

September 1, 2016

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Dear Member of Congress,

NDD United, representing 2,500 national, state, and local organizations that support the full breadth of nondefense discretionary (NDD) programs funded by the federal government, strongly urges you and your colleagues to swiftly pass a clean, short-term continuing resolution to keep the government running pending enactment of final appropriations legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2017. Specifically, that continuing resolution should not extend beyond December 2016—a period which, as demonstrated by the last two years, allows adequate time to complete the appropriations process. Punting decisions about FY 2017 funding until next year is an abdication of Congress’s constitutional responsibilities, and an affront to effective governance.

Congress’s “power of the purse” is vital to a functioning government and its ability to respond to challenges that Americans face. Through the annual appropriations process, Congress makes adjustments that reflect changing priorities, providing additional or new federal funding for emerging needs and cutting spending that is no longer needed. Continuing resolutions do not afford such necessary course corrections, and cause significant uncertainty for federal grantees and contractors working on the taxpayers’ behalf. Whenever “regular order” fails and a continuing resolution is needed to keep the government running, such stop-gap measures should be as short in duration as possible, allowing only enough time for Congress to complete work on new spending legislation.

Further, it is critical that any short-term continuing resolution is not politicized by ideologically motivated policy riders. Such riders threaten the passage of a continuing resolution and risk another government shutdown. Indeed, Congress has the authority to alter current policies and propose new ones through the legislative process. But attempting to do so through the appropriations process risks Americans’ access to programs that improve their safety and security.

No country runs effectively on autopilot. It is unnecessary, unproductive, and irresponsible to prolong the debate about FY 2017 spending into the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Upon passage of a clean, short-term continuing resolution, lawmakers must work in earnest to finalize spending legislation for FY 2017 before the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress adjourns, restore stability and certainty to the appropriations process in FY 2018, and lay the groundwork for replacing sequestration in FY 2018 and beyond.

*For more information, please contact Emily Holubowich at [eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com) or visit [www.nddunited.org](http://www.nddunited.org).*