

May 1, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chair  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Collins and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro,

On behalf of the Bipartisan Policy Center and its (c)(4) affiliate, Bipartisan Policy Center Action, we are pleased to share our appropriations priorities.

When it comes to the federal budget, BPC advocates for responsible investments that grow the economy and help working families thrive, reduce waste and deliver better outcomes, and make the difficult but necessary compromises to improve our [fiscal outlook](#). To that end, we encourage Congress to prioritize spending, detailed in BPC Action's attached letters to appropriations subcommittees, that:

- Secures American energy and agriculture innovation research through funding of advanced nuclear energy, carbon dioxide removal, critical minerals, and state-of-the-art agricultural innovation to bolster U.S. competitiveness, increase American jobs, and reduce global emissions.
- Strengthens human capital development by ensuring strong support and continuation of education and workforce programs targeted to our most vulnerable students, families, and communities, including funding for child care and preschool grants, Title I and IDEA grants, research and data transparency, Pell Grants, and student aid.
- Increases housing production and preservation and helps families access and afford housing.
- Improves health outcomes, reduces health care costs, and makes quality health care affordable and accessible for all—including through investments in behavioral health, digital health and artificial intelligence, long-term care, public health and prevention, and rural health.
- Enhances Congress's ability to respond to an evolving policymaking environment and meet the needs of the American people through targeted investments that build institutional capacity and develop modern legislative tools.

It is critical to recognize that the country's fiscal [trajectory](#) is unsustainable, creating a drag on the economy that increasingly impacts every taxpayer and business. Rapidly rising debt and interest payments are slowing growth and making it more [expensive](#) for Americans to buy homes, attend college, and pay off credit cards. It is achievable to both prudently invest in the priorities outlined above and to exercise oversight that improves government efficiency and fiscal responsibility. To achieve this balance in the fiscal year (FY) 2026 budget, BPC recommends:

- *Continuing defense and non-defense discretionary spending caps.* We commend the [discretionary caps](#) enacted in the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 and recommend they continue for both defense and non-defense spending, ensuring spending grows no faster than inflation. In addition, we encourage lawmakers to scrutinize opportunities to reduce [duplication](#) and [overlap](#) in federal programs.
- *Funding program integrity resources across the government* for key programs such as unemployment insurance, tax administration, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, among others—to help lawmakers address administrative issues, reduce fraud, and modernize data systems to improve the delivery of [services](#) on which millions of Americans rely.

BPC also encourages authorizing committees to review the statutory language making appropriations to ensure that the binding legislative language fully expresses congressional intent. Enhancing the clarity and specificity of the laws governing the appropriation and expenditure of funds would help to ensure continued implementation of the Constitution's grant of the power of the purse to the legislative branch.

Finally, outside of the appropriations process, Congress must also act to bring mandatory program spending and revenue into balance. BPC has identified trillions in potential revenue and several areas for mandatory program modernization—from [Social Security](#), [Medicare](#), and [Medicaid](#), to reforming [student loans](#)—that would reduce costs and improve efficiencies. Congress can also revamp the [budget process](#) to catalyze legislative action on these primary drivers of the debt. We will continue working with the authorizing committees to do their part in designing, directing, and overseeing the critical work of the federal government, as both authorizing and appropriating are integral to fully realizing Congress's role under the Constitution.

BPC and BPC Action stand ready to work with Congress as you confront the difficult economic and budgetary questions throughout the process. You can keep up to date with BPC's latest policy development at <https://bipartisanpolicy.org>.



Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Spellings".

Margaret Spellings  
President and CEO, Bipartisan Policy Center

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Stockwell".

Michele Stockwell  
President, Bipartisan Policy Center Action

