. Investing in domestic programs that support working families and combat poverty and inequality will result in greater economic growth, increased tax revenue, and reduced spending on safety net programs. This is especially vital for low-income communities and communities of color that have been disproportionately affected by these spending caps.
- With today's seniors and individuals with disabilities facing historic levels of income insecurity, the CPC will oppose any bill that cuts Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid benefits. Congress should follow the precedent established in the bipartisan Ryan-Murray budget deal and only consider offsets that do not impact mandatory programs.

- The CPC will oppose any bill that includes new policy riders that undermine rules or other Administration efforts that strengthen environmental protection, consumer protection, a woman's right to choose, and worker voice on the job.
- Any sequester relief for defense spending should be matched by equal levels of relief for non-defense spending. The CPC believes that any deal should recognize that Pentagon spending has doubled over the last decade at the expense of investments in working families. Any good deal should embrace defense program savings that support a leaner, more agile force to combat realistic twenty-first century threats. Additionally, Congress should discontinue the dishonest policy of using additional Overseas Contingency Operations funds to pad the defense budget.
- The CPC has identified a significant number of revenue and cost-saving proposals in its alternative budget, *The People's Budget*. These proposals have garnered the support of a majority of the House Democratic Caucus and should be considered in these negotiations.

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