



Cynthia M. Lummis
Congress of the United States
Wyoming

The Honorable Richard Nugent
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Rules and organization of the House
The Committee on Rules
H-312, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Nugent,

Thank you for holding a hearing for proposed changes to the standing rules of the House. It is a subject of great interest to me and to many other members.

I held a series of ad hoc gatherings about the House Rules with other Republican members beginning in May. I will provide a list of all the proposals discussed by the attendees of the ad hoc meetings, and will focus my testimony on those which I strongly support.

My primary focus lies with Rule XXI. I testified before the House Committee on the Budget regarding the importance of making structural reforms to the appropriations process. I have attached a copy of that testimony. Briefly, it has become customary to waive clause 2 of Rule XXI. This blurs the line between authorizers and appropriators and makes it more difficult for authorizers to make reforms or otherwise improve programs. It also means funds are spent on programs without adequate review of whether they are an appropriate use of tax dollars. I am not asserting that every program with a lapsed authorization should be automatically defunded, but I do support language that would limit

appropriations to unauthorized programs from exceeding the most recently enacted appropriation for that program. Representative McClintock is proposing the specific language, which follows:

Amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to establish an additional point of order against certain unauthorized appropriations reported in general appropriation bills or amendments thereto.

Resolved, That clause 2(a) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives is amended by redesignating subparagraph (2) as subparagraph (3) and by inserting after subparagraph (1) the following new subparagraph: “(2) An appropriation may not be reported in a general appropriation bill, and may not be in order as an amendment thereto, for an expenditure not previously authorized by law if such appropriation exceeds the amount of the most recently enacted appropriation for that expenditure, except to continue appropriations for public works and objects that are already in progress.”

To change our nation’s current fiscal trajectory we must eliminate artificial categories such as discretionary and mandatory spending that put a straightjacket on Congress’ ability to control spending. That is why I support a further change to Rule XXI to allow “mandatory spending” reduction amendments to appropriations bills.

Revise clause 2(b) to read

*A provision changing existing law may not be reported in a general appropriation bill, including a provision making the availability of funds contingent on the receipt or possession of information not required by existing law for the period of the appropriation, except germane provisions that retrench expenditures by the reduction of amounts of money covered by the bill (which may include those recommended to the Committee on Appropriations by direction of a legislative committee having jurisdiction over the subject matter), ~~and~~ except rescissions of appropriations contained in appropriation Acts, **and except changes in direct spending programs that reduce expenditures.***

Congress should put America’s fiscal house in order, rather than expanding government. I support a further change to Rule XXI to prevent consideration of legislation over 50 standard pages of standard type in length except for reauthorizing or appropriating legislation.

Add clause 12 to Rule XXI

It shall not be in order to consider a bill over 50 letter sized pages of standard type in length except for legislation reauthorizing appropriations or appropriating funds.

I also believe in transparency and accountability. It should be clear who supports spending, and who opposes it. I support amending Rule XX to provide for automatic recorded votes on bills that increase direct spending.

Amend clause 10 to read:

The yeas and nays shall be considered as ordered when the Speaker puts the question on passage of a bill or joint resolution, or on adoption of a conference report, making general appropriations, or increasing Federal income tax rates (within the meaning of clause 5 of rule XXI), or increasing mandatory spending (within the meaning of clause 10 of rule XXI), or on final adoption of a concurrent resolution on the budget or conference report thereon.

I support language proposed by Representative Don Young to change rules for travel by private aircraft inside a member district.

Thank you for your consideration. I appreciate the difficulty in reforming such a complex process. Please find attached my testimony before the House Budget Committee, as well as a summary of proposed changes to the House Rules from members I spoke with over the summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cynthia M. Lummis
Member of Congress