



U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

March 4, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a nearly \$2 trillion bailout bill disguised as emergency COVID-19 response funding. With your Administration on the verge of enacting such levels of spending, it is of vital importance that you release the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 President's budget request as expeditiously as possible. As members of the House Committee on the Budget, we ask that you, at the very least, tell the American people when they can expect to see a budget from your Administration.

There is already talk of trillions more in additional, new spending that your Administration and Democrats in Congress hope to pass related to various policies, but Congress and the American people have yet to see a plan on how you will pay for any of it. Now more than ever, it is necessary to be forthright about the cost of your agenda. American families plan and budget for their own financial future. The White House should be transparent with the American people about the government policies and programs their tax dollars will fund, especially if it will require a tax increase.

According to the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, a President's budget is due to Congress on the first Monday of February each year. As we noted in our January 14, 2021 letter to Ted Kaufman, Co-Chair of the Biden Transition Team, it is critical for the Administration to explain when it plans to fulfill this obligation of transparency required by law. When asked about the timing of your first budget, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki blamed the outgoing administration for a supposed lack of cooperation.¹ In the above referenced letter, we expressed concerns about asserting a delayed transition as the cause for the late submission of your budget to Congress. Rather than lay blame, we ask that you complete your budget proposal as required by law.

As detailed in the earlier letter, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Trump Administration fully complied with the Presidential Transition Act of 1963. Within hours of the General Services Administration letter of ascertainment, OMB apportioned \$9.9 million for the

¹ Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki, Feb 10, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/02/10/press-briefing-by-press-secretary-jen-psaki-february-10-2021/>.

hiring of transition employees and services. OMB provided all requested pertinent, factual information on ongoing programs, participated in 45 meetings with transition staff, and provided detailed funding information for the coronavirus response. Not only did OMB meet all obligations called for in law, it also fulfilled the requirements agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Trump Administration and the Biden Transition Team prior to the election.²

After pledging bipartisanship, it is unclear why you have chosen to issue a record number of executive orders rather than work with Congress on your priorities.³ These commitments are more than just words – each executive order comes with a price to be borne by American families and taxpayers and has far-reaching economic consequences. Working-class families are struggling, and it is critically important that your Administration be upfront and clear about the policies and the price tag of its agenda.

To date, some of the most concrete information provided as to timing of when the White House will release a budget has been from media reports which as recently as last week projected a mid-to-late April timeline.⁴ If true, that will be the latest an administration will have ever released its budget. Of course, the American people should not have to rely on speculation in the press. The Administration should be forthcoming with its timeline to release a budget.

In the absence of a budget, Americans are left to wonder how your Administration might go about adopting or implementing some of the more sweeping priorities put forward by Democrats – whether it be some variation on the Green New Deal, a Medicare-for-All health care overhaul, policies that defund the police, weaken America’s national security, or prioritize resources for illegal immigrants over our fellow Americans. Such policies would harm working-class Americans and cause job losses, less economic opportunity, and the prospect of painful tax increases. That is why it is incumbent upon your Administration to be transparent with the American people.

On behalf of the American people, we urge you to share when you plan to submit your budget to Congress. Taxpayers deserve to know. Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Smith", written in a cursive style.

Jason Smith
Republican Leader
House Committee on the Budget

² Memorandum of Understanding Between the General Services Administration and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., September 4, 2020, https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/2020_MOU_between_GSA_and_Eligible_Candidate_%28Biden%29.pdf.

³ With 28 Executive Orders Signed, President Biden Is Off To A Record Start, February 3, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/03/963380189/with-28-executive-orders-signed-president-biden-is-off-to-a-record-start>.

⁴ White House budget not expected until April, Yarmuth says, February 26, 2021, <https://www.rollcall.com/2021/02/26/white-house-budget-not-expected-until-april-yarmuth-says/>



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Member of Congress



Tom McClintock (CA-04)
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Glenn Grothman (WI-06)
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Chris Jacobs (NY-27)
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Michael C. Burgess, M.D. (TX-26)
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Buddy Carter (GA-01)
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Ben Cline (VA-06)
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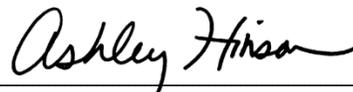
Byron Donalds (FL-19)
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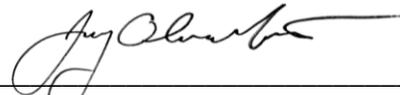
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Bob Good (VA-05)
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Ashley Hinson (IA-01)
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Jay Obernolte (CA-08)
Member of Congress

cc: Robert Fairweather, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable John Yarmuth