



HOUSE
BUDGET
COMMITTEE

Budget Digest

Chairman Steve Womack

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REFORMING THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

There is near universal agreement that the congressional budget process is broken and badly in need of reform. Perhaps the most visible sign of failure is that Congress has not followed regular order regarding the congressional budget and appropriations process since fiscal year 1995, the last time Congress passed a budget conference agreement followed by all of the separate appropriations bills before the beginning of the fiscal year.

More worrisome still, the budget process has been ineffective at controlling spending – specifically mandatory spending – and keeping the government on a sustainable fiscal path. The process is overly complex, its rules are either outdated or not well understood, and budget recommendations are largely ignored. That is precisely why the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123) established a bipartisan, bicameral, select committee on budget and appropriations process reform.

Membership and Mission of the Joint Select Committee. The Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform consists of 16 members, equally divided between the House and Senate. Four members are each appointed by the Speaker, the Senate Majority Leader, the Senate Democratic Leader, and the House Democratic Leader.

Last Friday, Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi announced the House appointees. They include the following members: Representative Steve Womack (R-AR), chairman of the Budget Committee, Representative Pete Sessions (R-TX), chairman of the

THE STATUS QUO IS NOT WORKING

Time Period	Enacted Budget Resolutions	Appropriations Completed on Time
Past 5 Years	3 out of 5	1 out of 60
Past 10 Years	5 out of 10	5 out of 120
Past 25 Years	16 out of 25	48 out of 312

Committee on Rules, Representative Rob Woodall (R-GA), member of the Budget Committee, Representative Jodey Arrington (R-TX), member of the Budget Committee, Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY), ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, Representative John Yarmuth (D-KY), ranking member of the Budget Committee, Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, and Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

The Joint Select Committee is required to hold public hearings and report recommendations and legislative text by November 30, 2018. The panel's mission, to reform our current budgeting and appropriations processes, is broad in its scope. Therefore, the Joint Select Committee also has broad discretion in making its recommendations on how best to improve the budget and appropriations process and ensure that Congress follows regular order to fulfill its constitutional duty of budgeting for the nation.