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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

July 13, 2010

CHARLES J. HOUY, STAFF DIRECTOR
BRUCE EVANS, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Chairman,

As Republican members of the Appropriations Committee, we are writing to express our views regarding the Fiscal Year 2011 appropriations process.

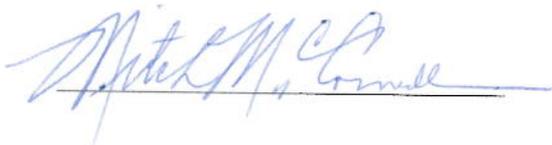
The Committee is operating in a particularly difficult environment during this Congress. The enormity of the Federal debt poses a direct threat to our national security and demands restraint of Federal spending. Developing a consensus approach to funding the operations of the Federal government in such an environment is a significant challenge.

Despite the clear need for a long term plan that would bring our nation's debt under control, it is apparent that Congress will be denied the opportunity to debate a Federal budget this year. Our Committee will instead be compelled to choose a discretionary top-line number outside the context of a comprehensive budget resolution.

Over the last two years discretionary spending has increased by 17%, not including stimulus spending. With stimulus spending included the increase soars to 84%. We note that a bipartisan majority of the Senate has voted several times in recent months on the Sessions-McCaskill proposal to impose a discretionary top-line for Fiscal Year 2011 that essentially freezes non-defense spending, and which would result in significant reductions in spending from the President's budget proposal. This is a clear indication of the broad concern that exists about levels of Federal spending.

We are confident that, working together, our Committee can produce bills that responsibly address fundamental government needs in a fiscally responsible manner. We will not, however, be able to support appropriations bills that do not conform to this top-line number.

Sincerely,



July 13, 2010

Joel Gray

Connors

Susan Collins

Bob Bennett

Phil Bond

Richard Shelby

Liz Berry Hutchinson

Sam Brownback

George V. Voinovich

Joe Nease