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Committee on House Administration
Ranking Member

Committee on Appropriations
*Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development, and Related Agencies*

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 18, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson,

I write to you today regarding the unnecessary delay in concluding the appropriations process for fiscal year 2024 (FY24) and its impact on the upcoming appropriations process for fiscal year 2025 (FY25).

We are now almost four months into the fiscal year, and in the best-case scenario, it appears Congress will not complete the FY24 appropriations process until mid-March. We cannot afford to wait six months into the current fiscal year before beginning the appropriations process for FY25. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I am concerned that a delay to this year's appropriations process will ultimately result in yet another funding crisis, as we work to meet the September 30, 2024 deadline for FY25. I urge you in the strongest possible terms to initiate, without delay, the FY25 appropriations process.

House Republicans have spoken often of adhering to regular order and of your party's stated desire for fiscal responsibility. In practice, however, the results have been anything but regular or responsible. The poor stewardship shown by the majority threatens the fiscal stability of the federal government and erodes further America's confidence in Congress.

Since the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 was signed into law by President Biden in June 2023, the topline spending levels for FY24 have been set. Agreement on those spending levels should have immediately unlocked the ability for Congress to pass all twelve appropriations bills by September 30, 2023, avoiding the need for a series of continuing resolutions to fund the government. House Republicans, however, immediately discarded the terms of the agreement and attempted to pass appropriations bills at levels far lower than what could ever become law. On several occasions, those spending bills were unable to even pass the House over Republican concerns about cuts to critical federal programs and the inclusion of conservative policy riders. This exercise wasted more than six months and has directly resulted in a potentially delayed FY25 process.

Without immediate action, the situation we find ourselves in effectively guarantees another late adoption of FY25 appropriations bills. It will also lead to the crisis of another potential government shutdown. This is dangerous and avoidable. Even as we work toward concluding the 2024 process, we can begin in earnest with our FY25 deliberations. To do anything less will lead to yet another unnecessary delay in completing Congress' responsibility to fund the federal government before the end of the fiscal year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Joseph D. Morelle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress