

June 25, 2025

Hon. Tom Cole, Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

Hon. Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We are writing to express our deep concern about drastic reductions proposed in the FY26 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. These cuts will significantly reduce Congress's capacity to carry out its constitutional responsibility to ensure taxpayer funds are used wisely and to prevent waste, fraud and abuse.

Specifically, the bill reported by the subcommittee would decrease funding of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) by \$396.5 million, or nearly 49 percent. It would also hamstring the GAO from ensuring funds are spent as Congress intends by prohibiting enforcement of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act. It also reduces funding of the Library of Congress by \$84.6 million, or 10 percent, adversely affecting the ability of the Library to support the work of Members of Congress.

GAO provides crucial support to Congress by ensuring government transparency, efficiency, and accountability. The objective, fact-based information it provides through its investigations and research is critical to helping Congress improve government operations, save taxpayer money, and make informed choices about policy and funding. Its reports have identified billions of dollars in potential savings through its work on various government programs, helped agencies improve their operations, protected taxpayer dollars, and ensured that public funds are used to achieve their intended purposes.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS), which is part of the Library of Congress, responds to thousands and thousands of congressional requests for information each year, providing essential support to members, staff and indeed the entire legislative process. Such significant cuts to the Library of Congress will result in a less informed and less effective Congress.

We urge you to restore this funding as you mark up this legislation. The legislation as drafted will result in continued erosion of congressional capacity to legislate wisely and to oversee the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. Ultimately, it will further erode the public's trust in the Legislative Branch and consequently, our democracy's ability to function.

Thank you for your consideration of this essential matter.

Sincerely,

Jim Townsend, Director
Carl Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy

Danielle Brian, Executive Director/President
Project on Government Oversight

Daniel Schuman, Executive Director
American Governance Institute

Max Stier, President and CEO
Partnership for Public Service

Kevin Kosar, Senior Fellow
American Enterprise Institute

Nan Swift, Resident Fellow
Governance Program
R Street Institute

John Shaw, Director
Paul Simon Policy Institute

Marci Harris, Co-founder and Executive Director
POPVOX Foundation